

LTBMI Episode 37: Setting Up for Practitioner Forums

CASAT: CASAT podcast network.

Paul Warren: Lions and Tigers and Bears MI is brought to you through a collaboration between The Mountain Plains ATTC and NFARtec in episode 37. Paul and Amy, welcome return guest Billie Jo Smith to discuss the upcoming series of six episodes on building an MI practitioners forum, as well as the value of learning communities. For episode resources, links to episodes episodes, contact us and other information, please visit the Lions Tigers and Bears MI website at 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: Hello, Amy. How are you?

Amy Shanahan: I'm doing well. How are you?

Paul Warren: I'm good. And I have to admit that I'm thrilled about our return guest, who I believe holds the record for the most, episodes joining us at the round table. And I could not imagine a better episode to bring our guest in for this conversation.

Amy Shanahan: Well, I'll have to admit that we, we both concurred that we pretty much trust this guest with anything we did.

Paul Warren: Absolutely. Whether we tell the guest about it or not.

Amy Shanahan: And this is a surprise.

Paul Warren: It is a big surprise. So. So, Billie Jo would you like to introduce yourself before we begin with that? Reintroduce yourself. I should say I. Sit corrected.

Reintroduce, yourself before I reveal the purpose of why we brought you here today.

Billie Jo Smith: Oh, thanks, Paul and Amy, I appreciate the opportunity to be asked back again. And though you didn't ask it, I have to say that I'm really enjoying this morning recording because I feel like I'm having coffee with friends. so. But yeah, sure. So, hello to everyone out there, that has not met me yet. my name is Billie Jo Smith. I reside in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, which it is unseasonably cold, but we have all seasons in a 24 hour period of time. So I imagine later I'll have flip flops and possibly a tank top one. but that's not what you wanted to hear. You wanted to know that I am a licensed professional counselor by background. I currently work for one of our local managed care organizations providing support, ah, and consultation for bringing behavioral health services into a physical health realm. in terms of MI I was blessed to

join the MI network of trainer community, in 2018. and because of my practice and experience with MI, that's how I've got the blessing of coming in contact with Paul and Amy. not just once, not just twice, but many, many times. So. Ah, yeah, you're welcome. I've worked in a variety of backgrounds. I do a lot of stuff, I wear a bunch of hats. But I feel like everybody who, is in this field and comes on podcast and does this work. We've all done, and wear a lot of hats. We're fancy folks. So I'm excited to be here.

Amy Shanahan: Woohoo.

Paul Warren: Excited to have you. And I just want to confirm because this is an audio podcast, it's not a video podcast. None of us are wearing hats at this particular moment.

Billie Jo Smith: Nope, we are not. That was an opportunity that was missed, I think.

Paul Warren: I agree. It's a little warm where I am though, in m. My apartment. It's cold outside, so probably wearing a hat wouldn't be good for me.

Billie Jo Smith: We could have paid homage to the recent, Kentucky Derby. Being that, you know, we're. We're having this conversation here at the beginning of May, we could have come with some very fancy hats.

Amy Shanahan: Yeah, maybe.

Billie Jo Smith: Maybe next year.

Paul Warren: Should have, didn't.

Amy Shanahan: Yep.

Paul Warren: So, Billie Joe, if it's, if it's okay with you and if it's okay with Amy, I'd like to reveal, at least in some small way, why we invited you to join

00:05:00

Paul Warren: us for this conversation today.

Billie Jo Smith: I have been eagerly awaiting our topic of discussion. So laying on me, Paul, I'm rolling the drums.

Amy Shanahan: Rolling the drum. Is it okay, Amy, please do.

Paul Warren: So, Billie Joe, we brought you here today because we'd like you to tell us how to say I was attacked by a wild boar in French.

Billie Jo Smith: Oh, no. Oh my gosh. Okay, well, first I have to say disclaimer to anyone who is native to the French language or speaks it. Well, in my intro, I didn't mention that the last time I had any French training was in high school, which, though you can see me, I look very young, was quite a while ago. But if you are ever in a position where you need to say in French that you were attacked by a wild boar, you would say, jete atake par un songlier.

Amy Shanahan: Ooh. You have to say that like 10 times for the listeners to practice that. Or they could Rewind.

Paul Warren: Or at least once more, they could rewind.

Billie Jo Smith: Jte atake par un sanglier. So sanglier is the wild boar, is my understanding. So if that just doesn't hold true and you want to say things like, you were attacked by a pigeon. That's a pigeon. Or a shein is a dog. That might be more likely for folks. Or a shat.

Amy Shanahan: If it's a cat.

Paul Warren: That's a cat, right?

Billie Jo Smith: That is a cat.

Paul Warren: Okay. Just wanted to make sure. I didn't want to get censored or anything.

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah. This is why your viewers are here. To hear what I have to say in French.

