

Western Australian Solution Focused Interest Group (WASFIG) Meeting 8



WASFIG Best Hopes: Share, Connect, Grow, Learn, Develop

1. Share SF knowledge and update our SF knowledge since original training;
2. Connect and network with like-minded SF practitioners to enhance community and reduce isolation;
3. Grow interest in the SFBT approach in Perth and WA to do our bit to change the world one SF step at a time;
4. Learn where and with whom SF might be best applied in our practices;
5. Develop our clinical effectiveness and efficiency (we may only have a set number of sessions so how do we do the very best with each session as though it may be the only one or the last).

When: Saturday 25 June 2022 9:30am-11:30am (WA time)

Where: Zoom

Attendees: Yvette Strawbridge, Michael Bazeley, Shona Scallan, Ruth Leveson, Brent Dalgleish, Sara Tovska, Theresa Acutt, Andrea Yeo, Susan Colmar, Rod Sherwin, Lisa Cregan, Violeta Groza, Nadia Truong, Iga Bishop, Fiona Skahill, Lisa Jooste; Steve Runciman and Kerry Drummond (Co-coordinators).

Apologies: Michele Thomas, Kris Giesen. Amy O'Brien, Kym Madden, Keera Pethick, Johanna Saltis, Melanie Whiteside.

Group Facilitator: Kerry Drummond

Group Presenter: Steve Runciman

Topic: Frameworks of Solution Focused Practice – I SHAPES ME EARS

At our June meeting Steve Runciman presented one template for conducting a first session, I SHAPES ME EARS, how to know when to do what in a SFBT session, and showed parallels and inclusion with the Connie-Froerer SF Diamond Approach. Steve will present the EARS part of this model at an upcoming interest group in 2023. Steve provided a practical and inspiring presentation that walked us through each letter of his I SHAPES ME template, with suggested SF questions for the client at each point. Steve showed us how we can 'reconceptualise' the intake process in a SF way before we ask the Best Hopes question so that we are searching for solution from the get-go. Steve reminded us of the importance of approaching the session with a SF consciousness as "we cannot change a problem with the same consciousness that created it".

Kerry Drummond then presented a model of how Steve's I SHAPES ME EARS fits with Elliott Connie and Adam Froerer's SF Diamond Approach, and where the models differ as SFBT 1.0 meets SFBT 2.0 as Mark McKergow has suggested. Some of the key points were:

Desired Outcome/ Best Hopes – I ntake (referral problems (as seen by clients or VIPs; assessment info (provided or obtained), H opes (instead of problems), goals (contract) and E xceptions, instances and coping.

Exceptions, Instances and coping questions fits into the **Best Hopes** section when clients respond to the Best Hopes question with their problem story. This is our cue to listen for exceptions, instances and how the client coped with our 'SF ears' as Jacqui von Cziffra-Bergs from the Solution Focused Institute of South Africa has suggested. Coping questions are framed as Evan George has suggested with 'one foot in acknowledgement and one foot in possibility' where we acknowledge the client's struggle and add on a question that leaves room for possibility moving forward in the client's life. For example, "Gosh, that sounds like you have really had a hard week; and given things have been so difficult for you lately, I am wondering how you were able to find a way to still get the children to school and make it to work on time?"

History of the Outcome - Exceptions, Instances and coping questions is also a good fit where we look for signs of the clients Best Hopes/Desired Outcome showing up in the past in terms of instances, or when the problem happened less or not at all for exceptions; or for how the client coped when the problem showed up.

Resource Talk (Resources of the Outcome) – Strengths, resources (problem free talk and pre-session change), networks

Preferred Future – Alternative Future Signs and Miracle Question or Tomorrow Question

Scaling – Progress Scaled (0-10/10), Signs of Future Progress Scaled (x+1) - no longer part of the Diamond Approach as this was dropped with the updated version in 2021 as the Description section can also elicit similar detail to Scaling – Resources = X on scale, Preferred Future = X + 1 and History of the Outcome = X-1. Scaling questions can be helpful following the description to help summarise the session and invite the client to identify their next steps.

