

CLARA 2.0

Bringing compassion, mindfulness and MI into hard conversations

Use it	Steps	Pages
Talking across differences	Five	Two

CLARA 2.0 builds on the LARA and CLARA communication model (Tinker, 1992). This version makes more room for listening and compassion. It rests on four assumptions:

- 1 Conversations across difference matter.** Talking with people whose views differ from ours, including views that cause harm, builds connection and can change minds and institutions. Whatever happens in the moment, a real conversation can plant a seed.
- 2 They are hard.** They can bring up strong emotions, overwhelming thoughts and past hurt. Sometimes the right choice is not to engage.
- 3 Helpers can go first.** Trained helpers practice these skills every day, so we're well placed to model real listening and respect.
- 4 Everyone wants to be happy.** We all want happiness and peace, with different ideas of how to get there. Some ideas cause harm, knowingly or not, but the wish is shared.

Terms

Ambivalence	"The simultaneous presence of competing motivations for and against change" (Miller & Rollnick, 2013).
Change talk	"Any... speech that favors movement toward a particular change goal" (Miller & Rollnick, 2013).
Compassion	"A sensitivity to suffering in self and others with a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it" (Gilbert, 2014).
Mindfulness	"Paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally" (Kabat-Zinn, 1994).
Reflection	A statement that mirrors the meaning, said or unsaid, of what the other person just said (Miller & Rollnick, 2013).

The CLARA 2.0 steps

● Center

Calm and center the mind
Set aside ego and agenda
Set an intention to help

● Affirm

Start with compassion: everyone wants happiness and peace
Look deeper: values, principles, loves, wishes
Stay genuine: notice your tone, intent and their reaction

● Ask

Ask them to say more about ambivalence, compassion or change talk
Seek to understand their intentions and motivation
Ask permission: “Would it be OK if I shared my perspective?”

● Listen

Body: open posture and eye contact, as feels right
Mind: curious about the other person; let agendas pass
Speech: brief, supportive, seeking to understand

● Reflect

Simple or complex reflections
Focus on compassion and change talk
Double-sided reflections to highlight ambivalence

Sources

Gilbert, P. (2014). The origins and nature of compassion focused therapy. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 53, 6–41.
Kabat-Zinn, J. (1994). *Wherever you go, there you are*. Hyperion.
Miller, W. R., & Rollnick, S. (2013). *Motivational interviewing: Helping people change* (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.
Tinker, B. (1992). *Love makes a family*. Portland, OR.