

Theories of Counselling and Practice –II- UNIT –V

Dr. A. John Balaiah

Head, Department of Counselling
Psychology

SFBT

SFBT was developed by Insoo Kim Berg, Steve de Shaze, and their colleagues in the late 1970s.

Disillusioned by the results of traditional psychoanalysis, Berg and de Shazer wanted to create a new type of therapy that dealt less with the “why” behind challenges patients face, and more with the “how” of treating them.

SFBT

SOLUTION-FOCUSED BRIEF THERAPY

The Main Assumptions



SFBT

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Key Concepts

01

Therapy is concerned with looking for what is working.

02

Downplay "past" while highlighting "present and future."

03

Therapists assist clients in finding expectations for their problems.

04

Therapy grounded on a positive orientation - people are healthy & competent.

05

The therapy process is to focus on creating solutions rather than talking about the problems.

06

View people are healthy, competent, and resourceful & can construct solutions to enhance their lives.

SFBT

SOLUTION-FOCUSED BRIEF THERAPY

Techniques Used in Solution-Focused Brief Therapy



Three steps to problem Solving

- Step
- Step 1: Gathering Information -Understand the problem in-depth by collecting relevant information.
- Step 2: Developing Solutions- Brainstorm and devise potential solutions to the problem.
- Step 3: Evaluating Solutions-Assess potential solutions and select the best one.

Interventions

Compliments are frequently used in SFT

- To help the client begin to focus on what is working, rather than what is not.
- Acknowledging that a client has an impact on the movement toward a goal allows hope to become present.
- Once hope and perspective shift occurs, a client can decide what daily actions they would like to take in attaining a goal

Higher levels of hope and optimism

- Higher levels of hope and optimism can predict the following desirable outcomes (Peterson & Seligman, 2004):
 - achievement in all sorts of areas
 - freedom from anxiety and depression
 - improved social relationships
 - improved physical well being

Mind mapping

- Mind mapping is a visual thinking tool that helps structure information. It helps clients to better analyze, comprehend, and generate new ideas in areas they might not have been automatically self-generated. Having it on paper gives them a reference point for future goal setting as well

Empathy

- Empathy is vital in the administration of SFBT. A client needs to feel heard and held by the practitioner for any forward movement to occur. Intentionally leaning in to ensure that a client knows that the practitioner is engaged in listening is recommended.

Speaking to strengths

- Speaking to strengths and aligning those strengths with goal setting areas in SFT. Recognizing and acknowledging what is already working for the client validates strengths. Self-recognition of these strengths increases self-esteem and in turn, improves forward movement

5 SFT Questions to Ask Clients

If a miracle occurred while you were asleep tonight, what changes would you notice in your life tomorrow?

- **1. Miracle Question**
- Here is a clear example of how to administer the miracle question. It should be delivered deliberately. When done so, it allows the client to imagine the miracle occurring.
- *“Now, I want to ask you a strange question. Suppose that while you are sleeping tonight and the entire house is quiet, a miracle happens. The miracle is that the problem which brought you here is solved. However, because you are sleeping, you don’t know that the miracle has happened. So, when you wake up tomorrow morning, what will be different that will tell you that a miracle has happened and the problem which brought you here is solved?”* (de Shazer, 1988)

2. Presupposing change questions

- A practitioner of solution-focused therapy asks questions in an approach derived way.
- Here are a few examples of presupposing change questions:
- “What stopped complete disaster from occurring?”
“How did you avoid falling apart.”
“What kept you from unraveling?”

3. Exception Questions

- Examples of exception questions include:
- 1. Tell me about times when you don't get angry.
- 2. Tell me about times you felt the happiest.
- 3. When was the last time that you feel you had a better day?
- 4. Was there ever a time when you felt happy in your relationship?
- 5. What was it about that day that made it a better day?
- 6. Can you think of a time when the problem was not present in your life?

4. Scaling Questions

- These are questions that allow a client to rate their experience. Scaling questions allow for a practitioner to add a follow-up question that is in the positive as well.
- An example of a scaling question:
“On a scale of 1-10, with 10 representing the best it can be and one the worst, where would you say you are today?”
- A follow-up question:
“ Why a four and not a five?”
- Questions like these allow the client to explore the positive, as well as their commitment to the changes that need to occur.

5. Coping Questions

- These types of questions open clients up to their resiliency. Clients are experts in their life experience. Helping them see what works, allows them to grow from a place of strength.
- “How have you managed so far?”
“What have you done to stay afloat?”
“What is working?”

4 Activities & Exercises

- **1. Solution-focused art therapy/ letter writing**
- A powerful in-session task is to request a client to draw or write about one of the following, as part of art therapy
- a picture of their miracle
- something the client does well
- a day when everything went well. What was different about that day?
- a special person in their life

2. Strengths Finders

- Have a client focus on a time when they felt their strongest. Ask them to highlight what strengths were present when things were going well. This can be an illuminating activity that helps clients focus on the strengths they already have inside of them.
- A variation of this task is to have a client ask people who are important in their lives to tell them how they view the client's strengths. Collecting strengths from another's perspective can be very illuminating and helpful in bringing a client into a strength perspective.

3. Solution Mind Mapping

- A creative way to guide a client into a brainstorm of solutions is by mind mapping. Have the miracle at the centre of the mind map. From the centre, have a client create branches of solutions to make that miracle happen. By exploring solution options, a client will self-generate and be more connected to the outcome.

4. Experiment Journals

- Encourage clients to do experiments in real-life settings concerning the presenting problem. Have the client keep track of what works from an approach perspective. Reassure the client that a variety of experiments is a helpful approach

Advantages & Disadvantages

SOLUTION-FOCUSED BRIEF THERAPY

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages

- Fits in nicely with managed care and the pressure to provide effective counseling in a briefer time frame.
- Emphasizes the positive attributes in clients.
- It can be used effectively with a variety of clients and issues.

Solution-Focused Brief Therapy

Disadvantages

- Critics say it is too simplistic and does not have enough empirical research to support it.
- It may be contraindicated with dependent clients.
- It may not adequately address clients with serious mental issues.
- It may not develop the counselor/client relationship in enough depth to be therapeutic.

References

- *The Miracle Method: A Radically New Approach to Problem Drinking* – Insoo Kim Berg and Scott D. Miller Ph.D.
- *More Than Miracles: The State of the Art of Solution -Focused Therapy (Routledge Mental Health Classic Editions)* – Steve de Shazer and Yvonne Dolan