To change what we do is to change what we view.

You can act your way to a new way of thinking. And, you can think your way to a new way of acting.

People have problems because they have not thought of solutions.

When you talk about your troubles, your ailments, your diseases, your hurts, you give longer life to what makes you unhappy. Talking about your grievances merely adds to those grievances. Give recognition only to what you desire. Think and talk only about the good things that add to your enjoyment of your work and life. If you don’t talk about your grievances, you’ll be delighted to find them disappearing quickly.

-Thomas Dreier
Solution Focused Brief Counseling and Consultation

Russell A. Sabella, PhD

Description of Workshop

A solution focused approach allows for the acknowledgment of the seriousness of the situation, but notes that the past is past and what matters now is the future. This approach emphasizes the coping strategies, skills and resources of the people involved in the situation, and highlights these rather than the negative aspects of what has already happened.

This experiential workshop is designed for both beginning and experienced school counselors, mental health counselors, social workers, psychologists, other human service professionals and educators who want to learn an innovative approach to empower their students/clients to recognize and utilize their resources. In addition, teachers, administrators, and parents are now learning the solution focused brief counseling principles to effectively help students change their behavior for enhanced academic achievement.

How does this approach differ from other counseling approaches?

This model uses a systematic, five-step approach in which clients focus on solutions rather than problems. They are encouraged to think about times when their problems did not exist, and how these times contributed to the absence of the problem, and how to recreate such circumstances in their present situations. Focus is on the clients’ strengths and abilities rather than their weaknesses. Solutions are derived by clients themselves and therefore not only are they more involved in their success, but the solutions fit their unique lifestyles. Finally, because the clients find their own solutions that work, often self-esteem is increased. With this emphasis of counseling on solutions rather than problems, counseling becomes brief.

What types of applications does SFBC have?

SFBC has been applied very successfully in a variety of situations, including addictions counseling, marriage counseling, pastoral counseling, mediation, and with groups of school children. More recently, this model has been successfully applied to solution focused brief consultation with parents and teachers, classroom management, and supervision.

How does SFBC work?

• Students/Clients are uplifted when their strengths rather than their deficits are emphasized in counseling. This provides incentives to advance their successful efforts.
• The solution-focused process allows students to do all the work in counseling and accept responsibility for their behaviors.
• Students/Clients become empowered when their previously unrecognized abilities are discovered.
• Resistance is reduced as clients address what they want to accomplish in counseling.
What are the benefits to counselors who use SFBC?

People who apply the solution focused methods find that, by focusing on solutions rather than problems, their meetings are more positive and less stressed. SFBC users report that, instead of leaving work drained of energy, they are energized and full of hope for their students and children. And, of course, students/clients are empowered to “get back on track.”

About the Workshop Leader

Dr. Russell A. Sabella is Professor of Counseling in the College of Education, Florida Gulf Coast University. His concentration of research, training, and publication includes counseling technology, internet/technology safety, comprehensive school counseling programs, peer helper programs and training, sexual harassment risk reduction, and solution focused brief counseling.


Russ is also well-known for his various workshops conducted throughout the country. Dr. Sabella served as President of the American School Counselor Association from 2003-2004.

Workshop Objectives

Through a combination of discussion, video cases, handouts, practice exercises, and role plays, participants should be able to demonstrate one or more of the following (depending on the extent of the training):

• Identify the major principles and methods of Solution-Focused Brief Counseling/Consultation (SFBC).
• Help students to identify and move toward solutions to reach their goals.
• Use innovative Solution-Focused Brief Counseling assessment and interview methods that initiate change in the first interview.
• Implement the five-step Solution-Focused Brief Counseling intervention process.
• Learn how to facilitate positive change among the student’s stake holders (e.g., teachers, parents, and friends) as a result of his or her progress.
• Understand how the SFBC model can be applied to other areas such as consulting, career planning, parenting, and teaching as well as Response to Intervention and PBIS.
Principles of SFBC

Guidelines
1. If it works, don’t fix it ... do more of it.
2. If it works just a little, build on it.
3. If it doesn’t work, do something different. That is, when you find yourself in a hole, stop digging.

Principles
1. Make no assumptions about cause or origin of the problem
2. Keep an indirect focus on problems and a direct focus on solutions.
3. Minimum intervention with maximum results.
4. Focus on strengths/resources rather than weaknesses/deficits.
6. Focus on actions as opposed to insights.

