



Case Study 1a

Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust

Presented by
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Beyond the boundaries of management

Coaching to leadership to clinical practice:
Solution-Focused Coaching at AWP

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Outline for today

- Solution-focused coaching
- The original coaching programme
 - Content and process (Antoinette)
 - Impact (Justine)
- Expanding developments
 - Wider application and use
 - Impacts
 - Ultimately – reassessment of clinical practice

Avon and Wiltshire



Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust

- >2000 staff
- 8 hospitals and 50+ community based services
- Large geographical area
- Management challenges



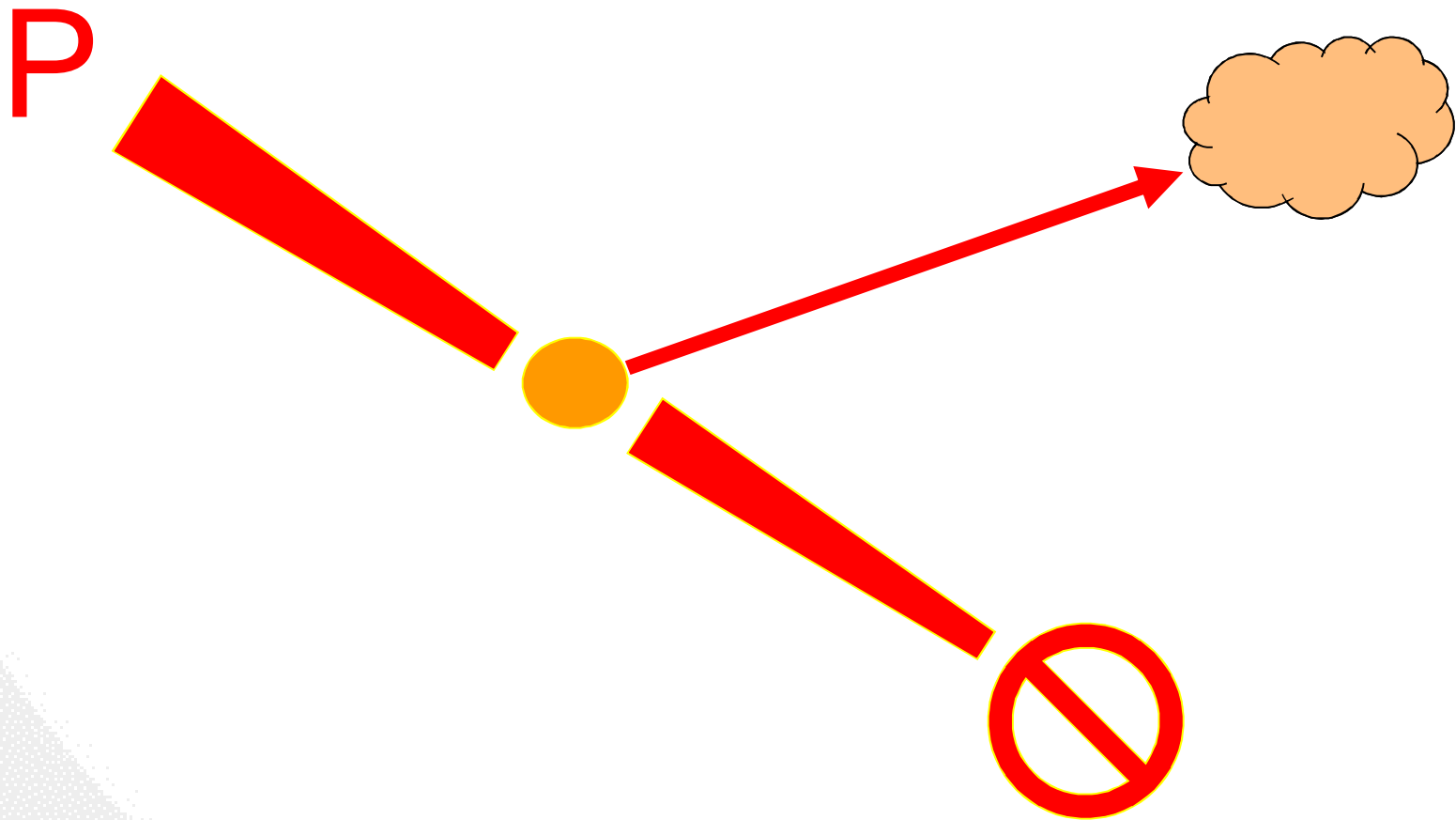
Solutions Focus

Change is
happening
all the time...