Paul Warren: Exactly. And we hope you've enjoyed this episode. And please do. No, I'm kidding. Billie Jo, I have to acknowledge that is not why we invited you here. But I just like hearing you speak French. And in your introduction, you said, for those of you who don't know me, I can't imagine any listener to lions and tigers and bears am. I would not know who you are. So the real reason we brought you here. Amy and I have had conversations about dedicating this season to the MI Practitioner. We. Following our conversation with you, we are going to embark on four conversations with four different practitioners, folks who are actually practicing motivational interviewing, who have agreed, knowing in advance, unlike, you have agreed to join us because there's a

particular aspect of their MI practice that they want to refine or sharpen, and they are willing to do that in a living conversation at the round table with Amy and I. So this is the season of the MI Practitioner, and Amy and I thought, given your particular experience, and Amy will correct me if I'm speaking out of turn here, but we thought with your particular experience, given that you are a skilled MI practitioner, you are a skilled MI trainer, and you are also an MI coach. So we thought we would invite you to the first episode of this season to share your thoughts about how Amy and I can effectively engage with these practitioners, supporting their growth in their MI practice within the frame of lions and tigers and bears. MI m, which you are very familiar with. So, Amy, I'm going to pause there and let you, clean up, elaborate, or clarify anything that I may have misrepresented to Billie Joe before we go forward.

Amy Shanahan: Well, I'd only do any of those things with your permission, Paul. And I don't have anything to correct or alter or tell you you're right or wrong, but I would like to add some things for the listeners, please. So what Billie Joe may have said in other episodes, I'm not sure, Billie Joe, if you share this, but you, are. Do private practice as well. You see people, Yeah, in your own practice, you see people who are professional sports folks. You see general adults. Right. So the mix. Not that people who play sports are not general.

Billie Jo Smith: They do bring something unique. And it just puts me one step closer to Steve Rolnick. But he doesn't know it yet, but I do.

00:10:00

Amy Shanahan: Oh, yeah, well. Well, we don't want to talk about that.

Paul Warren: This episode, I'm reminded of your very, personal conversation with Steve Rolnick where he was really concerned that you got exactly what you needed.

Billie Jo Smith: it was a fantastic conversation. I like to reference it as much as possible. and for any of the listeners that are curious, you can find it on YouTube where all three of us actually have the opportunity to ask Steve Rolnick a question. But I do think that I might be able to weave that into our discussion about practitioners and how we can grow our skills. But we'll see. I'll chalk that up as something I'll see if I can work in.

Amy Shanahan: I wasn't going to work in your affinity for Steve, but, you did hold your heart. While you were talking about Dr. Rollnick, I just revealed that, to the listeners. But I'm curious, from your frame of practice, Billie Joe, when you're thinking about things that you're fine tuning or, refining, what do you do? What do you find helpful? And how could Paul and I carry that into the following four episodes, even just to explore with other people? Because we all do things differently. How we practice, how we refine things. What would you recommend or what thoughts do you have about all of that?

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah, and I think that's a great question. And I think it ties in with how Paul kind of introduced today's session minus the French class that I taught for a few brief moments, but talking about how each person's going to come in talking about a different way or means to practice. And I was already kind of getting my thoughts together. But I think it ties in, Amy, to your question is that there's a lot of different ways and opportunities to practice skills. And I think that, because of the fact that I still do, Well, it's not just because I do private practice, because I truly believe and embrace mi that I want to continue to practice the skills and improve. And, I think that there's a lot of different ways. But in private practice, one that immediately comes to mind is having the opportunity to record, and code can be really, really helpful. because some of the other

things that come to mind when I think of practice may not necessarily be directly associated with my in the moment skills, though they are helpful and I'm sure we're going to talk about some of those things. but when you use recordings, you have the ability, one, to not only seek feedback from other practitioners in terms of, what they heard, what they noticed, but also, I think there's a lot of benefit in hearing yourself. And I'll speak to, you know, when I was newer in this practice is, I learned very quickly that I leaned heavily on questions. And I didn't. I wouldn't have thought that. I would have thought that I had a more natural balance. but having the opportunity to listen to my own recording providing me, provided me with some insight of, one, I did lean heavily into questions. and two, another thing that I noticed is that when I became uncomfortable, I would actually lean more heavily into closed questions, like I was trying to, to gain some sort of control and get the conversation back on track, if you will. and so I very intentionally set that as a goal to see if I could practice more reflections than questions, so improve that ratio in some way. and I think till the, to this day, like, that's still something that I would to see in my own practice, is that I lean more heavily on reflections because I do know and have seen the benefits of allowing people the opportunity to hear themselves talk about change and growth. and for your listeners, if they haven't picked up on that, there's some episodes about reflections that they could listen to.

Paul Warren: So you link plug for the podcast, by the way. Thank you. Your check is in the mail.

Billie Jo Smith: Yes. Well, thank you for having me. Have a great rest of your day.

Amy Shanahan: Everyone we know now. We now know how to speak French easily.

Paul Warren: Yes.

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah, I've bestowed a lot. Ah. On you all in the first few moments.

French plugs for the previous episodes and a YouTube connection to go see Dr. Rolnick and us, and us, talk together.

Amy Shanahan: Now listeners know why we have you back. Yeah,

Billie Jo Smith: well, you might. It must not be my charm, because they can't see that.

Amy Shanahan: It's your charm. It's your charm.

