



“OPPORTUNITY”

About this quarter's theme: *Opportunity*

This summer megrette.com will be exploring *Opportunity*. I picked this theme because as I dig deeper into Health At Every Size (HAES), Mindful Eating, and Diabetes Care, new and unexpected opportunities continue to appear, including the creation of a quarterly newsletter! The purpose of *The Thought Compass* is to help you, the professional, make sense of HAES, Mindful Eating, and Motivational Interviewing (MI). These overlapping concepts take time to explore and often can feel vague, confusing, and a bit overwhelming. Each quarter *The Thought Compass* will guide you to resources

offering clarity which can be used in your practice.



Overwhelming Opportunity

The word, Opportunity, epitomizes choice. Opportunity may be a noun, yet it acts more like a verb, pointing to a mental state of being. A mind that can see opportunity is free to choose and is no longer trapped by habitual patterns of thinking. There are so many opportunities in the Health At Every Size field to promote healing, empowerment, and to dig deep into a topic which is easy to see how opportunity can feel overwhelming and trigger a sense of uncertainty or doubt. In addition to this, there are opportunities to be had with the challenges in our lives. As I am writing this newsletter I am reminded of the opportunity to practice acceptance of what I can't change (such as my recent diagnosis of Shingles) and the opportunities to let go of ineffective thinking (the fear of my daughter's newly minted driver's license). The opportunity to be with my all too human experiences of pain and fear aren't always welcome, but they remain excellent teachers if one can stay rooted and not get swept away by feelings associated with being overwhelmed.

Last quarter I explored professional friendship and spoke about how our peers are vital to help us grow. This topic was a self-fulfilling prophecy as I worked with Sumner Brooks, creator of ED/RDPro, on a presentation for American Association of Diabetes Educators annual conference in August regarding eating disorders and diabetes care. Talking with some amazing podcasters including DeAun

Finding Your Bearings - A 3 month calendar of events

This section lists some opportunities for you to explore over the next 90-days.

July

- **Dietitians Unplugged Podcast** - ask me about why many people feel HAES or a non-diet eating approach works for people with diabetes.
- 24th from 1-2 pm EDT [How Food Affects Blood Glucose: Exploring the Many Uses of The Blood Sugar Rocket Analogy](#). This FREE webinar offered by Skelly Skill

August -

- 13, 20, 27th [Stepping Into Mindful Eating](#) - This three-part webinar series is a unique opportunity for our TCME members to develop their social media and online communication skills to help spread the word about mindful eating.
- 17-20th **IN PERSON** Baltimore, MD — AADE 2018 - Join Sumner Brooks and me as we present How to Teach Clients about Diabetes and Prediabetes without Triggering Disordered Eating. Here Sumner and I explore the overlap between disordered eating and diabetes care.

September -

- **Am I Hungry** - Diabetes Professional Training. Fully updated with the 2017 Standard of Care guidelines from the American Diabetes Association, professionals interested in teaching a HAES, mindful eating, DSMT program now have a complete training option to consider.
- **Eat What You Love, Love What You Eat with Diabetes** - This on-demand learning program for clients offers you, the professional, a couple of options. You can use it to augment your individual teaching or suggest it to clients who you know won't come for teaching. The 2nd edition of *Eat What You Love, Love What You Eat with Diabetes* is a great way to introduce the topic of mindful eating and health at every size and it can be a way to provide support for your clients with pre-diabetes and diabetes to step into between their appointments.

Nelson, Julie Duffy-Dillion, Paige Smathers, Louise Adams, Aaron Flores, and Glenys Oyston, I was given the unique opportunity to explore the confusion and barriers professionals and clients have when bringing HAES and Mindful Eating to diabetes care.

Empowerment or Chaos?

