

Around what is wanted....

Steve de Shazer, one of the founders of SFBT in discussions about individual clients, their situation, possible strategies for further work, very often at the very beginning of such a conversation asked the question "What does the client want? He could ask about the "problem", also about the "solution" and many other things, but what he was interested in the answer to the question of what is wanted by the client in his current situation. I had the opportunity to participate in these discussions in the 1990s on the SFT-L mailing list. Steve's consistency in asking this question in each of the discussed situations with clients strongly modelled one of the main axes of thinking in SFBT - the direction of work is to be determined by what the client wants. Many years later, when in my own practice I discovered the uselessness of many SFBT maps, focusing on what the client wants in the situation we were dealing with always remained an important and useful element. Steve de Shazer himself had a great deal of distance to the name "solution-focused", such as the description of the method. His doubts were one of the inspirations for me to stop using not only the word "problem", but also the word "solution". The famous SFBT dichotomy "from problem to solution" ceased to be any axis of reflection in my practice. On the other hand, constant attention to what is desired by the client within the situations we're working on, it has remained vitally important.

I've also received a lot of inspiration from Luc Isebaert, who paid great attention to "free choice of the client". Luc saw the principle of "free choice of the client" as an ethical principle in psychotherapy, and he saw the ability to make a choice as a function of health. The choice is health.

In my practice both gentlemen left their significant trace, much larger than the one I have mentioned here. When I try to define my own practice within the Situation Model, I can see very clearly the tradition described above. **My job is to serve the client in achieving what he wants more, in a specific situation.** Therefore, on the level of description of this fragment of the method, the only useful word is "wanted".

Two years ago, following Steve de Shazer's idea of the "death of resistance" in SFBT, which is to stop using the meaning of "resistance" to describe various phenomena in the client and therapist, and instead to assign the meaning of "cooperation", I decided to "kill" two consecutive meanings - these were the meanings of "problem" and "solution". After my presentation at the SFBTA conference in Halifax in 2016, however, I listened to Harvey Ratney's reflection that it may be too many of these deaths and it is enough to send these meanings - resistance, problem, solution - to retirement.

When I focus my reflection on the topic of "wanting", there are also a few aspects of it that are simply expressed in the form of questions:

"In the matter we are dealing with:

What and by whom is unwanted or less wanted (what else?)?

What and by whom is more wanted (what else?),

What and by whom is chosen (what else?),

What will be achieved at the expense of what and how to deal with it?

With these questions I leave myself, you for some time! Exploring their content with clients can take up a lot of time and bring a lot meanings and experiences. ☺