



## CONTINUING EDUCATION SESSION

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SESSION	CE HOURS	DATE/TIME
CE5	1.0	Friday, November 4th 10:30am-11:30am
TITLE		
<i>Adapting Motivational Interviewing (MI) for Use with Couples and Individuals in Relationships: Examining Processes and Mechanisms that Leverage Relational Motivation for Change</i>		
AUTHORS		
Demetria Cain, PHD, MPH; Hunter College, City University of NY Tyrel J. Starks, PhD; Hunter College, CUNY J.L. Stewart, PhD; Weill Cornell Medicine		
<b>AASECT</b> - Core Knowledge Areas and Training:		D; H
<b>APA</b> - Curriculum Content Criteria:		1.1; 1.3
<b>NCHEC</b> - Areas of Responsibility:		3.1.4; 4.4.2; 4.4.3; 4.4.4; 4.4.5; 6.5.4
ABSTRACT		
<p>Sexual minority men (SMM) in relationships face unique barriers to HIV prevention. SMM in non-monogamous relationships use drugs at rates comparable to those who are single and the use of drugs is associated with sexual risk taking. Despite this need, most existing motivational interviewing (MI) based interventions have been developed for single SMM. These do not address the ways in which relationship partners influence behavior and they fail to capitalize on the ways in which partners might support and motivate change. This symposium presents one theoretical perspective and two empirical studies, all of which in some way examine MI processes intended to activate relationship-related motivation for change. PRESENTATION 1 (THEROETICAL) TITLE: Advancing sexual health intervention for couples: Integrating sexual satisfaction and considerations that extend beyond dysfunction BACKGROUND: A decade of research has highlighted main partners as a context for HIV transmission risk among sexual minority men. As a result, there is increasing interest in developing interventions (particularly for male couples) that address sexual risk taking and related substance use. Advancement in this area requires bridging a number of schisms in theory and practice. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES: The purpose of this presentation is to describe four key divisions that serve as barriers to the advancement of interventions that enhance sex and sexual safety generally and for male couple specifically. We then propose an integrated view of sex as both a potential target behavior and essential context in couples' interventions. First, there is a theoretical schism that divides work on sex therapy (which has focused largely on the treatment of disorders of sexual functioning) and research on sexual risk reduction (where the emphasis has been on the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections – STIs). Second, both sex therapy and sexual risk reduction interventions tend to be focused on problem amelioration or prevention. Relatively less attention is given (traditionally) to the enhancement of pleasure in healthy individuals with normative sexual function and relationships at low risk of STI transmission. Third, despite years of research on sexual scripts, schemas, and expectancies, these cognitive constructs have had relatively limited influence on intervention content. Finally, despite decades of research indicating associations between substance use and sexual behavior, most drug use interventions give little or no attention to sex and many sexual health interventions limit attention to drug use to a narrow focus on connections with sexual risk taking. SIGNFICANCE TO THE FIELD: Advancing interventions to reduce sexual risk may require attention to sexual satisfaction that goes beyond the treatment of sexual disorder. Interdependence Theory would suggest that partners in couples who have higher relationship satisfaction are more</p>		



likely to develop shared health goals and support one another in accomplishing them. It follows then that couples with higher levels of sexual satisfaction might be more likely to develop and accomplish sexual health goals. Our team has developed a prototype intervention in which partners deconstruct their script for sex together. This creates the opportunity to correct inaccurate assumptions about one another's sexual goals and priorities. The process integrates attention to sexual satisfaction, sexual risk reduction, and the intersection of sex and drug use into a unified intervention dialogue.

**PRESENTATION 2 (EMPIRICAL) TITLE:** Partnered young sexual minority men's discussions of their personal values and HIV transmission risk behavior following a Values Card Sort task **BACKGROUND:** MI interventions, especially those designed to reduce drug use and sexual risk taking among sexual minority men (SMM), commonly include values card sort (VCS) activities. Personal values are theorized to guide motivation for behavior change; however, scant research has explored the content of client speech VCS activities elicit. Research on relationships and health suggests that as individuals become more committed to a romantic relationship, they take on a "relational orientation" – the relationship becomes integrated into their sense of identity. Therefore, VCS activities conducted with clients in relationships might activate relationship-relevant motivation for change. This study aimed to examine speech elicited by a VCS activity completed by partnered SMM, and to specifically examine how relationship-related motivation is manifest in this content. **METHODS:** The data came from 48 sessions completed by SMM participating in a larger efficacy trial of a 4-session MI intervention to reduce drug use and sexual risk taking that was tailored for partnered SMM. All participants were 18-34 years old, HIV-negative and reported recent drug use and HIV transmission risk behavior. Sessions were transcribed and coded and by three researchers per the Consensual Qualitative Research method. **RESULTS:** Analyses identified themes aligning with Arnett's Theory of Emerging Adulthood, including personal and relational identity development through values exploration, values linked to sources of stability/instability, and values representing possibilities. Within each of these themes, participants discussed both their relationship unit and their relationship partner as both origins and targets of their values. Further, participants distinguished between aspirational and realized values in ways that were particularly relevant to motivation. Aspirational values were those participants were motivated or seeking to realize, while realized values were those participants presently enacted and were motivated to preserve. **CONCLUSIONS:** VCS activities conducted with young SMM in relationships yield client speech heavily focused on the intersection of relational orientation and personal values. Further, clients discussed their values in a developmental context aligning with their stage of change.

**PRESENTATION 3 (EMPIRICAL) TITLE:** Client responses to video-based modeling of sexual health communication for PrEP with relationship partners delivered in a motivational interviewing intervention with sexual minority men **BACKGROUND:** Many sexual minority men (SMM) in relationships express concerns that implementing any HIV prevention strategies generally, and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) specifically, will signal a lack of trust, commitment or investment in their relationship. One way MI interventions might address this barrier to health behavior change is through the incorporation of relationship skills building activities that empower clients to engage their relationship partners in constructive conversations about sexual health goals. Communication skills training videos provide one option for such integration – one that requires minimal additional provider training; however, relatively little is known about the content of client speech elicited by these activities. This hinders the development of effective provider strategies to draw out motivational for change in sessions where they are used. The goal of the current study was to explore client response to video-based modeling of sexual health communication focused on PrEP administered in the context of a MI intervention to reduce drug use and sexual risk taking for SMM in relationships. **METHODS:** Data came from 37 sessions of a MI intervention for partnered SMM. The MI intervention included a session where videos modeling sexual health communication were utilized. All participants were 18-34 years old, HIV negative, and reported recent (past 30 days) drug



use and HIV transmission risk behavior. Session content was transcribed and coded using the Framework Analysis and Consensual Qualitative Research approach. RESULTS: Potential sources of conflict in conversations were elicited from watching the videos as implied infidelity, implied commitment, and exploration of relationship alternatives. In scenarios with conflict, clients described their partner giving destructive passive and active conversation responses, which limited clients' ability to work in conjunction with their partner to develop shared goals concerning PrEP. Thus, potentially limiting SMM from either starting PrEP or maintaining PrEP use. CONCLUSION: Discussions around PrEP can be challenging for SMM in relationships. MI for SMM in relationships would benefit from the inclusion of communication skills building around PrEP to empower clients to discuss sexual health goals with partners.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

To explain strategies essential and unique to Motivational Interviewing with couples and the impact of these strategies on relationship functioning.

To explain the rationale for integrating the priority card sort and communication skills training into MI practice with people in relationships.

To explain the particular importance of developing HIV risk reduction interventions for Sexual Minority Men in relationships.