

Episode 33: Coaching Samples & Session Structure

Speaker A: CASAT Podcast Network.

Speaker B: Lions and Tigers and Bears MI is brought to you through a collaboration between The Mountain Plains ATTC and NFAR Tech in episode 33. Paul and Amy, welcome return guest Billie Joe Smith to discuss coaching sample and session structure. For episode resources, links to episodes, contact us and other information, please visit the Lions, Tigers and Bears MI website mtplainsattc.org/podcast

Paul Warren: Lions and Tigers and Bears MI is 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 10 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 trainers. Join us in this adventure into the forest where we explore and get curious about what lies behind the curtain of MI Hey, Paul.

Paul Warren: Hey, Amy. How are you?

Amy Shanahan: I'm doing well.

Amy Shanahan: How about you?

Paul Warren: I'm very well and I'm very excited about a return visit of our most frequent guest on Lions and Tigers and Bears MI

Amy Shanahan: I'm excited. I suppose I should sing. Okay, well, then we'll let our guest explain why. What do you think?

Paul Warren: I think go with it.

Amy Shanahan: all right. Welcome back. Welcome back. Welcome back. Billie Joe Smith.

Billie Jo Smith: Hi, Amy. Hi, Paul.

Paul Warren: Hi, Billie Joe. Welcome back.

Billie Jo Smith: Thanks. so to Amy's point, she said she was going to sing and then I would explain. in trainings, I tend to sing because my brain operates in song. So when I. When we come back from a break or back from lunch, what plays in my mind is welcome Back. and from my experience working with Amy, she let me know that that song is the theme song to welcome Back Coottter, which is a television show that I had never seen and was unaware of the fact that John Travolta was in it. M Whereas I know that song from an early 2000, like hip hop song by an artist called Mace. I think so, yeah. Generational differences.

Amy Shanahan: So we'd play off of each other.

Amy Shanahan: About.

Amy Shanahan: Generational differences, which actually plays out pretty well when we're training a diverse group. But that's not the topic of our conversation today, is it, Paul?

Paul Warren: It is not. And I do believe, though, and this may be a trivia thing, was not, John Travolta called a sweat hog on that shown't. Weren't they all called the sweat hogs?

Amy Shanahan: They were. They were, yes. Do you remember what his name was in the show?

Paul Warren: I don't, but I remember that as a group they were called Sweat Hogs.

Amy Shanahan: He was Vinny Barbariino.

Paul Warren: That's right, Vinny Barbariino. So clearly, Billie Joe, I've just made a disclosure that I didn't intend, but it's been made.

Amy Shanahan: Well.

Billie Jo Smith: And I will say that, just based on that, I'm really intrigued to, to understand this whole Sweat Hog concept. I might have to watch episode of the show at some point in time.

Amy Shanahan: I think you should. Maybe some of the listeners are interested now and

we can get some emails about what they think about the Sweat Hogs and welcome Back Kotter

Billie Jo Smith: Or on the other hand, they're going to be like, you keep inviting somebody back that doesn't know welcome Back Kotter

Paul Warren: Or you have two hosts that don't know that it's a song from somewhere in the 90s. You know, its.

Amy Shanahan: Right, right, right, right, right.

Paul Warren: Well, as you said, Amy, that is not our topic for today. That is not what we invited Billie Joe Smith, to join us to talk about. But I'm confident that there will be other perhaps musical or television related detours. And I have to say, Billie Joe, I was thinking as you were saying that, and I'm going to reiterate the title or say the title of our focus today, which of course we know is focused on coaching, but particularly today we're going to be focusing on coaching samples and session structure. And it made me wonder if you might have a song associated with that.

Billie Jo Smith: Oh, I don't know. But I will definitely think if it comes to my brain, I think I will commit to just singing it as it happened. So we never know when it's going to pop up. But it might. There's probably songs about coaching.

Paul Warren: Definitely shows about coaching.

Amy Shanahan: Yeah. Oh, or people named coaches coach in TV shows.

Paul Warren: Yes, yes.

Amy Shanahan: Getting closer to your generation, Billie Joe.

Billie Jo Smith: I still haven't seen the show Coach, if that's what you're referring to. I think that's the name of that show. Right.

Amy Shanahan: We will stay down this rabbit hole if we keep.

Billie Jo Smith: I was like, we can find a way to morph it into mi M. Right. Because if we're talking about coaching, we're working with people. Wouldn't the first step be about engagement? And so this may be, this may be our way of engaging with each other around a conversation about coaching.

Amy Shanahan: Yeah. You know, because I was going to, I was thinking, you know, I, remember starting to take a Musical instrument. And I was nervous and I talked and veered the conversation away from coaching because I was nervous. So yeah, I'd love to start there. Engaging people. How do we help people feel comfortable and safe?

Billie Jo Smith: I think it can be. I'm so sorry, Paul. Go ahead.

Paul Warren: No, go right ahead, please.

