

Season Two, Episode 4: Using Motivational Interviewing with brain injury with Andrew Rose, Director of AKA Case Management

Shabnam 0:05

Welcome to the Psychology of Case Management podcast: the show that helps you use psychological ideas to strengthen your relationship with your catastrophically injured clients and their professional networks, so you can achieve more for your clients and feel more fulfilled in your role.

0:20

Welcome to another episode. I'm Dr Shabnam Berry-Khan, and I am bringing to you today a reminder, if you like, of the importance of communication: the language we use, and the power that is inherently in it. If truth be told, the sway that words can have has always been a fascination to me, and it's a lot of the reason of why I do what I do as a psychologist and as a case manager: no tools, just words. And in the personal injury world, I think a lot of the time that's all we have, as well, to navigate ways through this journey with our clients to achieve those goals that they want to achieve, and to maximize those outcomes for our clients. When my guest today informed me that he is a skilled motivational interviewer and uses it in his case management work, I almost bit his hand off to talk to me today. So I'm very grateful to have today and it's my great pleasure to introduce to you: Andrew Rose, Director of AKA Case Management. Welcome to the mic, Andrew!

Andrew 1:28

Thanks very much.

Shabnam 1:31

Thanks for being here. I know you're a busy, busy man. As I do with all my guests, as I'm sure you know, is just have a little... CV of how did you get to where you are? You are a case manager, you're fairly well-known, I would say, but how did you get to where you are? Tell us a little bit about you.

Andrew 1:52

So, I suppose I've had a bit of an eclectic journey. I started off in academia. I did a degree in Psychology then just fell into academia and working as a lab technician, and doing some training and teaching in Psychology as well. And then after eight years of doing that, and the fact that I always knew I had a passion for brain injury, eventually bit the bullet and joined a case management company – and was was lucky enough for Carol Collins at NCM to take a risk of employing someone who had no direct practical experience of working with individuals with brain injury. But she gave me the opportunity to work on lots of levels as a support worker doing behavioural management, and doing case management work as well. And that's where I was introduced to motivational interviewing at that time. So that was over 15 years ago now. I worked there for a few years. And then I was approached to go and work in Australia, by David Manchester, who had introduced me to motivational interviewing. And I jumped at that opportunity. I thought it was to go over work with individuals with brain injury on a programme over there. And it turned out most of my clients were actually people with very complex mental health issues and extreme challenging behaviour. I'd always gravitated to people with challenging behaviour in the UK, but the people I worked in Australia were a whole new level. Yeah, lucky enough to expand my knowledge of MI over

there, delivering and supporting training of motivation interviewing to over 1,000 support workers over in Australia, then moved there in a couple of roles. And then after five years of never having made the decision to live in Australia full-time, came back to the UK and came back into into case management. And yeah, that's why I've ended up where I am now. So AKA Case Management, and took over the directorship earlier this year. I've also been a director of BABICM, the British Association of Brain Injury Case Managers, and I'm currently a member of the training events group with BABICM, as well. So that's a potted version of my history.

Shabnam 4:26

Yeah, amazing! Gosh, you've had a very eclectic, very varied... lends itself so, so well to the work we do as case managers, and you've kind of done it bottom-up, in a way, and then sideways, and all the rest of it. And now you're running the show, which is tremendous. So well done you, first of all! Motivational interviewing means a lot to you. It means something to me, but may not mean an awful lot to some of our audience members. Do you think you could tell us a little bit about what motivational interviewing is, as a sort of core approach, and what it has been used for traditionally, if you like?

Andrew 5:08

Yeah, so it started off being used with people mainly with drug/alcohol dependency, particularly with clients that were, I guess, more challenging to engage. So it's a conversational therapy... I like to talk about it in terms of 'coming alongside' somebody, and having that conversation with them. So you're empowering them to look at their own life and what that means to them, and how important behaviour change is to them, and their own capacity to change, but also helping them to identify how they might change. It really is, when we started this, we're using the importance of language, to get people to talk about their own change. So they're making decisions, and you're guiding and supporting them to make those decisions, so they have that commitment. So you are getting them to really change their own language, because that's been found to actually have the best outcomes to create behaviour change. You can't force someone to change. You've got to help them to find that internal motivation.

