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## AUTONOMY, CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING, AND EMOTIONAL AROUSAL

Ultimately, it is up to each person to decide on whether or not to change – even children. Acknowledging this autonomy empowers child(ren)/youth, makes them responsible for their own actions and reduces the arguing that adults might engage in with them. Personal choice and preference is addressed in the activity **It's My Choice** and the worksheets, **Who Decides?** and **Things I Can Change**.

Consciousness-raising involves getting facts and increasing awareness of the problem. Educating oneself about the problem and its consequences through research and personal feedback helps awareness. This is addressed in the activities, **What is Motivation?** and **Brainstorming Change** along with the worksheets, **Things I Can Change** and **Assessing My Impulsivity**.

Emotions influence our decisions and generate actions. Emotional arousal for motivation elicits anxiety regarding the problematic behavior or hope regarding the possibility of change. In the activity, **Energy to Change**, positive emotions are elicited in the service of addressing impulsivity.



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# IT'S MY CHOICE

### Objectives

- Engage client(s)
- Support autonomy
- Create a safe and fun climate

### Materials Needed

- No materials needed



### Directions

When the child(ren)/youth enters the room, ask where s/he would like to sit (and be willing to let her/him sit there!). After being seated, thank the child(ren)/youth for being there and explain that while s/he has been referred because of problems with impulsivity, it is completely her/his choice how much or how little work is done (although you hope that the activities will be so much fun that s/he will want to do everything). Then simply play the "Would You Rather..." game by reading some of the questions below or making up your own.

- Have a milkshake or a sundae?
- Be smarter or more good looking?
- Get a piercing or a tattoo?
- Speak French or Japanese?
- Watch TV or play on the internet?
- Be stranded on a desert island with a book or a ball?
- Have excellent reading skills or excellent math skills?
- Vacation at the beach or in the mountains?
- Go back in time or into the future?
- Go on a safari or a cruise?
- Fly an airplane or a helicopter?
- Be a scientist or a comedian?
- Rather be able to read minds or fly?
- Have a rewind button or a pause button for your life?
- Meet George Washington or Abraham Lincoln?
- Be stuck in an elevator or on a ski lift?

### Discussion Questions

- How does it feel to know that you have choices?
- What are some things that you get to decide in your life?
- Even when you feel like you "have" to do something, don't you really still have a choice?
- What would you like me to know about you and impulse control?

# WHAT IS MOTIVATION?



## Objectives

- Understand the concept of motivation
- Support autonomy

## Materials Needed

- Dry erase board or flip chart
- Markers

## Directions

Explain to the child(ren)/youth that before anyone can change, they must be motivated to change. Then on a dry erase board or flip chart, draw a box in the middle of the page with the word MOTIVATION inside of it. Ask the child(ren)/youth to define motivation by using their own words. Write down their ideas around the MOTIVATION box and draw lines from their ideas to the box (a node-link mapping technique). Prompt as needed.

## Discussion Questions

- Who do you know who seems highly motivated? What is s/he motivated to do?
- What are the signs that you see that makes you think that this person is motivated?
- What are three (3) things that you are highly motivated to do?
- How do you encourage yourself to get motivated when you're not?



# APPENDIX A - YOUTH SELF ASSESSMENT

Listed below are some statements about feelings and behaviors. Please answer all of the items honestly. For each item please circle the number indicating how often you show that characteristic.

	Very Often	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Very Seldom
I stay calm even when things go wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
I can handle my angry feelings without any problems.	1	2	3	4	5
I can stop myself from saying mean things when I'm upset.	1	2	3	4	5
I make good choices even when my feelings are hurt.	1	2	3	4	5
I think things through before acting when I'm feeling sad.	1	2	3	4	5
I'm careful about what I do when I have strong feelings.	1	2	3	4	5

**EMOTIONAL IMPULSIVITY TOTAL**

	Very Often	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Very Seldom
I don't like to start an assignment until I've read the directions.	1	2	3	4	5
I think about possible consequences of what I do before I do it.	1	2	3	4	5
I think about the pros and cons before I make decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
I work hard on my school work.	1	2	3	4	5
I plan things before I do them.	1	2	3	4	5
I am self-disciplined.	1	2	3	4	5

**INADEQUATE REFLECTION TOTAL**

	Very Often	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Very Seldom
I finish projects/assignments that I've started.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't give up when things get hard.	1	2	3	4	5
I'm a determined person	1	2	3	4	5
I'm the type of person to get the job done.	1	2	3	4	5
I get upset if I don't get to finish assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
I have good concentration skills.	1	2	3	4	5

**POOR PERSISTENCE TOTAL**

	Very Often	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Very Seldom
I'm restless if I'm not enthusiastic about something.	5	4	3	2	1
I like novelty and excitement.	5	4	3	2	1
I would like to go bungee jumping.	5	4	3	2	1
I am always looking for thrilling experiences.	5	4	3	2	1
I like things that go fast.	5	4	3	2	1
I hate feeling bored almost more than anything.	5	4	3	2	1

**EXCITEMENT-SEEKING TOTAL**

One of the things I am best at is \_\_\_\_\_

If I get into trouble, it is usually for \_\_\_\_\_

If I could change one thing about my impulsivity, it would be \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*Inspired by the UPPS Impulsive Behavior Scale Whiteside, S.P. & Lynam, D.R. (2001). The five factor model and impulsivity: Using a structural model of personality to understand impulsivity. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 30(4), 669-689.