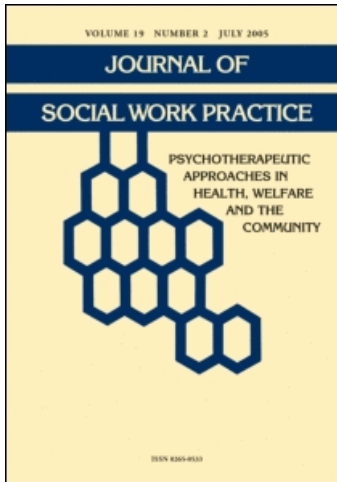


Publisher *Routledge*

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Journal of Social Work Practice

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title-content=t713436417>

Using the expertise of knowing and the expertise of not-knowing to support processes of empowerment in social work practice

Wolfgang Gaiswinkler; Marianne Roessler

Online Publication Date: 01 June 2009

To cite this Article Gaiswinkler, Wolfgang and Roessler, Marianne(2009)'Using the expertise of knowing and the expertise of not-knowing to support processes of empowerment in social work practice',*Journal of Social Work Practice*,23:2,215 — 227

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/02650530902923874

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02650530902923874>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.informaworld.com/terms-and-conditions-of-access.pdf>

This article may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

Wolfgang Gaiswinkler & Marianne Roessler

USING THE EXPERTISE OF KNOWING AND THE EXPERTISE OF NOT-KNOWING TO SUPPORT PROCESSES OF EMPOWERMENT IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

This article reports some of the outcomes of a two-year action research and development project in the field of social work for the prevention of homelessness. The project was funded by the European Union's EQUAL programme and was carried out in Austria from 2005–2007. The starting point for the project was whether the solution-focused approach of de Shazer and Insoo Kim Berg could be used for the description and development of social work. The role of the authors was to train social workers in the solution-focused approach. Insoo Kim Berg was involved in the training process and held live interviews with clients during the project. Video recordings served as a basis for analysing interventions together with the social workers involved, in order to help them learn from the social worker–client interactions. Another part of the project consisted of post-session interviews with clients and social workers, and their analysis. In the course of the project the authors developed a model of communication which distinguishes between different kinds of expertise in social work practice. Another outcome of the project was a handbook, written by the social workers themselves, for the application of the solution-focused approach in their agency. This handbook aroused interest among external experts.

Keywords solution-focused approach; goal negotiation with clients; social work practice; client's frame of reference; secure tenancy; careful language use; alliance; empowerment; expertise of knowing; expertise of not knowing; analyses of counselling interviews

Introduction

We consider the solution-focused approach to be a successful operationalisation of the following fundamental requirements of the helping professions: the promotion of empowerment and the need to focus on the resources and strengths of the client. Because of its operationalisation of these principles for the practice of psychosocial

counselling or psychotherapy, the solution-focused approach can also be expected to provide valuable insights for the practice of social work.¹ (Berg, 1991; Pichot & Dolan, 2003; Saleebey, 2006; Turnell, 2006)

The solution-focused approach suggests a set of conversational tools and questioning techniques. It suggests a particular attitude through which social workers can provide support to the client in working towards the goals of the client and the goals of the agency employing the social worker. In order to co-ordinate the client's goals successfully with those of the agency — where goal negotiations are necessary due to clashes between goals — it is useful to focus on the goals of the client and support him/her in developing and formulating a picture of a preferred and achievable future in terms of everyday action and social interaction. In most cases, if the basics of such a picture are outlined, the negotiation of the goals of both agency and client is much easier.

The solution-focused approach was developed over the course of 30 years (Gainswinkler & Roessler, 2007) by Steve de Shazer, Insoo Kim Berg and other team members at the Brief Family Therapy Center (BFTC) in Milwaukee in the USA by analysing counselling interviews (with one-way mirrors and video recordings).²

In order to find or build a solution with the client, it is important for him/her to develop an achievable goal rather than to analyse the problem. After identifying 'exceptions' — situations that were at least a little like the desired state — the client can be helped to generate some knowledge of what he/she has done to achieve these exceptions (De Jong & Berg, 1998, 2008; De Shazer, Dolan, & Korman, H., 2007). Following the solution-focused principle 'If something works, do more of it!', the client is encouraged to expand existing strategies and actions that have been (at least slightly) successful. With this method, it is the task of the professional helper to work within the client's frame of reference³ towards the client's goals. Insoo Kim Berg states: 'The client's goals drive the activities' (personal communication, 2005). Experiences with the solution-focused approach show that small changes often lead to larger changes. Clients are encouraged to take small, concrete steps in everyday life.

