



Hi My Colleagues in Denmark! Thanks to Anne-Marie I've received proposition to write something from my experience. So finally I decided to share with you part of the article which will be published at the Journal of Solution Focused Practice and is focused on describing Situation Focused Model which I created to adopt SFBT ideas to my inner, personal "universe". You know very well concept of exceptions, where we ask client "When it was better?" or "When it was like that"? aiming to work in clients personal experience. Below I share with you with some extended concept of so called exceptions which is based on my clinical experience. I hope you enjoyed at least part of this concept. See you somewhere on our sf paths.

### **Exceptions situations concept...**

My idea about exceptions is described and expressed at the following definition:

**Exception - data situation from the past or presence, which potentially could be useful for a client in the context of present situation and preferred situation.**

Theoretically each conversation about exceptions is undertaken to meet at least one or two goals. First of them is "inspirational" one, second "operating" one.

Inspirational goal means that by talking about exceptions we mainly focus our attention on building pictures of clients "better" functioning. We're mainly interested in the description of how was it rather, than about possible sources or means how to achieve such a state.

Operating goal directly focused on the aspects of know how. So we want to figure out possible connections, supportive coexistence, positive influences, useful strategies which allow us to achieve preferred situation.

There're a few kinds of the exceptions, and only some of them refers to clients experience. Still referring to clients experience seems to be obviously and naturally first source of searching in typical situations.

1. Client's exceptions - within sfbt tradition obvious source of searching for useful experiences. Typical questions:

*When it was like that in your life? How was that? What helped or how come?*

2. Client's exceptions about others - it's about client's experience and knowledge based on observing and getting from others. Typical questions:

*Where did you saw such a thing? What did you saw? What was helpful?*

3. Other's exceptions - by using this source of exceptions we offer to clients possibility to meet with people who personally share similar situations, difficulties, goals, preferred situations like our client and are ready to talk to each other and exchange with personal know how with others. Typical questions or statements:

*Would you like with other people in similar situations? Not the same but somehow similar! Maybe you can inspire each other with your personal experiences? Maybe you can find out something useful for you? Maybe you can share with something useful for others?*

4. Professional exceptions based on others experience - in some cases it may be clear for both sides - client and therapist - that knowledge and experience collected by therapist from her/clients during years of practice could possibly become useful source of ideas how to cope with life, or how to achieve preferred situation. Important issue is getting clients authorization to speak about therapist "know how" collected from previous clients in somehow similar situations. Typical questions or statements:

*Would you be interested in what I've learned from my clients in somehow similar situations? Sometimes it's not useful, sometimes it's useful. Would you like to listen to or even ask me about details?*

5. Knowledge exceptions - sometimes for many reasons some of the mentioned above sources of exceptions are not sufficiently useful for our clients. Still probably we as a professionals have some kind of theoretical knowledge, which at least light in the darkness with the minimal hope, that can be helpful for a client, as long as, client is interested in considering such data. Typical questions or statements:

*Would you like to consider some ideas which are connected with some knowledge I've learned...? Sometimes it's not, sometimes it's useful for some clients. So, from the perspective or lens of this piece of theory we can consider... What do you think about it? How do you find it? Does it make any practical sense for you?*

6. Prototype exceptions - basically concept of exceptions is rooted in the past, is based on the past experiences. Prototype exceptions tends to be focused on near future, like the concept of small change at the scaling technique. Prototype exception implies that client and therapist try to put their effort to create new strategy, which contains possibility of being useful for a client following one of the sf rules "do something different". Typical statements:

*So maybe we can brainstorm and create some more or less wise or crazy idea how to proceed situation in order to bring a tiny piece of light of hope for positive outcome?*

7 . Mystic exceptions - some of our clients bring resource of having relationship with God, mystic person. Our personal believe, as a therapist is not so important here, much more important is believe of the client. In most cases, believe of Gods existence assume God's ability to share with God's grace, and one of them is God's inspiration. Medical doctors, at least some in Poland, encourage clients in very difficult situation to use this strategy by saying: "We have done all we could, now you can pray and wait." Following such strategy we can incorporate it into clients situation and encourage client to "apply" to her/his God for a kind of advice, inspiration... Typical statements:

*"So you said you had strong relationship with your God. Maybe you can talk to and ask your God for a kind of advice, sort of inspiration in this situation. So please talk to your God, keep your heart, soul, mind open and try to figure out your God's suggestions in your situation."*