

Solution Focused Future Cheatsheet

Solution-Focused (SF) Practice

- Puts students in the driver seat
- Validates concerns but focuses on the desired outcomes
- All while ...
 - ✓ Avoiding defensiveness and blame reallocation
 - ✓ Battling trauma - Meets people where they are, building what is wanted by finding successes and strengths to extrapolate into other areas
 - ✓ Being culturally inclusive - Builds what the person hopes, regardless of culture, not what the counselor dictates they need
- Focuses on what the person wants
- Brings more joy and less stress to both the counselor and counselee

Solution Focused Trifecta		
3 Tenets	3 Skills	3 Segments
Co-founder of Solution Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) Steve de Shazer's three tenets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it's not broken, don't fix it. • If it works, do more of it. • If it doesn't work, do something different. 	The three skills needed for success at implementing SFBT include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HALO (self-check) • SF Looking (reframing) • SF Listening (not knowing) To allow for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SF Language 	The three segments of any solution focused conversation are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What's Wanted</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Best Hopes (<i>Now</i>) ◦ Preferred Future (<i>Later</i>) • <i>What Works</i> • <i>What's Next</i>

Key Strategies / Techniques

- **Miracle Question (MQ):** Although variations exist, the idea goes like this: "A miracle happens and when you wake up tomorrow, your best hope has been fulfilled, but you don't know it. How will you know? What will be the first small signs? What will be different?" This is generally used to segue to the Preferred Future (i.e. *What's Wanted AFTER* the challenge has been overcome).
- **Tomorrow Question (TQ):** Modified MQ popularized by BRIEF; takes away fantastical aspects, replacing them with the logical assumption that progress will naturally take place. This can be used in place of the MQ and/or to help build *What's Next*.
- **Scaling:** Using a number line to help the person gauge where they are, what is working, and where they are going. (Both 1 - 10 or 0 - 10 are acceptable scaling ranges.)
- **DAP360**
 - Descriptions: Explanations, details, and descriptions of differences. If a person says something generic, ask, "How would that be different?" or "What will be the



first signs that things are a little better?"

- **A**ctions: Focus on what people are doing when successes occur or exceptions happen. "How did you get through it?" or "What are/were you doing when ___?"
- **P**eople**360**: Explore key stakeholders' opinions. "What will ___ notice when ___?"
Take a 360 degree view from the perspective of one or more key stakeholders.

Key Elements

- Student, Parent, or Colleague -> Has a concern or desire
- You ...
 1. **Listen**, acknowledge, and validate the concern as you always would
 - Remember: SF Language stems from SF Listening (not knowing) and SF Looking (Reframing).
 2. **Select** the people, topics, and resources that can lead towards their *Best Hope*
 - Explore **What's Wanted** (*now and later*), **What Works**, and **What's Next**
 - Different / Change / Last time / Resources / Instead?
 - "What will be the **first small signs** that ...?"
 3. **Build** the segment/s needed to get to achieve their *Best Hope*
 - Co-construct segment/s via identifying and building upon their resources

If a problem needs to be discussed briefly, after some listening, find the resources that help the person already:

- Identify:
 - "How did you ...
 - ... get through it?" ... keep going?"
 - ... stop things from getting even worse?" ... keep hope alive?
 - "What have you been pleased to notice the last few days even though things have been so tough?"
 - **DAP360** (keep it small) -> Doing/happening/look like?
 - **"What else? What else? What else?"**
- Redirect:
 - (When negative) "What would be happening **instead** ...?", "What difference would that make?" or "Will that be different?"
 - (When bad) What would you **rather see** ...?

Resources

[Solution Focused Trifecta: A Guide to Being Solution-Focused](#)
[Solution Focused Practice in Schools: 80 Ideas and Strategies](#)
[Brief Coaching with Children and Young People: A Solution Focused Approach](#)
[Solution Focused Brief Therapy: 100 Key Points and Techniques](#)
[The Solution Focused Approach with Children and Young People](#)



To learn more, go to "[Solution Focused Future](#)" on  **YouTube** or www.solutionfocusedfuture.com