The agency we worked with

The research and development project was carried out in cooperation with the Fachstelle für Wohnungssicherung (FAWOS) in Vienna, a centre for secure tenancy where people at risk of losing their home can ask for help. FAWOS was set up in 1996. Social workers at FAWOS do not work with homeless people but try to help people not to lose their homes. Together with the client seeking help, the social worker tries to reach this goal through counselling and the provision of information, and through case-specific interventions such as negotiations with housing management, lawyers etc. In some cases financial aid can also be granted for the payment of outstanding rents.

Most clients are under pressure, since the prospect of losing their home naturally presents a great threat to them. Therefore, the social worker is faced with the challenge of handling the client's emotions as well as his/her own emotional reactions in a professional and productive way (see also Böhle & Glaser, 2006; Devereux, 1998; Lipchik, 2002, p. 26). In most cases, help must be provided quickly, since an eviction process is already underway and tight deadlines must be met to find a solution. The faster the social worker is able to identify the client's goals, the faster the necessary

steps can be taken to define for both client and social worker their share of work to be done. Although FAWOS has a very specific remit, the outlining of clear goals is still important, since not all clients actually want to keep their home. Sometimes they have other goals which have to be identified through specific questioning or which still need to be developed together with the client.

The most important results of our research

From our research and our cooperation with the social workers at FAWOS, it became evident to us that the success of a practitioner's work with a client depends not only on a few single brilliant interventions — for example, by using the 'miracle question'⁴ — but also on every single everyday-life interaction. Every utterance made by the social worker is actually a (micro)intervention (cf. Bavelas *et al.*, 2000). These micro-interventions will influence the client's perception of the situation and the options open to him/her. We would like to give two examples of how these micro-interventions could be used at the very beginning of a conversation.

Useful ways to start the conversation

The following example of how a social worker trained by the authors formulates the goal-negotiating question demonstrates how quickly the social worker receives a well-formed goal from the client that can be worked with.

- Client: First of all I'd like to thank you ever so much for being so kind and taking the time ... as I said I cannot help it — it has just appeared ... actually, it is a rather strange story ...
- Social worker: [*Interrupting the client*] Let's see Mr. H. — yes, before we start ... I'd like to ask you, we have about three quarters of an hour ...
- Client: Good.
- Social worker: Well — ehm ... what would you say must happen in this period of time, so that you can leave afterwards and say that it was a good thing that you came here?
- Client: That we find a solution for my problem ... to eighty per cent — although a solution to a hundred percent would of course be better — that's quite clear.
- Social worker: Good — and what kind of solution for your problem could you imagine?
- Client: Well, for me it would be important not to lose my flat.
- Social worker: Mhmm, so that you can stay in the flat?
- Client: Exactly ...

Our findings⁵ are confirmed by large empirical studies based on meta analysis (Duncan *et al.*, 2004). These show that it is of the utmost importance to guide the conversation very carefully, in order to build up a feeling of alliance, since the perception of an alliance by the client⁶ is the most reliable outcome predictor for therapeutic progress.

Negotiating goals and working together along these lines means staying client-oriented, and this is necessary because it fosters alliance. Our data show that the more the client feels respected and understood, the more he/she has the impression that the social worker really wants to help. The more the social worker is seen as competent by the client, the more the client feels the session to be helpful for his/her situation, and the more he/she feels hopeful of being able to change or manage it. In social work practice each session is a moment-by-moment activity; at each utterance the social worker has the opportunity to build the alliance and to increase the opportunity to work on the client's goal.

As already mentioned, not every client actually wants to keep his/her home. Furthermore, clients may have different ideas about how the agency and the social worker should help them. The 12 social workers at FAWOS said that one of the project's positive effects had been to increase their awareness of the importance to ask clients explicitly — as the colleague in the transcript does — about what has to happen in the session in order to make the session worthwhile for them. The social workers reported that this simple question could make a big difference.

The following excerpt from a session with Insoo Kim Berg and a client was videotaped during our project and serves as another example of a possible beginning of a conversation. The transcript shows what social workers can do to build an alliance even before they ask what the concern of the client is.

The client had been in contact with the homelessness prevention agency that we worked with for a few sessions. We cooperated with Insoo Kim Berg as an external expert on the solution-focused approach. In order to tailor the principles of the solution-focused approach to the agency's needs, we recorded live consultations with Insoo Kim Berg and clients. The only information Insoo had had before the interview was that the client had a lot of children and struggled to pay the rent, so that she was in danger of losing her flat.⁷ Naturally, the transcript demonstrates only one of numerous ways in which a practitioner can go about creating an alliance and identifying the competences and resources of a client in the first minutes of a session.

