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# Journal of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy

Volume 2, Number 1 — 2016

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## EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Journal of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy* is a scholarly journal that aims to support the Solution-Focused community through the publication of high-quality research in outcome, effectiveness or process of the Solution-Focused approach and the publication of high quality theoretical and/or case-study related material in the area of Solution-Focused practice.

The journal invites submissions as follows:

**Research reports** — We are committed to helping expand the evidence base for Solution-Focused Brief Therapy. The journal seeks scholarly papers that report the process and results of quantitative and/or qualitative research that seeks to explore the effectiveness of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy or seeks to explore aspects of the Solution-Focused process. We are also committed to research reports being “user-friendly” and so invite authors submitting research-based papers to address specifically the implications or relevance of their research findings to Solution-Focused practitioners.

**Theoretical papers** — The Solution-Focused approach raises many issues relating to psychotherapy theory, to our basic assumptions of working therapeutically and to the philosophical stance adopted by Solution-Focused practitioners. The journal welcomes papers that explore these issues and which offer novel arguments or perspectives on these issues.

**Case study/Practice-related papers** — We are committed to the journal being related to Solution-Focused PRACTICE. Therefore, we invite papers that explore the experience and perspective of practitioners. This might be a single case study, with significant analysis and reflection on the therapeutic process and which then distils some principles or insights which might be replicable, or it might be a paper which explores a series of clinical/practical cases and which seeks to draw out overarching principles which might be used by others. Please discuss your ideas with the Editor!

**Not just “therapy”** — The Journal recognises that many useful and interesting manifestations of the Solution-Focused approach occur in settings that are not to do with therapy. Nonetheless, Solution-Focused interventions are all concerned with helping to facilitate change. The journal is called the *Journal of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy*, at least in part in homage to our heritage. Nonetheless, the journal welcomes submissions that explore the use of Solution-Focused ideas in other settings. The journal enjoys a collegial relationship with the journal *Interaction: The Journal of Solution-Focused in Organisations* and, where appropriate, will discuss which journal offers the more appropriate publication forum.

## SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS

### Manuscripts

Manuscripts should be sent to the Editor as Microsoft Word or Apple Pages word processing documents. Please do not submit your manuscript elsewhere at the same time. Please send the manuscript double-spaced with ample margins and a brief running head. The title of the paper should appear on the first page. Since all manuscripts will be blind reviewed, please include names, affiliations, etc. of the author or authors on a SEPARATE first page. Please also include on this (or a next) page details of any grants that have supported the research, any conference presentations relating to the paper, any potential (or even perceived) conflicts of interest.

Spelling should be anglicised, with -ise endings and English spelling of words such as colour, counselling, and so on. Solution-Focused Brief Therapy and Solution-Focused may be abbreviated to SFBT and SF after the first mention.

References should follow the format of the American Psychological Association (Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th ed.). Papers should include an abstract of no more than 150 words.

Any tables, figures or illustrations should be supplied on separate pages (or in separate computer files) in black and white and their position indicated in the main document. For any images or photographs not created by the author, the submission must include written permission to reproduce the material signed by the copyright holder.

We would expect that papers will ordinarily be a maximum of 5,000 words; however, this limit is negotiable if the content of the paper warrants more.

### **Clinical/client material**

The Journal's policy is that any actual clinical detail in a paper (including, but not limited to, therapy transcripts, client/patient history, descriptions of the therapy process) should have signed consent from the clients/patients for the material to be published. If a paper includes clinical material or descriptions, please include a declaration, signed by the first author, either that signed consent of clients/patients, specifically for the publication of their clinical information in this journal, has been obtained and is available for review OR that clinical material has been altered in such a way as to disguise the identity of any people.

### **Review**

Manuscripts will be reviewed by at least two members of the Editorial Board, who will be asked to recommend that the paper be accepted or rejected for publication; however, final decision about publication rests with the Editor. Reviewers will also be asked to indicate what kinds of changes might be needed in order for the paper to be published. Where reviewers have indicated that changes are required or recommended, we are happy to work with authors to review amended submissions with a view to achieving publication. When the reviewers both recommend that the paper not be accepted, and make no recommendations for changes, and when the Editor accepts this recommendation, no further consideration of the paper will be given. When the reviewers (and the Editor) suggest that your paper, while it might have merit, does not meet the requirements for this journal, we will endeavour to suggest other journals to which the author might submit the paper; however, we are under no obligation to help achieve publication.

Where one or more authors of a paper is a member of the Editorial Board, that person will take no part in the review process and the review process will still be anonymous to the author or authors.

Send manuscripts to: [michael@briefsolutions.com.au](mailto:michael@briefsolutions.com.au)

## Editorial

Michael Durrant

Welcome to the third issue of the *Journal of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy*.

You may have been wondering when the next issue of the journal would eventually appear.

Starting a new peer-reviewed journal is not an easy process and we were significantly behind schedule even when Volume 1, Number 1 was actually published in 2014. Thus, the Board decided to “skip” 2015 and for Volume 2 to be dated 2016. Thus, we should be more or less back on schedule.

Steve de Shazer often referred to Solution-Focused Brief Therapy as a “minimalist” approach. While it seemed that minimalism was little more than a brief therapy tool, it is clear from the Solution-Focused literature broadly that doing as little as is necessary is a core value of the Solution-Focused approach. Solution-Focused practitioners believe that people should be out there living their lives rather than in here talking about their lives and that it is, in one sense, unethical for the practitioner to do anything more than the minimum necessary to assist the client.

de Shazer embodied minimalism. Despite Solution-Focused originally being developed as a “talking therapy”, de Shazer was renowned as a man of few words!

The team at BRIEF in London have continually attempted to “test” the extent to which different aspects of the approach were actually necessary and do simplify Solution-Focused as much as possible. Simple does not mean simplistic and the paper in this issue by Chris Iveson and Mark McKergow attests to that. Iveson’s quest for simplicity coupled with McKergow’s ongoing fascination with trying to figure out how we describe HOW Solution-Focused actually works results in a stimulating suggestion of a new way to think about the Solution-Focused process — a way of thinking that might just mean

some of the Solution-Focused techniques we have held dear are actually not necessary.

Frank Thomas considers the process of giving “compliments” to clients, a practice once suggested by de Shazer and Berg (1997) as one of the defining aspects of the Solution-Focused approach. Mindful that the fact of the practitioner deciding what aspects of the client’s achievements warranted compliments might be seen as inconsistent with Solution-Focused’s claim to a “not-knowing” stance (De Jong & Berg, 2012), Thomas explores some different ways to think about the process of complimenting.

Cynthia Hansen relates a fascinating journey from using Solution-Focused ideas in a school psychology setting to implementing Solution-Focused ideas (in some very different ways) in disaster recovery work and I offer some thoughts about what is ... and isn’t ... Solution-Focused.

De Jong, P. & Berg, I. K. (2012). *Interviewing for solutions (4th ed.)*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.

de Shazer, S. & Berg, I. K. (1997). ‘What works?’ Remarks on research aspects of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 19(2), 121–124.