Opportunity can be a source of empowerment and a source of confusion or chaos. Kori Kosta, Motivational Interviewing trainer and owner of [Nourished Body](#), explains for someone who is dealing with fear (because of a recent diagnosis of pre-diabetes or diabetes) its common to crave assurance. This craving is how restrictive eating, and the need to “lose weight” is often rooted. Restrictive Eating can appear to keep a person grounded, offer direction, and feel like a ‘do-able’ goal. Talking with clients about HAES seems to challenge this positive and helpful desire. So, what can you, the health professional do?

Dieting is easy to understand, and weight loss is simple to measure. Clever marketing paints the picture that weight loss and a simple eating plan provides the assurance everything will be ‘ok’. Just the other day, I had a client say she hoped eating more salad would make her job be less stressful. Like you, I was very curious how this would actually happen.

It isn't wrong to crave a sense of security. The error is when diets, programs, and professionals suggest security can be gained from an achievement, instead of one's ability. There is a considerable amount of research which looked at the question of students and test taking. The research concluded if you told a student he or she was smart because of a grade, for example, “You are smart because you got a 100 on this test,” the student was *less* likely to try a more challenging test. Why? The risk of a lower grade

would prove he/she wasn't smart. However, when researchers said, "You are smart because you know this subject." The student had a greater likelihood of seeking additional challenges, including tests, subjects, and learning opportunities.

Translating this to nutrition, if we praise our clients for following a meal plan, or losing weight, we are less likely to see our clients see, seek, or try new opportunities. Why? Because praising the outcome versus the ability decreases learning, inhibits risk taking, and nourishes existing doubt.



I have found first hand praising the outcome does exactly the opposite of what I want, because it fuels fear and insecurity. Fearing the client will make a mistake or "might do it wrong" may be verbalized in the counseling session and unless it is countered, this insecurity may have the client telling me, "You have to tell me if this is okay" or "Am I allowed to eat X?" or "I need to follow this plan perfectly to be successful."

The Unspoken Desire

To overcome the normal desire for assurance that is marketed to clients by a billion-dollar diet industry shift your focuses onto the core belief that the client is an able person who has the ability to find the answer or to identify the barriers preventing success. This empowering focus will result in a counseling relationship moves away from self-doubt towards self-reliance and inner confidence in the process of change. This single step will take you one closer to those magical 'ah-ha' moments that result from true insight.

Opportunities for Motivational Interviewing

- **Books with CPE for RDN/CDE from Skelly Skills:**
 - *Motivational Interviewing in Nutrition and Fitness*, Dawn Clifford and Laura Curtis
 - *Wellness, Not Weight: Health at Every Size and Motivational Interviewing*, Ellen Glovesky
- *Core Concept of Mindful Eating: Professional Edition*, Megrette Fletcher (This is an MI Primer)
- *Diabetes Counseling and Educational Activities: Helping Clients without harping on weight* Megrette Fletcher (This offers MI counseling scenarios in Diabetes Care)
- **Webinars/Online Learning**

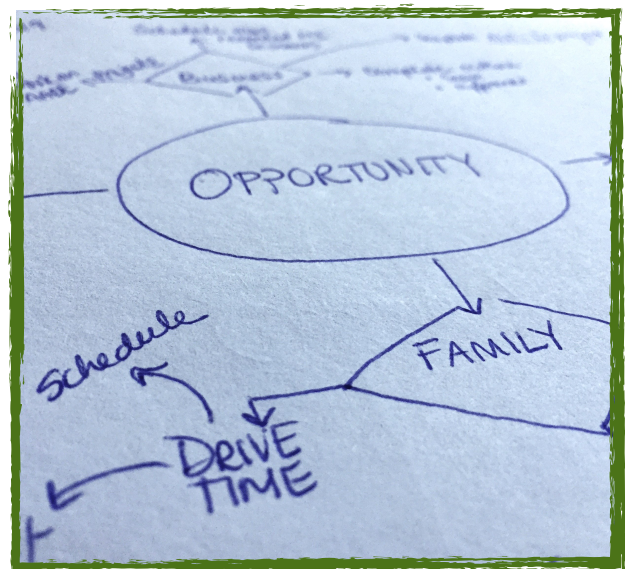
- Skelly Skills Motivational Interviewing Workshop: Counseling Dialogue for Moving Toward Change 1 CPE
- Nourished Body Mindful Eating and Motivational Interviewing -<https://nourished-body.mykajabi.com/p/motivational-interviewing>
- Susan Dopart - Virtual Training <http://susandopart.com/motivational-interviewing/virtual-trainings/>
- **In person MI training**
 - Health Education Training Institute - LIVE Classes HETI.org —
 - Susan Dopart - LIVE Classes - <http://susandopart.com/motivational-interviewing/upcoming-trainings/>
 - Motivational Interviewing Network of Training <https://motivationalinterviewing.org/>