Billie Jo Smith: I was going to say, and I think that even getting to that step of wanting or seeking out a coach, as excited as we can be, as excited as I have been about getting the opportunity to receive feedback, for me there was a little bit of an anxiety there because MI M is important to me. Hence I continue to return back to your podcast. I just

I am an MI enthusiast but and it is important to me. And so because of the fact that it's important I want to do well. and so I bring that to the table or I have brought that to the table when seeking out coaches, in a way that I want to, I want to do a good job with my MI skills. And so coaching can be a little bit of an anxiety producing, situation. And how can, how can we be mindful of that and how can we as coaches support that with people?

Paul Warren: and to me that absolutely relates to in some way certainly creating the foundation of the coaching session, the structure of the session. And I could imagine, it would be very helpful if I were a coach and you were somebody who were seeking coaching. And yes, there's excitement about it. And maybe you also need to talk about the anxiety or the pressure of like I feel some sort of pressure of wanting to do this well. So that part of the moving into the actual coaching, part of the structure of that conversation is we of put our cards on the table and I mean as a coach I might feel anxious as well.

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah. And how can we support and empower the folks that we're going to be working with so that it's a valuable experience not only for us as the coaches, but also for the people, the coaches if you will. Paul, I think that term earlier or the people who are receiving the coaching. How can we take all of that into account to ensure that the interactions are meaningful and valuable to the individual?

Amy Shanahan: I remember getting a new person to me, new coach and what she did. She's actually one of our guests on this podcast as well. Carol and I didn't know her when when we first got connected as coach and coachee And she spent some time getting to know me and getting to know what my trajectory was and not only my career, but what was my Goals or what did I want to learn in motivational interviewing? And it

became a nice conversation. Just like we do with MI practice with a person in general.

Paul Warren: So that parallel between the tasks, when we are actually practicing motivational interviewing as somewhat of a frame for the guide to maybe how we want to create, co. Create collaboratively create a structure with the person who's seeking coaching and the coach, I could imagine that went into a coaching session where the coach basically said, this is my role, this is the way it works, this is what we're going to do. That that might raise my anxiety a little bit.

Amy Shanahan: yeah.

Billie Jo Smith: And I like Paul, that you had mentioned this kind of parallel process, because I think in so many ways it does lend itself to what we've learned and what we train and what we build within our own MI skills. How do we bring that to the table when working with individuals that we may be coaching in terms of creating a partnership, where we're working together in the direction of a common goal, how we can support individuals, how we can empower them, how we can draw out from what they already have within them. I think that there's so many parallels, not even just the task, but also when it comes to the spirit.

Paul Warren: You took me back to, one of the early coding instruments that I used, and I'm blanking. It's not the mighty, it's not the mica. what is the one me a step. That's it exactly. For some reason I couldn't remember that, for a moment. And it reminded me that one of the MI inconsistent behaviors, that's I think a 16 item, 10 consistent, 6 inconsistent. and again, this is to code practice. But you really took me back as you were saying that Billie Joe to asserting authority is one of the MI consistent inconsistent approaches. And I don't think a coach is an authority. and I think being very clear about

what you're bringing to the table in terms of how you conceive of what a coach is and who knows, a person who's seeking coaching could come in and think like, oh well, Amy's the expert, so she's going to tell me what I'm doing wrong and that's what I'm here for. so somebody could even have that.

Billie Jo Smith: Expectation and that might be really valuable in kind of setting the foundation or the structure of what the relationship is going to look like. So before we even get to go down the road of all the things we could do within a session and the structure of it, first and foremost, coming to the table to determine what is it that we're going to be doing together? what are you going to bring to the table? Can I share what I might bring to the table? Can we brainstorm together how this partnership can look? so that we are kind of falling, we are going together toward a common goal, not just. Well, this is what I think as the expert that you, as my coachee is going to need to do. Because I imagine that would even increase my angsts more than it would just going and looking for feedback on how I could grow as an AMI practitioner.

Amy Shanahan: It makes me think about that setup of conversation about the partnership. One thing that maybe that's even part of the engaging task, but also how do I coach or what's my style and. Or how do you like to be coached? What works for you? And we'll get into the other pieces of the structure about what kind of things are we gonna be doing together once we find our focus. What do you wanna focus on? What do youunna practice? What do you want to be coached about? But also the how.

Paul Warren: and what are each of us bringing to the table in terms of, you know, what are my expectations as the person who's seeking coaching? What is my style as the coach? And again, I don't know why I'm struck by this because this is not the first conversation on the podcast that we've had about coaching. but I am reminded and

maybe it has something to do with Billie Joe and the history that I have knowing you, Billie Joe, and the situations that we've been in. But I'm really reminded of how that there's kind a mutual vulnerability that is inherent in this relationship if it's actually going to be an effective collaborative partnership.

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah, I think both of us, and again, I'm switching hats. I'm putting on my cohi hat and I'm putting on my coach, when I am a coach hat and what that experience is like for both parties and how we can, even at the very beginning, I think it really goes back to that engagement. How do we spend and invest our time together within that first task, if you will, to set up what this, journey is going to look like in coaching. And so acknowledging, Acknowledging what we bring to the table and each kind of side of that relationship.

Amy Shanahan: I think.