Shabnam 6:27

Yeah, and language is the key to that, isn't it? Yeah, absolutely. It is linked to NLP, isn't it – Neuro-Linguistic Programming, or have I got that wrong?

Andrew 6:39

It has lots of links to lots of therapies. So it's drawn on lots of different things. There was a study done many, many years ago now that was looking at the effectiveness of treatments for depression, whether that was medical intervention, whether that was professional counselling therapies, and they, they looked at this, and one of the the outcomes that they weren't particularly testing for any reason, was just how much you liked your therapist, and it was one of their measures. And what they found was, there was absolutely no difference between the type of therapy that was done. But the biggest predictor was about the therapeutic relationship, as it's called. And motivational interviewing is a skill that helps you build that therapeutic relationship; it helps you to avoid getting into arguments, you're not the one dictating to someone, like the traditional medical model of: you come in and see me, you tell me what the problem is, and I tell you what to do to go and fix it. And you go away, and you don't listen to what I said. And to me, when I heard that, I went "Yeah, well, that makes sense, doesn't it?" So if I want to have someone's advice, I don't go to someone I don't like. I go to someone I like. If I want advice on getting some new clothes, I go and ask someone who I like what they wear and go: "Can you come and help me?" And so it just fitted for me, and made perfect sense.

Shabnam 8:12

Well, it just sounds very *real*, doesn't it? It's probably conceptualizing something that's very human, you could say.

Andrew 8:21

For me, it gave a framework. So there were components that I probably normally did, as an interaction style, but it actually gave me a framework and an understanding of why they worked, and what the impacts of them were.

Shabnam 8:35

Yeah, I'm with you. As you were talking earlier, I have this image in my head of walking side by side with someone, and stopping when they stop, and gently encouraging them to walk alongside – maybe in a slightly different direction – but the whole time the word that pops up in my mind is 'collaborative', it feels very collaborative as a core principle, maybe you could say?

Andrew 9:02

Absolutely: that is that is one of the key elements of the spirit of MI. It has four key elements which are about collaboration between the practitioner and the client, about evoking or drawing out the client's own ideas about change, and then emphasizing the autonomy of the client, and then practising compassion in that process. So it's very much working *with* someone, I think. One of the initial descriptions of it was 'following and directing' which I found really hard to get my head around, but that's where I got that 'walking alongside': so you can be directing someone, but it doesn't feel like it. It feels like you were just naturally going for a walk with someone and you might just be guiding what that route is, without feeling you're dictating a path to somebody.

Shabnam 9:53

Yeah, right, interesting. And the one thing that would come to my mind if I knew less about motivational interviewing, would be: you're talking about language; you're talking about it impacting helpfully on thinking patterns, and then impacting on behaviour change in a positive way. What is the link, then, with brain injury, where we know that there's cognitive impairment, sometimes? Well, there *is* cognitive impairment – not 'sometimes' – there *is* cognitive impairment on some level. And often the thinking element is harder, therefore. How are the two linked? Motivational interviewing and brain injury do not sound like they would naturally go hand-in-hand, according to the description that we've just talked about.

Andrew 10:44

Yeah, it incontrovertibly, absolutely does work. There are lots of sort of micro-skills that you use within it. So in my experience of MI, and in terms of delivering training, I've always particularly focused on training with support workers working with individuals with brain injury, with complex mental health, where there is cognitive impairment. So one of the big skills is what's known as 'rolling the resistance', or 'rolling with discord', it's been renamed, although I still prefer the old version.

Shabnam 11:23

I like it too!

Andrew 11:25

Yeah! Using tools like reflective listening, so you're not getting into arguments. And what you're demonstrating to your clients using these skills is: I am listening to you, I'm understanding you, I'm accepting you. And that can that can occur even with cognitive impairment. Because you're coming alongside, it doesn't have to be complex. And then there are other skills within it you can use to compensate for the cognitive deficiencies that people have. So using option tools, in terms of when you're choosing a path for that behaviour change. And it's something that you do regularly, over time. So you're practising it, and if you use the whole motivational 'toolkit', then you really are literally listening out for specific words that people use. So are they using action words? "I have a plan" – for what I meant to do about changing this behaviour. But particularly for support workers, and maybe case managers, what you might be focusing on more is using the tools like using your reflective listening, using summaries, using open questions, using affirmations. And cognitive impairment doesn't have to be a barrier to the use of those, because you are using the shared language of the client.

