# Episode 11- How Do I Know I'm Doing MI?

## M Lions and Tigers and Bears is an interactive podcast focused on motivational interviewing

CASAT Podcast Network in episode eleven, Paul and Amy discussed verifiability within MI They explore global measures for behavioral change, including the mica and Mitee, as well as how feedback can help refine your MI practice. For episode resources, contact us and other information, please visit the Lions and Tigers and Bears MI website at nfartec.org/mipodcast That's nfartec.org/mipodcast

Paul Warren: Lions and Tigers and Bears MI an interactive podcast focused on the evidence based practice of motivational interviewing, a method of communication that guides toward behavior change while honoring autonomy.

Amy Shanahan: I'm Amy Shanahan.

Paul Warren: And I'm Paul Warren.

Amy Shanahan: And we've worked together over the past ten years. We've been facilitating MI learning collaboratives and providing trainings and coaching sessions focused on, the adoption and refinement of MI We're also members of the motivational interviewing network of training. Join us in this adventure into the forest, where we explore and get curious about what lies behind the curtain of MI

Paul Warren: Hi, Amy.

Amy Shanahan: Hey, Paul.

## Episode eleven focuses on verifiability of motivational interviewing

Paul Warren: Here we are, episode eleven.

Amy Shanahan: How do I know I'm doing MI then?

Paul Warren: Yes. And about verifiability.

Amy Shanahan: What do you think about that topic, that we chose this as a specific one for this episode?

Paul Warren: I really like it because oftentimes, and I think we've talked about this in the past, in a prior episode, when you ask people if they're doing MI m, they say, of course. So people have very, I think they have a very broad definition of what doing MI m really means. And to me, motivational interviewing is an evidence based practice and it's a verifiable practice. You're either doing it or you're actually not doing it. And I think that the instruments that are available to help people code their practice are really helpful in giving people direction about answering that question, am I really doing it? Am I not doing it? And if I'm not doing it, what do I need to be doing? And if I am doing it, how well am I doing it? What could I potentially work on?

Amy Shanahan: Yeah, I know that I probably fall in that category of people over the

years that would raise their hand and say, yeah, I'm doing a little bit of MI I was always a little leery to say it confidently, and it took a while and it took getting feedback with a coding instrument for me to know what I was doing that would be constituted as MihD consistent and what areas m that I needed to kind of hone in on and pay attention to making a little bit stronger or yeah, more. Am I consistent?

Paul Warren: I'm curious. Would it be okay if I asked you a question?

Amy Shanahan: Sure.

Paul Warren: So you said that you were a little bit leery of raising your hand that you were actually doing. Am I? And I guess, I'm curious because I wonder if other people who also raise their hands have this particular doubt. What was it that you were sort of unsure or leery about? Or.

Amy Shanahan: You know, I think it has to do with this whole concept of verifiability. Just because I think I'm doing am. Ah, I. I don't know what the rest of the world thinks. So no one ever told me I was or wasn't. I made that decision. And it's interesting, I think, that there's some, writings about that very thing that most m of the time, our reports are not accurate by ourselves, like our own report that we're doing. Well, usually doesn't match what

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Amy Shanahan: perhaps the patients say, or, if we got coached and got feedback. So it's not because I know that now. It's just there was something that I must have known instinctively, probably because I'm very passionate about supervision and feedback,

that unless someone gave me feedback that I was doing, am I. Well, I don't think that I would be so courageous to raise my whole arm. I'd raise half of an arm because of a lot of things that I hear people say why I'm using the ors, the open ended questions, affirmations, reflections and summaries. Of course, I'm empathic with people. Right? So. And I know that we've touched on all of these aspects throughout the, episodes in the podcast at various times for various reasons. But now, to say that I know I'm doing it, I want to be sure that I'm doing it with some level of consistency and intentionality.

Paul Warren: You know, that's partly why I really appreciate the availability and the development of these instruments, coding instruments, because they remove that doubt, I think.

