

Summary - A Solution Focused, Strengths-Based Approach.

A client-centred respectful and collaborative approach to supporting people to change that builds on their existing resources and strengths.

Essentially the approach involves a shift from:

Problem focused thinking, talking and description

To

Solution focused thinking, talking and description

Clients are invited to move from a focus on:

- Problems **to** Goals
- What's wrong **to** What's right
- Deficits **to** Strengths
- What's lacking **to** What's working
- How harm happened **to** How person coped and thrived
- Professional as expert **to** Client as Expert

Principles of solution-focused practice

1. Focusing on change and possibilities.
2. Establishing client goals and preferred futures.
3. Building on strengths, skills and resources.
4. Looking for 'what's right' and 'what's working'.
5. Being respectfully curious.
6. Creating co-operation and collaboration.
7. Using humour and creativity.

History of model

- The model grew out of the Family Therapy/ Systemic tradition of psychotherapy
- Emerged as a 'Brief Therapy' in reaction to long-term therapies
- Focus on solutions, strengths, and client cooperation

Major sources MRI, and Milton Erickson • Developed by de Shazer, Berg, O'Hanlon and others

Summary of Four Stages and Questions

1. Joining
2. Goaling
3. Affirming progress
4. Next Steps

STAGE 1) Joining/ Clarifying

Listen empathetically to their version of the problem

- Can you tell me what is concerning you/ what prompted you to make the call this am?

Clarify: What specifically happens? Give me an example.

Empathise: I can understand that must be challenging/ Lots of parents would feel that way/ Lots of parents

STAGE 2) Establishing a Goal

Goals question

- What are you hoping for by contacting the telephone line today?
- What would be the most helpful thing to talk about today?
- How are you hoping I can help you today? Life Goals
- What would you like to be different in your life? What are you hoping to be different?
- What will things be like when things are better for you? What will you be doing differently

STAGE 3) Appreciating Progress

Highlight Exceptions and coping

- When have you managed to cope?
- When have you got through to your son?
- When you do get him to bed on time, what is different then?
- What happens on a good day?

Affirm and credit parent

- How did you manage to get your son to calm down then?

- How did you manage to persist? • How were you able to talk to your Mum on that occasion? • What did you say to yourself to manage the anxiety?
- Despite having a difficult year, what keeps you hanging in there?
- The fact that you have kept going and persisted, what does that say about you? Supports and resources
- Who supports/ helps you the most in this problem? What do they do that is helpful?
- What other things are helpful to you? Strengths or positive qualities do they see in you?

KEY is DETAIL

- What happened specifically then?
- What did you do specifically that helped?
- How did you feel when things went a bit better?
- What else? What else?

STAGE 4) Next Steps

Exploring client ideas about next step

- What is the next step in moving towards your goal?
- Going forward what is the next step in order to make progress?
- What will be a small sign of progress?
- What would it take to make the next step? What support would you need?

Next Steps

- a) Permission – Would you like to hear my thoughts so far?
- b) Highlight and reinforce client strengths - I am struck at how you persisted when... - I feel you really made progress when...
- c) Give a suggestion that fits with client's strengths and preferences
- d) Evaluate – what do you think?

Plan

- What do you want to take away today from our discussion?
- Check if need anything else from you