Paul Warren: Go ahead, Amy. Yeah, go ahead.

Amy Shanahan: I think it's important too to, you know, then move when you're ready together to talk about the expect. I think you mentioned the words expectations or what do you want and the expectations around the setup. Are we meeting together in person and how often and for how long and what happens when we can't make it? Do we communicate with each other? There's times I know we're in a committee together and, and some folks will say well, I haven't heard from so and so and so that collaboration might be kind of structuralist as well. Like the whole setup, of when it's going to happen and how frequently and what do we do when we can't make it.

Paul Warren: Yeah. And that commitment to communication because that can engender

sort of respect on both sides. If I can't make it, I'm letting you know. If you can't make it, you're letting me know. And I'm also kind of thinking too that and I love the word that you use, Billie Joe, like investing the time to do that. And Amy, you framed it as you and your coach like spent time. You got to know her, she got to know you.

Paul Warren: And investing that time and acknowledging that maybe this is the preliminary structure that we develop and as our partnership evolves or grows that we can go back and we can refine or elaborate but that at least there's some agreement that we're both going to be respected. We both going to be valued in this collaborative partnership.

Billie Jo Smith: I think that's such an important piece because if I think of my journey with coaching, being coached, having coaches, I know when I first entered into MI I knew that I wanted to enhance my skills. And so a coach seems like a good way to do that. Then when I got into the coaching experience I didn't really know what to expect. I just knew that I wanted to get better. But how or what that meant, I didn't know. and so I had somebody who was very, very, took a very MI approach to coaching and was like, well, what do you want? I'm like I don't know. I don't know what I don't know. and so how we can then have that conversation with people together to say let's explore what this relationship might look like. I'm not assuming that everybody knows the expectations or even the communication. Paul, to what you just said, like if all of a sudden I can't make it, how do we communicate that to each other? whose responsibility, who reschedules? Like some of those things can be really beneficial to have with folks if they're entering into their first experience without, a lot of ideas of what it could look like.

Paul Warren: And you know, Billie Joe, you're underlining. You are underlining a very, I think, important distinction because all of this is at this point in the coaching

collaboration, there's no actual sample or focus on the work. So there's no focus yet at this particular point. But there is the investment in the engagement and setting up a mutually agreeable structure so that when we make the transition, when perhaps a sample of work comes in, there's hopefully some rapport that's been established, maybe the beginnings of trust and maybe some vulnerability, so that when we actually get to, quote, unquote, the focus, which might be because of a sample or because of work you're doing in the coaching session, then we can move kind of forward in a particular way with a solid foundation.

Billie Jo Smith: Even having the conversations about the benefits of using samples in the practice, can be helpful, again, kind of laying that foundation of the engagement as we talk about what the process can look like, why using samples can be beneficial, what the process will look like, you know, And Paul, as you mentioned, like, kind of laying out any sort of vulnerabilities or concerns, so that folks feel safe, because it has to be a safe environment. I have to feel like I can trust you, with my work, with how the session or how our coaching sessions are going to progress. and so I think that that's really important, making sure that we have invested time into that relationship so that when we get into the options of sampling, that we're ready to go.

Amy Shanahan: Yeah. You know, you mentioned flexibility too, and that. That the, sessions can be refined because I was struck by, Billie Joe, your example of going in saying, you know what you want in a general term, but you don't know specifically what you want. So maybe your coach in the beginning might not know. Are there going to be recordings? May not know you enough yet. Do you want to do role plays or real plays? And we'll get into those kinds of things. And I was thinking about, my one particular coaching session. I mean, I've had other coaches, but this particular one that I'm mentioning with Carol, I had a specific thing or two that I wanted to focus on. I may not

have known all the details either. but I wanted to learn more about coding. I wanted to dive into some of the research, especially out of substance use disorder care, which is where my background is in. I wanted to stretch myself beyond that. But how we got there, was again, that parallel process. She guided me through and helped me refine or get to the point of oh, yeah, I'd like to do that, and I'd like to do that. And do you want to practice together or do you want to coach code together? And things like that came to be even more refined as we developed where I wanted to go and getting more refined into the focus.

Paul Warren: You're really also acknowledging, I think, Amy, that that focus evolved. It didn't start, finished that, through the dialogue that you and Carol had, that it started to kind of refine itself, get sharper, get clearer. And then the methods, once it was clearer, once that focus was clearer, the methods that you were going to engage in, whatever the activities that you and Carol agreed upon, were then based on what you had ultimately determined was going to be the focus of that particular activity.

Amy Shanahan: Right. And I wonder what it was like for you, Billie Joe, in that similar kind of conversation that Paul just summarized very nicely. coming to a focus and where you went from there.

Billie Jo Smith: I think that it's really helpful to find the focus, and I think the important part of that is that dialogue or that conversation collaboratively. because what was helpful for me is the exploration and kind of leaning into my coach to help guide the conversation. because we've already talked about a lot of different. You know, we've kind of put out some different ways that coaching can be done. You know, we've talked about coding, we've talked about, providing samples and role plays and real plays. And so taking the focus and really honing in on exactly what it was that would, could have

been is the most beneficial thing for me coming out of the coaching session and then discussing how that can look within the structure of our sessions moving forward, what tools and what things might be helpful in that conversation. But it was really. I think that it was wonderful to be able to have a collaborative discussion, to find the focus. It was there in the mix. I just wasn't. I couldn't see it through the trees, if you will.