The Thought Compass - Opportunity.

The Thought Compass is an activity that I created for *The Core Concepts of Mindful Eating*. It is a modified mind map, which is a learning tool to help sort out ideas and see connections. I have been using this tool for about 10-years and continue to see the value of looking for the “big picture”. In this activity, place the word *Opportunity* in the center of the compass.

On the North, South, East and West sides of the compass, jotted down four opportunities

that you would like to explore this summer. For myself, I wanted to focus on re-connecting with myself and my spiritual practice. Next, identify as least 3 ideas for each of the North, South, East and West headings. Then check to see if there are some connections between the larger subjects. For myself, I wrote *spiritual practice* and *family* as a North and East heading. I like to share my spiritual practice with my family and I also see the connection between being in nature (which is part of my spiritual practice) and connecting with friends. The purpose of

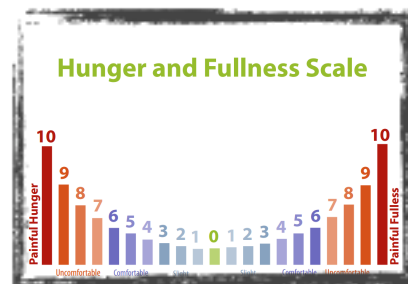


the Thought Compass is to generate ideas and to sort out your deepest desires. When I see a true wish or deep desire pop-up in my journal, I will circle, highlight, or even draw arrows and make a note - explore more. You can do so many things with the Thought Compass if you hold in your heart, there isn't a right way to do this. You are simply exploring the desires that float about in the brain in an organized way.

Favorite Pieces - Centering Suggestions

Two tools I use in my counseling practice are the Hunger Fullness scale and The Thought Compass. Recently, I had some clients who wanted to explore their diabetes care and use these two tools.

The Hunger and Fullness scale, from Discover Mindful Eating for Kids. This H/F scale is different than the scale used in Diabetes Counseling and Educational Activities. It was developed to help clients explore how the signal of hunger is different than the signal of fullness. The features of this H/F scale include a mirrored scale, meaning if you fold the image in half, both sides are the same. It is also color coded, indicating red as uncomfortable, blue as comfortable, and green as being slightly or not present. As I work with clients about hunger and fullness, some typical barriers emerge. The one, the signal to start eating, which is hunger is not the same signal to tell you to stop eating, or the signal of fullness. These two signals feel very different in the body, and this can be confusing for the brain, which is looking for the same signal to stop a behavior. I suspect this is why people wait until hunger is uncomfortable to start eating because they easily hear uncomfortable fullness as a signal to stop eating. As I work with clients, they begin to learn a number of clues indicating they are either hungry or full from a variety of places and can abandon pain and discomfort as the primary driver to start or stop eating.



The Thought Compass is an activity I created for *The Core Concepts of Mindful Eating*. It is a modified Mind Map and it was really effective for a recent client. This individual felt overwhelmed and didn't know what to do. We placed in the center of the thought compass *Menu Ideas* as the topic.

On the North, South, East, and West sides of the compass, the client jotted down Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, and Snacks. Then she looked at me and said, "I'm stuck."

