

- **Intended outcomes of the session**

To know what Solutions Focused coaching (SFc) is, how it differs from problem-focused behaviour management and where it fits in

To experience practical SF coaching skills

To understand the theory underpinning SF coaching

This session:

- Introduction to SFc (15 minutes)
- Practical elements of SFc; problem-free talk, Solutions Focused scaling, (60 minutes)
- Reflection and understanding; next steps (15 minutes)

## What does a Solutions Focused coach do?

- Approaches a situation knowing that things always have cracks in them, where the light gets through ( with thanks to Leonard Cohen)
- Searches for what's going right, sidelines what's gone wrong (see James 2016)
- Asks open questions
- Embraces the subjective and complex aspects of behaviour, with the necessary involvement of emotions and feelings
- Focuses on strengths and resources of the child and their supporters, rather than on deficits
- Sees children as successful, hopeful and resourceful people with agency

## What's different about SF coaching?

- It places strengths and resources at the centre of a teaching approach to behaviour, which responds to a learning need and doesn't demand medical expertise and diagnostic skills
- It places the child as an engaged community member, a learner, rather than a disordered individual
- It builds the empathetic, emotionally positive relationship necessary for cooperative work with children struggling in school (see Brooks 2014)
- It starts with the recognition of people-problems as either Complex\* (interacting systems) or Complicated (made up of discrete parts) demanding different approaches: Complex=Solutions Focused approach/ Complicated=Problem Focused approach (see James 2016)

## Why make use of SF coaching?

- It's an appropriate educational approach to behaviour as a learning issue, using inquiry/constructivist pedagogy
- It has a simple, easily learnable structure and promotes useful change or points the way to the need for specialist intervention
- It develops a new language to promote wellbeing, engagement and resilience
- It builds confidence in responding to children's needs with a recognised practice where Problem Focused approach

## What's changing?

- Rising worries about distress and mental disorder, connection between exclusion and SEN/health needs demanding timely educational, preventative action for wellbeing and inclusion (see Brooks 2014)
- Recognition of limitations of one-size-fits-all behaviour management approach to support all children
- Brief SFc training enabling school professionals to develop safe, effective, preventative teaching becoming more available
- SF approach present in Care services, NSPCC, mental health care, ITT, CPD and school pastoral support, developing a common language