Paul Warren: It's funny, I'll throw out a recent experience that I had with coaching where I was, engaged. Somebody asked me if I would coach them. And it was very interesting because I had never, approached the coaching partnership in this particular way before where this person had had a standardized patient interview, that standardized patient interview had been coded. And basically what he said was, I'd really like you to coach me based on the feedback I got from the sample that was coded, and that was his ask of me. So I said, absolutely. If you feel comfortable, send me the coding feedback. Because I didn't have access to the recording that he had done. So he sent me the coding feedback and it was very clear from the coding there were some specific technical things that could be part of a coding conversation, a coaching conversation. So I said to him when we met again I said, you know, based on your results of the coding, these are some of the things that I identified that could be focal points, could be the focus of this conversation. What are your thoughts? What's your reaction to that? And where if any of these would you like to start?

Paul Warren: So the coding results really kind of laid the foundation of where we started and from that place. Then we engaged a couple of particular methods to more closely look at those particular areas of focus which were technical, they were about specific skill, you know, the over reliance on questions, things like that.

Billie Jo Smith: Paul, I have to say that I give credit to the individual that reached out to

you for coaching, coming in with a particular focus and recognizing how beneficial using a sample can be. because again there's a vulnerability that comes with allowing somebody else to enter into our practice. hear what it is to hear the work that we do with individuals that we work with. and one thing that we know is that talking about mi though it can help promote learning that actually practicing the skills and having those samples or you know, the in in practice moments, you know, where maybe were entering into a real play or a role play can be so beneficial and so for this individual to step right into it and say like yes, I have a sample, I want you to listen and how can we take that feedback to strengthen am my approach, I think really courageous and brave of that individual.

Paul Warren: And to add to that, he also was very open to the idea because what I threw out for him is an option is we can do an in coaching session role play where I'll be, I can take on the role of a client with a particular behavioral change that I'm considering and you can intentionally practice this particular area and we'll record it and then we can listen to the recording together. And that's ultimately what we did. We created a recording of a role play sample and then each looked at it independently and then each then looked at it together during our coaching session.

Amy Shanahan: Yeah, you're talking about different options about how do you know? Because sometimes we don't know what people are coming to the table with. We don't know what their skills are or not. Where are they? so sometimes we can do that role play or real play like you said. And to your ah, example first was, you know, this person came already with feedback that he got from a recording and wanted you to coach him on some specific things. So there's such a variety of ways that people will coach. I think at the time when I was coaching, when I was being coached with Carol, we didn't do recorded sessions right out of the gate. We coded together other sessions. So. Because

coding was my focus. But there were times when you and I, you too and I, we're practicing together, live together. Right. And we had a coach in the room that gave us some feedback. So that might be considered direct observation of our skills. Right. So I would imagine, you know, for me, I sometimes coach to my own style. And if I'm nervous, for example, about doing role or real place, maybe I'd be hesitant to do role or real plays with folks. And I have to be mindful of partnering with them because it can be a very powerful way to learn.

Billie Jo Smith: And Amy, I know that, we have been talking about role plays and real plays and you know, I even think in a coaching session, you know, is it worth having a conversation of why one or the other or both and what can be beneficial? What are we hoping to achieve out of these things? you know, and how does it help us with our practice of MI And I know that I feel compelled to answer because of course I already have looked into it, in preparation for this conversation. But I think organically, I'm curious. I would 'love to hear from you all. As, as coaches, how do you talk to people about real plays and role plays and what, what do they offer to the folks that we coach?

Paul Warren: Well, generally speaking, and Amy, I think is forming a thought at this point or has it already one forming one. Okay. I would say generally speaking, I think they're both invaluable tools and I want to be very clear and go on the record with this is I think that there is a, there is, there is benefit in both. And they're very different and, and there's great power in both of them. And I guess it's what you, what you're really trying to get at. I really like that you're putting this on the table and that you're asking this question because I'd like us to tease it out more.

Amy Shanahan: I don't know if my thoughts are formulated yet, but I'll give it a try. 1. As a coach, I think I default to a style of flexibility. I'm not very structural, that I have a plan

for sometimes I talk about role in real plays and what the differences would be if it comes up impromptu. so for me, it kind of has relieved the angst that people might have. If someone's saying, well, how would I do this? Or what would you do in this situation? I might invite them to, would you like to try it on with me and see, See how that feels for you. So that's what I mean by impromptu. role or real play? So it might be a role play because they're talking, like you said, Paul, about a particular patient client, thing that they're struggling with communication. so I have an impromptu kind of thing. It's. Sometimes I go into real play because it might be related to some intention that I have with them, being able to experience it for themselves, how it feels to be listened to or using a reflection or two instead of a few questions. And so that's my kind of style. But I think Billie Joe's got some good information around what you found around role versus real plays. I don't know if you're chomping at the bit to say something about that.