- 1 Insoo: So I understand — you have children.
- 2 Client: Six.
- 3 Insoo: Six kids ... six kids ... Oh what's the age ... oldest and youngest?
- 4 Client: 17, the oldest is 17 years old and the youngest 10 months.
- 5 Insoo: Oh seventeen and ... 10 months. Ohhh ... so you have a teenager and a baby ... it's a long time i-it's a long time to be a mother.
- 6 Client: So I married when I was 17 and I had a baby when I was 19.
- 7 Insoo: So you have to be a mother for another seventeen years ... it's a long time ... so how are you doing with so many children ... who helps you?
- 8 Client: I'm a single parent, my mother died a year ago. She lived in Vienna — she helped me a lot. I have brothers here but they all have families.
- 9 Insoo: Of course of course ... they all have families.
- 10 Client: One sister has four kids and another sister has two and is pregnant now.
- 11 Insoo: Oh, so they are busy.
- 12 Client: Yes.
- 13 Insoo: So ... does anybody help you?
- 14 Client: No.
- 15 Insoo: No ... how about the father of the children?

- 16 Client: He doesn't care about his children . . . doesn't care at all.
 17 Insoo: Wow! . . . so you do that all yourself.
 18 Client: My daughter is 16, she helps me a lot. She came home today . . . not much time and . . . she helps to tidy up and looks after the kids.
 19 Insoo: Ohh . . . so . . . she helps around the house — does housework.
 20 Insoo: So that must be some help.
 21 Client: The other kids are all well-behaved . . . they help a lot — except the oldest son they help in the household.
 22 Insoo: So the seventeen-year-old boy causes you concern?
 23 Client: Yes.
 24 Insoo: What kind of concern does he cause you?
 25 Client: He wants a lot of things . . . expensive things that I should buy him and . . . because I'm a single mother.
 26 Insoo: So . . . you came here . . . for some help . . . with your flat. Is that right?
 27 Client: Some rent I couldn't pay.

The transcript shows the introductory phase of the conversation. Before Insoo Kim Berg draws the attention to the flat and the danger of losing it (in turn 26), she takes an appreciative interest in the client, her personal and family situation and her duties as a mother. She treats her as an expert on the world she lives in. This way of starting a conversation illustrates exactly what Bavelas *et al.* (2000) meant when pointing out that practitioners in the 'alternative paradigm' were convinced that every client had certain strengths and the potential to find a solution.

Janet Beavin Bavelas and her group distinguish between an 'alternative' and a 'traditional' paradigm of psychotherapy. In the traditional paradigm, clients have pathologies that should be diagnosed and treated by the therapist. In the alternative paradigm, clients have certain strengths and a solution potential that therapist and client can discover and build on. The two paradigms differ also on another, very fundamental assumption about the role of communication in therapy. In the frame of the traditional paradigm, communication in psychotherapy is done by individuals (alternating monologues); it forms a conduit for information transmission and involves global influence of the therapist on the client. In the frame of the alternative paradigm, communication in psychotherapy is collaborative and reciprocal (dialogue or conversation), thus inevitably co-constructive; it shapes the information and involves moment-by-moment (micro)influence.

(Bavelas *et al.*, 2000, p. 49)

What we see in the transcript is typical for solution-focused practitioners. They commonly frame introductions in such a way. They call it 'joining with the competences of the client' (Yvonne Dolan, personal communication, November 2007). They do not idealise the situation. On the contrary, in turn 7 Insoo says: 'So you have to be a mother for another seventeen years . . . it's a long time.' She continues in turn 7: 'So how are you doing with so many children?'

In the framework of the already mentioned traditional paradigm, a practitioner might ask: 'Please tell me why you were not able to pay your rent regularly over the

last months?' We can imagine that the client would expect such a question in an agency dealing with homelessness prevention. Instead, Insoo asks within the first minute of the conversation: 'So, how are you doing with so many children?' This question contains a few embedded presuppositions.⁸ We will stress two of them: first, the client is managing her life with so many children, so there must be strengths or resources to do so; second, the client is not only defined in terms of the problem or concern that brought her to the agency. The person faces a problem, a difficulty or a complaint, but she is more than that. Not beginning with the problem straight away indirectly introduces this presupposition and often leads to interesting data about resources.

