



ASFA 2026 CONFERENCE

Conference Abstracts

Gold Coast, 2026

Australasian Solution Focused Association

PRESENTER ABSTRACTS

Conference Abstracts

Ordered alphabetically by presenter surname

Olwen Anderson

Meeting the challenges and using the opportunities in allied health care with solution-focused therapy techniques

ABSTRACT

Supporting people in allied health care can mean a single encounter or at best a limited number of consultations. Solution-Focused therapy techniques can provide support for clients to engage more of their coping skills, help them develop actions that lead towards their preferred future.

Allied health care can be demanding for practitioners, who the client may perceive as the person who will take on responsibility to solve their presenting concern. The Solution-Focused Approach can also support practitioners, helping prevent burnout when supporting people with complex or traumatic presentations through development of vicarious resilience. The practitioner lets go of the responsibility of solving the problem for the client and becomes a collaborator with the clients.

This presentation will focus on the opportunities of Solution-Focused techniques in meeting challenges within allied health practice, with attention to specific Solution-Focused techniques useful in an allied health setting.

PRESENTER BIO

Dr Olwen Anderson is a lecturer at Griffith University, training students in mental health practice and applied counselling as well as a naturopath and counsellor in private practice. She holds qualifications in rehabilitation counselling, counselling and naturopathy.

David Hains

Single session approaches – is it a tokenistic, cost-cutting, band-aid approach ... or is it actually something useful?

ABSTRACT

I have been focused on single-session interventions for many years, starting in an emergency department, then headspace, and now in a Medicare walk-in centre. In this session we can all share our thoughts about the single-session approach; the good, the bad, and the ugly. What works? What doesn't? What do clients think? What does the research say? What about risk? After all that, hopefully there is still a bit of time to talk about how the Solution-Focused Approach fits within a single-session framework.

PRESENTER BIO

David Hains is a Mental Health Nurse from Adelaide who loves sailing even though his boat is much smaller and much slower than Dion's boat.

David is also the Director of Left Turn Solutions, an Australian consulting, training, and counselling practice specialising in Solution-Focused approaches. Based in Adelaide, South Australia, David is a Registered Nurse with more than 30 years of experience in general and mental health nursing, including nearly two decades working in busy emergency departments. He is widely recognised for his expertise in the Solution-Focused Approach, especially in short-term clinical work and single-session therapy.

David served as President of the Australasian Solution Focused Association from 2018 to 2022 and has been a strong advocate for integrating Solution-Focused practices across healthcare and community services. Through Left Turn Solutions, which he founded in 2016, he provides training, coaching, counselling, clinical supervision, and consultancy services to a diverse range of clients throughout Australia and internationally.

His contributions to the field have been recognised with several awards, including the South Australian Premier's Nursing Scholarship in 2016 and the Mental Health Nurse Achievement Award from the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses in 2018. David has also contributed to professional education as a university lecturer and was co-editor of the textbook *Mental Health and Mental Illness in Paramedic Practice*.

David Hains, Michael Durrant and Kate Kowalski

The birth and growth of SFBT in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand

ABSTRACT

A conversation between David Hains, Michael Durrant and Kate Kowalski.

David is a mental health nurse and Solution-Focused practitioner at Left Turn Solutions in Adelaide, SA. He was formerly President of the Australasian Solution Focused Brief Therapy Association (ASFBTA ... now ASFA). Michael is a psychologist and Director of the Brief Therapy Institute of Sydney. He was one of the first Solution-Focused practitioners in Australia, the first President of the Australasian Solution Focused Brief Therapy Association, and the founding Editor of the Journal of Solution Focused Brief Therapy (now the Journal of Solution-Focused Practices). Kate is a Social Worker who was a faculty member at the Brief Family Therapy Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (where Solution-Focused Brief Therapy was first developed) and worked with Steve de Shazer, Insoo Kim Berg, Eve Lipchik and the other developers of the approach. She is now a Solution-Focused coach based in Arkansas, USA.

Michael first met Steve de Shazer and Insoo Kim Berg in the mid-1980s, introduced by the late Brian Cade, and had a professional relationship with them until their deaths in the mid-2000s. Kate came to Sydney and worked with Michael in the late-1980s and their therapy and training activities established Solution-Focused Brief Therapy in Australia. In this conversation with David, Kate and Michael will reflect on the early days of the Solution-Focused Approach in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, their experiences with Steve and Insoo, and with Brian Cade and other early pioneers in and out of Australia. Michael may talk about the formation and development of the Association and the three of them may talk a bit about how they see the Solution-Focused Approach evolving in the future.

