A s a clinical psychologist and associate professor, who has been actively involved in MI training and research for the past 8 years, I was interested to review the four-part DVD series, *Motivational Interviewing Step By Step*. Cathy Cole, LCSW, shines as the star of this series. Her expertise as both a practitioner and trainer of MI are evident throughout each DVD. The information provided in the series incorporates several updates to MI terminology and concepts introduced over the past decade. Thus the series is valuable both to the MI novice and the experienced MI practitioner/trainer interested in a “refresher course.” Cole’s warm and casual presentation style is complemented by series moderator Victor Yalom, Ph.D. Yalom engages Cole in discussions about core concepts of MI, as well as the MI sessions depicted on each DVD. While seemingly unscripted and casual, these lively discussions provide the viewer with a clear, logical, and linear explanation of MI concepts. Yalom’s curiosity about how and why it differs from other approaches guide him to ask Cole probing questions that deepen the discussion of MI and further clarify concepts for viewers.

The DVDs are titled “Core Concepts,” “Increasing Importance,” “Resolving Ambivalence,” and “Increasing Confidence.” The “Core Concepts” DVD is largely didactic, and contains small segments of MI sessions conducted by Dr. Bill Miller to illustrate or reinforce specific MI concepts as they are discussed, as well as the MI sessions depicted on each DVD. While seemingly unscripted and casual, these lively discussions provide the viewer with a clear, logical, and linear explanation of MI concepts. Yalom’s curiosity about how and why it differs from other approaches guide him to ask Cole probing questions that deepen the discussion of MI and further clarify concepts for viewers.

The final DVD, entitled “Increasing Confidence,” opens with a discussion about how and why confidence is essential for behavior change. Cole acts as a health educator, assistant in deciding whether to take a promotion or keep his current job and a health educator is assisting a client in deciding whether to continue to breastfeed her one year old child. This equipoise stance is contrasted to an approach in which a health educator strategically reinforces and focuses on change talk during a discussion of smoking cessation. I also showed the smoking cessation session during the recent training I offered for medical students, and the students’ responses were uniformly positive. Although they were most struck by how good Cathy Cole is at MI, and how powerfully beneficial MI can be for patients approaching difficult behavior changes, they also discussed the ways in which the commentary before, during, and after the session helped increase their understanding of MI.

The final DVD, entitled “Increasing Confidence,” opens with a discussion about how and why confidence is essential for behavior change as well as strategies for increasing confidence. The three MI sessions included on this DVD, Cole acts twice as a health educator and once as a counselor. Clients in these sessions are single mother who
is uncertain about how to incorporate more exercise into her busy life, a teenager who would like to change her diet, and a man who would like to make more progress toward financial security. In these sessions Cole demonstrates how developing a plan, eliciting past successes, and affirming strengths, among other strategies, can be used to enhance client confidence about change. During the second session, the teenager with whom Cole is working is very loquacious. Thus, this session provides Cole with the opportunity to demonstrate not only how to change-plan and increase confidence, but also how guide a session back to the agreed upon focus in a manner consistent with the spirit of MI.

In sum, this DVD series provides a review of the core concepts of MI including updates over the past decade, a set of interactive practice exercises, and nine full-length MI sessions depicting how providers from various professional backgrounds working in diverse settings might use MI to help clients make a variety of important life changes. The discussion and commentary that accompany each MI session allow viewers an invaluable window into Cole’s thinking as she conducts an MI session. Thus, these sessions allow viewers to observe how MI sessions unfold from engagement, to focus, to evocation, to planning, and to understand the provider metacognitive processes that underlie this unfolding. Although the “Core Concepts” DVD is a valuable stand-alone training resource that would a worthwhile addition to any MI library, the subsequent DVDs in the series add great richness to the understanding of MI. Each of the subsequent DVDs can also be used as a stand-alone training resource, as each begins with a brief review of core MI concepts. However, these DVDs are likely to be most valuable if viewed after the “Core Concepts” DVD.

As noted previously, this series would likely be a valuable learning tool for both novice and experienced motivational interviewers. For the latter, this series would be valuable as a refresher course. For the former, this series would be a valuable adjunct to formal training and coaching. The series could easily be incorporated into formal training (using the instructor’s manuals that accompany the Institutional / Instructor’s Version as a source of valuable tips for how to use the DVDs as part of a formal training) or could be viewed before or after formal training to reinforce concepts and enhance learning. Many learners at all levels will likely appreciate the availability of CE credits from psychotherapy.net for this video series.