After a short pause in turn 7 Insoo Kim Berg ends with the question: 'Who helps you?' From turn 7 to turn 16 she and the client are exploring how the client sees her external social resources ('who helps you?'; cf. Roessler, 2008, p. 8). Insoo is listening carefully and showing her understanding. By asking this first question she implies that there must be some kind of help or support somewhere. Initially no helpers are found. There seem to be no resources. The tone of the client turns gloomy. Then, a change occurs in the conversation: Insoo Kim Berg accepts the answer that the client thinks there is no help and reframes⁹ the answer from 'no help' into 'Wow! ... so you do that all yourself.' She converts the client's response that there is no help into an implied compliment, and stresses the client's competences instead of the lack of resources. It leads to the answer: 'My daughter is 16, she helps me a lot.' The video shows how the client suddenly straightens up and starts to smile.

In the course of the conversation the client tells, with Insoo's help, how her children help her in the household and how well-behaved they are, 'except the oldest', who wants 'expensive things that I should buy him'.

Solution-focused practitioners often begin a professional conversation using the principle of 'joining with the competences of the client'. They do this for different reasons. One reason is that this can be helpful in starting to build an alliance with the client.

Recognising the competences of the client and appreciating them — not only at the beginning of a session — is another principle of the solution-focused approach that the social workers at FAWOS found practicable and helpful. Below is an example of how one of the social workers at FAWOS expresses appreciation for the client's actions (especially in turns 9 and 15):

- 1 Social worker: You had your own little cafe but you had to close it down?
- 2 Client: Close down ... and thus the problems started.
- 3 Social worker: Mmmhh, I understand ... and the company you last worked for ...
- 4 Client: Yes.
- 5 Social worker: What exactly was your job there, your profession?
- 6 Client: I was, actually, that sounds good, the term 'regional manager', sounds good, that's what I used to be, but that meant working around the clock.
- 7 Social worker: That means you helped ... ehm ...
- 8 Client: Exactly, member of staff ... that was in properties, that means I helped them ... with the setting up for a certain region.
- 9 Social worker: That means — again, it was a completely new field ... so you are very versatile!

- 10 Client: Yes, as I said ... I do anything, I don't mind which kind of job.
- 11 Social worker: Mmmhh, yes ... because from cafe to real estate, that's quite a leap in the dark ...
- 12 Client: Mmmh, as a salesperson ... I worked in sales ... that is ... but I don't mind. A job is a job for me ... for me any job ... when I want to earn money ... now I'm going to Switzerland ... that's why I asked ... I work in the construction business now ... I have never worked in construction ...
- 13 Social worker: Mmmh.
- 14 Client: At the age of 47!
- 15 Social worker: Mmmh, you are quite determined in terms of jobs, aren't you?

The complexity social workers have to manage

A specific challenge for the social workers at the advice centre for homelessness prevention (and for social workers in general) lies in the fact that often their job not only consists of providing psychosocial counselling, but also involves conveying specialist knowledge (for example, legal information) and making decisions that affect the clients (for example, whether or not to grant financial support). The challenge is how to integrate psychosocial counselling and other forms of action in a meaningful way. In our view the professional tasks of social workers are very complex, since social workers have to integrate many different kinds of professional action programmes.¹⁰

Most social workers — unlike psychotherapists — have to manage, in cooperation with the client, the appropriate shifts between (1) the professional action programme psychosocial counselling (2) the professional action programme decision-making by the social worker (for example on financial support, or other decisions the agencies or the individual social worker have to make which impact on the client), (3) the professional action programme information giving (for example legal information), and finally (4) the professional action programme interacting with people other than the client (for example calling the lawyer or the landlord).

In the following section we briefly present some of the results of our research, showing how the social workers manage the complexity of different professional programmes of communication and the appropriate shifts between these programmes.