Billie Jo Smith: Didn't even do my hair for today's session.

Amy Shanahan: Well, maybe we could, like, share a, video recording of this so they could see your hair.

Billie Jo Smith: Oh, wonderful.

Amy Shanahan: But you were saying, Billie Joe, that, recording and coding was something that you could lean on. And you also noticed that you had a specific skill that you focused on. So if I'm correct in hearing it one at a time skill. So you were practicing one thing and trying to refine that.

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah, I. I think that it would be, for me, it would be overwhelming if I wanted to fix it all at one time. If I wanted to increase my reflections, decrease my questions, work on one of my global ratings to maybe be more empathic, to, you know,

give less advice.

Paul Warren: It.

Billie Jo Smith: That's just a lot. And I think that especially when you get into the moment in practicing, there's already, you know, if I'm. I already hit the record button, I get weird anyhow because I, for some reason I know that's on. And so I feel like if I had a mental checklist that I was trying to go through, I wouldn't be my authentic self or it would have the ability to pull me out of being my authentic self. And these are real life counseling sessions. And so it's not like I'm doing a real play in a training. Not that that's not beneficial, because it is. But folks are coming to see me with a purpose. And their purpose is not for. To see how well I can practice my MI stuff. I want to be mindful of that as well. But yeah, I would pick one thing with the intention of here is my focus today or here is my focus now for a period of time or whatever it may be.

Amy Shanahan: The alternative to that is what you were describing as Steve Rolnick would refer to as clutter.

Billie Jo Smith: M. Well, and that's another thing that you can hear Steve talk about in that YouTube video that I had mentioned with, Paul, Amy and I. and he talks about the six Cs. But reducing clutter is one of them. That all the stuff, all the jumble that runs through your head or can run through your head when a person, that you're sitting with is talking about their change or their growth. and so I think that there's enough clutter that runs through anyhow just naturally. Like, you know, can people hear the lawnmower that's outside right now? Or did I take the chicken out of the freezer for dinner? Or, if the session's running later, it's going to push back my, you know, just natural clutter. but, the idea of also my MI skills. Right. So. Oh, that was a question. Don't ask another question.

Oh, that was this. That was that. and so by picking one, it does have the ability to reduce that list of clutter of MI skills in my brain.

Amy Shanahan: I wish I had that in the beginning of my practice because I was trying to do it all. Go ahead, Paul.

Paul Warren: No, I was just going to say, in addition to the primary message that you're giving here, Billie Joe, about. well, before I say this, the m. Primary message that you're giving is pick one and then focus on that one. And I think that's very helpful. I think that certainly runs along the line of my experience as a coach, my experience as a practitioner. Also for myself. Two other messages, maybe even three that I'm getting from what you're saying. The first one is how you pointed out for me. And I think that. That Know thyself and the best way to approach my growth can be really helpful. Because you determined, you know, I could be overwhelmed. If I'm looking at too many things at the same time. For me, I need to look at one. Now. We may have a guest who may have a totally different experience. They may, you know, they may want to work on all the ors simultaneously. So, again, I think really being tuned into the. For me is going to be very helpful. The other thing that you mentioned, and you said it quite quickly, but I want to go back to it and really underline it, is you said, I listened to my own recordings. Because oftentimes that's not the case. The recording is submitted, a coder listens to it and then gives the feedback. I agree with you. I think there is tremendous benefit if you're able to. Some people find it very difficult to listen

00:20:00

Paul Warren: to their own voice. They find that distracting or whatever. I think with the practice of motivation, motivational interviewing. It's helpful to confront that barrier so

that we can listen more closely. And you gave such a great example. I noticed that when I'm anxious, I rely more on questions. And if I'm even more m. Anxious, they start to turn into closed questions. And you heard that. And you hearing that is going to be very different than me hearing that and reporting that to you.

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah. And I know that again, for me, one, I love this idea of honoring autonomy. Because just because any of these things worked in my practice, like you said, Paul, does not mean that anybody else who's listening to this episode, agrees with any of it. And they may, in fact, want to focus on more than one thing. but for me, there's some anxiety to having someone else listen to my recording. and it even goes up the more skilled I believe that they are in MI M. Cause I'm like, I'm going to look like I don't know what I'm doing. so one, it reduces the anxiety a little bit to just have myself listen to my recording because I don't necessarily have to submit it to somebody else to gain from it. so that's one thing I feel a little bit more comfortable. But also the idea of one, I think it cuts down on this idea of our buy in or my buy in. You know, I'm hearing it for myself. So I think about sometimes sitting in coaching sessions or in supervision where maybe someone doesn't agree with the feedback that we're providing. it kind of takes that off the table. If the individual is listening to their own recordings, the only person that has to buy into it is them. They don't have to agree. If I saw it, their empathy was low. that may or may not be true, but it takes away some of that defensiveness because it's just me against myself. And, you know, I don't have anything to prove to anybody other than me of what I'm trying to accomplish. I also think it helps me kind of strengthen my own knowledge and understanding of M MI and what it is and the skills. And because I'm hearing it, I'm listening to it, I'm learning it. I'm growing that for myself.