Assumptions
1. Students have the personal resources to solve their problems.
2. Focusing on the positive, the solution and the future, facilitates change in the desired direction.
3. Focus on what is right and working rather than what is wrong and the problem.
4. Exceptions to every problem can be co-created by you and the student to build solutions.
5. Small changes lead to bigger changes.
6. Progress is directed towards the presence of something, rather than the absence of something.

Criteria for Effective Solution Focused Goals
1. In the presence of a behavior or thought.
2. Detailed and measurable
3. In the client’s control.
4. Also .. Is it right, realistic, and responsible (3Rs).
(Typical) Path to Solutions

**Goaling**: What is your goal in coming here? As a result of us working together, what will you be doing differently?

- **Negative Goal or in the Absence of something**
- **Positive Goal in the Presence of Something**
- **Stuck on Formulating Goals**

  **Reframe Negative Goal**
  So what will you be doing instead? What difference will it make to you when this is no longer a problem? How exactly is this a problem? What will you do if he/she does not change?

**Hypothetical or Life Without the Problem (optional)**
If a miracle happened tonight when you were asleep and tomorrow you awoke to find things much better here at school, how would it be different? What will the crystal ball show me about how you are doing better?

- **What else would be different/happening? (Elicit) 3-4 times**

  **Instances/Exceptions**
  When has this happened a little before (in the past)? What did you do to make that happen for yourself?

  **Detail (mind map), Amplify, Cheerlead, Mine field**

**Scaling**
On a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 representing things at their worst and 10 at their best, what number would you give yourself to describe how things are now? What number would you have given yourself when things were worst? How did you get from ___ (lower number) to ___ (higher number).

**Anything Else I Need to Ask?**

**The Message**
Updated Model of SFBC
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### Six Techniques

1. Reframing  
2. Detailing  
3. Mind Mapping  
4. Cheerleading  
5. Amplifying  
6. Mine Fielding

### Five Steps

1. Goaling  
2. Hypothetical  
3. Exceptions  
4. Scaling  
5. Message

### Four Ways to Go from Complaints/Wishes To Control

1. Be Direct  
2. Explore a future without change.  
3. Explore hypothetical change.  

### Three Criteria For Solution Focused Goals

1. In the presence of an action  
2. Detailed  
3. In person’s control

### Two Areas of Focus

1. History (exceptions)  
2. Future (hypothetical)

### One Focus

1. What has or will be working better?
Helpful Solution Focused Questions

Moving from Complaints or Wishes About Others to Control ...

1. How can I help you?
2. How will things be different for you when (complaint or wish about other) is resolved?
3. How will you be back on track even if (other) does not change?
4. People experience problems in different ways .. How exactly is this a problem for you?

Questioning the Assumption ...

Example

Counselor: And so when this problem is resolved for you, you will be able to better con...
Client: I can’t eat, sleep, concentrate, socialize ....

Counselor: People experience depression in different ways. How has this been a problem for you?

[Counselor picks the goal that is most in their control and that which has the greatest potential for impact. Goaling, hypothetical, exceptions ..]
Goaling and/or Detailing

1. As a result of us working together, what will you be doing better or different?
2. How will I know when you will be (unfit goal)?
3. What will you be doing differently or better that lets us know that you are ready to ________________?
4. If I were to tape you (unfit goal), how will I know to start recording?
5. How will you know when you are back on track?
6. What will others (I) see you doing that lets them know you are back on track?
7. Are the goals right, responsible, and realistic (3R's)?

Hypothetical

1. What does the crystal ball show me that you are doing differently at the end of the program that is better/different than how you are doing now?
2. After you go to sleep tonight, a miracle happens. That miracle is that your problems are solved. You don't know this miracle happened because you were sleeping. What is the first sign you notice that tells you that things are better (at school, at home, etc.)?

Exceptions

1. How are you on track even just a little sometimes?
2. How do you explain that you are sometimes on track?
3. What are you doing differently during the times that things are better.
4. With all the terrible things that are going on with you, how do you even get yourself to _____?

Amplifying

1. Who will notice when your are doing better? What is he/she doing that lets you know that they noticed?
2. What difference does it make to them?
3. What difference will it make to you when others notice you are doing better?