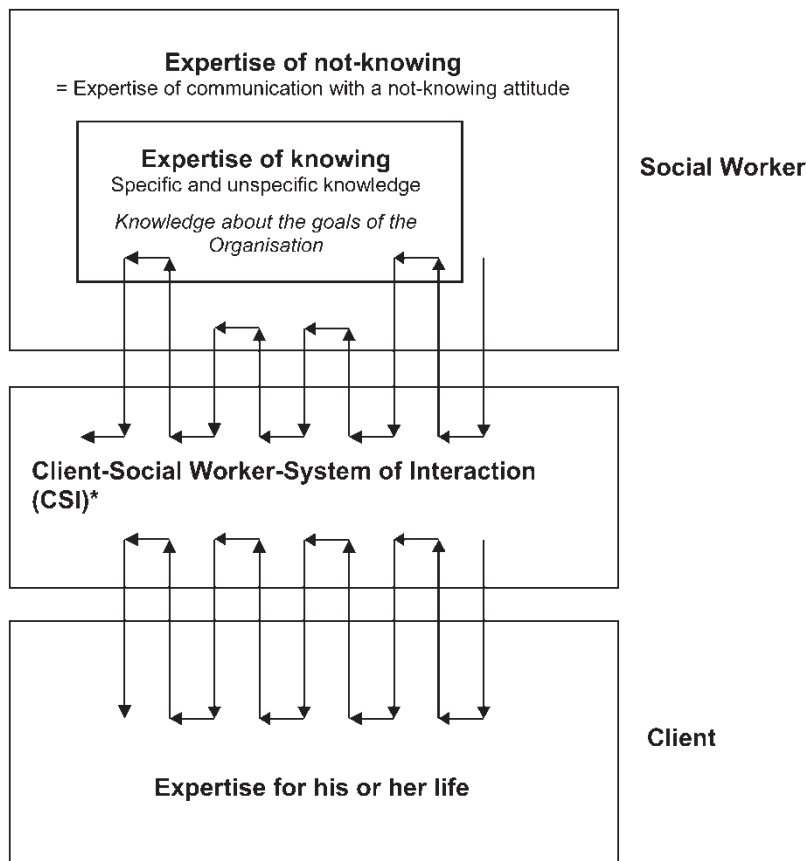
Expertise of knowing and expertise of not knowing

Qualitative analysis of video recordings and counselling activities led us to a differentiation of types of expertise necessary for the social workers to do their job. There are two kinds of expertise that are of vital importance in social work: on the one hand, social workers must have expert knowledge about, for example, legal questions, claims procedures, responsibilities of agencies or further relevant matters concerning these agencies. This kind of expertise is generally called 'expert knowledge' or, as we call it, 'expertise of knowing'.

However, this expertise of knowing is not enough: Social workers are also experts in goal-oriented counselling, which is a communicative expertise we suggest could be called 'expertise of not knowing'¹¹ or 'expertise of communication in the alternative

paradigm'. Following this paradigm social workers in their professional conversations assume that every client within his/her frame of reference always has good reasons for his/her behaviour. On the one hand, the expertise of not knowing includes the social worker's attitude and perception (personal frame theory) in the counselling situation, and the structuring of his/her professional relationship with the client. On the other hand, it includes concrete questioning techniques and tools.

The practitioner knows that he/she has to enter the client's frame of reference — that is, the very personal set of reasons for his/her values and actions. In order to do this, the practitioner has to manage the shifts between different professional programmes in order to be able to support the client in building and establishing his/her goals, to provide the information required, and to negotiate achievable goals within the frame of reference of the client and the framework of the agency he/she is working for. Figure 1 shows how these shifts between programmes can be managed in the client–social worker interaction, according to the alternative paradigm.



* CSI is the translation of the term "KlientInnen – SozialarbeiterInnen – Interaktionssystem" Peter Pantucek (2006) uses

FIGURE 1 Communication in social work practice: the social worker uses the expertise of not knowing and the expertise of knowing to encourage the client to bring in his/her expertise. The expertise of not knowing builds the framework for the appropriate use of the expertise of knowing.

According to our theory, an individual (and social systems) can best develop and change in a lasting way if the individual in question outlines a preferred and realistic picture of his/her future and tries to identify the seeds of this future in his/her present and past. The practitioner's task is to guide the conversation in a way that supports this process.

Our evaluation and analysis of the video recordings clearly shows that both kinds of expertise are needed for successful social work interventions following the alternative paradigm. These results were supported by the analysis of the 16 post-session interviews we carried out. In these interviews we asked clients immediately after their session what they had found most useful. Instead of offering suggestions for their replies, we allowed for their own answers. Eleven out of the 16 clients named the specialist information they had obtained, for example on legal issues such as eviction lawsuits in court. The second most important aspect (mentioned by nine clients out of 16) was the social worker's social and conversational skill (e.g., 'That the social worker understood my problem'; 'That she listened to me'; 'That she really wanted to help me').

Analysis of the post-session interviews clearly showed that a social work intervention has to be based on both kinds of expertise in order to be successful, and that a co-operative communication style greatly facilitates the reaching of the client's goals. The two kinds of expertise are necessary to develop a good alliance with the client (Duncan *et al.*, 2004; Loth, 1998, 2000). The expertise of not knowing has to build the framework, and the expertise of knowing (specialist knowledge) is guided by the expertise of not knowing.¹²

The decision regarding when and how to use the expertise of not knowing and the expertise of knowing has to be made during the conversation, and depends very much on the client's frame of reference. Our research showed that if the client feels that he/she will get no help at this agency, or if the client feels misunderstood, then the expertise of not knowing becomes more important. If a client's reactions to the social worker's interventions increasingly turn into 'resistance' as described by traditional concepts, it is of vital importance for the social worker to switch to the expertise of not knowing.