Amy Shanahan: I'm glad you're talking about because I was going to ask the question, what do folks do if they don't have access to somebody who can code or give them

feedback? But listening to yourself reminds me of some things that we practice in MI M. The person knows this. And that's been my experience too. Like you said, when coaching people, I ask them, what did you like? What did you notice happened? What else did you notice? And I stay with that for a while. oftentimes when I say, what do you like about what you did? The first thing they say is what they didn't like or what they didn't do. And as a coach, I don't have to really point out something that I noticed because they already did. So, I'm just guiding the conversation, reinforcing it. They're really picking up the pieces. And the other thing that I was picking up on is when we, because you said, you know, you're working with real people, you're not. I think Bill would call that. That's when you're practicing MI M. If we do a role play or a real play together, that's dress rehearsal, we could just play around and, and practice in that way. because I was thinking at times that I also have paid attention myself when I'm trying to figure out how well I'm doing is how are people responding, to what I, what I'm saying. And I had a recent exchange and I thought what is going on here? I'm just providing simple reflections and I'm not going deep with this person for some reason and I could tell that they were just spinning the same story. And I, yeah, I heard it, you know, and I wanted to shift from that. But being able to be aware of how, it's, how people are responding to you is, is part of what I've picked up on too.

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah. And Amy, to go with what you said about people who may not have access to a coach, or to superv regarding the mi, or their MI skills, being able to listen to your own recordings is I think an easy way to, if you're interested in growing your skills and you don't even have to have, you know, like we're talking about coding and we're talking about like I'm hinting at coding tools specifically. Folks don't even necessarily have to have any knowledge or expertise in using those codes to, to be able to grow their skills. You know, like you said Amy, the ORs, somebody could just be mindful of listening to themselves using open ended questions, affirmations, reflections

and summaries. and that's, that's a fine place to start. It's just as good as any other place I think. and then again to Paul's point about just picking one thing, I think about trainings and we have this like coding sheet. It's not a formal tool, it's just a sheet that has the skills on it that people can be mindful of. And I feel like frequently we have to remind folks like you don't have to put a check in each of these boxes. Like this

00:25:00

Billie Jo Smith: is not a form for you to see what all you can hit. It's really just to get an idea of what it is that's going on. And so again reducing the importance of saying like you have to focus on all of MI today, and hit the mark on each one is, you know, you don't have to, you can just pick one, don't worry about the sheet.

Paul Warren: You know, something that Amy said links I think very strongly to what you're, the overarching kind of observation you're making of your own sort of growth process. And I would frame it as engaging in reflective practice, meaning whether you are working with a coder or whether you're looking at your simple, you know, you're collecting ores. There's a commitment to looking back at what you did so that you can have a sense of is this what I intended? Is there something I want to grow here and what are the strengths that I'm bringing to the work as well? And I mean ideally, wouldn't it be wonderful that you would have the opportunity to listen to your own recordings and maybe also have a coder listen to your recordings that you, you can engage and have feedback sort of with your observations as well as their observations because chances are they're going to meet somewhere. There's going to be some overlap. But again, I would think of that as engaging intentionally in reflective practice.

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah, and Paul, I love that you said intentionally because I think that's a

big part of this that I necessarily wasn't going to hit on. but now that you said it, I think it's important that we recognize that for my practice I wanted to engage in this and to get better and to enhance particular skills. And I think that that's really where the value can come in is if the folks that are engaging in the practice are doing so intentionally because they themselves have chosen to do this versus my boss is telling me that I need to, you know. And I think of a time where Amy and I worked together, and we had an, I'll call it an MI initiative within the work that we did. and I think that the benefit of the practice really came with the folks that saw the value and wanted to use it in such a way to grow their skills. So I imagine that most folks that are coming to your podcast are coming to. To it because they want to learn something and, or grow them their skills. So this may not apply to any of those folks. M however being mindful of folks that maybe aren't there yet in terms of their desire interest to grow their skills and how if we're in the position of a supervisor or a coach, how we might be able to talk with that individual about that, that might be a place for us to start in. The practice is just talking about how MI M could be useful in their work, not trying to get them to be better because we think that they should. I do think that they should, but they need to find that on their own.

Amy Shanahan: I'm loving the word that. I love the word intentionality. And just thinking about it for, from the perspective of I think the first time I ever went through a script, well, not the first time but when I Went through a script. Bill Miller was leading this workshop, and he was having us look at a script. I don't know, unbeknownst to us, maybe we didn't know it was him, but it was his interaction. But, yeah, it was really powerful. But to even think about listening to our own tapes and asking ourselves, from a reflective practitioner perspective, what was my intention in that moment? What was I trying to do when I said that? Because then Bill would pause the process and five people would say what they thought the practitioner's intention was. And he said, well, what would you say? Or maybe what would you think of saying next? Like, to kind of

preempt and get them an opportunity to say what they would say and for what reason? And I remember him saying that it's okay that we get one step ahead of the person, but we don't want to get. We don't want to get too far ahead so that we're no longer listening. But that's what he. What stood out to me, what he shared about his practice of doing things intentionally. and I think for me as a learner practitioner and refining my skills, it makes me think of

00:30:00

Amy Shanahan: times when I was like, well, I wanted to see what the. The issue was or what the barriers were, because my habit was leaning into sustained talk. And I didn't know that until I got feedback, till I listened to my recordings. And then I started to actually become more and more aware of it, because I wasn't as aware of it as I would have hoped, I guess, is what I want to say. but then when I started to listen and then think about, well, why the heck did I ask that question in that way, or reflect back that thing instead of. And. And then I was able to figure out the. The more about the why. But that took some time.