The simple way
to change is to
find useful change
and amplify it



Not Solutions Focus

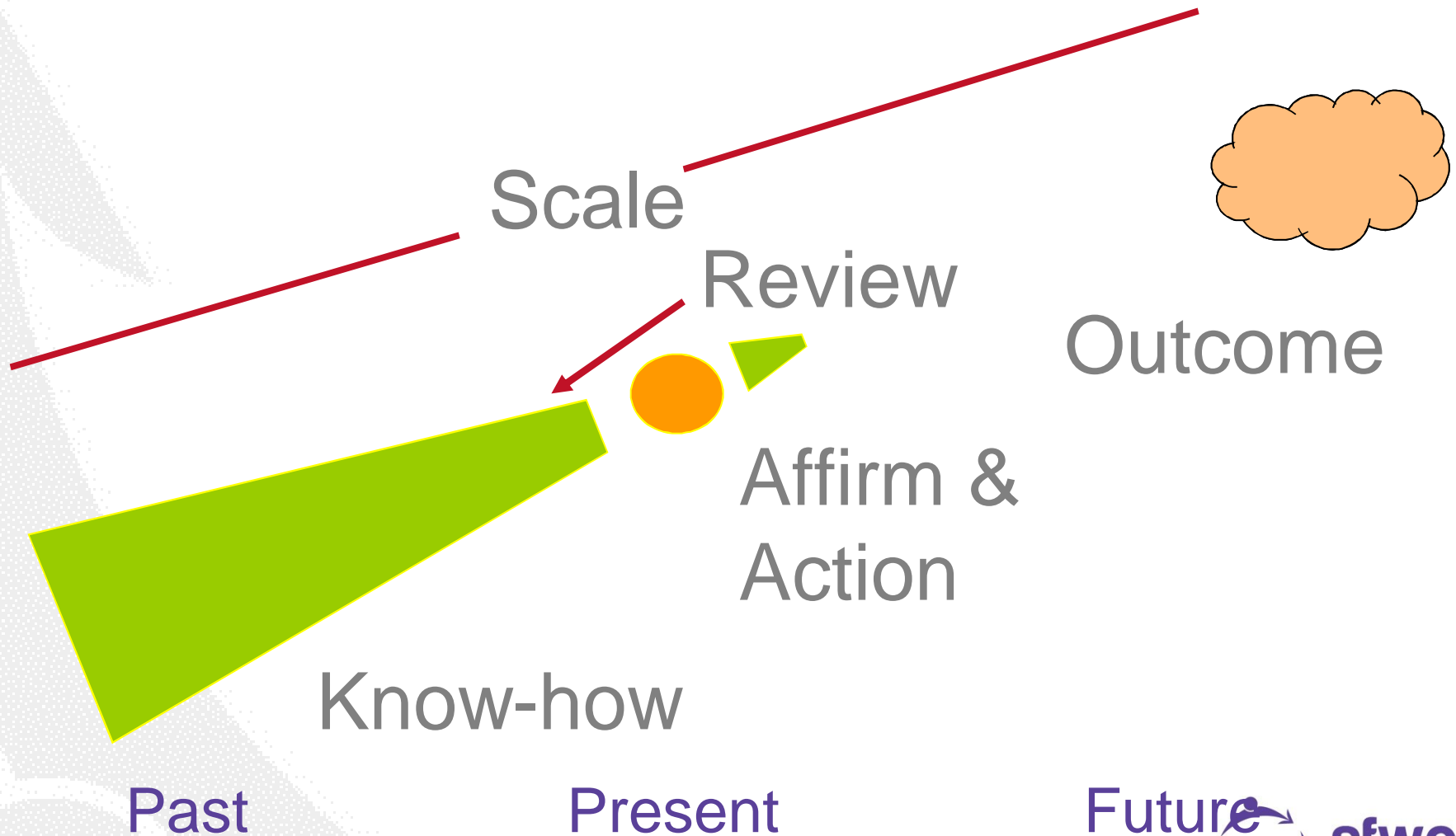


Past

Present

Future

Solutions Focus and the OSKAR model



Quelling rumours about SF coaching

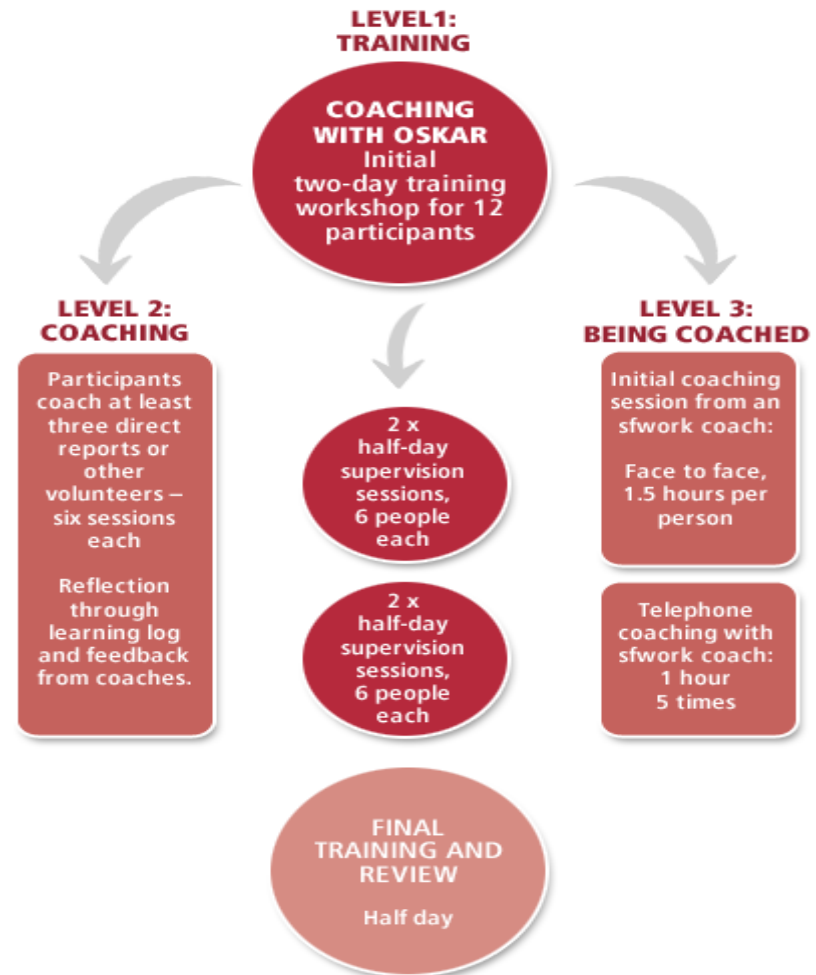
- It's a way of looking at change rather than a technique
- It's always about balancing acknowledgement AND progress
- It's about finding and building ways forward, particularly in *tough* situations

Sfwork's original brief

- Increase use of 'coaching style' by senior and middle managers
- HR department liked the look of the SF approach
- Clinical leaders 'familiar' with SF approach

The 6-month programme

- 2-day training in SF coaching
- Applying learning at work – in coaching
- 6 coaching sessions per participant with our coaching team
- Two supervision days and final review day



The coaching model
taught as tools rather than a process or questions

the
OSKAR
model

**Outcome
Scale**

Know-how

Affirm & Action

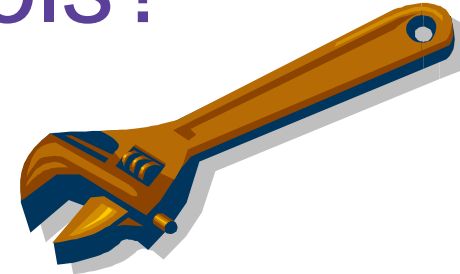
Review



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Questions or tools?



