

**Solution-Focused Therapy Application**

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## **Introduction**

As a case study, this paper will outline the goals of solution-focused therapy and discuss which interventions and strategies can achieve successful outcomes for Ana. The counselor and the client's roles and the length of therapy will be covered in detail in the description of the treatment process. This case study examines how solution-focused therapy addresses the client's cultural and social needs. The case study will also discuss how the solution-focused theory supports the constructivist philosophy in treatment and how the counselor uses collaboration to meet client goals. This case study will also discuss how the counselor uses post-modern collaborative approaches to interact with clients to ensure progress and safety.

## **Goals of Counseling and Intervention Strategies**

Ana's solution-focused therapy will begin with identifying her current difficulties: financial pressure after losing her job, being a single parent, and lacking support from her family. Then, the counselor will assist the client in developing solutions for these issues. Interventions utilized in solution-focused therapy with Ana will include questioning, normalizing the problem and externalizing. To move Ana from a negative problem-focused perspective towards a positive solution-focused one, the counselor will help her identify the personal resources she already has available to resolve her current difficulties. By reframing the situation through posing critical questions, the counselor helps reveal Ana's strengths. The solution-focused therapy guides the client forward by the counselor asking questions tailored to the client's situation. Counselors use a key question to navigate a client's thinking towards times when their life was problem free. As a result of these questions, clients may identify precise objectives and ways of achieving them.

Externalization requires labeling or recognizing a problem to separate it from the client. Ana will be encouraged to describe her experiences from a situational view rather than attaching her circumstances to her identity. This strategy lets Ana differentiate the problem from herself, providing positive insight. Normalizing is another technique the counselor will use to establish with Ana that her issue is not germane to herself but is often experienced by others. This approach will help alleviate Ana's sense of hopelessness. To build Ana's confidence in achieving these goals, the counselor will collaborate with her to formulate feasible and attainable goals. In addition, the solution-focused counselor will work with Ana to create a realistic plan to help her envision a future of desired possibilities. Ultimately the goal is to modify the client's behavior which makes negative situations, alter the client's perception of the problem, and then use the client's capabilities and means to achieve solutions.

### **Process of Treatment**

By outlining and clarifying her problems within the first session, Ana will discover her potential to achieve her desired goals. Ana will also gain a sense of fulfillment because she decided to seek counseling. Solution-focused therapy will direct Ana's focus toward her future. Future-focused thinking will eliminate time spent on the negatives in her past, which may cause stagnation in the development of emotional and mental freedom. The counselor will use information from Ana's past to identify successful thinking and behaviors which worked previously to achieve the desired outcomes Ana is presently pursuing. During the counseling sessions, the counselor will use the interventions of questioning, externalization, and normalizing the problem to implement the solution-focused therapy for Ana to succeed. The solution-focus treatment will focus on Ana's strengths and build on them while giving her insight into her

ability to correct her behaviors and attain her counseling goals. Solution-focused therapy will allow Ana to visualize her dream life and devise attainable steps to accomplish it.

Solution-focused therapy is a perfect fit for Ana because her insurance only covers eight sessions. This therapy is considered short-term and ranges from one to ten sessions. Solution-focused therapy is a partnership in which the client and therapist strive to maintain a mutually beneficial, considerate, and collaborative relationship, where both are viewed as equally valuable. The therapist cultivates a trusting relationship with the client, ensures that Ana is informed throughout all phases of treatment, and aspires to bring balance to their relationship. The counselor practices ethically by not forcing Ana to adopt their values and allows Ana to set goals that align with her beliefs. Ana must understand the therapeutic process from start to finish and be available to contribute to the therapeutic relationship and process fully. Although Ana is considered the expert concerning herself and her situation, the counselor will be the expert on how to accomplish her transformation. Ana must collaborate with the counselor to establish which strategies work to reach the end goals.

### **Social & Cultural Needs of the Client**

According to the solution-focused theory, dwelling on present problems and issues is not the most helpful approach to coping with them; however, coming up with a solution to address them is. Therefore, solution-focused therapy is particularly suitable for clients from different cultures. Solution-focused therapy is constructive and depends on how clients interpret their experiences, allowing the counselor to conduct sessions from the client's perspective. Clients filter all aspects of their perceptions through culture. The therapist understands the client's point of view, making therapy culturally sensitive. The client directs the counselor on management approaches by offering their unique perspectives, which serve as guides. Counselors derive

solution ideas through listening and posing questions that stimulate inherent client strengths, which are used to resolve present issues. Because the client's view is used throughout the therapy process, the social and cultural needs are met, and the client has the autonomy to accept or refuse solutions according to how well they align with their values. Diverse populations have proven to benefit from solution-focused therapy (DeJong & Berg, 1998).

### **Constructivist Philosophy**

Constructivist therapists act as catalysts for change rather than decision-makers. This is to assist those in treatment in identifying pattern behaviors and moving away from them to improve their quality of life. Self-awareness, self-determination, and structure are all components of constructivism. Additionally, it promotes a team-based therapy model, where the client and therapist collaborate equally. Solution-focused therapy is collaborative, and counselors allow the client to establish goals and find solutions by assisting rather than leading them. Ana is encouraged to be self-aware and committed to acknowledging her strengths and abilities which equip her to resolve her problems. According to constructivism, clients formulate meaning in life rather than find it, which aligns with solution-focused therapy's approach to changing the client's perception to envision a future that is ideal and work towards that goal. Clients and therapists work together, building significance through communication which is supported by the constructivist philosophy. The client can gain insight through these communications which reframe perceptions of their circumstances and empower them with self-belief to forge a new existence. Problems exist only because the client views them that way; changing the view may resolve the issue, which is yet another correlation between solution-focused therapy and constructivism.

## **Post Modern Collaborative Approaches**

Solution-focused therapy is considered a postmodern collaborative approach. According to this theory, the relationship between therapist and client should be collaborative rather than directive. The counselor is regarded as a trusted advisor to the client, who is thought to be the consumer (Bidwell, 2000). The counselor's role is to comprehend the client's issues using their point of view and facilitate the client in experiencing growth in their life. The counselor must be prepared to provide compassion and focus to the client during therapy. The counselor must also acknowledge the client's role as an equal. Counselors must also be unbiased and refrain from forcing their values on the client, which eliminates potential damage, danger, or misunderstandings from hindering therapeutic growth (Murdock, 2017). Counselors assist and not lead clients in establishing objectives for therapy. Instead, they should seek to understand the client's view of their problems and allow the therapy sessions to be directed by this.

## **Conclusion**

The solution-focused therapy was used to treat Ana, a single mother of Latin American descent with financial, social, and motivational difficulties. The interventions of questioning, externalization, and normalizing the problem were employed to facilitate Ana's transformation into a solution-focused, empowered, self-aware individual with confidence in her potential to resolve her own issues through changing perspectives to positive possibilities. In addition, the solution-focused therapy addressed Ana's social and cultural concerns by allowing her to direct the course of therapy which aligns with a constructivist philosophy.

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