Billie Jo Smith: Oh, sorry. Go ahead, Paul.

Paul Warren: No, please, go ahead, Billie. Joan.

Billie Jo Smith: Well, I was going to say, I think intentionality is. Is definitely a thing that I have chosen to pay attention to at different times in my practice. you know, as I maybe have felt I've done a good job of building reflections, there may be moments where, based on what I hear in my own recordings, I want to be more mindful of my intention. What is my intention when using a particular skill or, the intention of, maybe where I am

in the tasks, you know, so that can be and has been a topic of mine in practice at times, is being just being mindful based on what I've heard, from my own practice.

Paul Warren: I mean, you and Amy, Billie Jo are both Making a really strong case for. In the process of reflective practice, questioning the intention of the intervention. And, and again, not to second guess yourself, not to say, oh, I should have, did, should have done this more from the perspective of, okay, this is the choice I made in that, moment. What was behind that particular choice. And it's funny, you know, listening to my own tapes and this will be no surprise to either of you or probably any of our listeners. Listening to my own tapes, I realized that, the area that I needed to focus on was that I talked too much. And I don't believe it. Well, what was that?

Billie Jo Smith: I said I don't believe it.

Paul Warren: Oh, thank you. so in true form, I'm going to say a little bit more here, which is that, you know, in. It's very easy to be kind of a Monday morning quarterback and sort of say, oh, I should have done this, or I could have done this. And in some way, I think all we can do when we're reflecting on our own practice is look at what we did, acknowledge that that's what we did at that particular moment. Based on what my experience of that moment was, and because I'm really reminded of the fact that there is no one right answer. You, you know, you, Billie Joe, could be talking to a climate client, Amy could be talking to a client. I could be talking to that same client. And we, the three of us may experience that moment very differently and may try a very different. We might use a different skill. We might, you know, a closed question might be appropriate. So one of the messages that I really try to convey to myself as well as to the folks that I have the privilege of, partnering with in coaching is that don't get so hung up on that. There's only one right answer to what you could have done here. let's

talk about why you did what you did. And then let's think about, you know, in the future, if, if this moment came up or if the person said this, what are the options as opposed to the right answer?

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah, and that's such a great way to look at it. Pollen. And I think it also taps into me another way to practice. And hopefully I'm not derailing the conversation, but the, the benefit of learning communities, because now we have a group of people looking at something together and we're able to recognize the, the variety of responses, or insights that folks might have. And so I love being able to sit with other people and hear their thoughts and their reactions. Cause I'm like, oh, that's good. I never thought I'd.

Amy Shanahan: I missed that one. How did I miss that? Yeah.

Billie Jo Smith: and so I think that that also helps to enrich the practice because you have that opportunity to hear other perspectives. And it does, for me, help grow my own mi. Practice because it allows, me to start, like, knocking down some of my own walls and really opening up to

00:35:00

Billie Jo Smith: a variety of different things.

Amy Shanahan: You know, when you're talking about the intentionality and these m moments. I think you said Paul moments a few times, and it made me think of another guest we had, Laura Saunders. And I'm stealing this from you, Laura. Thank you. If you're listening, because it means more to me in this context too, that whether we're

practicing with a friend or a colleague or a family member, or we, have a 20 minute segment or a 50 minute segment that we're having someone listen to, or it's a real session with somebody. Laura used this concept of this is a selfie. You're taking one selfie. It's a moment in time and at that time, and, this is how I'm taking away from it. The concept of the taking the selfie is it wasn't my best selfie, or maybe I could have turned my head a different way or fixed my hair a little differently, or the lighting was not as optimal as I'd want it to be. At the same time. It's still an okay picture, right? It's not the end all, be all of the. It's the, it has to be the best all the time. so when I'm coaching people who are just practicing, this is your time to decide what angle you want to hold the camera or, whether you want to smile or not smile. This is your time to try things on. And even in real life, when I was coaching this gentleman and he said, oh, I noticed that twice my fixing reflex kicked in. And I said, and overall, what do you think about the whole picture? And he said, well, I still think she felt engaged. She didn't really. I felt a little, you know. Well, no, not that. And, and change the tune. And I said, and you were able to course correct or shift gears. And. And I said, but really. And I, I use the term the overall gestalt of the session. And he said, yeah, I think I'd give myself a four out of five. I said, okay, all right.

Billie Jo Smith: Well, that's also important because I do think that we can sometimes self deprecate. I do think that sometimes we can, ah, again, I'LL speak for me. I can lean into this want or desire to perfect my skill and be a perfectionist. And again, I'm gonna go back to this conversation with Steve because I think, for me, it was so profound. he talks about a period of time where he didn't feel like he was doing MI Well, I can't wrap my head around that. Like you. This is your baby. What do you mean you weren't doing it?

Paul Warren: Well?

Billie Jo Smith: and yet I bring it up because I think it's really humbling. Because if there's a point in time where Steve recognized within his skills that he could be doing something more MI consistent, then I, who did not have any hand in creating MI should not expect that my skill set is gonna somehow be better than Steve's or be perfect.

Paul Warren: You know, you're noticing, I think, something that Steve really brought to that conversation, which is that he communicated not perhaps as directly as we're communicating it right now, but he engages in reflective practice. He realized that he was not. He said, I realized I wasn't doing quality conversations. And, you know, it also took me back to something that Steve, Rolnick. Dr. Rolnick said during my training of trainers, which was in Ireland, he. Because he and Bill came in, of course, and talked to us, and he said, you know, remember, folks, people get mi m. Quote unquote, right about 70% of the time. And that's fantastic. So it's not about the A. It's not about perfection. Like, you just said, Billie Joe. And it kind of reminds me of something that you said earlier, which prompted me to want to actually ask you a Follow Billie Joe. A follow up, closed question.

Billie Jo Smith: Okay.

Paul Warren: All right. You alluded to this. You didn't say this, but this flashed into my head because I have heard other people say it. And I wondered if you experienced this when you practiced motivational interviewing. Did you ever experience, fraud syndrome? Like. Like you're a fraud. Like, I don't really know what I'm doing here, but I'm. I'm doing this as best I possibly can. Have you ever experienced that? I know I have, and I

00:40:00

Paul Warren: know other people have brought it up. I just wondered if that was ever part of your experience.

Billie Jo Smith: you said it in a past tense, like, it doesn't still happen. Yes, of course. Of course I felt that way. There are times now that I still feel that way. I'm like, what am I doing?

Paul Warren: So let's normalize that. Let's just say that that's normal. Yes, for sure that that can come up.

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah. And I think it continues to come up in the practice, and I don't know where. I mean, part of it's probably just me and what I bring to the table. And I think another part of it is because of how pass I have become about MI that I truly have seen how it benefits folks that I work with, how it's changed my practice as a clinician, that there are times where I do feel like a fraud. You know, I'm like, what. What am I doing? Like, who am I to be doing this? You know, like, who do I think I am? so, yeah, I don't think it's a past tense thing. I don't think I've necessarily moved. Gotten rid of it. I think, to use the words of Dr. Bill Miller, I've just quieted down. It's m. There. Just be quiet. Go. Go find something else to do right now.

Paul Warren: Yes.

Amy Shanahan: Quiet.

Paul Warren: Yeah, yeah. you know, as. As we start to sadly bring this conversation. And of course, you will come back at some point, Billie Joe. I'm just putting that out to the universe. I. I have to tell you, what you brought to the table has inspired me in a very

particular way about how we will go forward, uniquely, with each of the practitioners that joins us at the Round table. And I really want to underline this point because the. The way you said it, it just strongly resonated with me when you talked about learning communities. Because what Amy and I are attempting, I think, to do in the next four episodes, is to create a micro learning community where we're not there, quote unquote, with the answers. We're not there to fix anything. We're there simply to reflect on the person's practice, reflect on what they decide is going to be their focus, help create activities where they're going to get the opportunity to practice that focus, and then all of us will reflect on it. So, you're saying that really reminds me that Amy and I will not be there as experts. We're there as reflectors and collaborative partners. And I feel so fortunate that you put that on the table for us.

Amy Shanahan: I was going to piggyback on that and say, what a great way to set the stage, Billie Joe, because of how you underscored the uniqueness of each of us. And we practice differently, we reflect differently, how we refine, our skills are different, and it really sets the stage for that whole autonomy support that again. Yeah. We're not here to tell people what they should do, how they should practice how they should refine their skills. But our message to any learner is there's multitudes of ways to refine our skills and to settle into. And I'm going to land on the word genuineness and authenticity. Because what I've started to adapt now is that not everything that comes out of my mouth is MI M skills, micro skills. And when I reflect back on that, sometimes my fixing reflex kicks in. Sometimes it's just me being Amy and being authentic and playing around or being playful or interjecting humor. And before I'd be like, oh, no, that wasn't an or, But I appreciate you helping us set the foundation, for inviting other practitioners to share their experience and what they're refining and why and how are they going about it.

Billie Jo Smith: I think that there's, so many different ways. And again, I don't know if I necessarily like, wrapped and put a bow on the next couple sessions, because we, you know, but learning communities are a great way. I think it's one of the things I love most about the Mint community, again, MI M Network of Trainers community, is having the opportunity to meet so many people that just share a common passion

00:45:00

Billie Jo Smith: or, you know, a desire for something. You know, like, we have one particular thing and it's MI that draws us together. And then you. For me, I have the ability to learn so much from people that do so many different things because we don't all practice the same way. we don't even have the same professions. And so to be able to learn from people's perspectives and their experience, and then I just take little bits from each, things that I carry with me, you know, that then lean into my own practice. You know, I will always think of the forum where you guys did your session on intention. Like, I carry that with me. I carry Steve's six Cs, though he only does five. He only tells us what five of them are in that video. But I hold all six with me, and I just think of how each person that I encounter, because we come from unique perspectives, I just take a little bit and weaves itself into how I practice. It weaves itself into allowing me to become more genuine because I. That becomes who I am as an MI practitioner, then. And I think that just having the ability to be with others in a community, has been so beneficial for me in my MI M. You know,

Paul Warren: one of the things that I love about what you just said is I could almost visualize that kind of resonating with something and then like bringing it in, incorporating it and making it your own. But you're inspired by something that's been offered by somebody else. So it's. So our practice becomes this like, eclectic

internalization of all these generous offerings that the community allows us. And you know, one other thing quickly that I just would want to touch on, that you brought to light. Illuminated, I believe, and I'm going to use a phrase that I don't particularly like, but it's apt for what I take away from what you said is you, you, you acknowledge something that I had never even thought of is, does this person have skin in the game? M meaning. And I mean, I'm gonna. I don't want to assume, but I'm gonna be fairly sure we're gonna choose people who are gonna be our practitioners who are passionate about wanting to self reflect and wanting to grow their practice. Your point is so poignant though, because if the person does not have their own motivation, desire, passion, to want to continue to grow, to want to honestly look at what they're doing, then they're only going to reach a particular level in terms of their abilities. And I'm not judging that level, that that level may be very effective for what they do. But being a member of the MINT community gives us an opportunity for continuous growth. At least that's been my experience.

Amy Shanahan: Yeah.

Billie Jo Smith: And Paul, I appreciate you saying like that you're not judging it, because I have to be honest, there was a point in time where I was judging it. As a trainer, as a coach, I would want to get people to see the light. Like, oh, you don't think MI is that important? I'm not doing a good job, then I haven't convinced you. and because of my network within mi, M, because of my own supervision. And I'll give credit to Bob Jope here at this point because he was my mentor in the Mint. Plus, helped me to realize that I even have to look at this from an MI lens and that I'm not here to get people to do anything. So as a trainer, my job as the trainer is not to get people to see or to believe that the reason that I'm here, that you need to buy into it. I would love that for you. and I do. I very strongly feel that, like, if. If everyone walked out of the training, like that was

the best training. I want to do this.

Paul Warren: Like, yes, Smells like persuasion to me.

Amy Shanahan: There's a little piece of that in all of us. Maybe sometimes

Billie Jo Smith: quiet it down, right? Be quiet like that's right. but yeah, so that, that was, that's an important part for me. And I guess even practicing my skills as a trainer and a learner and a coach. Right. It's not just practicing my skills as a practitioner,

00:50:00

Billie Jo Smith: but I do that. but even in those roles, to recognize that people that I'm working with, I have to honor their autonomy and I need to have acceptance and I need to not judge it. And if someone's only goal is to, I don't know, ask more open questions than closed, like they get to decide that. and maybe I can explore it with them. but ultimately it's theirs and I'm not here to judge that.

Amy Shanahan: You know, I was thinking about not only my own journey, where I probably veered off the road because I was doing not off the road, but veered off the path.

Billie Jo Smith: Get back on the road, Amy.

Amy Shanahan: The dirt road. I wanted to go, atv.

Billie Jo Smith: Now you make me want to start singing.

Amy Shanahan: Yeah.

Billie Jo Smith: Chilling on a dirt road Laid back. Okay.

Amy Shanahan: We're not here for that.

Billie Jo Smith: We're not here for the past.

Amy Shanahan: I love it. But when I was in a different role in my career and it at the time, Mi, wasn't practical, I think. Of course, I don't think that way now because I think it's practical in any role I have played.

Billie Jo Smith: I wish listeners could see Paul's face

Amy Shanahan: when you said, I know he did wince, but somebody in our practice group shared at one point that she bought in. She liked mi. She felt it was useful. She liked coming to the learning community, but she wasn't sure that she wanted to invest the time in refining her practice because she didn't see the utility in using it for the particular role that she played at that time in her career. And so that really speaks to the journey that people take. and having that autonomy. But really thinking about, is this the toolbox that I need at this time? And it's really up to you, not just on, what you're practicing, but if you're wanting to invest the time into really refining and practicing all the skills and strategies.

Billie Jo Smith: And Amy, as you say that, I feel like I also want to mention how grateful I feel to have had the opportunity to practice in a variety of different settings. I was fortunate enough to have, mentors and coaches that were in my area, that were in my

job. so it didn't require me to go seeking out folks and cross time zones and like, I could walk down the hall. I also had a community, a learning Community. and I have to recognize that not everybody has. That not everybody has access to people the way that I have. And so if there are folks out there that listening to your podcast is their means of practicing, like, that's okay. Practicing is practicing. and if the only person available to listen to their coding is them, like, that's practicing. and there are ways to find people and communities if that's the direction that they want to go in to expand their own practice as well. But yes, I feel very, very fortunate that all of those options that we've discussed thus far, have been right at my doorstep since the beginning of this journey. Yeah. And have only gotten bigger.

Amy Shanahan: Yeah, same.

Paul Warren: You have a lot of gratitude in your attitude.

Amy Shanahan: Could you say that in French to wrap us up? Nobody can see Billie Joe. She's like, choking.

Paul Warren: She's like, I don't think so.

Billie Jo Smith: Laughing.

Paul Warren: Well, I'll tell you something. I. I will close with one perhaps related thought. And that thought is I have a hunch about what the undefined 6th C is.

Billie Jo Smith: Oh my gosh, Please share. And I have to remember if I ever see Steve. I need to ask him, should

Amy Shanahan: we share the five first or you want to give the missing C?

Paul Warren: Well, the missing one is not at the end. The missing one is actually the third

Amy Shanahan: one, I believe in the beginning.

Paul Warren: So we want to let go of clutter. We want to let go of being clever, blank. Which I'll tell you my hunch. Then we want to bring curiosity, calm and compassion.

Paul Warren: The blank, I believe is letting go of clutter, letting go of being clever and trying to control.

Amy Shanahan: Oh,

Paul Warren: my hunch.

Amy Shanahan: If that's not the missing C, maybe he'd like it.

Paul Warren: Well, it's for sale.

Amy Shanahan: We'll ask him.

Paul Warren: No, actually I would donate it, but

Amy Shanahan: you know, I really love that. And, and even thinking about the listeners. Thinking about what, what

00:55:00

Amy Shanahan: are they practicing? That's part of practicing too. And the first three Cs, maybe the listeners are picking up on that, are the stuff that can get in our way. Clutter, being clever and being in control. I love that.

Paul Warren: Yeah.

Amy Shanahan: But the anecdotes are the last 3C. Calmness, curiosity and compassion. They're easy to remember after you hear them, a time or two. Like, I had to really, like, memorize pace for the spirit. But those six Cs for some reason stick because they have practical application. That's my two cents that I'm adding to your 25 cents.

Billie Jo Smith: Well, and I think it's also like when we talked about practice in this episode. We talked about, you know, like the oars, the orcs got a lot of attention and focus. and at the same time, I think to the point that you're both making is sometimes we can practice things other than the micro skills. We can practice bringing the spirit or inviting the spirit into the space. We can practice the six C's. Are our feet on the ground? Do I feel calm? am I relinquishing control? All of these different things. We're definitely adding control as the sixth one. So we have to ask Steve if that's okay. Is that what you meant by that? Because that's where we went with it. but those can very much be part of our intentional practice. if that is the, the skill, the thing that we want to focus on in that moment. It doesn't necessarily have to be complex versus simple reflections.

Amy Shanahan: But it could be.

Billie Jo Smith: But it doesn't.

Paul Warren: And if I'm remembering correctly, and I'm sure Billie Joe, you will correct me if I'm not, or I can totally be sure that Amy will. Is that what Steve said about the six Cs is he said if you bring those to the conversation, you're more than halfway there.

Amy Shanahan: Yep.

Billie Jo Smith: Yeah. And I think that's what it is. You know, like I think sometimes. And again, I'll speak to my own practice. Yeah. Mic drop. is that it was easy for me to latch on to focusing on the oars. And so as an early practitioner, I did that. and then as I advanced my skills then it was really, finessing. And that's where being mindful of things like what was my intention? Or did I say that thing with the spirit? Or am I focused on the six Cs? Like that's where I think you really bring the polish in, and make it shiny.

Paul Warren: Yeah, yeah. And you know, you, I, I can't help but say this. You also just identified. Another thing that Amy and I can really consider as we have the privilege of working with these particular practitioners, is that we need to be aware of where they are in their development or their growth process with the practice of motivational interviewing. Because you just identified your kind of staging or process that you went through. And we don't want to push or direct somebody in a place where they're not. That's not the area they are in at this. So it truly is meeting the person

Amy Shanahan: where the person is at.

Billie Jo Smith: Yep. I think that is a great way to sum up, this discussion. Because I think that's m that's so important. It's an important ingredient in when we talk about

intentional practices. How do we meet the person that we're with, where they are, and explore where they'd like this journey to take them?

Amy Shanahan: No expectations.

Billie Jo Smith: None.

Paul Warren: And no pressure. Yeah, that's right. Call curious and compassionate.

Billie Jo Smith: Absolutely.

Paul Warren: Absolutely. Billie Jo, thank you so much.

Amy Shanahan: Thank you. Always a pleasure.

Billie Jo Smith: This was. Has been wonderful. It always is wonderful. but I do truly enjoy the opportunity to just talk with my MI m friends about MI Things.

Amy Shanahan: Well, we hope and trust that the listeners will be all excited as well and want to listen to more.

Paul Warren: I can't think of a better way. Ted started off.

Billie Jo Smith: Oh, I can't wait to hear all the episodes to come and how they kind of have snowballed from this conversation. It'll be exciting. Yes.

Amy Shanahan: Thanks, Billie Jo.

Paul Warren: Thank you both.

Paul Warren: Thanks for listening to episode 37, Lions and Tigers and Bears MI. Be on the lookout for new episodes coming out soon.

00:59:58