**What do these numbers mean to me?**

This MITI coding system was developed to see if practitioners are doing MI and to assess the quality of MI. We listen to exactly 20 minutes of your session, and all we need to know is who you are and what the Target Behavior is.

Prior to your feedback/coaching call, we would recommend that you read this manual, look at the numbers on your MITI coding form and listen to your own sessions again. We will give you the random start/end times of the 20 minutes we coded so you don’t have to listen to the entire session (unless it is less than 20 minutes long). We hope this helps you put things together even before our telephonic feedback/coaching session.

But what is all this stuff? While there is a great deal of focus on the Behavior Counts (reflections, questions, etc) during the training of MI, the actual important scores that determines competency or proficiency are the Global Ratings. When we finish coding a session, we do not tally the BCs first. We do the Globals first. The Global Ratings allows practitioners to not do the most perfect work yet get a high Global Rating. On the other hand, if the session was not so good MI, the Global Ratings will reflect that as well.

All the Global Ratings are on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being very good and a 1 being not so good. Baseline sessions usually have Global Ratings of 3 (smack dab in the middle) so when we are considering a number for a Global Rating, we begin at a 3. If it was pretty darn good, we start looking at the criteria for a 4 or 5. If it was not so good, we look at the criteria of 1 or 2. Please keep in mind this is a “Gestalt” of the entire session so if a small part of the session doesn’t go well, that does not spoil the session.

**Evocation:**

High evocation requires great curiosity on the part on the practitioner and in a genuine way. Evocation includes gathering information about the problem, what they have done in the past, what worked, what didn’t work and so Evocation includes asking Questions. Personally, I would not worry about open vs. closed questions because if you have an alliance with your client, they answer a closed question as if it were open.

A person who gets a 5 on Evocation might do the following things:

* Expresses curiosity especially about the presenting problem
* Uses structured tasks such as the Importance Ruler, a Values Sort Sheet, etc to further explore the target behavior
* Is very interested in the client’s own ideas about how this change might happen
* When the client offers Change Talk, the practitioner is willing to explore this with the client.
* You might even hear the clients talk themselves into changing!

A person who gets a 4 on Evocation might do the following things:

* Let’s the client’s ideas about how they might change greatly influence the session.
* Accepts what the client says very neutrally yet does not elicit more information about those issues.
* Responds to Change Talk by using key questions, more interest, (“What else?”) or accurate reflections.
* Does not attempt to argue with the client if there is Sustain Talk.

A person who gets a 3 on Evocation may do the following things:

* Doesn’t act very curious or interested in client or problem.
* May want to give information yet does it in a directing way.
* Misses Change Talk especially about the target behavior.
* May occasionally respond to Change Talk yet is inconsistent.

A person who gets a 2 on Evocation may do the following things:

* They may rely on their “pearls of wisdom” or advice without ever showing any curiousity about the client or their problem.
* Doesn’t act very interested in the client.
* Very inconsistent in responding to Change Talk.
* Ignore client’s contributions about change in the session.

A person who gets a 1 on Evocation may do the following things:

* Ignores what the client says about the problems.
* Is determined to educate the client even if the client states that they already have this information.
* Relies on lists of questions that have nothing to do with the individuality of the client.
* Ignores when the client contributes something about the problem.
* Lack of curiosity.
* Will definitely try to talk the client into changing, even though the client is “pushing back”.

**COLLABORATION**

Just as the word says, this is about “coming alongside” the client, having left your “expert hat” outside your office and creating an equal sense of power sharing. The practitioner focuses on assisting the client in figuring out that all the change needed is within the client.

A person who gets a 5 on Collaboration may do these things:

* Structures the session to make sure that the client shares their ideas about change.
* Is very curious about the client ideas and doesn’t laugh at any of them.
* Is very willing to use the client’s ideas as part of a change plan.
* Digs pretty deep to get more input from the client.
* Know that the client is the expert of their own world.
* There is a sense of equal power sharing between practitioner and client.
* They are dancing and not wrestling.

A person who gets a 4 on Collaboration may do these things:

* Asks the client about their views about the problem and possible solutions.
* Structures session so that problem-solving can take place.
* If client is not ready to made a commitment to behavior change, the practitioner backs off and can use that as an opportunity for an Autonomy statement such as “You are making a decision to not make a decision right now.”