The more able the client is to formulate clearly his/her questions and need for information, the more space can be given to the expertise of knowing (e.g., informing the client). During the course of a session, there can be several switches from one kind of expertise to the other. Every time the conversation seems stuck, the social worker can ease the situation by taking on a not-knowing attitude.

As already explained, the formulations used and the way questions are asked, as well as the way the conversation is conducted, influence strongly the replies the social worker will receive and the subjects both counsellor and client will focus on.

Handbook

Another outcome of the project was the writing of a handbook on the application of the solution-focused approach in the agency. With the exception of the introductory chapter, it was written by the staff of the agency. This handbook¹³ is not only useful for the work of social workers at FAWOS. It also raised great interest in other social work agencies. It explains the main aspects of the approach and provides concrete examples of potential formulations in a conversation as well as useful questions for certain counselling situations.

Summary

In this article we wanted to give a brief insight into our research and development project. We tried to demonstrate the significance of careful language use and communication in the field of social work, and the importance of using careful formulations and well-formed questions (Bavelas *et al.*, 2000).

Focusing on the client's strengths, resources, competences and social networks helps the client, because it leads to a process of empowerment. As Bavelas points out, in the alternative paradigm communication is a moment-by-moment process. Establishing an alliance, building and negotiating well-formed goals, and contracting and managing the different professional communication programmes are moment-by-moment activities of both the practitioner and the client. The aim is to build a client–social worker system of interaction together (Pantucek, 2006, p. 254) that is useful for the client. It helps him/her to develop an idea of an achievable and preferred future, and at the same time it helps the social worker to reach the goals of the agency he/she works for.

Notes

- 1 Our findings showed that this approach not only offers opportunities to improve the social worker–client interaction, but that it can also be employed successfully at the level of management and cooperation within organisations (see also Gaiswinkler, 2006; Jackson & McKergow, 2003). For example, during the course of our project a particular type of appraisal interview that is based on solution-focused principles was developed together with the institution we worked with (cf. Volkshilfe Wien, 2007, p. 43).
- 2 Steve de Shazer, Insoo Kim Berg and the team at the BFTC in Milwaukee built on the 'brief therapy' model that was developed by the so-called Palo Alto Group. The Palo Alto Group 'was a combination of the Bateson Group researchers and those at Jackson's Mental Research Institute' (Bavelas *et al.*, 2000, p. 48). Gregory Bateson, Dick Fish, Jay Haley, Lynn Hoffman, Don Jackson, John Weakland and Paul Watzlawick, among others, worked in this group. The Palo Alto Group was influenced by the psychiatrist and hypno-therapist Milton H. Erickson. 'Several other groups soon built on the early influence of the Palo Alto Group to develop their own unique therapeutic approaches, but always with a special interest in communication and language as central to psychotherapy: the original and subsequent Milan Schools (e.g., Selvini-Palazzoli, Boscolo, Cecchin, & Prata, 1978; Boscolo, Cecchin, Hoffman, & Penn, 1987); Solution-focused Therapy in Milwaukee (e.g., Berg & de Jong, 1998; de Shazer, 1982, 1985, 1994; de Shazer, Berg, Lipchik, Nunnally, Molnar, Gingerich, & Weiner-Davis, 1986); White and Epston's (1990) Narrative Therapy in Australia and New Zealand; and Jenkin's (1990) approach to violence, also in Australia' (Bavelas *et al.*, 2000, p. 48).
- 3 In our view, interesting parallels can be drawn to the concept of 'validation', a method of communication developed by the social worker Naomi Feil (2007) over the course of 17 years (1963–1980) in her work with dementia patients in nursing homes.
- 4 The miracle question was developed at the BFTC in Milwaukee in the early 1980s. It is posed to help clients develop a picture of their future as they want it to be.

