

Around useful purposefulness

Whatever happens in the SFBT is to happen "for something". The sense of purposefulness accompanies me during my meeting with client many times from the very beginning! Typical interventions in the form of questions like "What needs to happen here to think that it was worthwhile to come to this meeting"? are intended to introduce a purpose aspect. It is worth remembering that the search for purposefulness is also an adventure of the therapist with himself. Each of us can ask ourselves the question "What will help you think that what you did during the meeting was worth doing? Whatever we do, let us do it 'for purpose'.

The premise of purpose is connected in our method with another assumption concerning the search for usefulness. Usefulness in a solution-focused approach seems to be one of the basic building blocks of this method. The search for what works: within the framework of therapy and in the client's life, in a romantic description of the history of SFBT formation, could be compared to the history of St. Graal's search. This is reflected in the famous words:

"Do what works! If it doesn't work, stop it! Do something different"

When I refer these words to the method itself, it instantly encourages me to go beyond the rules of the method in every situation where they do not work. This, however, is striking with the idea that was created later on – idea of trusting the model: "Trust the model!". One of the practical aspects in SFBT applications lies precisely in solving the above outlined dilemma. Practitioners who are guided by the useful purposefulness principle easier find flexibility in creating the forms and content offered to the client during the SFBT application process. For the purpose of my practice I decided that one of the principles of the SFBT consists in exceeding its principles in the name of useful purposefulness. In other words, the value of looking for what is useful to the client is more valuable than the value of any SFBT rule being implemented in a rigid way. Looking for other words, I am willing to say that I have to trust the model, that is, to show distrust to the model, because it is only a map and not a reality. A map created "somewhere and once "and applied "here and now".

Based on this understanding, I have created three categories of SFBT activities for my practice. In my reflection on SFBT practice I try to use categories: it is typical for SFBT, it is quasi-typical for SFBT, it is a-typical for SFBT. However, the typology criterion is not a sieve that determines my practical choices, but rather a suggestion that determines the order of my choices. Unless I do otherwise, the general tendency is from what is more typical, through quasi-typical, toward atypical forms and contents.

When we take into account useful purposefulness, it is worth to ask ourselves what is our criterion to determine whether or not it is useful. How to recognize that what we are doing in the process of using SFBT because of its usefulness makes sense.

My understanding of SFBT allows me to define this approach as assisting the client in the "transition" from what is less wanted towards what is more wanted, based on every necessary source of inspiration. Combining this with Steve de Shazer words that SFBT was created to help the client achieve what she/he wants, the main criterion for assessing the degree of useful purposefulness is its value to what extent the intervention helps, supports the client's chances of achieving what the client wants, what the client chooses in the matter we are working on. Therefore, a strong recommendation in all SFBT traditions is to co-consider with the client the question: "To what extent and what is useful for you?" ☺

...and YES! TAKE A RISK! WHEN REQUIRED

THINK, SPEAK AND DO SOMETHING TOTALLY DIFFERENT!!!

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