

7-2014

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Michael Durrant

michael@briefsolutions.com.au

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Recommended Citation

Durrant, Michael (2014) "Why a new journal of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy?," *Journal of Solution Focused Practices*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 1 , Article 2.

Available at: <https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/journalsfp/vol1/iss1/2>

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Why a new journal of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy?

Michael Durrant

Back in 2010, there was a small meeting in Malmö, Sweden, that discussed the “future” of Solution-Focused work. It was a group of interested people and NOT a representative group at all. One shared concern was how we could make Solution-Focused more “respectable”, particularly in relation to the academic community, and how to advance the scholarly pursuit and examination of the Solution-Focused approach.

Solution-Focused Brief Therapy developed, not always comfortably, under the broader family therapy umbrella. The paper that first presented Solution-Focused Brief Therapy in a systematic way (de Shazer et al., 1986) was published in the respected family therapy journal, *Family Process*, and scholarly articles about Solution-Focused Brief Therapy have largely been published in family therapy journals, particularly *The Journal of Family Therapy*, *The Journal of Systemic Therapies*, *Families in Society*, *The Journal of Family Psychotherapy*, and others.

A few years ago, a professional association was formed by and for people using Solution-Focused approaches in organisational, business and coaching contexts. As part of its activities, The Association for the Quality Development of SF Consulting & Training (SFCT) publishes *InterAction: The Journal of SF in Organisations*. This is a peer-reviewed journal, with a clear scholarly focus and an editorial advisory board that withstands academic scrutiny. The journal is into its sixth year and is now included in a couple of the major academic journal databases.

We believe that the time has come for there to be a similar scholarly journal devoted to Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (rather than coaching or organisational consulting). The existence of a high-standard, specifically SFBT journal will hopefully assist the recognition of SFBT within academic circles and

help differentiate it from the broader muddle of different models that is the family therapy field. Further, since there is not yet any agreed-upon accreditation for Solution-Focused work, a peer-reviewed journal that accepts — and rejects — submitted papers will begin to help clarify (in broad terms) what the Solution-Focused community believes is, and is not, Solution-Focused work.

Dr Alasdair Macdonald and Dr Mark McKergow have been key supporters of this development, which has taken some time to reach fruition. The formation of the Australasian Association for Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (AASFBT) in 2012 provided the platform for the journal to move ahead. While published by AASFBT, the journal is by no means simply an antipodean project. Rather, the Australasian Association is publishing the journal as a service to the international Solution-Focused community — an international journal, published in Australia. We have assembled an Editorial Board of international breadth and are pleased that the papers published in this first issue represent six different countries.

My thanks to all who have worked to make this journal a reality.

de Shazer, S., Berg, I. K., Lipchik, E., Nunnally, E., Molnar, A., Gingerich, W. J. & Weiner-Davis, M. (1986). Brief therapy: Focused solution development. *Family Process, 25*(2), 207–221.

As mentioned above, the impetus for beginning this journal was at a meeting in Malmö, Sweden in 2010. That meeting was organised and hosted by Björn Johansson and Eva Persson, from the Clues Centre in Karlstad, Sweden. Björn was an energetic Solution-Focused practitioner — not a therapist but involved in Solution-Focused coaching, Solution-Focused team building and other Solution-Focused work in the organisational context and in supervising and training social workers and public sector professionals. He was passionate about the approach and keen that Solution-Focused work should expand in both organisational and therapy contexts. Sadly, Björn died in June 2014, 48-years-old, following a struggle with cancer. While not a therapist, Björn would have been excited that the idea of this journal has finally come to fruition. I dedicate this first issue of the *Journal of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy* to Björn. The journal owes its existence to his vision for expanding the broad Solution-Focused community. We send our best wishes to Eva and Molly (who assisted at the Malmö meeting and so is an honorary SF person) and the family.