Billie Jo Smith: I wasn't necessarily in that moment, but I will, because I think that, you know, what I was able to find really helped put it in context for me in a lot of different ways. But, I mean, I feel compelled to respond in different ways based on what you all said, because, one, I know for me, as a person who has been coached and as a coach, I have a lot of vulnerability anxiety around role plays and real plays. I don't know if I feel like I should be getting a Grammy or an Oscar award for. I don't know what happens. but when I know it's coming, I can feel my anxiety kind of building up. And I know how valuable, to Paul's point, both of them can be in terms of practice. Again, we can learn a lot from going to trainings and reading the books and talking to other people who are knowledgeable. And until we get to try things on, it's a much different experience. And so in terms of coaching, how can we invite that into our coaching sessions if, in fact that's the direction that we're going in? and at the same time, the benefits to both. Right. So to Paul's point, you had said about the benefits of a real play be a role play. And if we're focusing in on a particular skill, that can be really valuable as an opportunity to

practice a specific skill set. and then, Amy, you had mentioned, in terms of real Play. It allows us to experience, our own reactions to am consistent skills versus maybe more am I inconsistent skills. And there's an interaction that I had comes to mind immediately. Interestingly enough, both of you were in the room, though you were not the practitioner I'm going to be speaking of. but we were practicing our skills in a real play. and I was talking about a behavior change that I was interested in making. And this individual was so jazzed up by my willingness to make this change that they were picking up their cell phone. We're going to call these resources. And though we were just practicing in real life, I felt like the air was sucked out of the room and I could not have put my hands up faster to want to slow the train down. And so it was a really valuable experience for me early on in my practice of MI M to feel when the skills hit well and when maybe they caused me to pause or raise my eyebrow or in this instance say, like, oh, absolutely not. And so I think, you know, as we practice our skills, being able to have that emotional experience of what it feels like can be really helpful for us to understand why we intentionally do things or use skills in particular places. So both can all that to say both can be really valuable tools, in coaching sessions.

Paul Warren: You know, Billie Joe, as you told that story, and I've never heard that story before, it really. I kept thinking about how that actually also applies to the coach. Person seeking coaching, coachie, if we use that term, that I think as a coach, I want to be very aware of. Where is this person that I have the opportunity to collaborate with? Where are they in their sort of experience, openness? Maybe they need a longer on ramp before they get to something that might cause them to feel more on the spot. And again, hopefully there is that ongoing evaluation of what is the focus of our work. Why are we doing these coaching sessions? your story makes me really want to be very aware of the fact that, like, when I have the opportunity to coach somebody, I want to make sure that they're fully, on board with the methods that we may use. Like, maybe

now is not the right time for them to submit a recording and get coding feedback. Maybe now is not the right time for them to do a real play. But a role play is okay because it's focusing, as you said, on a specific skill. So that parallel also between the provider and the client. We don't want to get ahead of the person who's seeking to work with us. We're Supporting their growth process. We're not dragging them forward because we're the coach.

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah, and I thought of that, Paul, when you were talking about sampling and the individual that you had been working with, for both of you, taking the opportunity to listen to that recording and sampling, I think can be really valuable for some folks. Not necessarily for everybody, but for some folks to start to gain some awareness of where they might be with their skills. And so for a first opportunity for us as the coach and for the coachhi, I'll remain consistent with our language. For the coach E, to gain an understanding of where we are together in terms of skill set can also help, I think, with the focus. So as they listen to themselves, maybe very like, oh, I didn't realize that maybe I get. Maybe my fixing reflex is really loud or I ask a lot of questions. That was my own insight into myself when I started listening is like, wow, you ask a lot of questions. but so it helps us to kind of come together to find that focus based on what we hear in a sample and evoking that from our coachee to say, hey, what were your thoughts when you listened to your sample?

Paul Warren: Yes, 100%. Because when this, individual and I both had our individual time to listen to the brief recording that we made of the role play, he came back and we started with his feedback. And he said the very thing that you said. He said, I realized that I'm asking a lot of questions and I'm not doing enough reflections. Which was totally in alignment with what his coding sample had said too. But he had the realization from hearing himself. So I reflected that back to him and I said, well, what are your

thoughts about how you want to go forward in terms of the work that maybe we do during this session? And he said, well, let's jump back into the role play and I'm going to try reflections instead of questions.

Amy Shanahan: So kind of, it lends itself to also moving into the evocation of the tasks. How does someone want to learn? How does someone want to practice? And I think importantly for me, not just in the session, we don't just practice in the coaching session. So maybe some conversations around that from an evocative perspective on that evoking stage of the task where, how do you want to do this? What would you like to do next? What are the best ways for you to practice this?