Shabnam 12:54

Yeah, you're only ever at the level of the client: it's the ultimate almost person-centred approach, from the way you've just described it. And it makes me wonder why the bloody hell don't we talk about this more often? Or at least how come I've not heard of it more often? Maybe people do talk about it, and it's just not come to my ears. But in your experience... I mean, I know, obviously, you get it, and you may bring it naturally into your conversations. But if you, say, imagine a world where you didn't talk about it, perhaps. Is it popular out there in the brain injury world, case management or otherwise? Just the personal injury world? Is it something that you come across a lot? Because I haven't.

Andrew 13:37

I suppose... it's interesting, because I'm probably biased, so I do! I have that bias, and so I see it, and I will talk about it. And maybe I've also, it's just the case, I think, I've been lucky and I was very lucky that NCM and Carol was probably a very early adopter of it. And was exceptionally lucky to be introduced to it by David Manchester, who is amazingly passionate about it, and I've worked with him over years, to help him deliver training, and training with him. But then coming back to the UK after my time there... again, whether that is because I'm attuned to it, and so – because I've been using MI for 15 years and, apart from the last three years, I personally have been to an MI training course every single year.

Shabnam 14:39

Wow. As a delegate or as a trainer?

Andrew 14:41

As a delegate. I'm been training, myself, and delivering training myself, but also going to training, doing that refresher because you need to keep fresh, and you always learn something new. In this country, at the moment, Verna Morris does lots of training in motivational interviewing, and you'd see a lot of her. She does a lot training through ABI Solutions. So she's probably, I'd say, the biggest name in this country. And there are lots of case management companies that do use it and encourage people... but again, maybe that's my biased lens: because I have a passion for it, so I see it.

Shabnam 15:24

Yeah, exactly! Okay, so maybe there is an argument that we're using motivational interviewing in our practice, but we just perhaps haven't labelled it as 'motivational interviewing', given that it *is* person-centred, and it *is* collaborative; that we probably use it more when we're working with people who have

maybe high levels of ambivalence, and you want to 'roll with that resistance', but at the same time you want to direct and... avoid conflict, etc. How would we know that we may be doing it already?

Andrew 15:54

I think this is where, if you've got purist MI people, they would say it's a therapy tool about behaviour change, and therefore you're doing motivational interviewing if you're doing the whole programme. I think, as I said, within case management, and particularly for support workers, I would say the focus is about that working with – as you say – ambivalence; working with resistance, because those are the things that challenge us. And those are the things that very quickly escalate and then create more problems. So I think, potentially, people are using open questions, affirmations, and they might be using parts of skills, maybe not knowing that they're doing it. So I would certainly say that was me, pre-learning what MI was. Was I using reflective listening? Maybe... but, actually, probably not. Because most people, when you introduce them to reflective listening in the first instances, you're just agreeing with somebody. But you're really not, and there are so many different skills, nuances, even within reflective listening, about using complex reflections, using simple reflections... so you're reflecting someone's emotions. And there's also the skills at learning *when* you do it. So, on a personal perspective, one evening, after a bit of a rough time of life I went out for a drink with David, and at the start of the evening I said: "David, do not motivational interview me tonight, do not reflective listen me. I just need you to kind of agree... just go: 'Yes, life's rubbish.' You know, that would be the worst thing you could do..."

Shabnam 17:36

Just a bit of acknowledgment. Just keep it simple!

Andrew 17:39

So sometimes... it isn't a panacea. It isn't a 'fix' that will fix everything. You may be using components, but you may not be using the full spec of the skills, or the full components within there. So yeah, I would say that lots of people probably use parts of... but you can probably improve and increase your skills by learning a bit more.

Shabnam 18:05

And I suppose one of the key aspects of it is that it's a style of communication. So it is something that you will not just necessarily use with your clients. You may use it with your client's family; you might use it when you're running your MDT meeting; in supervision, as you said, with your support workers, etc. It has applicability beyond just that pure relationship, so it's not a therapeutic tool, if you don't want to see it that way, I guess?