A person who gets a 3 on Collaboration may do these things:

* Senses times when collaboration could take place but does not take advantage of these opportunities.
* Does follow the client’s story yet not in a genuine way.
* Will disagree with the client at times, even though they may agree at other times.
* Does very little problem-solving as they are to busy being the “expert” and sharing their “pearls of wisdom”.

A person who gets a 2 on Collaboration may do these things:

* Is insistent on being the expert.
* May ask questions yet is not genuine about it.
* Ignores problem-solving in lieu of sharing their “pearls of wisdom”.
* May engage in indirect arguing.
* Disinterested or impatient with client.

A person who gets a 1 on Collaboration may do these things:

* Dominates session as expert
* Tells client their ideas are wrong or not useful.
* Direct arguing.
* Does all the talking.
* Dismissive of any ideas of the clients.
* Not interested and perhaps bored with client.

**Autonomy/Support:**

This the most under-used Global Rating I work with. An Autonomy/Support statement can include anything about

* Choice (“If you would like, if any, up to you, you decide when you’re ready, you’ll know when you’re ready, ect”).
* Autonomy: The freedom to choose not to choose. It can also include statements about independence as well.
* Support: “Coming alongside without colluding” is the way I describe this. “It is hard to quit drinking.” Vs “It’s hard to quit drinking so I think you should just keep doing it.” That would be colluding.

Here is my metaphor for Autonomy/Support.

**A 1** would say, “It’s my way or the highway.” A **2** would say, “My way would be better.” A **3** would say, “You’re on your way.” A **4** would say, “You are seeing and using the ways to get there.” And a **5** would say, “You knew the way all along.”

A person who gets a 5 in Autonomy/Support might do something like this:

* The practitioner works hard to ask questions and use reflections that allow the client to realize their choice about the target behavior.
* Is genuinely interested in exploring all possible options.
* Acknowledges that the client has the right to choose not to change, including if not making the behavior change may result in death or disease.
* If not getting much information from the client about what all their options might be, they persist by going down different paths. They do not force change on the client.
* Knows that since the client is the expert of their own world, their ideas (many of which are very good) are the beginning of the client developing their own treatment plan.

A person who gets a 4 in Autonomy/Support might do these things:

* Acknowledges that the client is going to do what they want to do anyway yet take the time to explore what life might be like with the behavior change.
* Makes Autonomy/Support statements that may sound superficial such as “Great!” “Good job!” and misses opportunities to reflect on catching their client doing something right vs. something wrong.

A person who gets a 3 in Autonomy/Support might do these things:

* Neglect to bring up the topic of choice with client
* Missing opportunities to provide affirmations or autonomy statements.
* Neutral in that they are right dab smack in the middle of this Global Rating.

A person who gets a 2 in Autonomy/Support might do these things:

* May not bring up choice at all and if they do, they minimize it.
* Miss all opportunities for affirmations, supports, autonomy statements even though client provides these opportunities.
* Lack of genuineness through out session.

A person who gets a 1 on Autonomy/Support might do these things:

* Will outright tell the client they have no choice.
* May indirectly or directly threaten consequences (jail, children taken).
* Is crabby, sarcastic and at times mean-spirited as they do not believe the client has a choice.
* If they bring up change options, it is “My way or the highway.”

**THE SPIRIT SCORE:**

The Spirit Score is the numbers of Evocation, Collaboration and Autonomy/Support added up and divided by 3 (the number of these Global Ratings). Let’s say we have a 4, 3 and a 4 which totals 11.

We divide 11 by 3 (representing the three Global Ratings) and the Spirit Score would be 3.66. That is not unusual for a baseline session.

**Direction:**

Direction is what allows us to get our work done and involves the behavior therapy aspect of MI by using reinforcement or ignoring what we don’t want to hear. Think of yourself and your client on a rather big island in the ocean and it represents the target behavior. Target behaviors often have other directly related target behaviors and so imagine that those are smaller islands surrounding the big island. As practitioner, you have been given a compass and you are to use it.

Let’s use the example of Diabetes Management in which the patient has to exercise, eat the right way, check their blood sugar, and manage their medications. Each of those related subjects are the smaller islands so you and your client hop into a strong and user-friendly boat and make your way over to an island. Once you have explored that one, there may be another island to visit, so you both hop in the boat and zoom over to that island. It is always linked back to the big island and the practitioner must use their compass to make sure they don’t get lost but more importantly to get their job done.

