

Guidelines for Participation in MI Skill Development Group via Zoom

Thank you for registering to participate in our online Motivational Interviewing (MI) Skill Development Group! To maximize the positive impact of this experience, we would like to share with you the following information and recommendations:

1. *Prior training requirement*: In order to ensure a quality experience for all of our participants, we ask that all participants ensure that they meet the minimum training pre-requisites for the group. The groups are focused on the spirit, skills, and strategies of MI, so all participants should already have been trained in those areas, completing at least twelve (12) hours of MI training that include the spirit, skills, and strategies.
2. *Active engagement*: As you may know, MI learning experiences are generally focused on skill building, and because of this, they depend on a good deal of interpersonal interaction. Please be prepared to actively engage with the material through discussion, asking questions, and bringing your own expertise and experience into the session.
3. *Video encouraged, audio required*: Because of the interactive nature of the group, we invite all participants to engage with this online experience with their video enabled. Audio must also be available, but muted when not actively in use.
4. *Distractions*: This is probably not your first experience on Zoom, so you know that participating in a meeting or training remotely, whether from your home or office, can leave you open to distraction. In the interest of making this experience optimally beneficial for yourself and everyone else, we encourage you to take whatever steps seem appropriate to protect yourself from distracting influences during the time we’ll be together.
5. *Coding and feedback*: This experience is intended to support you to develop and maintain a set of skills that can make a significant and positive difference in your work and in your life more generally. Thanks to the wealth of research literature on MI, we know that an integral means for acquiring these skills is receiving feedback on your attempts to practice them. Because of this, the session will include opportunities for you to engage in live conversations with your colleagues, and receive feedback on your progress. You may also be asked to assess a colleague’s performance and provide them with feedback. We will be using the OARS coding system to do this; please familiarize yourself with the coding matrix and guidelines on the next page in preparation for the group.

After this experience, you may decide that you want to continue to take further steps to develop your skills in MI. We invite you to consider continuing your journey through any of the following paths:

1. Seeking further training in the model, whether through JCS ([www.jopeconsultingservices.com](http://www.jopeconsultingservices.com)) or any of the other MI training opportunities available through our wonderful colleagues in the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers ([www.motivationalinterviewing.org](http://www.motivationalinterviewing.org)).
2. Submitting samples of your MI use for assessment and feedback through our coding and coaching services, which you can learn more about at [www.jopeconsultingservices.com/coaching](http://www.jopeconsultingservices.com/coaching).
3. Reading any of the fine books on MI and its various applications, which are available through Guilford Press at <https://www.guilford.com/browse/psychology-psychiatry-social-work/motivational-approaches>.

Thank you for your time; we’re looking forward to working with you!

**A green and white logo

Description automatically generated*OARS Sheet***

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Intervention** | **Type/Count** | **Comments, Notes, Strengths, & Stretch Goals** |
| Reflections  *Goal: reflection to*  *question ratio is 2:1, at*  *least half are complex* | Complex: |  |
| Simple: |  |
| Questions  *Goal: 70% or more of*  *questions are open* | Open: |  |
| Closed: |  |
| Affirmations  *May be most effective*  *when paired together* | Complex: |  |
| Simple: |  |
| Summaries |  |  |
| Giving Information |  |  |
| Fixing Reflex  *Persuading, confronting* |  |  |
| **Giving Feedback:** *“What do you feel like you did well in this conversation?” (Reflect responses) (Ask permission to add your own thoughts)*  *“What would you like to do differently next time?” (Reflect responses) (Ask permission to add your own thoughts)* | | |

Above is the OARS coding tool; to use it to code an MI conversation, listen to the conversation carefully and use the Intervention and Type/Count columns to count the behaviors of the MI user, or ‘helper’. For example, if the helper says to their partner, “So that situation made you very angry. Did you say anything to your spouse about it?”, you might consider counting that as one complex reflection and one open question, and you would then mark them in the Type/Count column using a slash mark or some other symbol of your choice.

When the conversation concludes, you would then have a count of all of the behaviors you noticed, and would be able to use that data to support feedback you would offer to the helper. Please note the bottom section of the tool ,which provides a framework for giving feedback that is likely to be consistent with MI guidelines.