- Steve de Shazer said: 'It has never been just a simple question' (2008; for a description of the miracle question see www.netzwerk-ost.at/publikationen_texte.html).
- 5 Our data analysis was influenced by the principles of grounded theory (Roessler & Gaiswinkler, 2006; Strauss, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1996) and the 'microanalysis of communication' approach of Janet Bavelas and her group (2000).
 - 6 It is not important for the outcome whether the practitioner feels empathy or acts in a way that he or she thinks shows empathy. What is important for the outcome is if the client considers the actions of the practitioner as appropriate signs of empathy or not.
 - 7 In the room were the client, Insoo Kim Berg, the social worker who had already worked with the client for some sessions, and two interpreters providing simultaneous translations. The transcript begins after the exchange of greetings.
 - 8 Bavelas *et al.* refer to McGee (1999), who points out that one of the main functions of questions 'is to introduce embedded presuppositions. That is they can bring in new ideas without asserting them directly' (Bavelas *et al.*, 2000, p. 58).
 - 9 Bavelas *et al.* (2000, p. 61) would call this an example of using 'lexical choice' and 'formulation'.
 - 10 See Giesecke and Rappe-Giesecke (1997) regarding the different professional action programmes of supervisors.
 - 11 In German-speaking countries the term *Expertise des Nichtwissens* ('expertise of not knowing') is used (e.g., by Kurt Buchinger, 1997) with a similar yet not identical meaning in order to describe the work of supervisors. The term *Haltung des Nicht-Wissens* ('not-knowing attitude') is also used in the solution-focused tradition and other systemic approaches.
 - 12 Duncan *et al.* (2004) would not say — as we do — that the expertise of knowing is guided by the expertise of not knowing. They would call a similar kind of procedure and a similar kind of thought 'client-directed'.
 - 13 See http://www.netzwerk-ost.at/publikationen/pdf/fawos_handbuch.pdf Accessed 23 December 2008.

References

- Anderson, H. & Goolishian, H. (1992) The client is the expert: A notknowing approach to therapy. In: S. McNamee & K. Gergen (Eds). *Social Construction and the Therapeutic Process*, Sage, Newbury Park, CA.
- Bavelas Beavin, J., McGee, D., Phillips, P. & Routledge, R. (2000) 'Microanalysis of communication in psychotherapy', *Human Systems: The Journal of Systemic Consultation and Management*, vol. 11, pp. 47–66.
- Berg, I. K. (1991) *Family Preservation: A Brief Therapy Workbook*, BT Press, London.
- Böhle, F. & Glaser, J. (eds) (2006) *Arbeit in der Interaktion – Interaktion als Arbeit: Arbeitsorganisation und Interaktionsarbeit in der Dienstleistung*, VS-Verlag, Wiesbaden.
- Boscolo, L., Cecchin, G., Hoffman, L. & Penn, P. (1987) *The Milan Systemic Family Therapy: Conversations in Theory and Practice*, Basic Books, New York.
- Buchinger, K. (1997) *Supervision in Organisationen: Den Wandel begleiten*, Carl-Auer-Systeme Verl. und Verl.-Buchh, Heidelberg.
- De Jong, P. & Berg, I. K. (1998) *Interviewing for Solutions*, Brooks/Cole, Pacific Grove, CA.