PRESENTER BIO

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Michael Durrant

Michael Durrant is a psychologist and Director of the Brief Therapy Institute of Sydney. He was one of the first Solution-Focused practitioners in Australia, the first President of the Australasian Solution Focused Brief Therapy Association, and the founding Editor of the *Journal of Solution Focused Brief Therapy* (now the *Journal of Solution-Focused Practices*).

Kate Kowalski

Kate Kowalski is a Social Worker who was a faculty member at the Brief Family Therapy Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (where Solution-Focused Brief Therapy was first developed) and worked with Steve de Shazer, Insoo Kim Berg, Eve Lipchik and the other developers of the approach. She is now a Solution-Focused coach based in Arkansas, USA.

Dave Hogan, MTh, MSFC, ICF MCC and Debbie Hogan, MS, ICF MCC

Ripples of Change: How Solution-Focused Practice Travels through Individuals, Teams and Organisations

ABSTRACT

As Solution-Focused therapists, coaches, and consultants, we cannot predict when, where, or how our work will create an impact. Change often unfolds organically: a shift in one person can influence a team, which can in turn shape the wider organisation.

In this session, Dave and Debbie Hogan will share examples from their work across diverse settings: psychiatric institutions, international schools, and large-scale corporate environments. Drawing on these experiences, they will explore how the Solution-Focused Approach can contribute to change at multiple levels: from individual shifts in perspective and action, to changes in relationships, teams, and organisational culture. They will reflect on the often-unpredictable and developmental nature of systemic change, highlighting how small changes can generate wider ripples of transformation.

Through stories, observations, and reflections from their practice, Dave and Debbie will invite participants to consider how the Solution-Focused Approach can create meaningful change beyond the individual and how practitioners can notice, nurture, and build upon these emerging possibilities.

PRESENTER BIO

Dave Hogan, MTh, MSFC, ICF MCC

Dave Hogan, MTh, MSFC, ICF MCC is a Master Executive Coach for Senior Leaders and High-Performing Teams. With over 30 years of experience in coaching, he brings deep expertise in leadership transformation, performance coaching, and strategic team development across local and multinational organisations.

Dave is a Master Certified Coach (MCC) with the International Coaching Federation, a Certified Solution Focused Coach (CCPC) and Master Solution Focused Coach (IASTI), specialising in practical, outcome-driven coaching that delivers measurable change. As Director of the Academy of Solution Focused Training, Dave has been certifying coaches globally since 2004. His programs are ICF Accredited at all levels and are grounded in real-world leadership challenges.

He currently serves as President of the Singapore Chapter of Solutions Focused in Organisations (SFIO) and is a leading voice in the evolution of Solution-Focused coaching worldwide. Dave is co-editor of Solution Focused Practice in Asia and a contributor to several coaching publications, including Solution Focused Coaching in Asia and Solution Focused Coaching Supervision.

Debbie Hogan, MS, ICF MCC

Debbie Hogan, MS, ICF MCC is the founder of the Academy of Solution Focused Training Pte Ltd and has been training and certifying therapists and coaches in Solution-Focused Practice, offering professional certification globally since 2004.

She was trained by and mentored by Insoo Kim Berg and Steve de Shazer and earned a Graduate Diploma in Solution-Focused Brief Therapy. This radically transformed her practice as a psychotherapist and coach. In private practice, she works with children, couples and families across a wide spectrum of psychiatric and psychological issues.

Debbie is a Master Certified Coach and runs an accredited coach training school with the International Coaching Federation, and is an Accredited Coach Supervisor.

She has contributed to and been the editor of 6 books in Solution-Focused therapy and coaching, including The Art of Solution Focused Therapy, Encounters with Steve de Shazer and Insoo Kim Berg, Solution Focused Practice in Asia, Solution Focused Practice Around the World, Solution Focused Coaching in Asia, Solution Focused Coaching Supervision and Threads of Mastery in Coaching.

Dave Hogan, MTh, MSFC, ICF MCC and Debbie Hogan, MS, ICF MCC

Ripples of Change: How Solution-Focused Practice Travels through Individuals, Teams and Organisations – Follow-Up Group Interactive Learning Space

ABSTRACT

Building on Dave and Debbie's session, this interactive follow-up session will provide participants with an opportunity to explore how the Solution-Focused Approach can create meaningful change beyond the individual.

Through shared inquiry and collaborative learning, participants will be invited to bring their own experiences, observations, and questions into the conversation. Together, we will explore what helps change take root and spread across individuals, teams, and organisations, while noticing the possibilities and challenges that emerge along the way.