So, I asked, "What questions could help you get unstuck?"

She looked back at me blankly.

We waited.

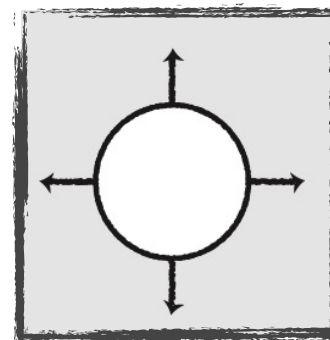
"You mean, like what do I want to eat for Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, and Snacks?"

"Exactly!" I replied.

"You aren't going to TELL ME what to eat?"

Silence.

"Really, you aren't going to give me a list or something."



“What do you want to have?”

She looked at me expecting more. When silence resulted, she looked up and said, “so I am to write down what I want to eat?”

Then the session started to generate ideas and solutions that were genuine and pulled from the client’s own knowledge and desires. Giving clients some assurance they have the ability to choose is often what they need to start seeing the opportunity before them.

Counseling Scenario

Client: “*Can I eat this with diabetes?*” [Notice the question is asking for permission.]

Professional: “*You are bright and able, what do you think?*” [This question is affirming the client’s ability and encouraging autonomy.]

Client: “*Yes, because it is a low carb choice.*” [Notice the client is pulling from his own knowledge.]

Professional: “*And you enjoy X.*”

Client: “*Yes, but it isn’t very satisfying.*” [Notice the client has an unspoken desire.]

Professional: “*You would like to have something more satisfying to eat.*” [This is a guess presented as a statement instead of a question which will help the client feel heard.]

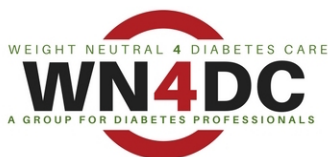
Client: “*Yes, but I am afraid to eat more because my blood sugar might go up.*”

Professional: “*What are your options to make this food more satisfying without it driving up your blood sugar?*” [This question is pulling the client to identify options to meet his deeper desire.]

Client: “*I could have Y with it. That might taste good.*”

Professional: “*What are some other ideas?*” [This question is pulling for more ideas.]

Weight-Neutral 4 Diabetes Care



Weight-Neutral
4 Diabetes Care
is a closed
Facebook group
for professionals
interested in

HAES and diabetes care. In this space, professionals can ask questions and access resources regarding diabetes.

Motivational Interviewing (MI) and Facing An Overwhelming Opportunity

Speaking from personal experience, I felt overwhelmed when I began to get serious about Motivational Interviewing (MI). The topic gave me energy and encouraged me with all the possibilities. I just knew this was my future. I was immediately hooked and couldn’t wait to learn more. This desire to understand Motivational Interviewing was coupled with thousands of questions, limited time, and very

few clear answers. In short, I had no idea how to complete my deepest desire, and that is what left me feeling overwhelmed.

This feeling of the unknown, along with excitement, is something I suspect many of my clients experience after our first session. I am often the first Health At Every Size professional they have ever met. And when a client says, “This wasn’t what I was expecting when I booked this appointment.” I know the opportunity can feel overwhelming if there isn’t a clear plan.

To start, it is helpful to recognize on one hand, the feeling of being overwhelmed can feel pretty depressing, like a weight on the chest or a sense of drowning, and on the other hand it can feel positive and exciting. These two extremes are typical of most people’s experiences and as a result, we experience a mixture of both fear and excitement when looking at any change situation.

Complex reflections are a way to show the conflict and to label the experience of having many emotions at one time. These reflections are helpful to highlight the emotions not at the extremes, but rather a mixed bag of feelings.

