Solution Focused Brief Therapy Association

News of the Difference

October 2026

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Do you have an idea for our newsletter? Please get in touch! board@sfbta.org

Message from Chair of Member Communications Committee

Dear Readers,

I hope you are all keeping well and enjoying the change of season as autumn settles in. Welcome to our October edition of the SFBTA newsletter!

There is something lovely about autumn and the way the changing colours of the leaves remind us that sometimes, what we need is already there, just waiting to be noticed. As the green chlorophyll in leaves breaks down, it reveals other colours that were present all along. I think there is a beautiful parallel here with solution focused practice, where we invite people to notice the resources, capabilities and possibilities that may already be there, perhaps not yet fully visible yet.

The conference in Cleveland, Ohio, is now just days away,starting on the 4th November, and it's exciting to think that so many of our solution focused colleagues will soon be coming together. The programme looks exceptional, and the conference team have been working tirelessly to bring everything together for what I'm sure will be a wonderful event.

I am very sad to share that, due to unforeseen circumstances, I am unable to join my colleagues and all of you at the conference this year. I will, however, be there in spirit, thinking of you all and wishing everyone a fantastic conference.



Warmest wishes,

Tara Gretton

Chair of Member Communications Committee

SF Cartoon





Beverley Kort



Steve Klein

President's Message

Dear SFBTA Members & Community,

How is it that the conference is already here? I'm so excited to meet up with current and new members as we continue to have this beautiful tradition that celebrates connectedness in our global community. The SFBTA Conference in Cleveland, Ohio - Bridging Conversations, has a great lineup of presenters who will speak to therapy, research, coaching, organizational leadership, education, healthcare and more! We also have a wide range of attendees from those with experience and expertise in the field, to those who are interested in learning about Solution Focus. All are welcome! Take advantage of this great opportunity to learn, share and enjoy. **REGISTER HERE.**

Mark Your Calendars:

Next year's conference in November of 2027 will mark SFBTA's 25th Anniversary! We would love to celebrate this milestone with our Solution Focused community from near and far. We'll be unveiling the location at this year's conference!

Board of Directors Nominations

Our Annual General Meeting will take place during the conference luncheon on Saturday, November 7th at 11:45 am. During this dedicated time, we share organizational updates, introduce current Board members, and vote on upcoming developments - including an open **Member at Large** position (a 3-year term beginning January 2027).

You're welcome to nominate yourself or a colleague (with their consent).

- **Online Nominations:** Open through October 31, 2026. **NOMINATE HERE.**
- **In-Person Nominations:** Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor during the Annual General Assembly.

Thank you and I'm looking forward to seeing you soon!



Warmly,

Vicky Essebag

President SFBTA 2026

~~www.sfbta.org~~

board@sfbta.org

HELP US BUILD THE SFBTA CONFERENCE PHOTO ARCHIVE

Do you have photographs from past SFBTA conferences?

We're looking to expand our archive and would love to hear from anyone who has photos they'd be happy to share from the following conference years:

2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2022 and 2023.

Whether they're from keynote presentations, workshops, social events, or those spontaneous moments that capture the warmth and spirit of our community, every photograph helps tell the story of the SFBTA.

If you have images you'd be willing to share, please send them to us. By submitting your photos, you're giving the SFBTA permission to use them on our website, in newsletters, and in other SFBTA publications. Wherever possible, we'll happily acknowledge photographers.

Thank you for helping us preserve and celebrate the history of our community.

Please email them here:

Email Us

BOARD NOMINATION OPEN

There will be ONE Board position available for a three year term beginning January 2027, and you may nominate yourself or someone else with their consent.

🗓️ Online nominations are open until **October 31, 2026.**

After October 31, nominations may also be made from the floor during the SFBTA Annual Members Meeting on Saturday, November 7, 2026, in Cleveland, Ohio.

Submit your Nomination **Learn More about the Board**

SFBTA 2026 CONFERENCE

BridgingConversations:SFBTA2026 Annual Conference Connecting Practice, Research, andInnovationin Solution-Focused Work

November 5–8, 2026 | Cleveland, Ohio | Cleveland State University

In just 10 days, the solution-focused community gathers in Cleveland for four days of learning, dialogue, and connection. This year's theme invites us to build bridges between research and practice, between disciplines, and between the many settings where solution-focused work is changing lives: therapy rooms, schools, hospitals, organizations, and athletic programs. Whether you join us in person or online, there is a place for you in the conversation.