Mind Mapping

1. How did you make that (described progress behaviors) happen for yourself (mind mapping)?
2. What will you be doing to make that change happen more often?
3. What did others notice you doing that let them know you are now more on track?
4. How did you make that happen for yourself even when it was difficult (mine fielding)?
Scaling

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, what number would you give yourself that tells me how you are doing?
2. How have you got yourself to a (number on the scale)? What exactly did you do (mind mapping)?
3. How have you moved to this number even when things were difficult (mine fielding)?
4. Who noticed? What difference did it make to them? How do you know? What difference did it make to you (amplifying)?

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<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>Identify and acknowledge the <strong>problem</strong>. Empathize with the person.</th>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Explore their <strong>motivations</strong> for change. Ask, “How will your life be better when this situation is resolved?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Be <strong>specific</strong> about future/hypothetical behaviors and thoughts. Also amplify. Ask, “Who will notice you doing these things? What difference will it make to them? And how will that make a difference to you?”</td>
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The Solution Focused Brief Counseling approach to working with students involves various steps and techniques which include goaling, the hypothetical, exceptions, scaling, and the message (e.g., see Sklare, 1997). My experience in using this model is that using it even somewhat can yield somewhat positive results. And, each technique in the model can work well apart from the model itself. This column focuses on scaling, one solution focus brief counseling technique that promises to be a useful part of your entire counseling repertoire.

Although deceptively simple, the technique of scaling is designed to help the student and counselor do several things. For one, scaling can help to determine at what level and how the student is performing or achieving in general or perhaps specifically in any given area. Second, it is a process that allows the student to pinpoint personal strengths and resources that can contribute to tackling a current problem. Third, it provides a more quantifiable mechanism for measuring and monitoring success, one that can be graphed and easily communicated to others. Here is how it works:

**Step 1: Introduce the Scale and Pick a Number**

For middle and secondary level students, you can simply draw a line on a piece of paper and evenly mark the scale using the numbers from zero to ten. Younger students may better respond to a more creative scale such as using a picture of a thermometer that ranges from zero (cold) to 100 degrees (you are getting hot), a football gridiron (zero is just getting started and 100 is a touchdown!), or perhaps a yardstick with the student’s name on it that indicates how the student is “measuring up.” Explain that the lowest number represents a time when “things were at their worst” and that the highest number represents “the problem is solved.” Emphasize the differentiation of numbers on the scale, perhaps by drawing smileys on the lowest (sad face), middle (neither sad or happy face, one with a straight line across for the mouth), and highest part of the scale (a happy face). Then, make certain that the student understands that he or she can pick any number – “1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, or 10” – that lets you know how he or she is doing right now. Circle the number that the student picked and provide compliments for being at that number even when the number is low such as a one or two – this is still better than a zero. If the student chooses a zero, compliment the student for how he or she is able to accomplish anything, such as attending school and coming to counseling for example, even when at a zero.

**Step 2: Brainstorm Existing Progress**

In this step, you must fight the urge to focus on problems, issues, or explanations for why the student is at a low number and not at a higher number. Instead, focus on accomplishments, efforts, achievements, efforts, and other strengths/resources that the
student can take credit for that allowed him/her to be at the number they chose. If the student chose a zero, solicit a number that describes when he or she was at one time doing better and focus on this number more. Then, ask solution focused questions that helps the student to explain progress already made. For example, if he or she picked a two, ask questions such as:

- What exactly did you do (thinking, feeling, behaving) to get yourself to a 2? (NOTE: Make certain to accept all answers, no matter how trivial. For example, if they say, “I just decided to” you say, “So sometimes you make smart decisions about your behavior [and explore how the student does this].”)
- How have you moved to a 2 even when things were difficult?
- Who noticed that you got yourself (or kept yourself) to a 2 in spite of the difficulties you have experienced? What difference did it make to them? How do you know? What difference did it make to you that they noticed?

When the student attempts to give credit to others for their accomplishments, focus on the part that they contributed which made a difference. For instance, if they say, “I was at a two because the friend that I normally get into trouble with was absent” you say, “Yes, but you could have chosen another friend to get into trouble with and you didn’t. How do you explain that? Or, respond, “Yes, but I bet there were days when your friend was present and you still did not get into trouble, how do you explain that?” Another common example that I have noticed is when the student responds, “I achieved because my teacher told me.” In this case, you say, “Your teacher has told you to behave better before and you didn’t listen. Although this time you did. Now what did you do differently this time that helped you to follow this smart advice?”