- Focus on practitioner – not on the answer!
- Stresses importance of ‘right question’
- A tool is a process
- Need to know
 - What does it do
 - How to use it
 - When to pick it up
 - When to put it down again!
- You may not need to use all the tools!

We find that teaching ‘tools’ rather than questions helps practitioners stay with the client rather than leaping around



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The results

- TEN cohorts of managers have taken the programme over 3 years
- Managers reported 'spending less time on problems and "why it's not fair", a decrease in anxiety and an increase in ability and action'
- Ripple effect with colleagues
- NHS journal article – The keys to unlock leadership
- Difficult conversations are now progressed
- *"The impact has been far greater than we'd expected -we're getting very positive responses. It does seem to have taken hold and is improving managers' confidence and performance,"* Justine Faulkner, Deputy HR Director

RESOURCE CENTRE

HUMAN RESOURCES

The keys to unlock leadership

Steve Onyett and colleagues explain how to use solution focused coaching to increase leadership capacity



The underpinning of change in the NHS now includes subsidiary: the practice of making sure the right people make decisions at the right level, and ideally as close to patients as possible.

This means finding new ways to bring out the leadership capacity of a wider range of staff. Too often people feel they have to keep their heads down and work on the assumption that the real authority to bring about change lies elsewhere – usually above them.

Coaching can support people to develop their leadership capacity, wherever they sit in their local systems and whatever their sources of authority. Coaching among peers can further unlock this potential.

Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership Trust commissioned the Centre for Solutions Focus at Work to introduce a cohort of managers to a solution focused way of thinking and working with others that could roll out through the organisation through a process of peer coaching.

After a two day workshop, senior staff from the trust began using coaching in their roles. They also received six months of support including external coaching and regular supervision sessions.

The managers reported that they spent less time on problems and why "it's not fair", a decrease in anxiety and an increase in ability and action. They also noted a "ripple effect on peers and colleagues".

ultimately unproductive analysis paralysis associated with unpinning causes. Being solution focused is about finding a "better" direction to move in and small doable steps rather than huge and unachievable action plans. Working with small steps is particularly valuable in times of turbulence and limited resources.

The power of helping everyone to nudge things along and ride the waves of change was seen by staff as a refreshing alternative to more deficit based approaches to improvement. At Avon and Wiltshire it enabled managers to harness the power of seeing things in a more positive light. The issues stay where they belong but they are so much easier to live with. ● Steve Onyett is a senior development consultant with the South West Development Centre. Mark McKergow is co-director of the Centre for Solutions Focus at Work, and Justine Faulkner is head of organisational learning and development at Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership Trust. →www.sfwork.com

HOW TO FREE CAPACITY

Tips for unlocking leadership capacity

- Get good at "not taking the monkey" off people's backs and support people without taking their responsibilities
- Develop your skills in noticing when people have done a good job and make sure they know you have noticed
- Help people look for "useful change" in the right direction and build on it
- Recognise the value of small steps – in living systems they can often have a big effect
- Trust people to do a great job – unless and until experience tells you otherwise

A notable example was the way staff no longer took on the colleagues' problems. We all experience the "monkey on our back" at work. The danger is the strong temptation to solve problems as they are delivered rather than investing the little extra time and technique to help others develop the capacity to tackle the issue themselves.

One example is staff ringing the on-call manager wanting them to deal with an "urgent" situation. A coaching response is to help those whose problem it is to think through the situation and respond, rather than instantly seeking external advice.