Andrew 18:33

Absolutely. You can use it... quite often when you do training, people talk about going to practise it with family members, which I always go "I'll caveat that," because it's a lot more difficult to do it in your personal relationships because there's emotion involved. So I would... and my my partner would probably attest that I might be good at doing it professionally, but I'm rubbish personally.

Shabnam 19:01

You know this is recorded, right? Oops.

Andrew 19:07

And that is because there is emotion involved.

Shabnam 19:10

Exactly. Yeah, that's really interesting. And there is – just to go back to the point of that – it sounds like there's an evidence base for motivational interviewing, in terms of its sort of 'traditional' use, and there is an evidence base... or a growing evidence base for it, as applied to brain injury clients and families.

Andrew 19:34

Across... I think there's now research evidence in most domains and most modalities. We had started in drug and alcohol training, but it is used across... there were so many research studies under different domains. So yes, absolutely. In AVI and many, many other fields – because of that therapeutic relationship focus and coming alongside.

Shabnam 20:01

Yeah, that's really cool. So, I'm just going to... one thing, as you probably know from our episodes, is that we always like to make it a little bit practical. We like to bring it back to: well, what can our audience... if our audience is really feeling this idea? They're thinking "Yeah, motivational interviewing sounds like I'm kind of doing it a little bit already... Maybe, maybe not." What three things would you say to our audience that would fit within the motivational interviewing field, and that would suit the work we do within the personal injury world – whether you're a case manager, whether you're a deputy, whether you're a litigating solicitor or therapist – what would you say: three things that you could do that would help your client, in terms of their engagement or their journey with rehabilitation, that could be just the ticket for them?

Andrew 20:58

Well, obviously it comes with a huge amount of bias. So I will say that, but I would advocate for absolutely anybody: any case manager, any support worker, any solicitor, deputy, therapist... to go and do some training in MI, do an introductory training course. There are one-day introductions; they can be done in person. So, as I say, Verna Morris in the UK is doing them. I did double check. And on David's website, he does say that he does deliver online training courses...

Shabnam 21:35

All the way from Sydney?

Andrew 21:36

Well, exactly: he is in Australia. I'm not quite sure how it works. But in the past, he has come over to the UK, but obviously that's not possible at the moment. But I know it's something that he's always interested in looking at and he is very passionate about it. I know Verna has lots of training in this in this country, so I would strongly promote someone going along to that. Or even getting into contact with someone like Verna, if it's a company, saying: "Would you be able to come along and do something like that for our company?" Even if it's only focusing on, as I say, the rolling with resistance, the reflective listening, the summaries, the open questions, affirmations and things like that. Because then that gives you that exposure and that framework, and then that's the start of knowing that "Ok, can I do this?" Now the next thing and the next 'tip' I would say is, the wonderful thing about MI – and the honesty of MI – says you

don't learn anything in a classroom. You learn by practising and getting feedback, and that improves your skills. And the wonderful thing about MI is: you practise with your clients, and you get feedback immediately. So if you don't get it, right, they escalate. But it gives you another opportunity to show to them and tell them: "I've listened to you; I've understood what you're saying." So you have opportunity, after opportunity, after opportunity. And you get that feedback. And that feedback is usually very obvious, when you say something that they don't agree with, or haven't said. So it is about practice, and it's continued learning and continued professional development. You don't just learn how to do it. It's that continuing, developing skill...

Shabnam 23:19

Yeah, totally – and observing that feedback in the moment. That's a really interesting point. Yeah, ok. Got that! Thank you.

Andrew 23:29

Yeah. And the other one is actually something we've mentioned before: is about motivation in the workplace and motivational interviewing isn't the answer to everything. So don't go along, believing that you will just... if you're talking about using reflective listening skills, you don't use a reflective statement to *everything* someone says, because it would be a bit like a child just repeating what you said: it becomes very annoying, very quickly. So it's about going: it's ok not to feel like I've got to use it all the time. Because if you are using it all the time, you're not actually doing it. So having that permission, as well, to understand that, would be my tips, because I think people come away quite often, going: "I've got to use this all of the time." And that's not right. And as I say, using it with work is very different to trying to use it with people you have an emotional attachment to, because you have so many other things that are going to change how you respond and how you behave when you talk to people. So yeah, those were my tips.