If you believe that the student’s number is inaccurate, especially if it is too high for the current reality, simply accept it as if it were true. Hedge your bet that the student will be more likely to act more consistently with how he describes his own behavior as compared to being challenged about his skewed perceptions about the quality of his behavior.

**Step 3: Explore Life When Student is 10% Higher**

In the third step, ask, “What will you be doing better or different when you get to the next number?” The key to this step is to assume progress and help the student describe in detail his or her behavior at the new number. Give special emphasis on what the student can control and the presence of positive behaviors, thoughts, feelings instead of the absence of these (i.e., what the student will do more of and not do or do less). Ask similar questions such as:

- If I were to video tape you when you are at a 3 (the next number on the scale), what will you be doing that lets me know that I should start recording?
- What will others (e.g., teachers, parents, friends) see you doing exactly that lets them know you are now at a 3?
- How will your life be better for you when you are at a 3?
- What will others (e.g., teacher, parents, friends) say or do when they notice you getting better?
If the student decided that he is at a 10 although you believe further progress is needed. You can continue the process by simply asking, “What would you say you will be doing better or different if the scale went to an 11?” Don’t worry, its your scale, you can change it if you want.

**Step 4: Choose 2-3 Goals**

Pick 2-3 behaviors that the student described which will be occurring when 10% progress is made. The behaviors may include already existing behaviors that the student will do more of, old behaviors not currently practiced, or new behaviors or skills developed in the course of counseling. These will be the goals for the upcoming days or weeks. Make certain that the goals are clear, concise, measurable, in the student’s control, and in the presence of a behavior.

**Step 5: Repeat the Process**

Begin subsequent sessions with this same solution focused scaling process. If the student gives you a number that is lower than the previous week, explore in detail how the previous week was better or different. If the number is the same, explore how the student was able to maintain their level in spite of opportunities for getting worse. If the number the student indicates is higher, explore the thoughts, behaviors, decisions, and other strengths in the student’s control that contributed to their progress. Continue promoting increments of 10% progress until the student reaches the high end of the scale.

**Multiple Scaling Among Stake Holders**

In addition to scaling with a student, you may choose to simultaneously scale with another care-taker such as a teacher or parent. If the student agrees, ask the teacher, for instance, to provide a number that indicates her perception of how the child is doing. If the teacher’s number is lower than the student’s, ask the student, “What are you doing that, if your teacher were to better notice, she would give you a higher number? How will you be doing this better so that your teacher will notice?” If the teacher’s number is higher than the student’s, ask, “What is the teacher noticing about you that you probably have not recognized for yourself?” You get the idea – always focus on that which you want more frequently, more intensely, or over a longer duration.

**Advantages of Solution Focused Scaling**

Scaling is one method among several in the solution focused brief counseling model. As part of the entire model, scaling helps students to inventory their personal strengths and resources, focus on progress, and build on achievements already made no matter how small. By itself, the simple technique of scaling can help counselors begin the process of counseling in a manner that is known to be empowering and encouraging – an especially important idea among students whom have been deemed as at-risk. Other advantages of scaling includes that it:

- adapts well as a technique consistent with the principles of other counseling approaches such as Reality Therapy, Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy, Behavioral Modification, Adlerian, and Person-Centered to name a few;
• reduces the importance of confidentiality because information is much less sensitive;
• can reduce the stress experienced by both students and counselors as compared to focusing on problems and issues;
• can also be adapted to other situations such as consulting with teachers and parents, supervision, parenting, and leadership.

Try scaling towards success with your students today!

---

The Message

• 2-3 Compliments
• Bridge
• Tasks such as
  □ Observe for positives;
  □ Do more of the positives or exceptions
  □ Find out how the spontaneous exceptions are happening.
  □ Do some small piece of the hypothetical solution.

Example:

Bobby,

I am proud of you for wanting to get better and working hard. I am excited that you discovered what you need to do more. You have shown me that you are dedicated to being succeeding.

