

[Home](#) > [Vol 8, No 1 \(2007\)](#) > [van Wormer](#)

Motivational Interviewing: A Theoretical Framework for the Study of Human Behavior and the Social Environment

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Abstract

This article provides a critical analysis of motivational interviewing stages of change model. Although rarely included in textbooks on human behavior and the social environment, this model has much to teach us about that aspect of human behavior most germane to social work practice—personal motivation for change of behaviors that are dysfunctional. The basic concepts that underlie motivational interviewing are derived from empirically-based principles from the science of social psychology. This article provides a historical and comparative approach to theory development, argues for the utility of this perspective as a guide to practice, and provides suggestions for further theory development.

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[TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

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