If subsidiarity is to become a reality we need to develop ways of helping managers support their staff in learning to thrive with their problems. Learning not to take other people's

DO IT YOURSELF

Tips for dealing with your own issues rather than relying on your boss to resolve them

- Remember why you ever wanted to do this job in the first place. Tell people, including your boss
- Be clear about what you are trying to achieve – and the first small steps of progress
- Consider what you know works well for you in similar situations. What are the best strengths that you can bring into play?
- Take a small step, try things out and make sure the learning is captured, whatever happens.
- Be prepared to ask for input from your manager and others – they may have helpful know-how for you to use (rather than them doing it for you)
- Negotiate a level of authority that is commensurate with your responsibilities

monkeys is also a key element of effective leadership – and effective coaching.

A solution focused approach brings a clear focus on what is working rather than what is wrong. It is a refreshing change from the dispiriting and

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Impact of the original programme at AWP

- A positive 'buzz'
- Began to establish a positive spiral
- SF thinking pervading the day job-meetings management, staff communications, corridor conversations
- Managers spent less time on problems and instead were able to use their new-found coaching skills to get others to think for themselves

What they said

The impact on me was being able to achieve things in difficult times

I now have more awareness of what can be done NOW with time and resources available

I spend less time thinking about problem and why it's 'not fair' and more on how to move forward

The effect on the wider organisation

People feeling more positive therefore being more proactive

Staff becoming more self-reliant and less dependent

More positive culture

Helps move things forward

Team members empowered and energised giving us all more time

Less negativity

Celebrate progress more

Improved relationships

More action, not just discussion

Expanding developments

- Programme started 2008
- 2009 – coaching network established, SF ideas linked to leadership in tough times
- 2010 – SF ideas connected to negotiation, conflict management, personal effectiveness, target attainment and more
- 2011 – Clinical practice project planned to establish SF way of working with service users across AWP – linked to ‘recovery approach’

Impact of wider developments

- An SF 'community' of leaders and managers
- The SF approach becoming the way we do things round here
- Transfer of approach into relationships with users inevitable
- Not 'therapy'- SF conversations, recovery coaching

Questions and comments please



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The Centre for Solutions Focus at Work Building progress rapidly in tough situations

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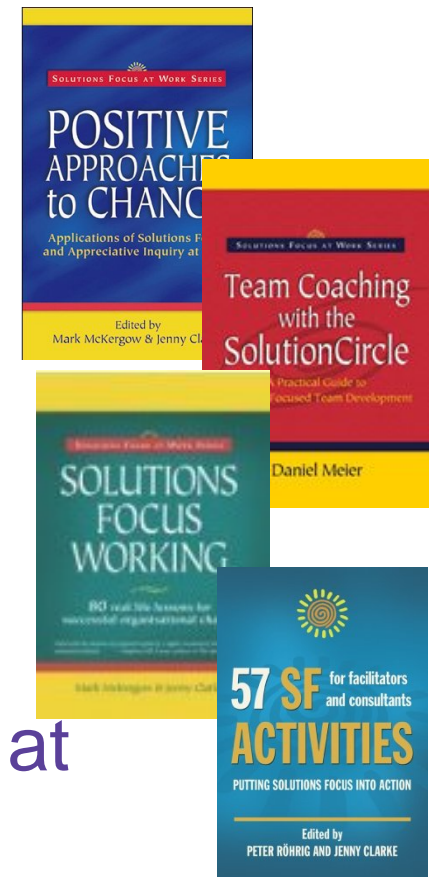
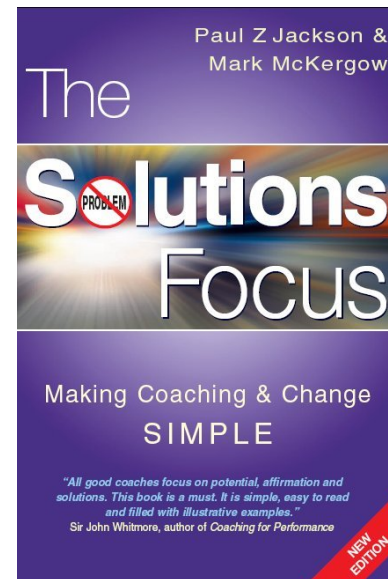
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Download the AWP NHS journal article at

<http://tinyurl.com/marknhs>

Thank you!