Because you want to get along better with others, I want you to smile more, keep your shoulders back, invite other kids to play, and tell others what you need.

Dr. Sabella
Example of SF Teacher Consultation Message

Angel,

I appreciate the opportunity to work with you doing solution focused brief consultation. I am very impressed with how you have already figured out what works well for you and, ultimately, the children. I enjoyed hearing about your innovative strategies and assignments. I am also grateful for your hard work and dedication to the children.

Because you want to continue to improve in your work, (and get to an 8 on the scale) I want you to continue:

- assigning the children to small learning groups;
- adjust your lessons to adapt to the children’s needs;
- use the peer helping model (kids helping kids);
- lower your voice when you begin to get upset (instead of raising your voice);
- ask questions instead of lecture when kids get into trouble;
- ask other teachers for advice or support when you need it;
- use appropriate packets for the kids;
- use appropriate humor;
- give the kids appropriate praise when you have the opportunity;
- stay calm and relaxed by clearing your mind, evaluating what you say before you say it, and when possible, use humor;

Keep up the great work. For your homework:

- observe what is different in the 6 (out of 8) classes that are going better than the rest and report back next time.
### Keeping up the Momentum: The EARS Model


| E | Elicit Success! | Ask questions such as, "What have you been doing to make your situation better?" If they don't have an answer to this question, try this one: "What would your _______ (supply a relevant name here) say you are doing about the situation?" This implies that the child is already solving his problem. The fact of the matter is that every response to a problem is a solution to a problem. Only some responses are better than others and have fewer severe consequences. Your job is to acknowledge children's efforts and then direct them to use better responses. If the child persists that there wasn't anything good about what he did in the situation, then ask, "What was the part of the situation that was better than the other parts?" And if the child does recite some 'better than other parts' of the situation, ask, "How did you do that? (Mind map)" This encourages the child to learn from their own behaviors and increase positive responses. If the child suffered severe consequences for his response to the situation, ask, "What did you learn from the situation?" Most successes are the result of trial and error and determining what doesn't work. |
| A | Amplify the Success! | Amplify refers to the use of questions to get more details about any positive efforts toward problem-solving. Use who, what, where, when, and how questions. For example, "Who noticed you do that?" or "When did you decide to do that?" or "How did they respond to your solution?" |
| R | Reinforce or Cheerlead | Be sure to reinforce any effort to solving a problem. Even failed attempts are worthy of acknowledgment. The child must want and value positive change. Reinforcement will be the motivating force for this value. Be sure, though, that you use verbal or social reinforcement. Don’t give in to bribes (candy, toys, and money) to reinforce the child. Also, reinforce the absence of problems (e.g., “You could have gotten into a fight given that ____ although you did not this time. How did you make that happen for yourself?”) |
| S | Start over or scale | See Scaling part of the handout. |
A Mini Solution-Focused Brief Counseling Guided Imagery Experience


**Step 1**
Identify a recent recurring problem that you would like to overcome, (a) something you would like to do, (b) something you want to stop doing, or © something you don't want to do.

Rate the severity of this problem from 0 (extremely high) to 10 (nonexistent).
Scaled Score _______

**Step 2**
(a) If your problem is something you would like to do, describe it below as if it were a video of what you would observe yourself doing behaviorally. (Do not describe something you would not be doing.)

(b) If your problem is something you want to stop doing, describe it below as if it were a video of what you would observe yourself start to do behaviorally instead. (Do not describe something you would not be doing.)

© If your problem is something you don't want to do, describe it below as if it were a video of what you would observe yourself doing behaviorally instead. (Do not describe something you would not be doing.)

**Step 3**
Suppose a miracle happened tonight while you were sleeping, and this miracle solved your problem and since you were sleeping you didn't know this miracle had occurred, and when you woke up you realized that you no longer had this problem. What would be the first small sign (specific observable behavior) that would show you were doing something different the next day? (Construct an image/picture of a behavioral action on your part. Do not describe something you would not be doing.)

**Step 4**
Identify who would notice this different thing you would be doing and describe how you imagine they would act when they notice this different behavior? (Construct an image/picture of a behavioral action on their part. Do not describe something they would not be doing.)

