

Responding to Resistance

Simple Reflection

Clt: I'm not the one with the problem. If I drink, it's because my husband is always nagging me.
Ther: It seems to you that the real reason you drink so much has to do with the problems in your marriage

Amplified Reflection

Clt: I couldn't quit. What would my friends think?
Ther: In fact, it might be hard for you to change at all.

Double-Sided Reflection

Clt: I'm not an alcoholic. It's just that Pat used to be married to an alcoholic, and thinks anyone who overdoes it now and then has a problem.
Ther: You can see that sometimes you have trouble with drinking too much, but it seems to you that Pat is making too much of it.

Shifting Focus

Clt: OK, maybe I've got some problems with drinking, but I'm not an alcoholic.
Ther: I don't think that's the issue at all, and I don't want you worrying about it. It's not important to me whether or not you want to think of yourself as an alcoholic. I am worried, though, as you are, about some of the things that seem to be happening in your life. Tell me a little more about....

Agreement With A Twist

Clt: Why are you and my wife stuck on my drinking? What about all her problems? You'd drink too if your family were nagging you all the time.
Ther: You've got a good point there, and that's important. There is a bigger picture here, and maybe I haven't been paying enough attention to that. It's not as simple as one person's drinking. Drinking problems like these do involve the whole family. I think you're absolutely right.

Emphasizing Personal Choice and Control

Ther: What you decide to do with this information is completely up to you. Nobody can change your drinking for you. It's really up to you.

Reframing

Ther: So something else you've noticed about your drinking is that you can really hold your liquor, so to speak. You can drink a lot more than most people without feeling or looking drunk. You've been able to fool people, so that they can't tell how much you've had to drink.

Coming Alongside

We've talked about the difficulties you've been having, and we've discussed quite a few different options that you have for changing. What strikes me is that none of the options appeal to you. You actually seem very happy with your old pattern, at least when you compare it with any alternative. It seems to me then, that what you ought to do is to keep on exactly as before. There is no point in going to all of the trouble of trying to change if what you really want to do is stay the same.