

# **Western Australian Solution Focused Interest Group (WASFIG) Meeting 7**



## **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 30 April 2022 9:30am-11:30am

**Where:** Zoom

**Attendees:** Michele Thomas, Amy O'Brien, Shona Scallan, Brent Dalgleish, Ruth Leveson, Theresa Acutt, Johanna Salis and Nadia Truong; Steve Runciman and Kerry Drummond (Co-coordinators).

**Apologies:** Yvette Strawbridge, Kym Madden, Michael Bazeley, Lisa Cregan, Pene Turnell and Andrea Yeo.

**Group Facilitator:** Steve Runciman

**Group Presenter:** Kerry Drummond and Steve Runciman

**Topic: Frameworks of Solution Focused Practice Part 3: A Deeper Dive into the Solution Focused Connie-Froerer Diamond Approach: Scaling, Closing a Session and Follow up Sessions.**

Our April 2022 WASFIG Zoom meeting took a third dive into exploring the Solution Focused Diamond Approach. Kerry began with a brief summary of the Diamond and then shared a case example to illustrate the Diamond In action. The client was invited to notice the glimpses of her normal self that were still there despite her feeling overwhelmed by her struggle. She realised that she would still go looking for the beauty that others don't see to capture this in a photo – the light on the leaf. The client reported this was helpful to lead her to look for the next small steps to feeling more herself again. As SFBT clinicians we are also looking for the beauty in our clients that others, including our clients, might not see when focused on the impact of the problem. We choose to look harder for their strengths despite their struggle. We know the light is there and when we look for it we find it. Elliott Connie reminds us that change is created when a client changes their perception of themselves.

Kerry then moved on to explore the benefits of scaling in session for a client to notice their progress towards their preferred future. Scaling is no longer officially part of the Diamond Approach as the description captured by the scale can also be elicited by asking questions from the History of the Desired Outcome, Resource Talk and Preferred Future components of the Diamond. Still, scaling is a helpful way to summarise the client's progress in session, to invite the client to notice signs of being X+1 in between sessions, and as Michael Durrant suggested in his March 2022 SFBT Workshop in Perth, a great technique to pull out when you feel stuck in session! Together the group

completed the final question for Scaling in the Practitioner I Aspire To Be exercise – *On a scale of 0-10, where 10 is being the practitioner you aspire to be and 0 is the opposite of that, where are you now?* Participants were invited to share their thoughts of how they and others know they are at X, where good enough would be for them on the scale, and how they and others would know they were at X+1.

Various options around closing a session drawn from traditional and more current SFBT 2.0 thought were presented. SF practitioners aim to leave the client with autonomy and a ‘cloud of possibilities’ as proposed by Mark McKergow in his March 2022 online workshop. Participants were encouraged to try out some options to determine which fits best for the way they work in session. A helpful discussion was raised around the benefits of taking a break towards the end of the session, as suggested by Michael Durrant - something done in more traditional SFBT. During his Perth SFBT Workshop, Michael shared that in his experience a break is beneficial to enabling a creative and reflective space for both the practitioner and for the client to collect their thoughts and clarify a take home message; and, that clients appreciated the practitioner taking time to consider what they had said. A break can clarify helpful thoughts to leave the client with rather than thinking about these after the client has left the session. However, from the more current SFBT 2.0 perspective, the client leaving free from our ‘helpful thoughts’ would be a good thing! SFBT 2.0 encourages the practitioner to get out of the client’s way so we are less likely to disrupt their opportunity to leave the session with their description, and their own helpful thoughts, of their Best Hopes intact (Elliott Connie and Evan George).

Finally, Kerry led a discussion identifying the possible pathways to navigate a follow up session. After being asked the traditional follow up question *So, what’s been better?*, a client can respond in a few ways. Mostly clients respond that ‘things have been better’, but can also respond ‘nothing is better’ – ‘things are the same’, ‘things are worse’, or of course ‘I don’t know’. SF practitioners work to acknowledge/validate the client’s response and identify and amplify progress with various versions of ‘how did you do that?’ and ‘what difference did that make?’ questions. For clients who have experienced life to be worse than before, SF practitioners acknowledge and validate the client’s experience and then ask questions to identify what the client has done to get back on track following a set back: how they may have responded differently to the set back than on previous occasions that has been more helpful, and how their response stopped the situation from escalating even further.

Participants were then invited into a reflective space to share their thoughts on what has been helpful from learning about the SF Diamond Approach, and to identify one sign that they are moving towards the Practitioner they aspire to be. A question was raised about the role of case formulation in SFBT. This is an interesting topic worthy of its own interest group so we will explore this further at a future group meeting! Some brief thoughts around this were considered. While SFBT does not engage in traditional problem mapping using the 3 or 4 P’s (predisposing, precipitating, perpetuating, or protective factors), the SF Diamond Approach provides a great example of how SF practitioners would look to work with the client’s Best Hopes rather than their problem. Elliott Connie has mentioned in his Live 2022 webinar that ‘SF Case Conceptualisation’ focuses on the client’s Best Hopes/Desired Outcome. By adopting the Resilientologist mindset, as advocated by Jacqui von Cziffra-bergs from South Africa, SF practitioners focus on the client’s strengths, competency, capacity and coping showing up in the past, present and future instead. ‘SF Case Conceptualisation’ is not about the problem a client wants to fix, it’s about the person the client wants to be.

## References

- Connie, E. (2020), *SFBT Secrets: Diamond Edition*, Online Training Course, Completed 7 February 2021
- Connie, E. and Froerer, A. (2022), *SFBT Masterclass – 3 Video Free Training Series*, Completed 5 February 2022
- Durrant, M. (2022), *Solution Focused Brief Therapy*, 2 Day Workshop in Perth, Completed 31 March-1 April 2022
- Iveson, C., George, E. and Ratner, H. (2012), *Brief Coaching*, London: Routledge
- Ratner, H. et al (2012), *Solution Focused Therapy: 100 Key Points and Techniques*, London: Routledge
- Von Cziffra-Bergs, J. (2022), *Solution Focused Brief Therapy and Depression & Anxiety*, Solution Focused Institute of South Africa, Online Training Workshop, 9 March 2022

## **Information for our Upcoming WASFIG Zoom Meeting 8 in June 2022**

**When: Saturday 25 June 2022 9:30am-11:30am**

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

Steve Runciman will present one template for conducting a first session, I SHAPES ME EARS, how to know when to do what in a SFBT session, and show parallels and inclusion with the Connie-Froerer SF Diamond Approach.

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! We will release more information and resources for this meeting closer to the time, keep an eye out for updates via email and on our **private WA SFBT Interest Group Facebook group** on the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/3103428583276551>

## **WASFIG Zoom Meeting 9: Saturday 27 August 2022 9:30am-11:30am**

**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 looking to the future. 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.

## **FIND US ON FACEBOOK: NEW 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/>

Hope to see you all again for our June 2022 Zoom meeting, keep your eye on your email for the link and more information.