**Step 5**
Indicate what you would do (specific observable behavior) in reply to the person's response described above. (Construct an image/picture of a behavioral action on your part. Do not describe something you would not be doing.)
Step 6
What else would you notice that you would be doing (specific observable behavior) differently after this miracle occurred? (Construct an image/picture of a behavioral action on your part. Do not describe something you would not be doing.)

Step 7
Identify who else would notice this different thing you would be doing and describe how you imagine they would act when they notice this different behavior? (Construct an image/picture of a behavioral action on their part. Do not describe something they would not be doing.)

Step 8
Indicate what you would do in reply to the person's response described above. (Construct an image of a behavioral action on your part. Do not describe something you would not be doing.)

Step 9
Describe a time when some of this miracle has already happened even if only a little bit during problem times.

Step 10
How did you make this part of your miracle happen during this problem time? (Things you thought or did differently—commitments you made—new behavior you tried, etc.)

Step 11
Recall your thoughts about how pleased you were with your efforts at the time.

Step 12
On a scale of 0 to 10 with 0 being the worst this problem has ever been and 10 representing the non-existence of this problem, where do you think you are right now on the scale?

Scaled Score ________

Step 13
Describe how you have gotten yourself to that number? (Construct an image of a behavioral action on your part. Do not describe something you would not be doing.)

Step 14
When you are one number higher, what will you and others see you doing (specific observable behavior) differently that you're not doing now? (Do not describe something you would not be doing.)

Step 15
Write yourself a short note describing what you discovered or rediscovered about yourself and your situation. You can use the back of this sheet if needed. Rate the severity of this problem from 0 (extremely high) to 10 (non-existent).

Scaled Score ________
20 MINUTE INTERVIEW

Insoo Kim Berg

from http://educationandcounseling.sdstate.edu/CHRDtribute.aspx

1. Referred client

- Whose idea was it that you come to see me?
- What will convince ____ that you don’t need to see me?
- On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being the worse, 10 the best) where would you rate yourself at this time? Where _____ would rate you on the same scale?
- Where ____ would like you to be at?
- How important is it for you to make these changes (scale of 1 to 10)?
- How willing are you to work at it?

2. Self-Referred Client

- What has to be different as a result of your coming and talking to me today?
- (Turning complaint into a goal). “All my friends are turning against me” into “So you would like to have more friends who are on your side?”
- When was he last time you did this, even a little bit (or a short time)?
- How did you do this? (What would your best friend say you did this?)
- What would it take you to do this again?
- What needs to happen to move up a single point on the scale?
- What would other say you need to do to move up on the scale?

3. Miracle Question

- Suppose a miracle happened while you were sleeping and the problem that brought you here is solved. What would you be doing differently?
- Who would be the first to notice you are doing things differently? What would he/she notice different about you then?
- When was the last time it happened, even a little bit?
- How did you do that?
- What would it take you to do it again?
- If you were to pretend, even a little while, that a small portion of the miracle had occurred, what one or two things would you be doing differently?

4. Questions for the Referring Person

- Support and agree with the teacher, acknowledge his/her hard work with the child, frustrations and the effort that already has gone into making progress (if true).
- What special qualities do you see in this child that tells you that he can do it?
- How would you rate the potential for this child for change for the better?
• What is the minimum change this child has to make?
• Tell me about the last time when the child was even a little more like he should be.
• How do you suppose that happened?
• On a scale of 1 to 10:

Where would you rate the present behavior of the child?
Where is the highest rating the child has achieved?
Where would you rate this child’s potential for change?
What is the first small thing I can do to be of help to you?

5. Steps to Homework and Closure of the Session

› Agree with and use client’s words and world view
› Compliment whenever possible
› Suggestions toward solutions that can begins with since you believe (think, feel) that . . .
   · Because (it is not your fault . . .)
   · I agree (I can see it seem like others are picking on you . . .)

To the referring person:

“I appreciate your (concern, frustration, worries . . .) regarding Jimmy, therefore, it would be helpful in my work with Jimmy if you can (think about, watch for signs of, keep track of) and tell me what difference it makes for Jimmy. I will (talk with Jimmy, his parents, assess his motivation, check into resources, depending on their idea/view of what I can do to be of assistance to them.)