Paul Warren: And I'm pretty sure. I mean, and please tell me if you think this is an overstatement, but I'm pretty sure that a lot of folks who, and I'm putting this in air quotes for the radio listener or the online listener, a lot of folks who believe they're doing motivational interviewing, probably have not had their work actually coded using one of these instruments. Do you think that's an overstatement based on your experience, or.

Amy Shanahan: No, no, it's not an overstatement based on my experience. And oftentimes when I have used these coding instruments with people. Their eyes light up in maybe not a great way, but oh, I m learn more about the particulars, about what I could do to strengthen my practice. Specific to MI Right. I think sometimes I experience people taking on motivational interviewing and maybe there's something we could do better. And you've helped me to articulate this. MI is about talking to somebody about change they're ambivalent about. I mean, to me that's just a simple enough statement because I think then others like me in the past have thought motivational interviewing is really just being nice and being kind and empathic and talking to people in a nice way

and reflective listening and you know, some of the ors, but it really has a specificity about it.

Paul Warren: And ultimately that's what these coding instruments are really zeroing in on is that specificity in helping the practitioner in a supportive way to really look at, oh, this is a potential area for growth. Oh, this is a potential, this is an area of strengthen because people are bringing strengths to these conversations too. I think the other reason that I really appreciate coding instruments and verifiability is, and I'm going to speak for myself here, I don't believe I will ever be a master of motivational interviewing. I believe that if I am open to having my work coded, if I'm open to getting feedback from somebody else, I can continue to grow and refine my practice. I don't believe though that I will ever not, need to be coded or get feedback.

Paul Warren: Because I'm a human being talking to other human beings.

Amy Shanahan: And I'm happy you mentioned that because I think the same. So I probably still will only raise half of an arm because there's always a, a place for improvement. And we also know that when you don't practice, when you don't get feedback, just like any skill. And we often, compare practicing motivational interviewing to playing an instrument or a sport that when you stop playing you lose a little bit and when you pick it back up again, you have to start over. And truth be told. Now this is so funny. I didn't think this was going to happen, but it's happening right here, right now in episode eleven. I think in maybe episode one or two I started talking about playing the saxophone and the particulars of being in my head about the notes.

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Amy Shanahan: Now I'm going to use the example in episode eleven to talk about what I just said about you lose the skill. I did. I dusted it off. Paul. I picked up the saxophone, brought it out of the closet, if you will, and put my books up and started to toodle around a bit. And some of it came naturally. I knew some of the basic notes in the fingering, but there was so much I had to go back and study my notes and revisit and practicing the blowing into the instrument because the embouchure is important and I lost some of that. So. So when you don't get time to practice and get some feedback around that practice. You can drift.

Paul Warren: Yeah. I've heard it referred to as skill drift.

Amy Shanahan: That's right.

Paul Warren: Yes. Yeah.

Amy Shanahan: And one of my coaches colleagues would say, and he probably has some research around that skill drift. And he would always say that, yeah, you would eventually be doing maybe a, version of Amy's MI m. But it's not truly, all the things as you go back to your old comfortable shoes.

## Paul: I'd like to dispel misconceptions about giving feedback using coding instruments

Paul Warren: I think the other reason that, I'm glad we're talking about this is because I'd really like to hopefully dispel for people, because some people have shared with me in trainings that they were coded and they had a horrible experience. And I'd really like

to dispel for people that that's not really the purpose of these coding instruments. It's not to show you, quote unquote, how bad you're doing. It's. It's really an opportunity to take stock, to look at what you're doing, to see the strengths that you're bringing to the conversation. And honestly, whenever I've coded anybody's work, I've always been able to find some strengths that they brought to it force. And it didn't mean that there still weren't growth opportunities, but there were definitely strengths. So if there's any way to sort of dispel maybe the anxiety or the resistance that folks, or normalize the anxiety or resistance that folks might feel around making an audio recording and letting somebody code it with one of these validated instruments. I think the thing that I've really walked away with when I've had my work coded or received feedback about my work is that it helped me to feel more confident that actually there was something I was bringing to that conversation and it gave me greater insight into what I could focus on. Maybe in the next conversation.

Amy Shanahan: Yeah, I have a similar experience and talked to people about that when we're practicing without even coding and just getting feedback, that it's an opportunity to make something stronger. It's an opportunity to focus in on something. And I know that in the last couple of years when you've given me feedback, I was really focusing in on something and needed to. And I remember I was responding more to sustained talk in a couple instances. And I thought, it's really, it must have been a habit that I've leaned into and didn't even realize that it was there. And without that feedback, I would have not really been able to focus in on that. Another thing that I think we know a little bit from our conversation with doctor Rolnick is about being calm and reducing the clever or the clutterness and the cleverness of mihdhdhehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehehe to. If I could wave, a magic wand for folks, be yourself and not worry about the clutter of all the

aspects of motivational interviewing, because it's a lot. And just be yourself and have a conversation and start there. If you chose to have someone give you feedback with one of these coding instruments, because I think we get stuck. And I know that's what I do is like, oh, am I reflecting enough? Am I using complex reflections enough? And then I lose sight of what I'm talking to the person about.

Paul Warren: It's really, I think, important to remind myself and maybe anybody who's listening, ah, about those three c's, the idea of kind of being regulated or calm, removing the clutter from your head so you can kind of be present in that moment. And the idea of not trying to be clever. And it's so funny because I think sometimes why people have maybe had a

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Paul Warren: bad experience when their work has been coded is because they start to think like, oh, well, I only did simple reflections. I didn't do any complex ones. So that means I don't know what I'm doing. And ultimately, I don't think that's the intention of the coding instrument at all. I think it's the way it can be sort of misinterpreted, you know.

Amy Shanahan: And not that I'm putting any particular person out, on the chopping block for this, I've also heard, and I can understand where it comes from. I hear practitioners say, I don't want to be coded. I didn't like it. I went through this project, and we had to count how many complex reflections, or how many reflections versus questions. And I, think there was probably good intention, because we do want to practice more complex reflections than simple and more open and closed questions. But what I heard from some of these folks, and what I heard from some of these folks is that that level of direction in their practice really messed with their minds about, well, I

just asked Paul an open question, so I guess I better move into reflections. Oh, now I'm, halfway through the conversation. How many reflections have I used yet? All right, whatever Paul says next, I'm going to reflect.

Paul Warren: That sounds like clutter to me.

Amy Shanahan: And, and it's interesting because I recently heard a conversation where someone invited people to practice and gave them that same direction of, I, want you to practice two reflections for every question. And for me, that would be hard as a practitioner to practice that way, to be that specific about, oh, I got to worry about using two reflections versus a question and stop myself. Was that a question or was that a reflection? Did my voice go up at the end and, you know, I'm just stuck in my head instead of being calm. And being there with people and let the chips fall where they make. Easier said than done. Because I could tell you right now, every time I submit a tape to get feedback, I have a level of nervousness because someone's watching my work and I want to do a good job. Not that I ever expect to be perfect. And I think for me I have a level of, my own expectation is one reason why I feel nervous. And I've also had examples in my career where people weren't as gifted as others and giving feedback. So it makes me a little nervous about that. And I wonder if it's important to even talk about that.

Paul Warren: I think it's absolutely important because how the feedback is given. And again, hopefully, if somebody is reviewing your work and they're using a coding instrument, hopefully they're going to be able to give you feedback in an am m I consistent way, m where they're going to be focusing on your strengths. They're going to invite you to talk about your experience. They're going to, honor your perspective about what you've heard, and they're able to invite you into a conversation about what

you identify as a growth opportunity. I so much appreciate that you framed this like, letting the chips fall where they may, because if we could kind of wipe the bad experience away that maybe people have had with having their work coded and, you know, simply lay out for them, let the chips fall where they may as you're, as you're doing this work and then get what you can get from what the feedback is with the coding instrument.

Amy Shanahan: Right. And start there even. Yeah.

Paul Warren: Yeah. And know that you're, you're building something. It's not about tearing something down. You're building something.

Amy Shanahan: And I know for me, and I know for folks that I've worked with and given them feedback. Over time, it gets more and more comfortable and some even look forward to the opportunity to get it, to get that feedback. I get a lot of this, and I wonder if you do as well, how would you handle this situation or how would you respond to this? And it's not easy to give you feedback on that. Or how would you handle it differently? Because I did it this way and it didn't go too well. I mean, you could probably have a conversation about it. It's just having the

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Amy Shanahan: pieces of the coding instrument that really speaks to the, not just the micro skills of the ors, also the responding to change talk, the aspects of the spirit that. But you used a lot of really nice, complex reflections, and I'm wondering what was going on at the time when you were sharing some of your ideas with the person. Right. So inviting the person in. And like you said, I love that you said that use and hopefully

an MI style to give that feedback and ask for it, because I've done that. I have a coach in my midst who doesn't always, because he wants to just cut to the chase. This is where you can improve. And I ask for it. So ask for it.

## I'm going to ask directly now for am m I consistent feedback

I'm going to ask directly now for am m I consistent feedback.

Paul Warren: If you were to do that with somebody that had coded your work and they said to you, well, tell me a little bit about what you mean by M. Am I consistent feedback? What would you tell them?

Amy Shanahan: that I would want it to be collaborative, that I want to have some input as to what I think my strengths were. ask me what I think my opportunities for growth are because I probably, if we believe that the person has it within them, I I could tell you probably my growth opportunities. And I actually think you did it that way. Paul, when you gave me feedback, you asked me first and I did half of the work for you in a way, because I knew, I knew the answers right. I knew where I could have done better. I think having some empathy and understanding where the people are at. So for me, I'm a little nervous. Some people like feedback right between the eyes. I like it a little softer between the eyes. And direct. Yes, and nicely direct. It doesn't have to be. That's not the right way to do it. It's, this could be stronger when or my impression of where you can be stronger in the partnering is or why I ranked at this number is because I heard this right. So there's this collaborative back and forth conversation. What do you think? That was a really good question.

Paul Warren: Yeah. You know, the thing that really has come to me as I was listening to you describe that was, and I guess this goes along with, effective feedback, is that it's specific.

Paul Warren: You know, you gave the great example of like somebody saying to the person whose tape they coded, you did a lot of excellent complex reflections. And here's an example of one so that you can really point out to the person, this is what you specifically did. That was very effective. And yes, the instrument is counting that quote unquote as a complex reflection. But that doesn't mean in your notes that you give feedback on that. You can't be specific and elaborate on an example. So people know kind of what they're doing.

Amy Shanahan: Right. Right. And I think the big thing is doing the illicit provide. Illicit. Why not? We have that tool in our toolbox when we're giving people feedback. Ask them first, what did you like about what you did? What did you see that was good? What did you feel good about? What do you, what do you think, you might have done differently? What do you think was missing? Any series of questions to elicit from them what they think. And then you could lean in. If it's okay, I'm going to give you some of my observations about what I heard and what I saw. Wait for them to say okay, because that's what we're here for. Right. And still ask permission.

Amy Shanahan: And then maybe pick out some things that they didn't already say to give them a piece of information or verify what they already said and then ask them what they think about it. What do you think about that? I mean, I do have an example where I received not so consistently MI feedback and I ended up questioning the people who were giving me the feedback. I was questioning myself, of course. and I had to unfortunately weed through that to find the pearls because I love feedback.

Amy Shanahan: I think feedback is so powerful and important and I hope that we as practitioners don't make the person we're giving feedback. they have to work for figuring out what's meaningful and nothing.

Paul Warren: Mm And certainly being specific, being am m I consistent.

Paul Warren: Inviting their input are ways to sort of be more direct about the conversation.

Amy Shanahan: And there's another nuance to that too, is asking the practitioner if there was a particular point where the person they were listening to responded to very well, or a time when they didn't or you noticed, you know, maybe a little wrestle versus a dance. Ask them to pick that out. I think for me, it trains me as a practitioner to pay attention to those things in future, you know, exchanges with people.

Paul Warren: Of course. Of course. You know, we've alluded to it several times in this conversation already, to various instruments that can be coding, instruments that can be used. And I'm wondering if now might be a good time to transition into maybe giving an overview of just a couple of those instruments, because there are many that would give folks who maybe aren't as familiar with these instruments, something that they could look into and consider, possibly, if it's just something they'd like to find out more about.

Amy Shanahan: Yeah, that would be a great idea. And we can also point people in to the direction of finding the list of others, because there's a big list. Right. A, decent

sized list, I should say. And we could give them that resource.

Paul Warren: Sure.

Amy Shanahan: To take a look.

Paul Warren: Absolutely.

## The Mica is the motivational interviewing competency assessment

So would you like to start by talking about the Mica, or would you like me to start by talking about the mighty. How would you like to begin?

Amy Shanahan: I'll go ahead and start with the Micah. You said that first. And people are probably asking, what does that mean? Because Micah is an old acronym that we use in addiction back in the day.

Paul Warren: Yes.

Amy Shanahan: Which is not a very nice. A good acronym anymore. No.

Paul Warren: we don't use it anymore.

Amy Shanahan: We don't use it anymore. But m some people might be thinking that's what we're talking about. Yeah. So the Mica is the motivational interviewing competency assessment. And to basically summarize it, what I like about the instrument, and not

that that's what we have to necessarily say we like or don't like about the instruments, but what I like about it is it starts off with that narrative that we were just alluding to. What did you like? What were the missed opportunities? So there's a section right off the bat in the instrument, which is a, ah, one pager with, a one page instrument with nice instructions. And then after that, there's a Likert scale of one to five for all. All of the areas. So it first, then, measures what we did with regards to strategic, strategically, responding to sustained talk. So you get a Likert scale, one to five. One is fundamentally inconsistent, and five is proficient. So, off the pat, for me, it's like, all right, I don't expect to get any fives, although that would be nice to get some. Right. But it just seems so expertise. And so these scores that you first, get feedback on our strategy scores around, change talk. So, strategically responding to sustained talk, and then to change talk. So you get that score, and then the rest of the scores, there's five areas that really focus on, the areas within the spirit. Same Likert scale, same anchor points. Fundamentally inconsistent to proficient MI m is, supporting autonomy, the guiding aspects. Right. So you wouldn't be following and you wouldn't be directing. You'd be guiding, expressing empathy, partnering, and evoking. So those are the five areas, that of intention around the spirit aspects. And then the micro skills are coded a little bit differently than what we'll hear from you in the mighty. In the mica, you just check, mark how many reflections and how many questions you don't qualify, whether it's complex, simple, or open or closed, you just count the reflections versus questions, and you, put together a reflection to question ratio.

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Amy Shanahan: So in the end, you get a ratio on your reflections to questions, and you get a total MI score average of those Likert scales. So what's nice about it, again is you start off with the narrative. What went well, where were the missed opportunities? And I

would hope that those things really complement then the scores that you'd see on the strategy scores of talking about change talk or softening sustained talk, and the intention scores. And then, hopefully your coach would give you feedback about what these scores mean in the middle. Right. So, well, why did you give me a three? So a three could mean emerging efforts, you know, so you could give them the language around what those scores mean in more specificity.

## There's certainly overlap between motivational interviewing and mica

Amy Shanahan: So, what are your thoughts or questions about the mica? I know I went through quite a few things. So is there, are there points that I could clarify?

Paul Warren: No, I think that was a really comprehensive overview. It clearly, and again, I'm a little bit familiar with the mica because you and I have discussed it and actually used it together. I'm more familiar with the mighty, but, and it's interesting, as you were talking about the mica, it made me really see that there's certainly overlap between these two instruments, because, again, we're looking at sort of the, core essence of the practice of motivational interviewing. So, of course there would be overlap. The method is different, but there is certainly overlap.

## The mighty is the motivational interviewing treatment integrity coding instrument

Amy Shanahan: And I wonder, well, let's hear what you have to say about the mighty,

and maybe we could illuminate what. And I know we talked about the, mighty in a previous episode, but this will have an essence of hearing what it sounds like, comparatively speaking, to the mica as another example.

Paul Warren: And I'm pretty sure our listeners will also be able to kind of note the overlaps in some way themselves.

Amy Shanahan: Right? Yeah, yeah.

Paul Warren: So the, the mighty is the motivational interviewing treatment integrity coding instrument. And it's four, 2.1. That's the version of the mighty that's being used currently. And what I'd like to say off the bat in regard to this particular instrument is that there is an excellent, coding manual available and I believe there is one for the mica as well.

Amy Shanahan: That's right, yeah.

Paul Warren: there's an excellent coding manual available for the mitei. And if you're just curious about, instruments, you have no intention whatsoever of ever having your work coding. But if you're ever curious about instruments and how instruments are looking specifically at the practice of motivational interviewing, I highly recommend the mica coding manual because it's very understandable and it gives, I think, a wonderful insightful view of the practice of motivational interviewing in a really comprehensive, yet I concise way.

Paul Warren: I think a couple of things to keep in mind about the mitei is that it was developed to originally to test treatment fidelity for clinical trials and the other purpose

of it, and again, I think this is a little nearer and dearer, maybe to our hearts, at least the way I've used it, is that it's also an extraordinary way to provide structured, formal feedback about the way to improve your MI practice in non research settings. M so it can be an extraordinary tool in order to really reflect on what it is you're doing and identifying those strengths and also those growth opportunities. So just to walk through sort of the structure of, and this is going to sound very familiar, I think, to what Amy was just saying about the mica. But there are basically two major components to the mighty. One are what are called the global ratings, and the next is what are called the behavior counts. The global ratings basically speak to the idea of cultivating change talk,

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Paul Warren: softening, sustained talk, partnership and empathy. And I think the thing to keep in mind about these global measures, and I recently, in preparation for this conversation, was looking over the manual again. I enjoy reading it, actually. and the global measures are really to be thought of as the overall gestalt of the whole conversation. So when you're looking at each of these particular areas, you're looking at the overall conversation and you're giving it a global rating. Sometimes it's suggested for folks who are beginning to use the mighty that they take two passes at the recording where they listen to it once and they then give the global ratings and then they listen to it again, and they do the behavior counts. Once you're familiar with the mighty, you probably don't need to do the two passes, but it can be helpful if it's something new to you to do that. The behavior counts are looking at specific behaviors that are demonstrated in the conversation. Now, before I name those behaviors, I want to just underline that the coding manual is very thorough in that it defines and gives concrete examples of what each of these behaviors actually are. So you will get definitions and examples, and it also helps you to figure out, because if something is not clear, you can

actually. There are decision trees that are offered in the manual that can really clarify for you whether you should be coding it one thing or another. Now, for this conversation, I'm not going to get into the weeds of that, but it is something that is available in part of the manual and essential to being able to code in a consistent way. So let me name those behaviors. Giving information, persuade, persuade with permission, question, simple reflection, complex reflection, affirm, seeking collaboration, emphasizing autonomy, and confront. Now, the greater balance of those particular behaviors that you're counting, and again, you're making a tick mark on the one page form every time you hear giving information or any of the others. The greater balance, except for two, these behaviors are MI consistent behaviors. Two of them are MI inconsistent behaviors. And the two MI m inconsistent behaviors are persuade and confront. Persuade with permission is an MI m consistent behavior. And again, the manual very clearly and specifically breaks down the specific definitions of these particular behaviors and provides examples. The last thing I'll say about it before I ask for Amy's comment is that once the behaviors are counted, once the global ratings are done, there is a, very specific system of calculating what the practitioner's score is. And one of the things, as Amy mentioned in the mica, is the question to reflection ratio. There are other things that are scored as well, and the manual breaks down how to do that.

## Mitee is a different instrument from the mighty. It is predominantly used in research

So I'm going to pause there and just thoughts, reactions.