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah, and I even think, you know, if we're continuing to draw parallels with the practice of MI as you're both speaking from a coaching perspective, using an Opportunity to use an Ask offer Ask. You know, so as we're going through the process acknowledging that I also listen to the sample and hey, would it be okay with you if I shared some thoughts based on what I heard or based on what you said or depending on where the conversation goes, some activities that I have used with others that might be helpful with your focus and then using that ask rain, circling back around at the end to you, did any of those sound like something you would want to try or something you would want us to try together? Or what are your thoughts on that feedback? You know, whatever may look like. But again, kind of tying in those parallels of the MI skills.

Paul Warren: Know this may be a really obvious statement, but I'm not going to let that hold me back for making it. Which is that as you two were talking about this, it really kind of hit me. I mean, and I'm surprised that I was not aware of this before, but it really hits me that coaching is more than just the coaching session.

Paul Warren: I mean, and I know it's obvious to say that, but I do want to underline it that there is work that happens in between that the person who has asked for the coaching hopefully is doing that they're giving. we're possibly coming up with things that they do in between the time that we meet and then they're going to come and talk about that. And then maybe the things that I'm doing is the coach where like I'm listening to their sample or I'm finding resources or thinking about other methods that could help them, depending on what they bring to the session next. And it's funny because I didn't quite ever think of it as additional work that is done that has a real influence on the actual time that you're talking with that person.

Billie Jo Smith: And I can speak for my experience with someone who's helped coach me and that's Amy would call them learning opportunities. So based on our interactions in these moments, here are some learning opportunities, again honoring my autonomy to say if you would like to do these things outside of our structured session, you can. Maybe you want to try on the skill that we just talked about. Again, Paul, thinking of the individual that you're coaching, maybe as he meets with other folks, maybe he wants to try using more reflections than questions. and maybe it's watching something, maybe it's listening to something, maybe it's reading something. But here are some things that you can do if you're interested, that you might find helpful in Furthering your learning outside of just this experience if they're interested. Again, right. Like we know that telling people what to do. If I told you you had to go home and read know three chapters in the latest MI book, unless that was important to that individual, might not be helpful. So again, collaborating together on opportunities that can be taken outside of just that structured meeting that we have.

Amy Shanahan: It reminds me, and I tell this story a lot. And I may have told it in previous podcast record episode recordings when, someone I was working with to that

point said, you know what my goal. And this really ties into maybe some even deliberate practice. And I know that there's a book that Denise Ernst and Jen, help me, Jen. I don't want to. She was one of our guests on the podcast, wrote a book on deliberate practice in motivational interviewing. I don't come to me, sorry, Jen. where this person wanted to specifically practice. No window dressing or no statement starters like it sounds like, or what I hear you saying, and I love this story and that it speaks to the collaboration and that engagement is, a constant. Even though we might have moved to focusing and evoking and planning. She came back and said, I'm not doing that again. I'm keeping the window dressing. I don't like what happen_ed and she told the story that she was reflecting back, someone was frustrated. And the gentleman responded, no, I'm angry. And he was really boastful and a little intimidating to her. And she didn, she didn't want to, continue that practice. And then in subsequent coaching sessions she said, hey, the guy came back, he felt, heard. He felt like I was listening to him and he wasn't mad at me. So I think I'm going to continue down my path of trying, to reduce the amount of time that I use. It sounds like, or what I hear you saying. And. But you know, it's just a powerful linkage that they're taking it back to their work and maybe sharing how does this fit for my style or the type of work I do. And yes, it's Jen Manuel. Thank you, Billie Jo, for reminding us.

Paul Warren: Yes, I love that story and I love it because how wonderful to have a coaching structure where you can try something out, have an experience, come back and then reflect on that experience again. and again, I love the story because I would imagine, and I'm guessing here, that leaving out the window dressing helped the person feel more heard and they were able to be more in touch with their affect that clearly maybe disquieted or frightened this person. And yet it was very appropriate for what was happening. And it helped the client to maybe move forward because they could express what was there because they knew this person was listening really

closely, as opposed to what I'm hearing you say or what I think. And again, I'm not judging that. I'm just saying that coaching can be a real way to help people to refine their practice in such a way that it can have a more powerful impact on the people they want to effectively and appropriately practice. Motivational interviewing with.

Amy Shanahan: Yeah, I'd have the same guest, Paul. and this particular person knew that she felt uncomfortable in her quotes. As I recalling, I hear this from other practitioners. I don't want to tell people how they feel. So it was uncomfortable for her to, formulate her complex reflections without that. It sounds like it made her feel uncomfortable. So from her perspective, it. She was trying something on that was somewhat new to her. And yes, she realized in her own way that that reflection, with or without the window dressing, no matter what, that she listened very well and that, oh, okay, it wasn't that I got rid of the window dressing that he was so upset. It was that he was heard. Yeah, I think it.

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah, I think it also speaks to the value of all of the varieties of ways and things that we can bring into coaching sessions. Right. Because in, ah, again, going back, I hate to keep going back to real plays and role plays, but could we could role play that situation and get a reaction that could be of use? We could realay that situation, and again, kind of have that emotional connectedness to it in our environment. And then taken out into the real world, she had a different reaction that generated what seems like a really fruitful discussion for a coaching session. To say, like, hey, when we talked about this, it seemed really beneficial. When I went out and tried it, it was a little bit more scary. And then how can we process that? And then people kind of decide where they want to go with that information. So again, looking at all of the different tools that we have available as coaches to be able to use with people that we work with, I love.