The question I always ask myself when thinking of giving a 5 on Direction is this “Did the practitioner get their job done?”

A practitioner who gets a 5 on Direction would do the following things:

* They would be transparent about the target behavior and lay their cards on the table in the beginning of the session.
* They are able to move the session along, focusing on key issues regarding the target behavior.
* The conversation is always moving towards the change of the client’s behavior unless the client things otherwise.
* They don’t talk about history. They talk about the present problem, do problem-solving around it so that possible change is the main discussions.
* Practitioner dominates the session. Sticks with the target behavior and get the job done. You will likely see lower Global Ratings of 1s or 2s with this type of “dog with a bone 5”.

A practitioner who gets a 4 in Direction might do the following things:

* Have some sort of agenda.
* Know there is a target behavior yet seems afraid or reluctant to bring it up (negative consequences, bad news, etc).
* Can be taken hostage by a talkative client yet brings it back to the target behavior most of the time.
* Misses change talk from client that could have been tied directly to target behavior.

A practitioner who gets a 3 in Direction might do the following things:

* Does not keep the session on track towards target behavior.
* May engage in eliciting client history rather than talking about possible change.
* There are parts of the sessions that have nothing to do with target behavior (sports, kids, etc). This practitioner may be the kind to self-disclose a fair amount of information to client.
* Does some reinforcing towards possible change yet it is erratic.
* “If the only thing you know how to use is a hammer, everything will look like a nail.” Practitioners who only know how to use a hammer use this approach.

A practitioner who gets a 2 on Direction might do the following things:

* May start out with agenda but goes off course for most of session.
* Most of the session is NOT about the target behavior.
* When able to tie client’s input to target behavior, it is done haphazardly.
* Practitioner may engage in a great deal of non-directive client-centered. listening and makes little comments about the target behavior.

A practitioner who gets on 1 on Direction will do the following things:

* No agenda is apparent at all..
* Any talking is on topics only mildly related to target behavior.
* Likes to focus on childhood history, trauma or may want to do a family genogram.
* Practitioner’s listening is non-directive client-centered which allows the client to run the session or be bored as heck in the session.
* When listening to session, we have no idea of what the target behavior is.

**Empathy:**

I think this is the hardest Global to get a 5 in. We all know that empathy is the willingness to enter the client’s world completely while putting aside any judgments we may have about the client. This is not warm and fuzzy with psychological or new age or AA jargon thrown in. Let’s get to the numbers on the Likert scale.

A practitioner who gets a 5 on Empathy does the following things:

* Uses their “eagle ear” to hear the “message within the message” yet being strategic when reflecting on that.
* They are genuinely interested in the client.
* They are able to get more detail from the client that digs deeper.
* Uses accurate complex reflections.
* Uses accurate MI Adherent statements.
* Bottom line: The client feels like the practitioners “gets them”.

A practitioner who gets a 4 in Direction will do the following things:

* Works hard and accurately understands the client’s worldview.
* Accurate reflections of what the client has said (explicit reflections).
* Practitioner is able to convey to the client that they understand the viewpoints of the clients.
* The practitioner’s understanding is largely limited to explicit content .

A practitioner who gets a 3 on Empathy may do the following things:

* They try hard to understand where the client is coming from yet don’t get it completely.
* Average empathy with a few reflections, most of which do not hit the mark.

A practitioner who gets a 2 on Empathy may do the following things:

* Practitioner’s understanding is not accurate and therefore they are missing the client’s meaning and viewpoint.
* May try to reflect their understanding of what the client is communicating but they do not “get” the client at all.
* They do not work hard to establish therapeutic alliance with client so session feels disingenuine.

A practitoner who gets a 1 on Empathy may do the following things:

* Completely disinterested in client.
* May ask a few questions yet they are using the “Colombo approach” so they can go for the jugular.
* Little to no attention to what the client has to say.

Work with your coach on what to do to move your Global Rating numbers up and your MI will greatly improve. It is not all about the Behavior Counts. Practitioners are assessed mainly with the Global Ratings.

**Behavior Counts**

Simple reflection: rephrase or restate what the client said.