Closing – Message (Acknowledgement; Compliments; reminder x+1, try this, look out for progress), would be in the Closing section of the Diamond Approach which has simplified over the evolution of SFBT 1.0 to SFBT 2.0 from a more involved acknowledgement and complimenting process and inviting the client to notice their Best Hopes showing up over the next week, to simply ending the session and asking whether the client would like another session without a message at all.

Closing – Evaluation (How was today for you? Meeting again? When?) would be in the closing section as well. Evan George has suggested to ask the client, 'what has stood out for you today that might be helpful to remember?' This is a way to invite our client to both evaluate/summarise the session and to find out if there is anything the client would like to focus more on next session.

Follow up sessions – (Elicit, Amplify, Reinforce, Start again) - not depicted in the Diamond Approach but Elliott Connie and Adam Froerer have suggested to start second or follow up sessions with 'So, what's been better?' since we spoke last (**Elicit**). The client can answer that things have been better in which case we find out what has been better (**Amplify**) and how the client made this happen (**Reinforce**); or that things are the same – how the client maintained their level of coping (**Elicit**) (**Amplify**) and not got worse (**Reinforce**); or if things are worse – how did the client keep going despite this or what were they pleased to see themselves do despite things getting worse (**Elicit**) (**Amplify**) and what did they draw on to achieve this despite enduring the challenging experience (**Reinforce**) – remembering that things would not have been worse all the time since we last saw the client. Then, starting again, what are you Best Hopes from this session? (**Elicit**). Steve will discuss EARS in more detail in an upcoming interest group in 2023.

Steve ended off the meeting with a bang with his 'Make it HAPN' exercise for when you only have 10 minutes for a SF conversation during which he walked the group through this exercise in relation to a work quality we would like to develop more of.

Information for our Upcoming WASFIG Zoom Meeting 9 in August 2022

WASFIG Zoom Meeting 9: Saturday 27 August 2022 9:30am-11:30am WA Time

When: Saturday 27 August 2022 9:30am-11:30am WA Time (VIC/NSW/QLD = 11:30am-1:30pm, SA = 11am-1pm)

Topic: Discussion of Key Points from Mark McKergow's new book Next Generation of Solution Focused Practice: Stretching the World for New Opportunities and Progress.

McKergow, M. (2021), Next Generation of Solution Focused Practice: Stretching the World for New Opportunities and Progress, London: Routledge

Mark McKergow is an SF expert based in the UK. <https://www.sfwork.com/> Mark's new book Next Generation of Solution Focused Practice is a wonderful overview of the history of the Solution Focused approach, current thinking and models, and Mark's thoughts on why SFBT is so effective. Steve and Kerry will present and lead a discussion of some of the key ideas from Mark's new book and share some clips of a Zoom interview they had with him about his book (and other topics!). Mark is a wonderfully clear and generous presenter and we are confident attendees will enjoy and profit from this session. It would be very worthwhile for people to read the book to warm up to the discussion (a start of a WA SFBT Book Club for fellow book worms??) otherwise just bring your curiosity and come along to join in our discussion.

Here is a great video of Mark McKergow talking about SFBT 2.0

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKMuFqA58kU>

FIND US ON FACEBOOK: WA SFBT Interest Group Facebook Group

Please join our new WASFIG Facebook Group to keep connecting and building our network between meetings, see up to date news and information for our group, share great SFBT resources and get support in working with clients: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/3103428583276551>

Remember to join the **Australasian Solution Focused Association** to access free training during the year, articles from the Journal of Solution Focused Practices, online group supervision and the members only Facebook group. <https://www.solutionfocused.org.au/>

We have decided to continue with meetings via Zoom as this has enabled flexibility for many to access these sessions that would not be otherwise able to due to distance or other commitments. This also enables our SF practitioner colleagues from the Eastern states to join us as well!

Hope to see you all again for our August 2022 Zoom meeting. Please reply by email to let us know you would like to attend and then keep your eye on your email for the link and more information.