Earn Up to 19 Continuing Education Hours

Bridging Conversations 2026 offers up to 19 NBCC CE hours, and the conference is approved for continuing education through the Ohio Counselor, Social Worker and Marriage and Family Therapist (CSWMFT) Board through Strongblossom, Inc. Attendees with full access can earn:

- **Pre-Conference (Thursday, Nov. 5): 6 hours.** Choose Teri Pichot's full-day ***SF 101*** foundational workshop, or Joan Neehall's ***Integration of SFBT with the Restore and Flourish Model of Emotional Regulation*** in the morning.
- **Main Conference (Friday–Saturday, Nov. 6–7)**: **10 hours** across eight 75-minute breakout sessions.
- **Post-Conference (Sunday, Nov. 8): 3 hours** with John Coumbe-Lilley's ***Solution Focused in Context***.

Maximum hours assume attendance at one eligible session per time slot.

Join Us In Person or Online

Can't make the trip to Cleveland? Bridging Conversations is a **hybrid conference**. Every breakout block on both main conference days includes two sessions streamed live, so virtual attendees can follow a full eight-session track. The livestreamed program includes:

Friday, November 6

- Does Neuroscience Have a Place in Solution-Focused Practice? (Carol Buchholz Holland)
- Transforming the Miracle Question through Expressive Arts (Roxanne Bamond)
- SFBT's Modern "One-Way" Mirror: Utilizing Microanalysis, AI Transcription, and Formative Development in Clinical Practice (Nate Guyton)
- Solution Focused Supervision (Dina Bednar)

- From Loneliness to Belonging: Reconnecting through Solution Focused Conversations (Shima Husen)
- Utilizing Solution Focused Brief Methods on Medical Floors and Crisis Settings (Christina Aguilar)
- Relationspaces: A Bridge to SFBT in Daily Communications (Vicky Essebag)
- From Harry's House to the Miracle Question (Joel Simon)

Saturday, November 7

- Schools Solutions Talk: Solution Focused Connections in Education (Vicky Essebag)
- Satisfying Quickies: SF Couple Work in a Single Session (Dina Bednar)
- Connecting Research to Practice: A Recursive Relationship in Pursuit of "What Works" in SFBT (Nate Guyton and Cynthia Franklin)
- More than Their Trauma: Solution Focused Practices that Foster Healing and Hope (Carol Buchholz Holland)
- Effective Use of Solution Focused Brief Practice in an Unjust World (Teri Pichot)
- Solution-Focused Sport Psychology: An Exercise in SFSP Fidelity (Kendra Bullard, John Coumbe-Lilley, and Nate Guyton)
- Hummingbird Effect: Small Actions, Meaningful Change, and Sustainable Helping (Franchesca Fraire)
- The Power of Social Connectedness: Introducing SF Circles for Mental Health Promotion (Arnoud Hubers and Vasundharaa Santhosh Nair)

Virtual attendees can also join the daily closing sessions, Saturday's open time for consultation and connection, the Sacred Rising Yoga sound bath, and the SFBTA Members' Meeting. Pre- and post-conference workshops are offered in person only.

Register Today

In-person seats and virtual spots are both available. Visit sfbtaconference.org to view the full program and register. We look forward to bridging conversations with you in November.

Strongblossom, Inc. and SFBTA are cosponsors of this program. This cosponsorship has been approved by NBCC. Strongblossom, Inc. is an NBCC Approved Continuing Education Provider, ACEP No. 7825. The ACEP solely is responsible for this program, including the awarding of NBCC credit.

Register Here **Learn More about Sponsorship**



Warm wishes,
Michelle Lasky
2026 SFBTA Conference Chair

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Join the Committees!

Each of our standing committees is led by one of our Board members. You can learn more about these committees here committees. If you're interested in joining or if you have any questions, please reach out at board@sfbta.org



Professional Development Committee - Olivia Wedel - Chair

The Professional Learning/Development Committee met on Friday, October 16 at 9AM CST. We are in full conference mode because all committee members are attending and presenting in Cleveland! If you see one of us, please say hello.

Based on unanimous feedback from the September Town Hall, the committee is planning a workshop webinar series for 2027. More details will be finalized before the end of this year, but tentative dates are set for March, June, and September. The goal is for the content to be panel-style but with fewer panelists to give it more of an 'affinity group' feel, like an SF learning circle.

Please stay tuned for the Grad Student Fireside Chats beginning in January 2027. These conversations will typically be held on the second or third Friday of the month, and offered for 60 minutes to start out and simply see how interest grows. If you work at a college or university with interested students, please email us: board@sfbta.org.

We will have our final meeting of the year on Friday, December 11, 2026 at 9AM CST. Please reach out if you are interested in joining the committee!

We will see you in Cleveland very soon!

See Olivia's Reflections from the Last Townhall



Membership and Outreach Committee - Toya Brown and Cecile Dietrich - Co-Chairs

What's working, and what would you like more of?



We'd love to hear from you about your experience of being part of SFBTA.