If you are new to complex reflections, start with a Double-sided reflection. A double-sided reflection is when you present both the struggle and the desired outcome (Here is a tip, start with the struggle or conflict). In this situation, the struggle is feeling overwhelmed. Then, you would present the desire, which here would be the desire to learn more about motivational

interviewing. On page 129 of *Motivational Interviewing in Nutrition and Fitness*, Dawn Clifford and Laura Curtis offer a chart of the many types of complex reflections. They explain, “It contains the client’s sustained talk and change talk usually with the conjunction and between the two.” Here is an example, using myself as the client, Megrette.

Megrette: “I am struggling. I love MI and I want to learn more about it. I loved taking the three-day class and I just feel like it is a great fit for me and my counseling practice. I want to get into MINT, and but I just don’t understand what to do next. I love MI, but I need to study it more and get really good at it.”

You: “You are frustrated that you don’t know the steps to learn MI and you would like a clear way to advance your understanding and practice.”

Megrette: “Yes, I really want to have a path and a plan, so I can use MI all the time at work.”

You: “Learning how to advance your MI practice is what you would like to focus on.”

Megrette: “Yes, I would really like this.”

If you are like me, with the above wish - to understand MI is what is in your heart, at the end of this article is a list of excellent MI teachers.

Now, let’s understand why this dialog was effective. In the above scenario, Megrette presented a lot of fears and wishes. If it is helpful, underline the fear and circle the wish/desire. Once you can recognize these two aspects of a conversation, the next step is easy.

Imagine you are holding a fear in your left hand and a desire in your right hand. You are going to show your client the fear “On one hand [insert fear] and on the other hand [insert desire].” This is a double-sided complex reflection. It is a great place to start if you are new to using reflections. The benefit of seeing both sides is you have twice as many opportunities for change. Many clients want to work to reduce the fear they are experiencing as well as explore new learning opportunities. The ah-ha moment for me was more I understand a client’s desire, the better I could have the client identify ways to meet it.

Learn more about Motivational Interviewing by exploring the following opportunities:

Books with CPE:

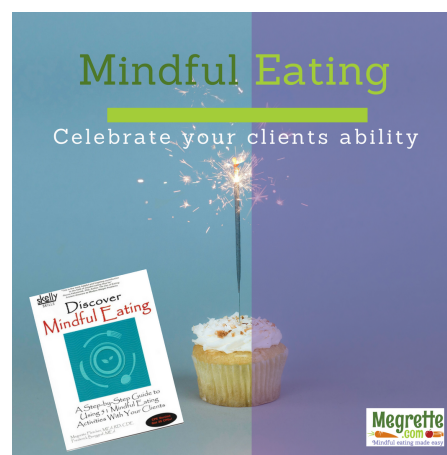
- *Motivational Interviewing in Nutrition and Fitness*, Dawn Clifford and Laura Curtis
- *Wellness, Not Weight: Health at Every Size and Motivational Interviewing*, Ellen Glovsky
- *Counseling Tips Practice Workbook Volumes 1-3*, Molly Kellogg.
- *Core Concept of Mindful Eating: Professional Edition*, Megrette Fletcher (This is an MI Primer.)
- *Diabetes Counseling and Educational Activities: Helping Clients without harping on weight* Megrette Fletcher (This offers MI counseling scenarios in Diabetes Care.)

Webinars/Online Learning

- [Motivational Interviewing Workshop: Counseling Dialogue for Moving Toward Change 1 CPE](#)

Websites

- [HETI.org](#)
- [Susandopart.com/motivational-interviewing/](#)
- [MollyKellogg.com](#)
- [Trainingwithdrellen.com](#)
- [Motivatechange.net](#)



Brave Space - A Bit about My Personal Journey

I have made the decision to be less active on social media for the summer. If you would like to reach me, please email me at megrette@megrette.com or megrette@gmail.com. I will be exploring the present moment, enjoying a few books, and hiking and biking the coast of New England to re-charge. I have also decided I will not be offering a mindful eating retreat weekend in 2019, and The Core Concepts of Mindful Eating Training in Fall of 2018. These decisions are all to help me be more present and deepen my spiritual practice.