Motivational Interviewing

Case Study: Jim Hernandez © 2011

Jim is a 68-year-old Hispanic male who was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes two years ago and is a retired electrician. He enjoys golfing, fishing, walking, and spending time with his children and grandchildren. Jim divorced his wife five years ago and also has two adult children, Mary and Tom, that live in the same town as him. Jim’s children visit him often and Tom helps him with the shopping for healthy meals every week.

Jim has four siblings, two sisters and two brothers. All of his siblings live near his house and also visit almost weekly. When Jim doesn’t have any energy, he watches television or calls one of his family members to catch up on what’s going on in the family. Jim’s family knows about his diabetes and is supportive of his plan to exercise, eat healthier, and take his medications.

Lately, Jim has had difficulty monitoring his diabetes. Although, he takes his medication as prescribed, he hasn’t had the energy to exercise or prepare fresh, healthy foods. He also has noticed he is more thirsty than normal and is going to the bathroom more frequently.

Jim recently went to see his primary care physician for his regular sixth month check-up. After a physical examination, his doctor informed him that his blood sugar levels were higher than normal. Jim’s doctor urged him to check his blood pressure more often, eat more low-fat foods, and get plenty of exercise. Jim was worried that he might not be able to follow the doctor’s recommendations and asked his doctor if there he knew a
therapist or social worker that could possibly help him. Jim’s doctor agreed that counseling
or possibly a support group could help motivate Jim to better maintain his diabetes and
appointment with a clinical social worker was set up for a week later.

During the initial meeting with the social worker, Jim expressed some ambivalence
toward changing his behaviors even though he knew he needed to change to manage his
diabetes. Jim stated, “I know I need to change and I want to change, but it’s so difficult to
take that first step”. He made other statements like, “I am already so old, why do I need to
change.” These kinds of responses singled to the social worker that motivational
interviewing might be helpful with Jim to resolve these conflicting thoughts and behaviors.
References