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### Useful Questions for Working with Involuntary Clients

Insoo Kim Berg

from [http://www.brief-therapy.org/insoo_handouts.htm](http://www.brief-therapy.org/insoo_handouts.htm)

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| **1** | - Whose idea was it that you need to come here?  
- What is your understanding why you are here? |
| **2** | - What makes ____ (pressuring person) think that you need to come here?  
- What does ____ think you need to do differently?  
- What does ____ think is the reason you have this problem he thinks you have? |
| **3** | - What would ____ say that, at a minimum, you have to do differently?  
- What do you have to do to convince___that you don't need to come here? |
| **4** | - When was the last time that you did this (what the client said ____said needs to be different)?  
- What was different in your life then?  
- How did you manage to do this?  
- What would ____ say s/he noticed different about you then? |
| **5** | - Suppose you were to decide to do that again, what would be the first small step you would take make it happen again?  
- How confident are you that you could do that again? (Scales)  
- What would ____ say the chances are that you will do this again? |
| **6** | - Suppose you were to decide to do this, what would be different between you and your _____(important person)?  
- What would your ____ (important person) say how that will be helpful to him/her? |
| **7** | - Suppose you were to decide to do this, what other differences would it make in your life?  
- What would be going on in your life then that is not going on now? |
| **8** | - How will know when you have done enough? |

(Copyright: Insoo Kim Berg, 1999)
Solution Focused Counseling References and Selected Bibliography

You can find most of these at Amazon.com by going here: http://tinyurl.com/y2jxtt


Brief Counseling Outcome TEACHER Survey
© 2011, Gerald Sklare, Ed.D. and Russell Sabella, Ph.D.

Teacher Name ________________________________________ Today's Date ______________

Student's Name ________________________________________ Grade __________________

**DIRECTIONS:**

1. Where it says **BEFORE**, think back to the beginning of the semester (January) and rate the student according to how you think he/she was doing at that time.
2. Where it says **NOW**, rate the student according to how you think he/she is doing right now. Sometimes these two responses will be the same and sometimes they will be different.
3. Circle a number from one (1) to seven (7) for each of the items. A rating of one means that he/she is doing extremely poor and seven means that he/she is doing extremely good. The higher the number, the better the student is doing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely Poor</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Extremely Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Completing schoolwork. BEFORE 1---2---3---4---5---6---7 NOW 1---2---3---4---5---6---7
2. Interacting with other students. BEFORE 1---2---3---4---5---6---7 NOW 1---2---3---4---5---6---7
3. Following directions in class. BEFORE 1---2---3---4---5---6---7 NOW 1---2---3---4---5---6---7
4. Following school rules. BEFORE 1---2---3---4---5---6---7 NOW 1---2---3---4---5---6---7
5. Working to potential. BEFORE 1---2---3---4---5---6---7 NOW 1---2---3---4---5---6---7
6. Coming to school (attendance). BEFORE 1---2---3---4---5---6---7 NOW 1---2---3---4---5---6---7
7. Attitude towards school. BEFORE 1---2---3---4---5---6---7 NOW 1---2---3---4---5---6---7

Other notes or observations concerning the student's progress this semester: __________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Return this form to the student’s school counselor. Call ________ for any questions.
Teacher Referral Form

Student's Name ____________________________________ Grade ______________________

Date: __________ Teacher's Name _______________________________ Room# ________

1. What, in your opinion, will this student be doing differently (goal) when the problem(s) for which he or she was referred is solved?

2. What would be evidence of a solid first step toward meeting this goal?

3. Indicate times when parts of the goal are achieved:

4. How might you explain these times?

5. On a scale of 1-10 (0 lowest to 10 highest),
   a. How would you rate the present behavior of the student?
   b. What is the highest rating this student has reached, in your observation?
   c. Rate your level of optimism about the possibility of change for this student.

Thank You!!
I look forward to working with you!
Solution Focused Progress Notes

Date, time, and type of contact: ___________________________________________________

Name: _______________________________________________________________________

Student Strengths: (“What’s was or is now better?”): _ _______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
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Student Goals and Progress:
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Tasks:
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Scaling: ______________________

Next Scheduled Session: _____________
### Daily or Weekly Solution Focused Activity Log

Student Name: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

**I. Circle the rating you would give this student for today.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely Poor</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Extremely Good</th>
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6. Coming to school (attendance). 1---2---3---4---5---6---7
7. Attitude towards school. 1---2---3---4---5---6---7

**II. Now rate the student for how he/she is doing overall. Also, jot down any comments to support your observation.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely Poor</th>
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<td>7</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Comments:

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

**III. If better than previous ratings ... What did the student do that was better?**

**IV. If worse than previous ratings ... What was the student doing better before that was better?**
V. What will the student be doing better when he gets a higher number on the scale? That is, frame his behaviors in the presence of something positive:

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

VI. What might be one or more things that you do that contributes to the times when at least part of this student’s goal is achieved?

