

- **Listen.** Simply repeat what you heard the person say. Avoid getting ahead of the priorities and needs expressed by the participant.
  - *“What I hear you saying is that you’re stressed and increasing your exercise is not a priority right now.”*
- **Make it hypothetical.** If you’ve encountered resistance regarding a particular issue, make the topic less threatening by turning it into a hypothetical scenario. Get the participant back to voicing the positive side of the argument for change. This will allow them to hear themselves make the arguments for change.
  - *“Suppose you made a change and are looking back on it now. How did it happen?”*
- **Acknowledge the resistance.** This may allow the participant to clarify his or her desires, which you steamrolled over in your haste to get commitment to a goal.
  - *“Sounds like talking about increasing your steps is not something you want to do.”*
  - *“You have doubts that this program will work for you.”*
- **Emphasize personal choice and control.** Remind them that what they do is up to them. Instead of directing clients or telling them what to do, collaborate on solutions.
  - *“It sounds like finding time to eat in the morning is hard when you are taking care of the kids. What ideas do you have for trying to solve this?”*
  - *“While I was planning on focusing on upper body today, it sounds like you also really want to work on cardio. What would be most helpful to focus on today?”*
- **Emphasize success.** Always assist clients to see the positives in what they are doing. It will help increase their confidence and understand that they can be successful.
  - *“On the 1–10 scale, you said your level of motivation was 5. Why a 5 and not something lower like a 1 or 2?”*
- **Acknowledge ambivalence.** Validate client’s feelings and show that you understand.
  - *“On one hand, you really value the convenience, taste, and low cost of fast food, but on the other, you’re afraid if you don’t stop eating this food every day that it will kill you.”*
- **Match the participant’s readiness.** Mismatched interventions are only fuel for resistance. Action-oriented solutions are meaningless to someone who is only contemplating change!