

APPENDIX B

Motivational Interviewing (MI) Guide for Biofeedback Study

Underlying spirit of MI: PACE – partnership, acceptance, compassion, and evocation

- We try not to come at the participant as the expert with something to offer to someone deficient. We treat people as the experts on themselves. Then, we collaboratively work to draw out motivation to change from within the participant (partnership + evocation).
- Recognize the person's full worth, whether or not we agree with their choices, and do everything in their best interest, not our own.
- MI elicits change talk from the participant, not enforce on them what we think they 'should' do. People will be at different levels of wanting to engage with the treatment.
- It feels like a dance, not a wrestle. We don't "win" if they decide to practice heart rate variability biofeedback (HRVB).

MI is not a way of tricking people into changing; it is a way of activating their own motivation and resources for change.

Our Goals:

- **More reflections than questions – shoot for 2 reflections to every question.**
- **Open questions are preferable to closed questions**
- **Notice strengths, talents, or effort with an affirmation when possible.**
- **Look for and reflect change talk when you hear it.**
- **Summarize the conversation at the end noting both sustain and change elements of the interview.**
- **Remember that the questions below are a guide – you can put things in your own words and guide the conversation naturally.**

First Session

Beginning of Session 1 (before jumping into the rest of the protocol; ~5 minutes)

1. Start by asking how the participant is currently managing stress/emotional difficulties (make sure to shoot for at least 2 reflections for every question).
2. Then ask what they know about biofeedback/why they would like to do biofeedback. If they don't have any reasons, ask permission to tell them some of the benefits of HRVB and ask which of the benefits they'd be interested in. You can use the bullets on the last page of this protocol to guide you.
3. Ask: "How would your life be different if your HRVB practice were effective?"

End of Session 1 (~5 minutes)

4. Invite the participant to do 20 minutes of practice twice each day (with the ear clip) to get the full benefit of HRVB.
5. Ask the following questions in your own words (remembering to use at least 2 reflections for each question):
6.
 - a. "Why would you want to do HRVB?"
 - b. "How might you go about it in order to succeed?"
 - c. "How important to you is it to practice HRVB, and why?"

7. At the end, ask in your own words: “So, what do you think you’ll do?”

Later Sessions

Start of Session (~5 minutes)

1. Ask how they feel their practice is going and look at their practice log with them.
2. Questions will depend on if they **a)** are practicing nearly every day **b)** if they are practicing half of the days or **c)** are practicing hardly any days. Always affirm any efforts they are making towards doing HRVB (even thinking about doing it).
 - a. “What benefits are you seeing from your daily practice?” “What do you think has made you so successful?”
 - b. “What is different about the days you do practice HRVB?”
 - c. “What are some barriers to practicing HRVB for you?”
3. Continue to reflect and ask questions depending on what comes up.

End of Session (~5 minutes)

1. Remind the participant that the goal is to practice 20 minutes twice each day.
2. Ask: “On a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is not important at all and 10 is the most important thing in your life right now, how important is it for you to practice HRVB?”
 - a. Ask something to the effect of: “Why a 5 and not a 2?” etc.
 - i. This invokes change talk (vs. “why a 2 and not a 5?”)
 - b. Could follow up with: “What would it take to get you from a 5 to a 7?”
3. Ask: “What do you think you will do to practice HRVB this week?”

Additional strategies for when participants give you lots of sustain talk (favoring the status quo)

1. Reflections are the first response.
 - Double-barreled reflections (e.g., On the one hand, you feel like daily HRVB is too time-consuming, and on the other, you feel like it could help reduce your stress)
 - Turning up the volume (e.g., You don’t feel like this would do anything for you)
2. Emphasizing autonomy – friendly and supportive, matter-of-fact statement.
 - “Nobody can decide that for you.”
 - “I wonder what you will choose to do.”
 - “You have some options here.”
3. Reframing
 - I don’t think biofeedback will do anything for me. (“You want to see some evidence for its effectiveness”).

Researched Benefits of Regular HRVB Practice

- Improved ability to regulate stress and adapt to the environment
- Improved ability to regulate emotions
- Improved focus
- Improved sleep quality
- Improved management of chronic pain
- Decreased symptoms of depression and anxiety
- Decreased blood pressure and improved cardiovascular health
- Better athletic performance and recovery