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

VII. Other comments:

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
Solution Focused Brief Counseling Case Scenarios

1. Andrew is a seven year old boy who is having difficulties controlling his behavior in class. He is described by the teacher as hyperactive, distracted, needy for attention, and disruptive. He often touches the other children, kicks, and hits them. Andrew is the youngest in his family. He has both biological parents and two older brothers (ages 12 and 14) living in the same household. Andrew does not get along well with others and has few friends at school or in his neighborhood. He sometimes plays with one boy who is about the same age although the duration of play does not last very long -- usually about 20 minutes.

2. Lester is a 7-year old phobic child and was brought in for treatment of his fear of riding in cars. Last year he was in a serious auto accident and now he has great difficulty even getting close to a car. His parents are anxious to know what can be done to help him work through his fears. Lester is the oldest of two children. He has a younger sister, Claris, who is 4 years of age. Other than his phobia, Lester's parents report no other outstanding developmental anomalies.

3. Kelly is a ninth grade girl at Mariner High School and she comes to you because she is bothered about being teased by the other kits about her weight (She is approximately 200 lbs). She wants them to stop saying mean things to her so she can get on with your life.

4. Sam comes to you because he is getting bad conduct grades in school. He constantly socialize with other kids at inappropriate times. He is very popular, however, he wants the other kids to stop engaging him in conversations during class time when the teacher expects his attention.

5. Larry is referred to you by his teacher who states that he is “obsessed with his girlfriend.” After a few minutes of an initial meeting, Larry reports to you that he wishes to “fall out of love with her” and get back to living.
6. Pat comes to you because he is afraid that he’s going to get into trouble due to the pressure some of his friends are putting on him to do destructive things. He says, “I’m in a real fix, my friends like to have a good time vandalizing things like spray painting cars and houses and knocking down mailboxes and they keep bugging me to go with them. I’m afraid that if I don’t go they are going to stop beating my friends. I don’t want that to happen, but I also don’t wanna go around a strong things either.”

7. Shirley comes to you because your grades are suffering. She got her first “D” at the midterm grading period. She’s in the school band, is a cheerleader and on the school volleyball team, and because of this is busy every night until 8:30 PM. This is very important to her and she doesn’t want to give any of them up. She is maintaining a “B” average up until now and it is worried that the “D” could hurt her chances to get into a good college. She has difficulty managing her time to fit in studying, schoolwork and extracurricular school activities. She says to you, “I don’t know what I’m going to do, I got my first ‘D’ and I can’t get ‘D’s’ if I’m going to get into a good college.”

8. Jamal comes to you because he is obsessed with perfection. He doesn’t like all the pressure his parents put on him to get straight “A’s” in everything. He says, “I just got my first B and I’m upset. Why do my parents put so much pressure on me? I just hate it!

9. Ms. Summers, Anne's mother, asks to meet with you about her child. Apparently, Ms. Summers has received three calls from teachers about Anne's misbehavior in class. Mom thinks that something is wrong at school because she does not see any problems at home. The misbehavior includes frequently talking out of turn, hitting other students, and cursing.
Solution Focused Brief Counseling Workshop Evaluation
Presenter: Russell A. Sabella, Ph.D.

How would you rate the following (place a check mark in the appropriate column)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1. Value of presentation in meeting your needs.
2. Expertise of the presenter.
3. Presentation techniques of the presenter.
4. Your learning experience.
5. Usefulness of handouts.
6. Clarity of objectives.
7. Active involvement of participants in learning experience.
8. Timeliness of the material presented.
9. Use of practical examples.
10. Overall rating of session

Would you recommend this workshop to others (circle one): Yes No

How come?

What guidance could you give the presenter to improve this learning experience?

What did you learn today that you are most likely to try?

In what other topics are you interested?

Other comments: