

“What’s Important in My Life”

The Personal Goals and Values Card Sorting Task for Individuals with Schizophrenia

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Using Motivational Interviewing for clients with schizophrenia requires some adaptations of traditional methods, including the Personal Values Card Sorting Task. In our clinical work, we found that the original task described by Miller, C’de Baca, Matthews and Wilbourne (2001; casaa.unm.edu) was not useful for these clients because some of the values described on the cards were overly abstract (e.g., Autonomy, Mastery) and other issues of potential importance to these clients (e.g., Find medications that work for me, Stop hearing voices) were absent. Our modification of the Personal Goals and Values Card Sorting Task was originally developed as part of a small pilot study (Graeber et al., 2003) to investigate the impact of MI on the substance use of veterans with schizophrenia. We have significantly enlarged the current version and present it as a viable method for discussing important life goals and values with clients who struggle with schizophrenia. This tool is available for researchers and clinicians at no charge through the UNM CASAA website. Individuals wishing to use the cards can print them on business stock cards. Alternatively, they may be printed on labels and placed on index cards. They may not be sold, re-published or used for commercial purposes.

The Card Sorting Task is relatively straightforward. Tell the client you will be using an exercise to help you figure out what is most important to him or her in life. Set out the three cards entitled: Not Important, Important and Very Important to form three side-by-side columns. Give the client the cards in the order indicated (research) or randomly, then ask the client to sort them into those three piles. Once finished, pick up the Very Important pile and ask the client to re-sort, pulling out the top five cards in that stack. Do not be concerned if the client cannot further edit the Very Important stack, or ends up with more than five cards, or fewer. Next, use the cards to ask open ended questions about why the client picked the card, what it means to them personally, how they know they have this value or goal (e.g. what do they see in their life that convinces them this is important) and how this relates to the target behavior (usually substance use or medication compliance). Use an MI approach (like rolling with resistance) if the client provides answers that indicate their card choice is consistent with an undesirable behavior (a common one is Have Fun). Certainly, listen carefully for the presence of change talk that might occur and reinforce it as you hear it.

We hope this exercise will *facilitate a discussion of values and goals between you and your client*. It is intended to serve the purpose of developing a discrepancy between a deeply held belief and a current behavior so that motivational interviewing can move forward. That is its only purpose, so please do not be overly concerned or meticulous about procedural details. The content of the cards selected by the client does not really matter either, and can be expected to change from time to time in any case. Use good sense and clinical judgment to make this exercise “work” in your setting. A word of caution: we do not recommend bypassing the cards in favor of using the values and goals as a list. There is something about the sorting itself that is very powerful in this exercise.

We welcome your comments and suggestions for improvement!