What have you found useful, interesting or valuable about being a member? What has made a difference to you? And what would you like to see more of as we look ahead?

This short, confidential survey is an opportunity to share your thoughts, ideas and hopes for SFBTA. Your responses will help us notice what is already working well and consider how we might build on this together, in ways that are meaningful and useful to our community.

Thank you for taking the time to share your experience with us.

With thanks,
Cecile, Toya, and Nate

MEMBER MEET-UPS

Did you meet with a fellow SFBTA member somewhere in the world? Snap a photo and share the smiles for our newsletter! Please send in your photo and brief description to board@sfbta.org.

SF OPPORTUNITIES

Events and SF Gatherings

The Solution Focus Glimmerfinders Experiment - what's the next step?

November 11, 2026

What happens when Solution Focus becomes part of the fabric of school life?

What might happen if you shared the small things that bring you joy, hope and connection?

A ‘glimmer’ is a micro-moment of joy, happiness, hope or deep connection — a leaf on your boot, a dragonfly on your bicycle, a funny face made of fruit or an unexpected moment with a family member. Small things we can learn to notice more intentionally.

Victoria Spashchenko, Julia Kalenberg, Veronika Jungwirth and John Brooker began Glimmer Finders to explore that question, sharing glimmers in a private social media group.

Join us to discover what happened, try glimmering and explore what we could co-create in the Solution Focus community. Expect stories both light-hearted and profound! Find out more and reserve a spot here:

Reserve your Spot

Solution Focus in Action: Beechen Cliff School

What happens when Solution Focus becomes part of the fabric of school life?

At Beechen Cliff School in Bath in the UK, a Solution Focused approach has been growing across the school community for the past eight years. What began as a way of working with individual young people has developed into a wider approach that finds its way into classrooms, corridors, conversations, relationships and the everyday life of the school.

The work is grounded in a simple curiosity: what happens when we pay attention to what is working, what is wanted, and how people are already contributing to making that possible?

The experience at Beechen Cliff has raised some interesting possibilities for schools and trusts, including staff wellbeing and retention, pupil attendance, behaviour, relationships and engagement in learning.

You can hear more about the Beechen Cliff story in the SFIO case study, “Biggest Bang for Your Buck”.

Save the date: 9–10 April 2027

Beechen Cliff School will host a two-day Solution Focus in Organisations gathering, bringing together school and trust leaders, governors, policymakers, practitioners and others interested in influencing what happens in schools.

This won't be a traditional conference or a show-and-tell. It will be a working gathering: an opportunity to share experiences, get curious about what is already happening, explore what we want more of, and consider what might be useful to take back into our own schools and organisations.

Come curious. Come ready to contribute.

The gathering will explore:

Community | Wellbeing | Growth | Possibility I

f you'd like to register your interest, with no obligation, please email zoom@sfio.org.

Beechen Cliff School, Bath

9–10 April 2027

More details to follow.

[Read the SFIO Beechen Cliff case study: "Biggest Bang for Your Buck" https://www.sfio.org/interaction/2025-1/beechen-cliff-case-study/]



Solution Focused In Organisation

SFiO is an international network of solution-focused practitioners which promotes, supports and develops research and applications of Solution Focus in Organisations. This website accompanies you in your discovery of SF by offering you an overview of SF events worldwide, access to the SF Clues, to the InterAction Collection, and much more. Enjoy staying curious.

Learn More

SF24/25 Watch Party

Register Here

Solution Focused World Conference

When: February 2027

Where: Amsterdam

Register Here

SF24/27 – Building Hope, Empowering Change

Call for proposals!

When: 25-27February 2027



Learn More

SF@WORK

Would you like to share how you use SF principles in your daily professional role? Please email us your 200-250 word essay for a future newsletter!

MEMBER ARTICLES

ArticlebyTaraGrettonand Harneet Kaur

Life's Like That…

by Tara Gretton

Life's Like That… is a space to share those ordinary moments when, perhaps without even realising it at the time, solution focused thinking has shaped how we respond to life's twists and turns.

I've had some ongoing frustrating health issues lately, and there are dear people around us going through some really difficult times. As the nights draw in, it can sometimes be hard to notice what's going well. And sometimes, you just don't feel like looking for it. That's okay too.

Something I've been thinking about lately, inspired by conversations with colleagues and things I've been reading, is the idea of looking for the tiniest specks of light. Not big things. Not a need to find the positives. Just the tiniest glimmers, when and if they feel possible to notice.

Years ago, when I started working on a project called the 117 Project, a colleague talked about gently poking some tiny little holes. As someone who thinks very visually, that image has stayed with me. When I bring it to mind, I picture the tiniest shards of light finding their way through.

