Applications of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy

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Agenda

- Introduction
- SFBT overview
- SF Interventions
- Practice/Demo
SFBTTennets

- If it isn’t broken, don’t fix it
- If it works, do more of it
- If it is not working, do something different
- Small steps can lead to big change
- The solution is not necessarily directly related to the problem
- The language requirements for solution development are different than those needed to describe a problem
- No problem happens all the time. There are always exceptions that can be utilized
- The future is both created and negotiable
Problem Solving vs Solution Building

**Problem Solving**
- Evaluate the Problem
- Diagnose the Problem
- Utilize known information about the diagnosed problem
- Evaluate the resources/strengths
- Determine the best course of action
- Implement the course of action

**Solution Building**
- Determine the desired goal
- Assist the client in creating a detailed account description of the goal
- Assist the client in evaluating where he/she is in relation to the desired goal
- Assist the client in evaluating times in which he/she was successful in moving toward the desired goal
- Work backwards to discover keys to success
SFBT Skeleton

1st (Future)
- Calibration
  - Greeting and Connection
- Identify what the person wants
- Goal Formation Question
- Explore (utilize difference, relationship, how questions)

2nd (Present and Past)
- Scale Present
- Higher or Lower (exception questions)

3rd (Immediate Future)
- Next Steps
- 24 hour Goal
- Feedback and Follow-up
SFBT Core Interventions

- Goal Formation Question (Miracle Question, Suppose, Fast Forward)
- Scaling
- Compliments
- Difference Questions
- Relational Questions
- Exception Questions
Goal Formation Questions

- **Goal Formation Questions**
  - Goal identification
    - What is important to the client?
    - What would the client like to be different?
  - Goal Formation
    - Future oriented
    - Miracle Question
    - Fast Forward
    - Suppose
Scaling

- Makes Concepts Measurable
- Provides assessment information (diagnostic scales)
- Provides a tool to measure change (therapeutic scales)
- Neutral tool to highlight exceptions and highlight change
- Use 0-10 or 1-10
- The 10 equals the desired goal
Safety Scales

- Safety Scales
  - Definition of 10 includes hardship
    - For example: “Even though things are really difficult right now, you know you can make it through”
  - Definition of 1 (or Zero) states immanent threat
    - For example: “You are going to leave the office today and kill yourself”
  - Ask why so high
    - For example: “Okay, so you are a 4. Why a 4 and not lower, like a 2 or a 3?”
  - If 1 or lower: follow emergency procedures
  - If higher than a 1: safety planning
Relationship Questions

- Assists the client in exploring how the changes impact all elements of his/her system
- Assists the client in keeping the plan realistic and inclusive of all factors
- Increases the client’s ability to see things from another perspective
Difference Questions

- Help explore meaning
- Increase hope that change will make a difference
- Encourages clients to explore if potential changes are realistic, feasible, and worthwhile
Compliments (Highlights)

- Compliments
  - Highlight areas of success that the client has already identified as useful.
  - Focuses on aspects within the client’s life rather than on behavior during the sessions (compliment vs. behavioral reinforcement)
  - Must be genuine
  - Two Step: (1) Highlight & (2) How
Exception Questions

- Help highlight the times in which the problem does not exist or is less severe
- Assist therapists in exploring if something that a client tried before was useful
- Must be client driven
- Only useful if the client sees them as useful in helping to get to the “miracle.”
- Can be used with scales (there is always a reason why they are as high as they are; why a not)
Vicarious Resiliency

- Focus on what you want to get bigger
- Be genuine with compliments
- Believe that people have a good reason for what they do
- Remember that people are people
- Believe that the future is both created and negotiable
Contact and Resources

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- Solution Focused Brief Therapy Association
  - www.sfbta.org