Complex reflection (there are a few so let me list them):

* Double-sided
* Metaphor
* Finishing the paragraph
* Noting emotional affect
* Amplified
* Siding with the negative
* And as Jen Knapp Manuel puts it: “Anything that adds some ***oomph*** to the reflection.”

Giving Information (GI). This is how we get our work done. There are 4 clear criteria that must be met to meet a GI.

1. Providing feedback from assessment instruments, which could include lab tests, BAC reports, pen/paper assessments, medical reports or information pertinent to the intervention.
2. Collateral contacts: When a person (family, Probation Officer, doctor) has given you (the practitioner) permission to share information related to the information of the intervention. Permission must be absolutely obtained first.
3. Explaining ideas or concepts about how to use tools used in the intervention. This might include a food journal, thought journal, writing about triggers or homework being given to the client by the practitioner.
4. Educating about a topic related to the target behavior:

Examples might be: smoking and pregnancy, explaining the ADA’s recommended food plans, sharing information with the client that they have told you they don’t know about. The information you share should be based on fact and your expertise. (Must ask permission first unless they ask you the question.)

QUESTIONS:

Closed questions (CQ): are any questions that can be answered with a “yes” or “no”. They usually have the stem words of: can, could, did, would, should, are, will, have, is, do, and where.

Also Closed Questions included questions in which only one response may be given such as “When did you last use heroin?”

Closed Questions do not have cooties. We need Closed Questions and while Open Questions are great at getting more information, if you have a strong alliance with a client, they will answer a Closed Question as if it were an Open Question. Don’t sweat this.

Open Questions: We are asking questions trying to get more detail and change talk. We may want to know more about what the client thinks or what their families think.

“Tell me more….” Is a statement yet is coded as an Open Question.

Open questions stem words might include how and what. “What else” is one of my favorite questions to elicit more detail (Bill Miller told me that)? “Anything else?” linguistically closes that series of questions.

“What happen with that?”

“What was that like?”

“What would your kids say about your drinking if they were here with us right now?”

MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING ADHERENT (MIA):

There are 4 clear criteria for a MIA:

1. Asking permission prior to sharing advice, facts or information. Another clever way to do this is to ask them what they already know about the subject, which implicitly gives you permission to give information. Examples might be “What did your doctor tell you about being pregnant and smoking?” or “What do already know about diabetes?”

Important Note: Once the client grants permission, the practitioner does not have to continue to ask for permission once the subject related to the target behavior begins. This can go on for several volleys and you will not get a MINA for not asking for permission once you have started a string of information all related to the target information.

Another way to do this: “One of my clients had great luck using a personal trainer. Would you like to hear what she shared with me?”

1. Affirming the client by catching them doing something right, commenting on their past successes (“You got your GED in prison? That says a lot about your determination.”) These abilities, successes and strengths do not need to be about the target behavior. They are about them, the client.
2. Emphasizing client’s control, freedom of choice, autonomy, and ability to decide.

* “You’ll know when you are ready.”
* “You don’t have to do anything you don’t want to do.”
* “That is up to you.”
* “You are the expert on you and your life.”
* “You could try it as an experiment and make a decision then.”
* “You are in the driver’s seat.”

1. Supporting the client with statements of compassion or empathy. You can do this by “normalizing” how hard it is to make a behavior change. Other examples might be “You want to be the best mom you can be.” “Others might not understand your situation.”

MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING NON-ADHERENT (MINA)

There are 3 clear criteria for a MINA.

1. Advising without permission by making suggestions, offering solutions or possible actions without first obtaining permission from the client. Language usually will have stem words such as: should, why don’t you, consider, try, you will, you need to, suggest, advise, how about, you could and there are more. “What about going to your doctor and getting free samples?”
2. Confronting the client by directly or indirectly discounting, disagreeing, shaming, arguing, correcting, questions the client’s honesty, ridiculing, labeling. Also included is restating negative information already stated by the practitioner. “You drank and you went to work?”
3. Directing the client by giving orders, telling them what to do, the language is imperative and often there will be a tone in the voice. Examples might be “Read that Big Book and do it by next week!”

Tone of voice (sarcasm, hostility, disbelief, mean-spiritedness, angry) always will count as a MINA, no matter what the content or language is. Yet it has to be pretty obvious in order to get a MINA.

Jacque Elder

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