Amy Shanahan: Amy, I think the things that stood out to me are the differences that I mentioned that you do. Code simple versus complex reflections, and the notion of those

two inconsistent behaviors are not seen in the mica. At the same time, you have the opportunity, if you hear that when you're using the mica, to give people feedback, that would be in the opportunities box. Where can you strengthen that? Yeah. And so I paid attention to the difference between that, and I like the notion of it. It is predominantly used in research and can be used for just skilled practice. So it's nothing unique to just research.

Paul Warren: I've used another instrument, in work that I was doing that I realized when I was using that instrument, as did the folks that I was working with, that because of

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Paul Warren: where our learners were, that instrument was too precise.

Amy Shanahan: The mighty.

Paul Warren: No, not the mighty. A different instrument.

Amy Shanahan: And the understood.

Paul Warren: Yeah. And the thing I like so much about the mitee is that it can be used for someone who's new to motivational interviewing as well as to the very seasoned practitioner. And I just find that being able to give people specific and concrete feedback on their strengths as well as their growth opportunities really helps build people's confidence.

Amy Shanahan: That's right. I remember using the mighty when I was coaching a group

of people and to the conversation around persuasion and persuade with permission. I was of course, at the same time getting my own coaching and feedback about my own skills and my use of coaching with the mighty. Right. So that there's a whole nuance of am I getting this right too? Am I hearing the right thing? Am I giving this person appropriate feedback? And what was really powerful was that the consistent style of asking the practitioners what did they see? What did they like about what they did? This one particular person, and we may have talked about this in earlier episodes, she really noticed that she has this strong desire to want to fill in the blanks for people. And it came across as being persuasive and just to guide that conversation with her and her choosing what she was going to practice on at what time. She wasn't ready in the beginning to focus on that particular piece. And when she was ready, she, really hooked into that, realizing that it connected to the aspects of the spirit. So she was thinking about practicing the skills and guiding her in a way so that she still felt empowered to continue on her path. It was her timing of when she noticed that, my goodness, time and time again this persuasion thing pops up whether or not I ask permission or not. I have this desire as a practitioner to persuade people to make their lives better. And she connected it to the autonomy piece and the evocation part of the spirit that she was not practicing as strongly. M so it just wraps up the power, how powerful it could be to use feedback in an am I consistent way.

Amy Shanahan: And model the guiding aspects of coaching someone.

Paul Warren: Yeah. And also meeting them where they're at in helping them to move through their sort of own developmental process.

## Amy: The mighty and the mica are very different assessment

**instruments**

Paul Warren: The other thing that I really took away from what you were saying about that specific example is that, again, the beauty of the instrument. The mighty, in particular, is that persuade, which, again, is defined in the manual very clearly, is one of the behaviors that's counted and that impacts the global measures, the partnership and the empathy part of it. So the interrelatedness of the overall global gestalt of the conversation and the relation to the behavioral counts, there's a clear connection there, and they influence each other. So, again, I think that helping. I remember when I was being trained to use the mighty, that the trainer said, the mighty is a blunt instrument. It's not meant to be a scalpel. It's meant to be a blunt instrument to help people to really look at their overall in these four particular areas and what it is they're doing. And again, the decision trees really give guidance about how to make that a meaningful coding situation so that people really understand the difference between the different behaviors that are coded.

Amy Shanahan: I think for me, in summary of comparing the mighty versus the mica, not that they're very, very contrasting, but the contrast for me is m. The mica simplifies by not

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Amy Shanahan: having the am m I inconsistent pieces in there, and not cluttering with our heads between simple versus complex reflections. For people to be concerned about that, and the Likert scale on the five different components really gives you a measure with the specificity of why it's not a lower number or a higher number you can really think about. How can I be more consistent in that area?

Paul Warren: It's interesting that you say that, because that's one of the other areas of overlap between the two instruments, is that the global measures also use a one to five Likert scale. And as the manual points out, that pretty much we want to assume that everybody is at three three, and then we move up or down the scale based on everything else that's going on in the conversation. And again, the manual is very specific about what a one means and everything in between that and a five. And again, it's very helpful guidance. again, I have found that simply reading the manual has helped me think more specifically about the conversations that I get to have.

Amy Shanahan: Nice. I usually use it as a reference guide. Probably after having used it, that might benefit from reading it, things will be illuminated more, because I remember learning it at first and thinking, oh, my goodness, just like learning MI there's so much. There's so much in my head about, is it right? Is it persuasion? Is it. What's the difference between this and giving information and persuasion? How do you know I'm not trying to persuade somebody if I'm giving them information. Like, I I kept asking lots of.

Paul Warren: Questions which are positive. Questions are good. It's a great way to learn.

Amy Shanahan: And as we mentioned, the mighty and the mica aren't the only instruments that are used. There are other assessment encoding instruments that listeners can find on motivationalinterviewing.org, and they'll find that list on the homepage, I believe, even if they're not members of the mint, I believe they can see the assessment codes. I think so.

Paul Warren: I mean, I know they can also get it at casa unm.edu, and I'll spell that out. Casaa unm m.edu. and they can get. And look at the different coding instruments that

are available there as well.

Amy Shanahan: Great. And I just verified that you can, on the homepage without having a login. Motivationalinterviewing.org. motivationalinterviewingoneword.org. You can see the list of assessment and coding instruments.

Paul Warren: Wonderful.

Amy Shanahan: And probably click on and get a description of them and see more. As a matter of fact, you get the coding manual when you click on some of them.

Paul Warren: M you know, to employ what has been referred to as the recency effect, I would like to say is sort of a final statement of this particular conversation is that coding instruments can really be your friend. They do not have to be, used and experienced as something punitive or detrimental. And for anyone who's even curious about them, please check out those resources. And I love the way Amy put it earlier, the idea of, like, you know what? Let the chips fall where they may and let that be your starting place. And the instrument can really point out your strengths, and it can point out opportunities for you to grow and focus on as you move into your next conversation.

Amy Shanahan: Yeah. And I think it's important to note that, ah, you can become a reflective practitioner and know what the, it's like having the test in front of you. What is am m I consistent? These things and the instruments indicate what's am m I consistent. So you have an opportunity to know what you'd be measured on. Even though it's most important to get that feedback from a person trained to measure your skills with these instruments, you now have an idea of what folks would be looking for and what you can continue to focus on and practice yourself. So having a sense of what the consistencies

are is

Amy Shanahan: important this, and listen to your work and assess for yourself. How well are you doing so far?

Paul Warren: Yeah. And that can really remove the ambiguity or the, mystery about sort of what the practice of motivational interviewing actually is. So when the next time you're in a training or the next time you're in a conversation with somebody and they say to you, do you do motivational interviewing? You can totally raise your hand full and high because you know what that actually means and what that actually includes.

Amy Shanahan: So in a sense, you could verify your hand, validate your own impression that, you know, you are doing motivational interviewing verifiably.

Paul Warren: Yeah. And not to lose sight of what you said, Amy, that having somebody who knows how to use the mica or the mighty and that they're listening objectively to your tape is, is best. But it doesn't mean you can't use these instruments for your own growth and for your own sort of reflection. Reflection, right.

Amy Shanahan: It's a good way to end, I think.

Paul Warren: Yeah. And I really, I very much enjoyed this conversation talking with you about these.

Amy Shanahan: Me too. I wish that I knew a lot about these instruments and navigating

the waters of all of this. Maybe at the start of things. I don't know why.

Paul Warren: Yeah. I mean, when I first started practicing motivational interviewing, I wasn't really aware of these instruments either. And as other people have said, when I became aware of them, I was a little bit intimidated. And now I really see them as a supportive, aid to what I'm doing.

Amy Shanahan: But I think in our field, behavioral healthcare in general, even healthcare, being able to verify that, you know, you're using this instrument the way it's intended can be really powerful in our work.

Paul Warren: Thank you, Amy.

Amy Shanahan: Thanks, Paul.

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