

# SSFN

Scottish Solution Focused Network

## Newsletter No. 3.

In this edition we have details of our upcoming [Conference](#) being held on August 29<sup>th</sup> at the Playfield Institute, NHS Fife. We also have details of our last [Training Day](#), held on May 30<sup>th</sup>. There's also a link to an excellent [paper](#) (courtesy of Dorothy Adam) on a Solution Focused pain management programme developed in Southport.

## Conference

The **SSFN Conference** will take place on Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> August, at the Playfield Institute, Cupar, Fife. This is an opportunity to showcase the work of Solution Focused Practitioners from around the country. Focusing on the theme of "Celebrating Simplicity in a Complex World" breakout sessions will allow practitioners to share their experience of working in complex situations using Solution Focused interactions.

Confirmed speakers include **Sharon Little** from Penumbra Youth Project, Fife; **Wendy Woolfson**, an Independent Storyteller from Glasgow; **Kate Smith**, a Primary Care Mental Health Worker from Aberdeenshire and **Gerry Hastie**, a CPN in NHS Fife. **Dorothy Adam** from Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen and **Christopher Ward**, Nurse Consultant in Child and Adolescent Mental Health will also be presenting breakout sessions. **Steve Smith** will present the Keynote Plenary Session on '*The Importance of the Future in Solution Focused Interactions*' and there will be an *Open Space* Session, for informal presentations and discussion, in the afternoon session.

Details of the programme can be seen on the [website](#).

The all-inclusive cost of the Conference will be £20 until July 31<sup>st</sup> and £25 thereafter: Conference presenters will receive a free place!

Please feel free to circulate the [Conference Flyer](#) to everyone you think might be interested.

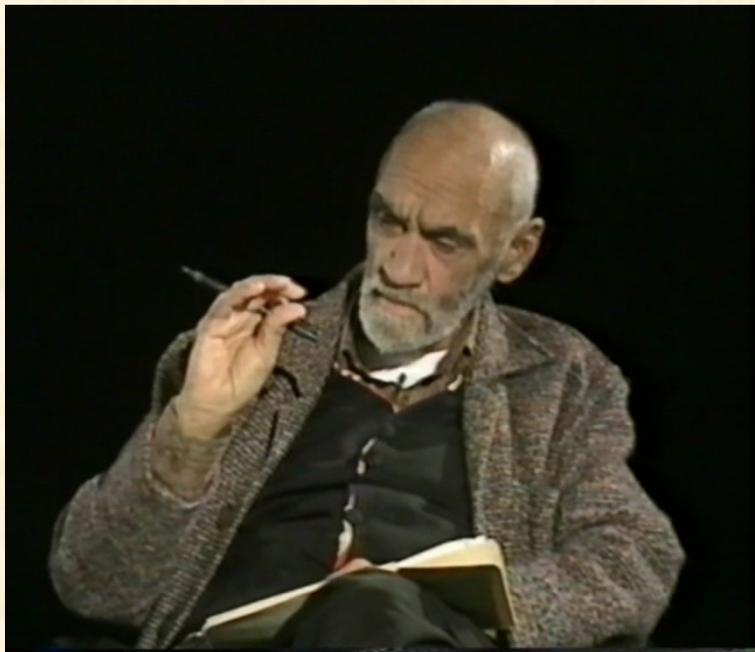
## Last Training Day

The last Training Day was on May 30<sup>th</sup>; also held at the Playfield Institute (thanks to Graham Buchanan for hospitality). An excellent turnout of members saw several new faces join regular members for a very full day. The day began, as usual, with a sharing of what was going well for members. Steve reported on the success of the current RGU training course in Uist, in the Western Isles. NHS Western Isles have funded places for a group of mental health practitioners to undertake the accredited module in Solution Focused Brief Therapy, and Steve has been facilitating the training on-site in Benbecula. Claire Davidson and her colleagues spoke of recent developments at the Fife Penumbra Youth Project. The team are working in a solution focused approach, and spoke of the success they have been experiencing working with the Individual Recovery Outcomes Counter (I.ROC), a tool developed at Penumbra which reflects the principles and practice of solution focused working.

Graham reported on the development of a stepped-care approach within NHS Fife's CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service). Beginning with the least intrusive intervention, the stepped-care approach offers clients the option of self-help and support materials before the offer of brief therapies within a structured programme. This led to a wider conversation on the non-inclusion of SFBT in the Scottish Government's *Matrix of Psychological Therapies*. In a broad discussion it was argued that the effectiveness of SFBT was increasingly evident and a growing empirical evidence base existed, and that SF thinking was seeping into contemporary culture without the need to 'flag wave' its presence. Wendy Woolfson suggested that SF conversations provided a gentle and immediate vehicle for building positive narratives with clients.

Graham then led the morning's formal training session with a presentation on the relationship between SF thinking and the Recovery movement in health and social care. This led into an interactive session, which reflected many of the issues brought up earlier in the morning. Francis Wiseman spoke of the use of SF and Recovery approaches in Drug and Substance Misuse Services and Adoption and Fostering Services; in the latter case, working with clients who need to stay out of prison in order to keep their children, and putting the client at the centre of their own recovery plan. It was suggested that both SF and Recovery are about 'living well' despite existing problems, and that both approaches represented major 'sea-changes' in (for want of a better term) care provision where the establishment tends to maintain the status-quo. In bringing the discussion to a close, Graham suggested that it was we who required Recovering; he suggested that we are defined by the therapy model (in many instances) and that, perhaps, the time has come to re-identify ourselves with the recovery model. Solution Focused Recovery facilitators?

After lunch and the opportunity to chat, network and encourage people to present workshops at the upcoming conference, we returned to Playfield Institute where Steve presented a video of Steve De Shazer working with a young man who had recently been injured in a car accident. Paralysed from



the waist down, the young man could see no future for himself; Steve, in his understated manner, worked with the man, focusing on the fact that, although he didn't want to go on with his life, he 'wanted to want to'. Echoing Milton Erickson's maxim that you work with whatever the client brings, Steve highlighted this meagre

possibility of change and left the client to decide when to return ('Come back and see us *when you want to*'). Excerpts from the second session demonstrate the change the client had experienced between sessions. Importantly, the

DVD showed Steve, Insoo and Yvonne Dolan discussing the session during 'the break' and showing the attention to detail the team put into the exact wording of the post session message to the client.

The day ended with a brief discussion on what would make the SSFN 'even better'. Suggestions included a certificate of attendance for CPD purposes (they'll be coming out soon), a shared list of SSFN members so that individual members can network (we're working on this), a forum so that members know who will be attending training days and can co-ordinate transport (working on this too).

The next Training Day will be the Conference on August 29<sup>th</sup>; the booking form can be accessed [here](#).

## Featured Paper

Dorothy Adam kindly sent us this issue's Featured Paper. It's from the British Journal of Pain and introduces a rationale for a solution-focused approach to a community-based pain management programme (PMP), describing delivery and preliminary outcome data. You can access the paper with this link: <http://bjp.sagepub.com/content/8/1/49.full.pdf+html>. If you come across a paper, or anything else, that you think would be of interest to the wider community of SF practitioners, please forward it to us and we'll include it in the next issue of the Newsletter.