Shabnam 24:38

Yeah, that's amazing. Thank you. And I guess it is, again, another reminder of one of the themes of this podcast, and certainly what we believe at PsychWorks Associates, which is that we have to be... that reflective element, and that observation and noticing... we are agents in that. It isn't just something we do to our clients, and it's almost up to them to take it or not to take it. But... it's a relational, constant cycle of feeding into one another and sharing an experience that hopefully – with the right tools, and like you say, using the right kind of language and ideas, open questions, etc. – it can turn into a sort of upward spiral, as opposed to a downward spiral. But of course, with motivational interviewing, what you're saying is that if it does start turning a bit downward, that's ok. Try a different approach, try a different strategy... because you'll get the feedback immediately; it will stop going downwards, and it will start spinning upwards – in a good way. The belief of our agency, in any one conversation with our client, is really important. So for me, when people say, "Oh, you know, I'm not the important person in this," actually, we are: we are important in it. And I know a lot of people have got that idea, I think, but I'm sometimes surprised by how that's not always clear in the moment. But that's why motivational interviewing is quite good, for me, in my conceptualization of how to work well with clients: because you are held in mind, as well. But you have a very active role in what you're seeing, and how to make it different quite quickly.

Andrew 26:27

Yeah, I think in terms of the autonomy when you're doing MI, what you should... what you will normally find is the client is the one doing most of the talking. And that's a good thing. But it also allows you to own your own mistakes, which is something that lots of clients are not used to. So in terms of those reflections, if you see that someone has escalated due to your response, you can say: "I'm really sorry, I've misunderstood you." And that in itself is just a tick in that relationship box, because they're going: "Sorry,

did they just say that was their fault? I'm always told it's *my* fault!" So there are lots of things there that, for me, make it such a wonderful tool for working with people.

Shabnam 27:15

Yeah, amazing. It's really great to hear how it can be used in the work, with relative ease, because there is a... I know, you said that it's embedded in that counselling psychology idea, or language theories, and I can just see that... I'm hoping that people are going to have listened to this and said, "Oh, I'm actually kind of doing this already – that's really encouraging. And let me just think about what bit of what I use works. And now there's possibly a way to think about how to use it better, or that it's not the end of the world if I didn't quite get it right in that moment. It's ok." And it's about making something fit, and just constantly having that evaluative thinking as a professional with your client, because you always want to stay alongside your client. You don't want to be sort of opposites, if you like, facing each other – and that's where the conflict kicks in, and it's much harder to roll with resistance, perhaps, when there's a sense of antagonism about it.

Andrew 28:25

Yeah, absolutely.

Shabnam 28:27

Yeah, thank you so much! Andrew, if people want to get hold of you to learn a little bit more about motivational interviewing; if people want to just get hold of you, because they like what you're saying in general, tell us how we can do that.

Andrew 28:40

So they can email me at andrew@akacaseamangement.co.uk or they'd be able to get a hold of me through the office number, which is 0115 7117070. I haven't actually delivered any training for a couple of years because of changes in roles. But it's something I still love. And I could probably still be tempted to do it, but maybe my co-Director might well go "No." But yeah, it's something I'm very passionate about, I love, and I think is a tool that can really help clients, and help case managers, support workers, therapists, solicitors... everyone within the PI world. I think it's a fabulous tool.

Shabnam 29:35

Yeah, thank you for that. And are you hanging out on social media at all, in any way?

Andrew 29:41

I'm not a massive social media user. I am on LinkedIn. I'm not a Facebook user, or anything. AKA does have a Facebook page. But yes, LinkedIn is my kind of social media domain.

Shabnam 29:55

Yeah. It's where you're hanging out. Brill! Andrew, thank you so much for imparting that wisdom – and your story, actually. That's one of the nice things about doing this: that we get to hear about the *people* behind the name, or the designation. So thank you so much for sharing all of that. And I wish you all the best with your – well, relatively new – directorship at AKA.

Andrew 30:21

Thank you very much.

Shabnam 30:22

All right, take care! And thank you for listening. See you next time. Bye-bye!

30:30

Before you go: if you enjoyed the episode today, I'd really appreciate it if you could rate it on whatever platform you're listening on, and share and like on your social media profiles. Word of mouth is the best way for us to grow and to be a continuous resource for all. And if there's any topic you wish for us to cover, please drop us a line on our website. Thank you so much for all your support.

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