The session will create space to share practice, surface questions, exchange ideas, and learn from one another, culminating in the co-creation of a practical collective 'toolkit' of insights, approaches, and possibilities that participants can take back into their own practice.

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Frances Huber

What Works?

ABSTRACT

Are you feeling tired? Overwhelmed? Craving some freshness and to be inspired? This is a no frills, nothing fancy, but totally fun and relaxed workshop for everyone! We're using Occam's razor to pare it all back to the basics!

Steve de Shazer, Insoo Kim Berg and their colleagues developed Solution-Focused Brief Therapy in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, beginning in the late 1970s and refining it in the 1980s from observing hundreds of hours of actual therapy sessions to see what helped clients move in the direction of their goals.

That was almost fifty years ago! Since then there have been countless shifts and changes and different perspectives.

This is a workshop to shave away the unnecessary and return to the core principle of what works? What is helping your clients move into the direction they want to go?

Tapping into our deep listening skills, let's together continue the conversation that Steve and Insoo and colleagues began, and share our stories of what works.

Does this sound simple and obvious? Yep! So, let's jump into the deep end!

PRESENTER BIO

Frances Huber is a psychologist who has experience with the Solution-Focused Approach in a variety of settings. She has a particular interest in how mindfulness fits with the Solution-Focused Approach.

Ian Johnsen and Allan Wade, Ph.D., C.M.

Active Ingredients

ABSTRACT

Ian and Allan will co-host this workshop where they will talk about, among other things, the intersection between the Solution-Focused Approach and Response-Based Practice, with a focus on interviewing. For example, both methods use questions to engage clients in moving from the object position to the subject position. Both promote conversation about the fine details of social interaction in specific settings and larger contexts. And both uphold client dignity by highlighting expressions of pre-existing ability and awareness, even in the most adverse conditions. Response-Based Practice adds a specific focus on responses and resistance to violence and distinctions in language that honour resistance to violence and enable open pursuit of social justice. The discussion will centre on examples from practice in diverse settings.

PRESENTER BIO

Ian Johnsen

Ian is a family therapist and registered psychologist who is passionate about working in ways that promote dignity and acknowledge the pre-existing competence, values, and resourcefulness of people across diverse contexts. For over 35 years, Ian has worked with those who have been socially marginalised, and with families and young people facing adversity, particularly people commonly positioned as 'at risk' within child protection and justice systems. Ian believes that continuing to work 'at the coalface' helps keep him humble, curious, and committed to learning. He has been privileged to work with a wide range of people across child protection, immigration and citizenship, early intervention, women's health, youth and family support, schools and tertiary education settings, domestic violence services, and out-of-home and alternative care systems. His work has included counselling, supervision, reflective practice facilitation, consultation, and training for government departments and many non-government agencies. Among colleagues, Ian is known for his interest in the Solution-Focused Approach and Response-Based Practice, and for finding creative ways to gently contest pathologising and labelling practices. Ian considers himself fortunate to learn from others committed to social justice, particularly from people responding to violence and other forms of adversity. Ian is a Senior Associate and Consultant at the Brief Therapy Institute of Sydney and a former Sightlines Associate with Domestic Violence Service Management. He has contributed to the development of practice resources in his fields of work and has presented workshops at conferences nationally and internationally.

Allan Wade, Ph.D., C.M.

Allan Wade, Ph.D., C.M. lives on the unceded lands of the Quw'utsun Indigenous First Nations, on southern Vancouver Island, Canada. He works as a family therapist and independent scholar with a primary interest in promoting socially just responses to violence,

broadly defined. For many years Allan has been interested in the question of how adults and children respond to and resist violence and preserve dignity in the face of humiliation. Allan has worked with people who have committed violence and people who have been subjected to violence, including adults and children, for more than 40 years. He is particularly mindful of the past and present colonial context and grateful for the friendship and teachings of Kaska Dena and Quw'utsun elders, whose resistance to colonial violence exemplifies the unending desire for justice and dignity on the land. Allan is best known for his part in developing Response-Based Practice, a method of individual and family therapy and community development, a framework for research and analysis, and a guide for practice across the institutions that respond to violence (i.e. child protection, policing, criminal justice, family law, journalism, research, therapy, shelter/refuge work). Allan provides training and consultation to organisations in Canada and abroad and has published several articles and book chapters on research and practice. In December 2024, Allan was appointed to the Order of Canada (C.M.) for his work in addressing violence and developing Response-Based Practice, with colleagues domestically and internationally.