Amy Shanahan: That distinction, Billie Joe, that you made, that we always talk about this, I think, in our trainings and in our conversations about this, that. But everybody's different. And your relationship with this person right now in this moment might be different than it is next week. So just having this myopic practice of real play or role play in a coaching session may limit their experience, inviting them to have some opportunity to try it at home, try it with their kids, try it with the folks that they're working with, so that they could see that maybe it worked for this one. And I know for me with the window dressing example, I realized being coached that when I felt not so engaged with someone or nervous about something or I didn't have a connection with someone, that old comfortable shoe of it sounds like, or what I hear you saying came back into play. So I learned that about myself by being guided to practice it outside of just one exchange.

Paul Warren: And Amy, thanks for elaborating on that because I think that can be a powerful outcome of an effective coaching partnership is that a person can, a practitioner can develop that kind of self awareness that you just described that I notice that these comfortable shoes that I was relying on are creeping back and that's kind of a tell or an indicator that maybe something's going on for me and maybe I can think more deeply about this particular situation. And I think a, well structured, thoughtful collaborative coaching structure and interactive collaboration can actually foster those kind of long lasting practice insights.

Amy Shanahan: And then the coach E starts to kind of coach themselves. Right. Like a teacher teaches people to learn. I'm sorry, go ahead Billie Jo.

Billie Jo Smith: Well, sometimes when the words are taken right out of your mouth, there's nothing left to say. But I think that's it. Because of the environment, because of

the relationship, because of all the work that's gone in from both parties, that the learning continues outside of just those structured sessions and also can be really fruitful for what we do in our coaching sessions is what works done on the outside and what people bring in. and you're right, I think that people do begin to learn and gain insight into and have awareness into their own practice and skills. And yeah, I think it's just a really, it's a really neat relationship to see as time progresses and kind of grows in that way.

Paul Warren: I'm curious if either of you have what you might suggest or what you've experienced as kind of a, I don't really know any other way to put it, but just to say possibly like a coaching session closure in terms of like what, what might be, you know, you and the person that you're coaching, you've determined to focus, you've chosen some methods that you're using and I'm wondering if you have any thoughts or guidance about how after engaging in the work, engaging in the exchange, the dialogue, what your thoughts are about how maybe a session Concludes until we meet again. Or maybe that's overthinking what the coaching session is. But, I'm a trainer too, and it makes me think from a trainer's perspective, if I'm working with a learner, how do I want to reinforce or support what is going to happen until we see each other next or what happened in the work that we were doing. So I just want to put that on the table as if you have any thoughts or reactions to that.

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah, this idea of how do we keep building on the work that we've done with the intention of reaching whatever goal it is, you know, focus that we've kind of gotten to. and again, I think it has for me very similar a parallel to work that maybe I would do with, ah, an individual that I was working with to summarize what we've done within our time together. really hitting on based on if there was a theme of the session, insights that were drawn, like we're not maybe specifically looking at change talk like we

do when practicing mi, but can we summarize some tangible things that may be beneficial for the individual to leave the meeting with? if naturally in conversation, next steps, learning opportunities or follow up steps came up, that for me would be a nice opportunity to highlight that again. So, you know, for example, you know Paul, one thing that you had talked about was that you'd really like to try to practice more reflections, to questions outside of this. And I'm wondering if we might be able to then further discuss what that looked like for you when we meet again. and again, always having that collaborative partnership there in terms of are we already starting to set the stage for what our next coaching session is going to look like based on how we wrap up and summarize the one that we were currently in?

Amy Shanahan: Yeah, very similar, I think session to session, almost like a deliberate practice again kind of concept. And what I want to say about that is instead of worrying about it all being big and grand, because I noticed that folks get maybe sometimes caught up in all of it. I want to learn this, I want to do that, I want to practice this. I might intentionally enumerate my open question, what are one or two things you want to work on between now and the next session? So that way they're not forced to do a lot. They don't have to do both or all of that jazz, but just enumerate it so that they can contain it themselves and figure out, so what do I want to focus on for this week or the next week.

Paul Warren: You know, as you said that, Amy, it really made me think of this as well, which is an open ended question. and I've never done this in a coaching session. I'm intrigued though. Maybe I will try it in the next opportunity that I have to coach. Something about what you said triggered me to think I might ask the person that I'm working with. I might say, you know, I'm wondering if you have any suggestions or thoughts for me about what you'd like me to focus on and what you'd like me to think about in preparation for the next time that together. Billie Joe, you have a very big smile

on your face.

Billie Jo Smith: I did. Because even as the words were coming out of your mouth, I thought about this idea of eliciting from the individual, not only are there things that I can do as the coach, but again, to tie in with this, idea of deliberate practice, taking it as an opportunity to elicit. How was this in terms of the coaching session? Does it feel like it's meeting your needs or that your needs got met? That we focused on what you wanted to focus on, and to give us some idea of how we might want the next session, the structure of the next session to go. So yeah, as you were putting that out there, as you were talking, my big smile came because I was like, oh my gosh, yes, would be great. That would be a great way to wrap up a session. Brilliance.