- De Jong, P. & Berg, I. K. (2008) *Interviewing for Solutions*, 3rd edn, Thomson Higher Education, Belmont, CA.
- De Shazer, S. (1982) *Patterns of Brief Therapy*, Guilford, New York.
- De Shazer, S. (1985) *Keys to Solutions in Brief Therapy*, Norton, New York.
- De Shazer, S. (1994) *Words were Originally Magic*, Norton, New York.
- De Shazer, S. (2008) *The Miracle Question*, http://www.netzwerk-ost.at/publikationen_texte.html [Accessed 23 December 2008].
- De Shazer, S., Berg, I. K., Lipchik, E., Nunnally, E., Molnar, A., Gingerich, W. & Weiner-Davis, M. (1986) 'Brief therapy: Focused solution development', *Family Process*, vol. 25, pp. 207–222.
- De Shazer, S., Dolan, Y. & Korman, H. (eds) (2007) *More than Miracles: The State of the Art of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy*, Harworth Press, New York.
- Devereux, G. (1998) *Angst und Methode in den Verhaltenswissenschaften*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main.
- Duncan, B. L., Miller, S. D. & Sparks, J. (2004) *The Heroic Client: A Revolutionary Way to Improve Effectiveness through Client-Directed, Outcome-Informed Therapy*, rev. edn, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.
- Feil, N. (2007) *Validation in Anwendung und Beispielen: Der Umgang mit verwirrten alten Menschen*, Reinhardt, München.
- Gaiswinkler, W. (2006) 'Organisational consulting as a field for the solution focused approach', in *Solution-Focused Management*, Lueger G. (Ed.), Hampp, München.
- Gaiswinkler, W. & Roessler, M. (2007) 'Empowerment konkret? Wie SozialarbeiterInnen in ihrem Alltag KlientInnen bei der Selbstermächtigung unterstützen und zugleich ihren institutionellen Auftrag erfüllen – Anregungen durch den systemisch lösungsfokussierten Ansatz nach Steve de Shazer und Insoo Kim Berg', in *Entwicklungspartner-Innenschaft Donau Quality in Inclusion. Sozialer Sektor im Wandel. Zur Qualitätsdebatte und Beauftragung von Sozialer Arbeit* (Ed.).
- Giesecke, M. & Rappe-Giesecke, K. (1997) *Supervision als Medium kommunikativer Sozialforschung – Die Integration von Selbsterfahrung und distanzierter Betrachtung in der Beratung und Wissenschaft*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main.
- Jackson, P. Z. & McKergow, M. (2003) *The Solutions Focus: The Simple Way to Positive Change*, Brealey, London.
- Jenkins, A. (1990) *Invitations to Responsibility*, Dulwich Centre, Adelaide, South Australia.
- Lipchik, E. (2002) *Beyond technique in solution focused therapy. Working therapeutic relationship*, The Guilford Press, New York, London.
- Loth, W. (1998) *Auf den Spuren hilfreicher Veränderungen: Das Entwickeln klinischer Kontrakte*, Verl. Modernes Lernen, Dortmund.
- Loth, W. (2000) "Wem gehört die Veränderung?" – Was ein Psychotherapeutengesetz nicht berücksichtigt: Die KlientInnen geben den Ton an', *Systema*, vol. 14, no. 3. Available at: <http://www.kopiloth.de/hero.htm> [accessed 29 June 2008].
- Miller, G. (1997) *Becoming miracle workers. Language and meaning in brief therapy*, Aldine de Gruyter (Social problems and social issues), New York.
- McGee, D. (1999) *Constructive Questions*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, Department of Psychology, University of Victoria.
- Pantucek, P. (2006) *Soziale Diagnostik: Verfahren für die Praxis sozialer Arbeit*, Böhlau, Wien.
- Pichot, T. & Dolan, Y. M. (2003) *Solution-Focused Brief Therapy: Its Effective Use in Agency Settings*, Haworth Clinical Practice Press, Binghamton.

- Roessler, M. (2008) 'Sozialraumorientierte und Klinische Sozialarbeit im Dialog', *Klinische Sozialarbeit: Zeitschrift für Psychosoziale Praxis und Forschung*, vol. 4, no. 3, pp. 8–9.
- Roessler, M. & Gaiswinkler, W. (2006) 'Grounded theory: gegenstandsnahe Theoriebildung', in Flaker, V. & Schmid, T. (Eds), *Von der Idee zur Forschungsarbeit*, Böhlau Verlag, Wien.
- Saleebey, D. (ed.) (2006) *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice*, 4th edn, Pearson/Allyn & Bacon, Boston.
- Selvini-Palazzoli, M., Boscolo, L., Cecchin, G. & Prata, G. (1978) *Paradox and Counterparadox*, Jason Aronson, New York.
- Strauss, A. L. (1994) *Grundlagen qualitativer Sozialforschung: Datenanalyse und Theoriebildung in der empirischen und soziologischen Forschung*, UTB für Wissenschaft, München.
- Strauss, A. L. & Corbin, J. M. (1996) *Grundlagen qualitativer Sozialforschung*, Beltz Psychologie VerlagsUnion, Weinheim.
- Turnell, Andrew; Essex, Susie (2006) Working with "Denied" Child Abuse. The Resolutions Approach, Berkshire: Open University Press, Berkshire.
- Volkshilfe Wien (ed.) (2007) *Handbuch zur Anwendung des lösungsfokussierten Ansatzes bei FAWOS, eine Einrichtung der Volkshilfe Wien*. Available at: http://www.netzwerk-ost.at/publikationen/pdf/fawos_handbuch.pdf [accessed 23 December 2008].
- Watzlawick, P., Beavin, J. H. & Jackson, D. D. (2007) *Menschliche Kommunikation: Formen, Störungen, Paradoxien*, Huber, Bern.
- White, M. & Epston, D. (1990) *Narrative Means to Therapeutic Ends.*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York.

Wolfgang Gaiswinkler is an organisational consultant, social scientist, lecturer and supervisor. *Address:* Netzwerk OS'T Zieglergasse 63-1070, Vienna, Austria. [email: gaiswinkler@netzwerk-ost.at]

Marianne Roessler is a social worker, social scientist, supervisor, educational supervisor, lecturer and organisational consultant. *Address:* Netzwerk OS'T Zieglergasse 63-1070, Vienna, Austria. [email: roessler@netzwerk-ost.at]
