

SOLUTION FOCUS

Five Steps to Improving Outcomes

The Solution Focus Technique was created by American social workers, Steve de Shazer and Insoo Kim Berg, in the late 1970s. Essentially the technique is a **conversation tool** to help individuals clarify and achieve solutions to their problems.

Step 1: Working with a partner, identify a current problem, challenge or difficulty in your life that you are comfortable talking about.

Step 2: Draw a scale of 1 – 10 with 1 representing your ‘worst nightmare’ and 10 representing the ‘problem completely solved’. **1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10**

Step 3: Place a mark on the scale of how bad the situation *feels* to you now.

Step 4: Ask focusing questions to reframe the problem and create ideas for a solution.

- **Reframing question:** Why did you chose this number and not a lower number?
- **Previous solutions question:** “Are there times when this has been less of a problem?” or “What did you (or others), do that was helpful?”
- **Looking for exceptions question:** “What is different about the times when this is less of a problem?”
- **Present and future focused question:** “What will you be doing in the next week that would indicate to you that you are continuing to make progress?”
- **Miracle question:** If you went in your mind to “the land where dreams come true”, what would you be thinking, feeling and doing if the problem was completely gone?
- **Action question:** What action could you take that would lift your score just one point – or even half a point.

Step 5: Commit to doing the action and report back the outcome to a partner. Continue to re-evaluate progress by repeating the process.

Focusing Question: **What is the ONE THING you could commit to doing, right now, that by using the Solution Focus Approach, would make the BIGGEST DIFFERENCE to your life?** For example: take it to my team to explore how to better support each other when we are under-staffed.

My ONE THING to improve using the Solution Focus Approach in my life right now is:

Focusing Question: What inspires you to want to make this change? What is your big WHY? Perhaps a Consequence Stretch might be helpful here?

Make a note in your action pages for ideas you want to use and share with others.