Keren Jones and Zarinah Heinekamp

Solution-Focused Supervision: Supervision in a brief solution-focused university counselling service

ABSTRACT

The UQ Counselling Service provides free counselling support to all enrolled students through their administration fee payments. UQ Counselling Service supports over 57,000 domestic and international students, often with a wait time for appointments due to demand. The average number of sessions attended by UQ students is one to two, with students often having an intense desire to gain knowledge quickly, necessitating the use of a Solution-Focused brief intervention framework.

The UQ Counselling Service is a teaching service providing placements to students completing master level degrees in psychology and counselling. These placements provide unique experiences for these students as they are required to assess risk, undertake intake and treatment in the first session and keep to a tight 50-minute timeframe. For many placement participants this is their first experience delivering Solution-Focused therapy and the combination with unpredictable attendance levels can be challenging as they navigate skill development and consolidation. The supervisory relationship needs to match the unique requirements of placement students where it often mirrors the Solution-Focused Approach of counselling sessions.

In this session we will explore the reflections from a team of supervisors from different professional backgrounds on how they build a strong supervisory relationship in this unique setting. The reflections of the placement students will also be explored. The aim of the workshop is to identify the key strengths and opportunities for supervisors working in this context.

PRESENTER BIO

Keren and Zarinah are Psychologists with over 16 years' experience as Student Counsellors and Supervisors at the University of Queensland. They share a love of indie rock, being in nature and the capacity for positive change through fostering psychological resilience, confidence building, and self-compassion. They have developed therapeutic groups utilising positive psychology and engaged in Student Staff Partnership research. Keren and Zarinah have previously presented at the Australian and New Zealand Student Services Conferences, the UQ Compassion Symposium, and the International Positive Psychology Association World Congress (Brisbane, 2025). They use the Solution-Focused Approach in their individual and group-based work and are committed to the opportunities this approach brings in supporting goal-driven, positive outcomes for students.

Keren Jones and Zarinah Heinekamp

The Strength of Solution-Focused Conversations in Creating Confidence: The UQ Confidence Chats Program

ABSTRACT

As Student Counsellors and Psychologists at the University of Queensland, we have utilised Solution-Focused therapy for nearly two decades to provide meaningful positive outcomes for students. Use of a short-term and goal-focused approach has supported our work in individual counselling sessions and student focussed wellbeing programs. In recent years students have reported a need for confidence building, through a 2023 Student Staff Partnership research project (Hienekamp, Jones & Meng, 2025); it is the most searched term on the UQ Counselling website; and students have reported this anecdotally. The importance of this was highlighted by Halim & Ishak (2025) who state that the current higher education environment is highly competitive and demanding, and self-esteem is a critical element which impacts students' ability to learn, feel motivated and achieve academic success.

In 2024 we commenced the UQ Confidence Chats program. The program consists of twelve weekly sessions, with a goal of increasing confidence and supporting dignity through dialogue. The UQ Confidence Chats provides a hope-focused, future-oriented space every week, with practical, sustainable and creative activities to both introduce and provide practical development of the VIA character strengths. The short-term, goal-directed and Solution-Focused approach has been central to the ongoing development of the program. From this small idea, a successful, data-driven, student-focused program has grown, with the themes of growth and blossoming central to the sessions.

This poster presentation is our opportunity to share this program with you, as we journey from the start to the current successes. We will introduce you to some of our activities and invite you to share your thoughts and ideas to support the future development of the program.

References: Halim, M.H.N.A, & Ishak, N.H. (2025). Self-esteem and its impact on university students' academic performance: A case study. *The International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 533-544. Hienekamp, Z., Jones, K., & Meng, T. Partnering for Program Prosperity: An investigation of what students need from university group-based wellbeing programs. *Journal of Australian and New Zealand Student Services Association*, 33(1), 113-122.

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the UQ Compassion Symposium, and the International Positive Psychology Association World Congress (Brisbane, 2025). They use the Solution-Focused Approach in their individual and group-based work and are committed to the opportunities this approach brings in supporting goal-driven, positive outcomes for students.

Dr Jolize Joubert van Appel

Application of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) in African Contexts: A Scoping Review

ABSTRACT

Evidence-based research supports the effectiveness of the Solution-Focused Approach for various mental health problems in diverse settings. Although studies in non-Western contexts have increased, research focusing on how the Solution-Focused Approach is implemented and adapted cross-culturally is scant. The aim of this scoping review was to map existing literature on the application of the Solution-Focused Approach in African contexts. More specifically, we asked: What are the characteristics (e.g. mode of delivery, format) of Solution-Focused interventions implemented in African contexts?; what process (e.g. techniques, questions) is followed when implementing the Solution-Focused Approach in African contexts?; how, if at all, are Solution-Focused interventions adapted to address cross-cultural needs in African contexts?; what is the outcome of Solution-Focused interventions in African contexts?; and what are the limitations and recommendations pertaining to the application of the Solution-Focused Approach in African contexts? The review was conducted and reported according to the Joanna Briggs Institute's (JBI) methodology for scoping reviews as well as the PRISMA-ScR guidelines. We included studies that focused on the application of the Solution-Focused Approach, were conducted in an African context, were published in English between 2000 and 2025, and were available in full text. Bibliographic databases were searched and relevant reference lists were scanned for applicable literature. Two independent reviewers were involved in each stage of screening. A total of 18 records were included in the study. Relevant data was extracted and results were summarised to map the extent of available literature, understand key characteristics, and identify knowledge gaps pertaining to the application of the Solution-Focused Approach in Africa. These results may inform further research on the topic and may ultimately guide the development and implementation of ethical, effective, and contextually relevant Solution-Focused interventions in regions where growth, collaboration, and change are pertinent.

PRESENTER BIO

Dr Jolize Joubert van Appel is a registered Clinical Psychologist and lecturer in the Department of Psychology at the University of Pretoria (UP), South Africa. She has worked as a clinical psychologist in various public health settings for more than 10 years, mostly practising from a Solution-Focused therapeutic stance. Her PhD thesis focused on developing a Solution-Focused intervention model to facilitate hope and subjective wellbeing among South African trauma survivors. Dr Joubert van Appel teaches the Solution-Focused Approach to postgraduate psychology students and her current research interests focus on wellbeing, positive psychological interventions, and the application of the Solution-Focused Approach in diverse local contexts. The submitted work is based on a mini-dissertation submitted by a Master's student, Mrs. Cheriska van Jaarsveld, conducted under the supervision of Dr Joubert van Appel.

Andrea Lemm

Einklang – Mauri Tau: A bicultural supervision model using the solution-focused approach

ABSTRACT

Einklang – Mauri Tau means harmony. Seeking harmony and enabling my supervisees to experience harmony through self-determination, connection, love and care is the purpose of my supervision model. I have chosen a bass guitar for my supervision framework as music has been a big part of my upbringing through my formative years of being a punk. The purpose of a bass guitar is to be the backbone in a band. The primary function is to maintain a steady rhythm, pulse and provide a good feeling. The bass is about harmony. Harmony means togetherness. The bass plays a powerful role in how we hear and see harmonies. The bass guitar as my supervision model shows the interconnectedness of my values through the strings. Learning about the Māori world has helped me shape my current thinking and understanding of my supervision model. I use the Solution-Focused Approach as a complementary model as well as Māori bodies of knowledge such as the principles of āta. It is my hope to elevate and inspire people to acknowledge Indigenous bodies of knowledge within their practice whilst using the Solution-Focused Approach.

PRESENTER BIO

Andrea Lemm is a social worker who has practised social work in Germany, England and Aotearoa New Zealand. She is passionate about bicultural practice using the Solution-Focused Approach. In August 2026, Andrea graduated with a Masters of Indigenous Studies at Otago University.

Michele Orr

Interview from SolWorld and presentation of scoping review from 2026

ABSTRACT

During this hour you will be immersed in a rich conversation across 2 specific Solution-Focused areas: SolWorld University experience and the details of a Scoping review on the use of the Solution-Focused Approach in Adult Community Mental Health.

Initially, hear from Michele Orr, interviewed by Cathy Martin (ASFA), about the learnings and experience from the SolWorld University residential week in The Netherlands, 14-18 Oct. Michele will share the “big questions” discussed and the unique nature of a SolWorld event.

Secondly, the last half of the hour will be spent sharing the use of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy in Adult Community Mental Health: A Scoping Review. A paper written by Michele and colleagues (a labour of love in many ways!) that will lay foundations for future research in the use of the Solution-Focused Approach in Adult Community Mental Health.

PRESENTER BIO

Michele Orr is an experienced Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, psychotherapist, trainer, researcher, author and leader, who values the wisdom and experience of others. Her passion for the Solution-Focused Approach grew from her initial discovery of the approach and training with Michael Durrant in 2011.

Her experience and knowledge in the Solution-Focused Approach is extensive, having developed from experts across the globe. Michele leads, trains and supervises individuals and multidisciplinary teams. She currently holds a clinical leadership role in Adult Community Mental Health in eastern Melbourne, with a focus on suicide prevention. This work aims to tap into hope and connection in life.

Her research experience is Applied Research in Action. She also offers online and in-person training and supervision in the Solution-Focused Approach. Michele has authored work related to the use of the Solution-Focused Approach in mental health and suicide prevention, including Solution Focused Practice and Mental Health Crisis: Inclusive Support and Orr, M., S. Ryder, and J. Considine. 2026. “Use of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy Within Adult Community Mental Health: A Scoping Review.” *Clinical Psychology & Psychotherapy* 33, no. 2: e70255. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cpp.70255>.

Jason Pascoe and Miriam Korman

What Conversations Are Helping People and Organisations Thrive?

ABSTRACT

The most valuable insights at conferences often emerge not from presentations, but from the conversations that happen between them.

This Open Space session invites participants to explore the question: what conversations are helping people, teams, communities, and organisations thrive in an increasingly complex world?

Hosted by Jason Pascoe, leadership consultant, coach, facilitator, and Vice President of the Australasian Solution Focused Association, and Miriam Korman, psychologist, supervisor, and ASFA Board Member, this session provides a space for participants to bring their own questions, challenges, experiences, and emerging ideas.

Rather than a traditional workshop or panel discussion, attendees will co-create the agenda, proposing topics and joining conversations that matter most to them. Discussions may explore Solution-Focused practice, leadership, wellbeing, resilience, coaching, collaboration, organisational culture, professional practice, or entirely new themes that emerge from the collective interests of the group.

No specialist knowledge is required. The session is open to practitioners, educators, coaches, leaders, students, and anyone curious about how Solution-Focused thinking can support meaningful progress.

Guided by the principles of Open Space, participants are encouraged to contribute what they can, learn from others, and follow the conversations where they can best learn and contribute. Together, we will capture key insights, practical ideas, and possibilities for action that can be shared with the wider conference community.

Join us for a dynamic, participant-led exploration of what's working, what's possible, and what conversations are worth having next.

PRESENTER BIO

Jason Pascoe

Jason Pascoe is a leadership consultant, coach, facilitator and Director of The Enactive Solution. His work explores a deceptively simple idea: every conversation grows something.

Drawing on more than two decades of experience across education, mental health, leadership development and organisational consultancy, Jason is particularly interested in how everyday conversations shape agency, relationships, learning and organisational culture. Rather than treating conversation simply as a tool for communicating or solving problems, his work focuses on the conditions created through interaction, and what those conditions make more possible next.

The Solution-Focused Approach sits at the heart of this work. Jason helps leaders, coaches and teams become more deliberate about what they listen for, the questions they ask, and how conversations can notice and amplify resources, progress and possibility. Increasingly, his work brings the Solution-Focused Approach together with enactive perspectives on cognition and change, exploring how preferred futures are not simply discovered or planned, but begin to emerge through participation and interaction.

Jason is also the endorsed provider of Dr Mark McKergow's Host Leadership training in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Host Leadership has become an important part of his approach to leadership: moving beyond the idea of the leader as the person with the answers towards leadership as the practice of intentionally hosting the conditions in which people, relationships and organisations can flourish.

Jason has coached, trained and facilitated leaders and teams across Australia and internationally and is Vice President of the Australasian Solution Focused Association. He also co-hosts the Toward Solutions podcast, where he and Dion Sing explore the Solution-Focused Approach with practitioners and thinkers from around the world.

His current work through The Enactive Solution brings these strands together around a central question: what becomes possible when we pay closer attention to the conversations through which leadership, learning and change actually happen?

Miriam Korman

Miriam is a psychologist living and working on Bundjalung country, Northern NSW, Australia. She loves skiing, tennis, hiking, camping, reading, spending time with family and friends and many other things. She is a strong proponent of the connection between physical health and mental wellbeing.

As a psychologist, Miriam has a diverse background ranging from the public health system and not-for-profit sector to private practice and occupational mental health. Miriam has had a longstanding passion for Solution-Focused practices and contributed to the organisation of the European Brief Therapy Association (EBTA) conference in Malmö, Sweden, in 2010. She is currently involved in the organisation of the ASFA 2026 annual conference on the Gold Coast, QLD.

Miriam is a board-approved supervisor and a member of the Australian Association of Psychologists (AAPi). She joined the Australasian Solution Focused Association (ASFA) as a board member in 2025. She offers Solution-Focused therapy to clients in private practice in Byron Bay and Cabarita Beach, NSW.

Guy Shennan

Connection and continuity in solution-focused practice, and...

ABSTRACT

On one of my early courses with BRIEF in the late 1990s, I heard that they helped themselves to learn Solution-Focused Brief Therapy, a decade earlier, by having Steve de Shazer's books, *Keys* and *Clues*, open on their laps while observing a session behind the screen. Then when I read these seminal books myself, at first I scratched my head, as I struggled to connect what I was reading with what I was learning with BRIEF. In the 30 years since then, I have been finding and making connections, and discovering continuities, both in the Solution-Focused Approach and in my own practice, and connection and continuity will be the theme and thread running through this plenary.

I will share some examples of my practice from those 30 years, some by showing video clips, others by talking about them, and also from before and after that time, in considering connections with what I did before coming across the Solution-Focused Approach and my hopes for my future practice. And I will invite you to make connections and look for continuities in your own practice. I will also be unpacking a little an idea that continuity is at the heart of the Solution-Focused Approach rather than change.

Some of my ideas for this plenary began to form while attending a lecture earlier this year on Pluralism and the Modern Poet. The speaker reflected on the word, and, which can be "jubilant... a marker of the inexhaustibility of the world". He reported the pragmatist philosopher, William James, as saying, "The word 'and' trails along after every sentence". Having recently focused on the word yes ("the most positive word in the English language" - James Joyce) in some Solution-Focused writing, I loved this. Be ready for a little poetry and philosophy entering the plenary too.

PRESENTER BIO

Guy Shennan is an independent Solution-Focused therapist, consultant, trainer and activist based in London, England. Initially training as a social worker, Guy has been using the Solution-Focused Approach for over 30 years. He has trained and presented worldwide, and is the author of *Solution-Focused Practice: Effective Communication to Facilitate Change* (second edition, 2019). His new book, *Solution-Focused Practice for Social Workers*, will be published by Routledge in 2027. Having co-founded the Solution-Focused Collective, to explore how Solution-Focused ideas can be applied to social change, Guy has since become interested more broadly in how a focus on hopes and the future can be useful in activism.

Guy Shennan

Three stages of solution-focused practice

ABSTRACT

In this workshop we will be looking at these three stages of the Solution-Focused Approach: creating a context for using the approach, getting the work started, and keeping it going.

1 - Solution-Focused training courses usually miss out the first of these, yet for many people it can be quite a tricky stage, as it was for me after I did my first course on Solution-Focused Brief Therapy then returned to my job as a social worker. We will be sharing some ideas on what this means and how to do it.

2 - How to go about getting the work started will vary depending, for example, on whether you are able to do planned sessions, or making use of opportunities that suddenly arise to have a Solution-Focused conversation for a few minutes. Either way, you'll need to get the work going in a Solution-Focused way somehow, and we will have a look and a practice at this.

3 - Once a Solution-Focused conversation is in motion, how do you keep it going? And in such a way that it remains a Solution-Focused one? What about if you get stuck? What this takes is practice, practice, practice, and we will practise together in a way that will increase your options and possibilities in your future Solution-Focused conversations.

I will be sharing ideas, creating practice opportunities and demonstrating some aspects of practice, and look forward to working with you and hearing your ideas on these three stages. As I'm not going to include how to stop, we might go on indefinitely.

PRESENTER BIO

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Dion Sing

A Way of Working: The Solution-Focused Approach Across Consulting Projects

ABSTRACT

“When I started out, the Solution-Focused Approach was something I did in a conversation. Over time it became how I work through the projects themselves.”

This conversation looks at what happens when the Solution-Focused Approach stops being a technique applied to clients and becomes the way a practitioner works through projects. The same posture that guides a good conversation, understanding what people want, finding what is already working, and looking for the next small step, turns out to apply in many contexts. It holds whether the work is a single conversation or a whole organisation asking for a piece of work.

I will draw on my own practice across supervision, program work, and working alongside communities, and explore where this way of working shows its quieter value. Working by asking and amplifying, rather than arriving with the answer, keeps the design where it belongs, with the people whose work it is. That is part of what makes the work dignified, and part of what it asks of a non-Aboriginal practitioner working alongside community.

True to a conversation, this won't be a lecture. It will leave room for us to think together.

PRESENTER BIO

Dion Sing is a consultant, trainer, and professional supervisor, and the author of the Solution-Focused Supervision Handbook. He is President of the Australasian Solution Focused Association and works closely with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations across Australia, through supervision, leadership development, and a Solution-Focused approach to program design and documentation. He has delivered hundreds of hours of supervision in community services and child protection settings, and co-hosts the Toward Solutions Podcast. His work focuses on helping people and organisations find what is already working and build on it.

Dion Sing and Jason Pascoe

The Journey of Toward Solutions

ABSTRACT

Come join us as part of the journey of the Toward Solutions Podcast.

