## Brief Behavioral Change Intervention Script

1. **Set the Agenda – Find the Target Behavior (e.g., using, smoking, not exercising)** Clarify the agenda around a target behavior about which there is ambivalence:

* So it sounds like you, like most of us, are working on paying better attention to some aspect of your physical or mental health; is that right?
* HDYFAB: How do you feel about talking with me about it today?
  + Validate whatever they say.
* What change are you trying to make? (note it on Healthy Habits worksheet)

Respectfully explore both sides of the ambivalence.

**2. Ask about the positive aspects of the target behavior. (This might mean asking what’s good about *not* doing a positive behavior, such as what’s good about not exercising.** This is often an engaging surprise. However, it will only work if you are genuinely interested. Keep digging. There are usually multiple reasons why we do what we do. Very important to recognize and respect the power of what is keeping the target behavior going.

* So I’m going to start with what might seem like a funny question. What are some of the good things about \_\_\_\_\_\_ (doing the negative behavior *or* not *doing the positive behavior*)?
* People usually \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ because it has benefited them in some way. How has \_\_\_\_\_\_ benefited you?
* What do you like about the effects of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?
* Summarize the positives. So it sounds like… List positives on Health Habits worksheet.

**3. Ask about the negative aspects of the target behavior:**

* Now, tell me about some the downsides of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (the negative behavior or not doing the positive)?
* What are some of the things you would **not** miss (if you stopped doing the negative behavior)? (Unwanted effects of the target behavior that would be eliminated)
  + Summarize the negatives: So, while there are some good things about \_\_\_\_, on the other hand…. List negatives on Health Habits.

Develop Discrepancy

**4. Explore life goals and values.** These goals will be the pivotal point against which cost and benefits are weighed.

* + - In thinking about helping you to try and make a change, it helps if I get to know a little more about you in general. What aspects of your life are most important to you?
    - What sort of person do you strive to be?
    - If the next year went really well, how would your life be different then?
* Affirm “positive” goals and values. OK, so if I were to sum up your values, you really care about …and want to be the kind of person who…. List these on Health Habits worksheet.

1. **Ask for a decision.** Restate the dilemma or ambivalence then ask for a decision.

* So I heard you say that on the one hand you like…..but on the other hand…. And that in general you really care about …..And that you want to be the kind of person who….. Is that accurate? (ask them to clarify if not)
* After this discussion, are you more clear about what you would like to do? Have you made a decision as to what you’d like to do? If so, what is it? ***(If decision is not to change or there is no decision yet, skip ahead to Q 7.)***
* On a scale of 1-10, how **strongly committed** would you say you are to …..? (1 being not at all interested, 10 being totally committed)
* If less than 6, ask what would make that number higher. If that is not possible, then you might suggest that the time is not right for the person to make that change, and then skip to Q7.

1. **Goal setting – Use SMART goals (Specific, Meaningful, Assessable, Realistic, Timed)**

(Summarize on Health Habits worksheet.)

* What is your goal?
* What will you do to prepare/get started in the next one or two days?
* What and who will help and support you in taking this step?
* What might get in your way?
* On a scale of 1 to 10, how **confident** are you that you can do your next step?
  + If less than 7, what could make that number higher?
* If you can take this step how do you think you will feel?

1. **Skip this question if there was a decision and a plan for change. Proceed to Q8.**

**If the decision was not to make a change yet,**

* Empathize with the ambivalence. This is really a tough one because ….. (Review both sides of the ambivalence.)
* Is there something that would help you to make a decision to make a change?
* Are there temporary steps you want to take while you are thinking more about this?
* Would you be open to considering this question again with me at a later time?

1. **Successful wrap up:** Regardless of the person’s readiness to change right now, we want the person to leave feeling understood, respected and like it was a valuable step just to think aloud and talk about the issue. We **don’t** want the person to leave feeling guilty, foolish, or discouraged.

* Follow-up HYDYFAB: So, how has it been talking with me about this today?
  + Validate whatever they say as genuinely as possible.
* I’m so glad you were willing to talk with me about this. This is a tough issue, and I can see why you might struggle with it. I think that the step we’ve identified is going to be a really good one to take. I’ll be interested to hear how it goes. (Or: I can see why you are not *quite ready yet* to make a change.)
* I think you’ve made a really important step here today and I’ve really enjoyed talking with you.

*From Miller & Rollnick, Motivational Interviewing: Helping People Change, as adapted by Allen & Siedlecki.*