What's Important In My Life

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IMPORTANT TO ME

VERY IMPORTANT TO ME

NOT IMPORTANT TO ME

GET MY OWN APARTMENT

HAVE MY OWN CAR

1
2006

2
2006

**HAVE A ROMANTIC
RELATIONSHIP**

STOP HEARING VOICES

3
2006

4
2006

**HAVE BETTER CONTROL OF
MY BODY MOVEMENTS**

FIND A GOOD FRIEND

5
2006

6
2006

**KEEP CURRENT ON
MY BILLS**

7
2006

HAVE A GOOD SEX LIFE

8
2006

**BE ABLE TO PREPARE
MY OWN FOOD**

9
2006

**HELP MY PARENTS OUT WITH
THEIR MONEY PROBLEMS**

10
2006

**BE A GOOD PARENT
FOR MY CHILD**

11
2006

GET MARRIED

12
2006

GET AN EDUCATION

13
2006

FIND A JOB I LIKE

14
2006

**HELP OUT MY FRIENDS
WHEN THEY NEED IT**

15
2006

**STAY TRUE TO MY
RELIGIOUS FAITH**

16
2006

KEEP A CLEAR MIND

17
2006

**BE ABLE TO
CONCENTRATE**

18
2006

**SOCIALIZE WITH FRIENDS
OR FAMILY**

19
2006

**CONTRIBUTE FINANCIALLY
TO MY CHILDREN**

20
2006

SERVE IN MY CHURCH

21
2006

**HELP OTHERS WHO HAVE MY
SAME PROBLEM**

22
2006

BE EASYGOING AND CALM

23
2006

HAVE A PEACFUL MIND

24
2006

**BE A GOOD
PROBLEM-SOLVER**

25
2006

HAVE FUN

26
2006

**LOOK AS GOOD AS I CAN
PHYSICALLY**

27
2006

BE RESPECTED BY OTHERS

28
2006

**HAVE OTHER PEOPLE
OFF MY BACK**

29
2006

BE A DECENT PERSON

30
2006

DO WHAT I SAY I WILL DO

31
2006

**TAKE CARE OF MY
RESPONSIBILITIES AS I
SHOULD**

32
2006

**BE FAITHFUL TO
MY PARTNER**

33
2006

BE PHYSICALLY FIT

34
2006

BE FORGIVING OF OTHERS

35
2006

OBEY THE WILL OF GOD

36
2006

BE TRUTHFUL

37
2006

**HAVE A GOOD SENSE
OF HUMOR**

38
2006

**NOT NEED OTHERS TO
TAKE CARE OF ME**

39
2006

**BE LOVED BY THOSE
CLOSE TO ME**

40
2006

BE CLEAN AND TIDY

41
2006

**FOLLOW THE TRADITIONS
THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO ME**

42
2006

HAVE ENOUGH MONEY

43
2006

**HAVE CONTROL OF MY
OWN MONEY**

44
2006

**HAVE GOOD FOOD ON
THE TABLE**

45
2006

**GET RID OF DRUGS
IN MY LIFE**

46
2006

**NOT DRINK TOO MUCH
ALCOHOL**

47
2006

NOT DRINK ALCOHOL AT ALL

48
2006

**HAVE MONEY IN
MY POCKET**

49
2006

**HAVE A SAFE PLACE
TO LIVE**

50
2006

**HAVE A ROOF OVER
MY HEAD**

51
2006

**FIND MEDICATIONS THAT
WORK FOR ME**

52
2006

BE HAPPY

53
2006

TO KEEP BUSY

54
2006

**FILL MY TIME WITH
INTERESTING ACTIVITIES**

55
2006

**WORK HARD AT A JOB
AND LIKE IT**

56
2006

FEEL WORTHWHILE

57
2006

**FEEL LIKE MY LIFE MATTERS
TO SOMEONE ELSE**

58
2006

**FEEL LIKE MY LIFE
MATTERS TO ME**

59
2006

**HAVE LESS STRESS
IN MY LIFE**

60
2006

**FOR OTHERS TO BELIEVE MY
SYMPTOMS ARE REAL**

61
2006

KEEP MY BENEFITS

62
2006

**HAVE THE TRUST OF
MY FAMILY**

63
2006

GET MY TEETH FIXED

64
2006

**BE ALERT WHEN I
WANT TO BE**

65
2006

**SLEEP WELL AND
WAKE REFRESHED**

66
2006

HAVE NICE CLOTHES

67
2006

**BE COMFORTABLE
IN MY OWN BODY**

68
2006

FEEL LIKE I FIT IN

69
2006

**NOT HAVE OTHERS TAKE
ADVANTAGE OF ME**

70
2006

**KEEP CONTROL OF
MY TEMPER**

71
2006

**NOT HAVE OTHER PEOPLE
LAUGH AT ME**

72
2006

**FOR OTHERS NOT TO BE
AFRAID OF ME**

73
2006

HAVE A CLEAR MIND

74
2006

**BE GOOD AT
TELLING JOKES**

75
2006

HAVE MORE FEELINGS

76
2006

**USE MY SMARTS FOR
SOMETHING**

77
2006

**STAY OUT OF TROUBLE
WITH THE LAW**

78
2006

GET MY DEGREE

79
2006

HAVE A DRIVER'S LICENSE

80
2006

HAVE SPENDING MONEY

81
2006

**DO SOMETHING GOOD
IN THE WORLD**

82
2006

NOT BE PARANOID

83
2006

NOT WORRY ALL THE TIME

84
2006

**HAVE PEOPLE UNDERSTAND
WHAT I SAY**

85
2006

FEEL ALIVE

86
2006

**STAY OUT OF
THE HOSPITAL**

**GET CREDIT FOR
MY IDEAS**

87
2006

88
2006

OTHER VALUE:

OTHER VALUE:

OTHER VALUE:

OTHER VALUE: