

### **What is biofeedback?**

Through the use of sensors applied to areas of the body like the scalp or hand, biofeedback can help an individual learn to control certain physiologic processes, like heart rate and breathing.

Biofeedback has been used in clinical practice for decades. Recent studies continue to demonstrate its efficacy in treating a variety of conditions, from chronic pain to mental illness. Due to its widespread applications, biofeedback may be of benefit to your clients. It may also help you cope with the stress of being a social worker.

### **Why learn biofeedback?**

Whether you perform social work in a private practice, a school setting, or an addiction center, biofeedback training may be able to enhance the treatment you provide your clients.

For instance, a [2005 study](#) demonstrated biofeedback's potential for treating substance abuse patients. Participants who received biofeedback were more likely to stay in their treatment programs and even to abstain from substance use a year later. Biofeedback has also shown promise for [children with ADHD and other learning disorders](#); sufferers of [generalized anxiety disorder](#); and individuals [with life stress](#).

### **How can social workers practice biofeedback?**

Non-profit organization [Biofeedback Certification International Alliance](#) (BCIA) certifies clinical health care providers - including social workers - to practice biofeedback following completion of an educational program and exam. Their website also includes a [directory of regional biofeedback organizations](#). Local organizations can provide another opportunity to learn about biofeedback as you work toward becoming a board-certified practitioner.

### **Could biofeedback help you?**

Even if you aren't interested in adding biofeedback to your clinical practice, you can also find a [board-certified practitioner](#) to receive treatment yourself. You can also purchase handheld biofeedback devices, such as the highly regarded [emWave2](#).

As social workers, we all know the importance of self-care, but it can be hard to make time to take care of yourself. With the amount of stress social workers face every day, social workers must find a way to relax and take care of their own needs. Biofeedback is just one more tool social workers can add to their arsenal for ensuring their clients' - and their own - well-being.