Client-Centered Counseling: Interview Overview

1. Set an agenda and get agreement.
   a. "I'd like to set an agenda for today. There are some safety questions I'd like to ask. I'd also like to discuss... (insert clinician's other agenda items) if you are agreeable. What items would you like to put on the agenda?"
   b. "I'd like to set an agenda for today. Since this is your first appointment I'd like to ask some questions so I can get to know you and your health needs better. I'd also like to know what topic is important to you, so we can put that on the agenda. Together we'll come up with a plan for how to address your needs, for example, more appointments, classes, or other resources. How does this sound? What topics would you like to put on the agenda?"

2. Negotiate and triage priorities on the agenda. Decide on the topic to address first. Reassure client their agenda items are important.
   a. "You've said that discussing (client topic) is your priority today. However I see that your (clinician triage topic) is extremely high and I'm concerned for you. How would you feel if we discussed this first?"
   b. "If time runs short, don't worry. I'll get you some information on (client topic) either with a handout, online education website, class or I'll refer you to an appropriate resource. Of course we can also book another appointment soon just to discuss your topic."

3. Assess conviction/confidence and determine appropriate strategy (see below)

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<tr>
<th>Assess conviction</th>
<th>If low conviction</th>
<th>Eg.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;How do you feel about...?&quot;</td>
<td>1. Offer info (ask 1st)</td>
<td>&quot;Would you like more information...?&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;On a scale of 0 to 10, how important is... to you?&quot;</td>
<td>2. Find personal benefits</td>
<td>2. Link behavior to solving a voiced problem or something important. &quot;You said you were bothered by... How would you feel if (target behavior) could help that?&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;On a scale of 0 to 10 how convinced are you that... is the right thing to do in your life at the moment?&quot;</td>
<td>3. Elicit change talk</td>
<td>3. Reflect change talk</td>
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<td>Explore with more open-ended inquiry &amp; reflection. Use empathy.</td>
<td>4. Strengthen relationship</td>
<td>4. Use empathy, reflection</td>
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| "How confident are you that you could...?" | 1. Identify barriers | "What would get in the way of...?"
| "On a scale of 0 to 10, how confident are you that you could...?" | 2. Problem-solve & brainstorm | "What has worked in the past?"
| Explore with more open-ended inquiry & reflection. Use empathy. | 3. Focus on prior success | 3. "You said you were bothered by... How would you feel if (target behavior) could help that?" |
| 3. Add social supports | 4. | |

4. Tailor a SMART goal based on their stage of change
   a. Goal to 'think about'
   b. Goal to 'prepare'
   c. Goal to 'act' in small steps or to enhance action
   d. Goal to 'maintain'
   e. Goal to make relapse plan

5. Arrange follow-up

Key Points:
1. Assess conviction/confidence:
   - Open-ended questions and 1-10 scales
2. Build relationship:
   - Reflective listening & empathy
3. Gather info/set goals:
   - Reflective listening and open-ended questions