Paul Warren: Well, as they say, it takes a village. Or at least it takes a

Billie Jo Smith: YMCA

Paul Warren: There's the song, right?

Amy Shanahan: All right. She's singing.

Billie Jo Smith: It happens.

Paul Warren: I was also going to say it takes a lion, a tiger and a bear. MI We will not identify who is which character. So what about this session in terms of wrapping up our conversation and any thoughts about anything that we may want to highlight in regard to this or maybe particular takeaways?

Billie Jo Smith: I think for me, some things that stood out from our conversation, one is just the importance of the partnership and the collaboration, that as a coach, it's a working relationship. and what do we put into fostering that? that's one thing that really stood out. And then the other thing is there's not one right way to do it. there are so many ideas, and ways and strategies that we discussed in this conversation today and how we can work with folks and incorporate one or some or none of those things, into our coaching sessions.

Paul Warren: A thought that comes to me, and I think that this thought has occurred to me in earlier conversations about coaching. But a thought that comes to me specifically based on our conversation again, and we only touched on this very lightly, but it was mentioned, is the idea that there's a temporal element to coaching. Coaching is not something that necessarily goes on forever with the same person. And it makes me think from my role as a coach, one of the things I guess that I'm hoping for is that I'm providing a structure and a partnership that this person is going to be able to internalize and take away with them even if we're not meeting anymore. And that what they're taking away is a combination of both of us. It's not just me, it's they're walking away with the positive. Hopefully positive, supportive, am I consistent? Respectful experience that had a purpose, had a focus, had actions that were taken that helped them to grow in a very intentional and specific way. And I guess I'm hoping that that's what they would walk away with when, you know, our time in that partnership has concluded, when our work has finished and they've gone in the direction that they're going and I've gone in the direction that I'm going.

Amy Shanahan: I think the only thing I'll add to those beautiful wrap up comments is bridging the session we are having now this episode to the next one. Because we talked about so the diversity of the people that we might be coaching. And some might

do role plays and real plays and some might come with recordings that depending on the person's resources and where they are and what their focus is, not everybody's going to come with a recorded session. Not everybody's going to worry about the specific practice. Like I shared in my example that I wanted to focus on my skills. I wanted to focus on my coding skills. Next bridge to our next episode, we'll be talking about using coding instruments. It's not the be all, end all. It's not the only tool we use in coaching. So for folks who are listening and hearing us talking about coding and bringing samples, that doesn't always have to happen when we're being coached.

Paul Warren: Yeah, coaching's not limited to that.

Amy Shanahan: That's right. And there's a lot of different activities that we may want or need in our relationship with a coach in a particular timerame. but next session we'll talk specifically about those coding instruments that we alluded to today.

Paul Warren: Well, Billie Joe, as a multiply returned guest, are there any final words, any final thoughts that you would like to add to what you already said or.

Amy Shanahan: A song you Want to sing.

Paul Warren: Another song because you've already sung two'just so.

Billie Jo Smith: Many opportunities for songs. no, in all serious, I do want to say thank you so much for these opportunities. I hope that these conversations are valuable to folks that are listening. And I can say with 100% honesty that I find the conversations valuable because just being able to have an explore with people who are passionate about motivational interviewing and coaching and how we can share this information

with others. It's just an honor to have an opportunity to continue to come back and just chat about things that are important to us. So I appreciate it so, so much. thank you.

Amy Shanahan: I do have an ask or ask right now for maybe some learning opportunity for you, Billie Joe. Because I'm compelled to want to sing a Carol Burnett song at this moment. Do you know who Car Matis?

Billie Jo Smith: I do know. I have heard of her. Do you know what you. No. I was gonna say if you asked me anything else other than the fact that it's her name and she's famous. You lost me.

Paul Warren: I know exactly the song you're going to sing.

Amy Shanahan: Oh. So maybe Paul and I will harmonize together.

Paul Warren: Well, I don't know if harmonizing is actually in my, skill ability, but I know the song.

Billie Jo Smith: This is going to be a real treat for all of your listeners. They thought they were coming on Justin. Enhance their own. Their own knowledge about coaching and they're getting, they're getting attune. So take it away.

Amy Shanahan: I just figured we started with a 70s song. I think this might go back into the 60s.

Paul Warren: 60s Yes. Or it might be a real turn off for all of our. Who knows?

Amy Shanahan: Maybe the editors can edit it out.

Paul Warren: That's right, they can edit out. Shall we?

Amy Shanahan: Let's go.

Paul Warren: I'm so glad we had this, time together. Just to have a laugh or sing a song. Seems we just get started and before you know it comes the time we have to say. So long. Good night everybody.

Billie Jo Smith: Bye everyone.

Speaker B: Thanks for listening to episode 33 of Lions and Tigers and Bears MI. MI be on the lookout for new episodes on coaching coming soon.