For over a year, we've been asking Solution-Focused practitioners a simple set of questions: Why do you love it? How do you explain the Solution-Focused Approach? How are you applying it in your world? Teach us something.

The conversations that follow are generous, thoughtful, and deeply human. They're conversations about what draws people to this work, how they understand it, and how they're living it, across therapy, coaching, education, leadership, and community.

In this session, you engage with these questions alongside your peers, discovering what emerges when practitioners get curious with each other about the work they do and why it matters.

This isn't about having the right answers. It's about the conversation itself: the articulation, the reflection, the recognition that we're all on a journey of deepening our practice together.

Whether you're new to the Solution-Focused Approach or have been practising for years, there's a place for you here. Come ready to listen, to be heard, and to be part of something that's still unfolding.

PRESENTER BIO

Dion Sing

Dion Sing is a consultant, trainer, and professional supervisor, and the author of the Solution-Focused Supervision Handbook. He is President of the Australasian Solution Focused Association and works closely with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations across Australia, through supervision, leadership development, and a Solution-Focused approach to program design and documentation. He has delivered hundreds of hours of supervision in community services and child protection settings, and co-hosts the Toward Solutions Podcast. His work focuses on helping people and organisations find what is already working and build on it.

Jason Pascoe

Jason Pascoe is a leadership consultant, coach, facilitator and Director of The Enactive Solution. His work explores a deceptively simple idea: every conversation grows something.

Drawing on more than two decades of experience across education, mental health, leadership development and organisational consultancy, Jason is particularly interested in how everyday conversations shape agency, relationships, learning and organisational culture. Rather than treating conversation simply as a tool for communicating or solving problems, his work

focuses on the conditions created through interaction, and what those conditions make more possible next.

The Solution-Focused Approach sits at the heart of this work. Jason helps leaders, coaches and teams become more deliberate about what they listen for, the questions they ask, and how conversations can notice and amplify resources, progress and possibility. Increasingly, his work brings the Solution-Focused Approach together with enactive perspectives on cognition and change, exploring how preferred futures are not simply discovered or planned, but begin to emerge through participation and interaction.

Jason is also the endorsed provider of Dr Mark McKergow's Host Leadership training in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Host Leadership has become an important part of his approach to leadership: moving beyond the idea of the leader as the person with the answers towards leadership as the practice of intentionally hosting the conditions in which people, relationships and organisations can flourish.

Jason has coached, trained and facilitated leaders and teams across Australia and internationally and is Vice President of the Australasian Solution Focused Association. He also co-hosts the Toward Solutions podcast, where he and Dion Sing explore the Solution-Focused Approach with practitioners and thinkers from around the world.

His current work through The Enactive Solution brings these strands together around a central question: what becomes possible when we pay closer attention to the conversations through which leadership, learning and change actually happen?

Allan Wade, Ph.D., C.M.

Drops of Longing: Equal Dignity and Resistance in the Colonial Context

ABSTRACT

Violence is committed on the level of social interaction. Close analysis shows that (a) victims/survivors invariably resist violence, openly and directly or subtly and secretly, depending on the dangers and opportunities present in the situation, and (b) offenders anticipate and work to suppress that resistance. Allan will present examples from practice and other sources to honour the diversity of resistance in cases of interpersonal and colonial violence, past and present. He will suggest that failure to acknowledge ever-present resistance conceals violence and supports a false view of history and human relations. A drop of longing says as much about the human spirit as a grand gesture of love or defiance.

PRESENTER BIO

Allan Wade, Ph.D., C.M. lives on the unceded lands of the Quw'utsun Indigenous First Nations, on southern Vancouver Island, Canada. He works as a family therapist and independent scholar with a primary interest in promoting socially just responses to violence, broadly defined. For many years Allan has been interested in the question of how adults and children respond to and resist violence and preserve dignity in the face of humiliation. Allan has worked with people who have committed violence and people who have been subjected to violence, including adults and children, for more than 40 years. He is particularly mindful of the past and present colonial context and grateful for the friendship and teachings of Kaska Dena and Quw'utsun elders, whose resistance to colonial violence exemplifies the unending desire for justice and dignity on the land. Allan is best known for his part in developing Response-Based Practice, a method of individual and family therapy and community development, a framework for research and analysis, and a guide for practice across the institutions that respond to violence (i.e. child protection, policing, criminal justice, family law, journalism, research, therapy, shelter/refuge work). Allan provides training and consultation to organisations in Canada and abroad and has published several articles and book chapters on research and practice. In December 2024, Allan was appointed to the Order of Canada (C.M.) for his work in addressing violence and developing Response-Based Practice, with colleagues domestically and internationally.