Sitting in my garden cabin, looking out at the trees, I notice the golden autumn leaves. But there's still green there too, alongside all those golden and speckled colours. Signs of life, even as the seasons change.

I don't always notice when something solution focused happens in everyday life. But perhaps that's part of it. It doesn't have to be a big moment or something we deliberately set out to do.

Sometimes, it's simply a gentle invitation to notice the tiniest shards of light, poking the smallest of holes. Not to change how difficult things feel, or to pretend that everything is okay, but to make a little room for something else to be there too.

And sometimes, even in the most challenging of times, that can feel enough.



Submitted by:

Tara Gretton

Chair of Member Communications Committee

October: An Exercise in Survival (and Other Academic Achievements)

by Harneet Kaur

October apparently decided that my personal growth needed to happen all at once. Between assignments that seemed to reproduce overnight and four exams squeezed into approximately two weeks, I barely had time to remember what day it was. Two exams on the same day? Of course! Because apparently, one academic crisis at a time would have been far too generous.

In the background, there was also the small matter of preparing for an upcoming conference. Preparing being the operative word here, because, as of now, I have still not properly prepared for it. My apologies to the conference, my future self, and anyone expecting a wonderfully organized presentation. We are working on it. Allegedly.

And then there is placement. Spending around twelve hours there is a unique experience, especially when you return home feeling as though your brain has officially submitted its resignation. By the end of some days, even thinking about another task felt like an additional assignment.

Somewhere in this chaos, my routine disappeared, my motivation took an unexpected leave of absence, and getting back on track became another item on an already impossible to-do list. I honestly cannot say how long it will take to feel organized again, but I am attempting a comeback.

From a solution-focused perspective, perhaps the question isn't, “How do I fix everything immediately?” but rather, “What is one small thing I can do today to make Tomorrow will be slightly easier?”

Maybe progress this month isn't about having everything figured out. Maybe it is simply about showing up, recognizing what we've managed despite the chaos, and taking the next small step.

And if you'll excuse me, I have a conference to prepare for. Finally. Hopefully.



Submitted by:

Harneet Kaur

SFBTA Student Member

We would love for you to share your articles here. Please do email us at *board@sfbta.org.*

RESOURCES

JSFP

Journal of Solution Focused Practice

Here is a recent Article from the Journal of Solution Focused Practice - **Integrating Solution Focused Brief Therapy and Harm Reduction: A Strengths-Based Framework for Working With People Who Use Substances Seán Foy, D.Clin Psych, M.A, B.Sc.**

Abstract

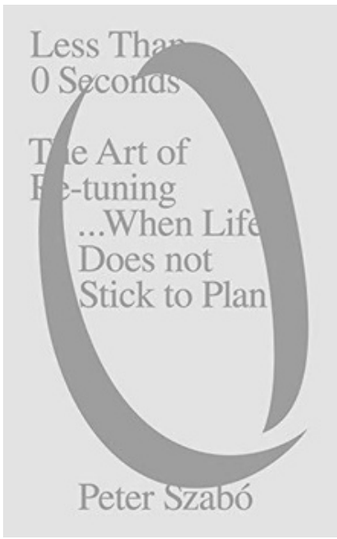
Solution focused brief therapy (SFBT) and Harm Reduction (HR) have each demonstrated effectiveness with people who use substances, yet they have largely been treated as separate domains, with limited attention paid to their potential integration. This paper argues that the two approaches are philosophically and technically convergent, sharing a commitment to client autonomy, pragmatism, and a strengths-based orientation, and proposes a unified framework, Solution focused harm reduction (SFHR), for working with people who are ambivalent about change or who have not responded to abstinence-oriented treatment. Drawing on the theoretical and empirical literature underpinning both approaches, five areas of convergence are identified: self-autonomy and self-determination, a strengths-based orientation, pragmatism, a shared hierarchy of outcomes, and a common origin in clinical practice rather than theory. Two clinical vignettes illustrate the integrated framework, showing how a not-knowing stance, exception-finding, and HR information offered as a menu of options can support meaningful, client-paced change without requiring abstinence as a precondition of care. SFHR is presented as a clinically coherent, person-centred model that respects the client’s pace and expertise while reducing harm and building on existing strengths. Implications for practice, training, and service development are discussed, along with the need for a fidelity framework to support future empirical evaluation of the integrated approach.

View Article

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Written by Peter Szabó





Less Than 0 Seconds: The Art of Re-tuning … When Life Does not Stick to Plan
by Peter Szabó

What happens when life takes an unexpected turn and our plans no longer fit the situation?

In ***Less Than 0 Seconds***, Peter Szabó shares 15 real-life stories that explore our ability to adapt when circumstances change. From everyday frustrations to life-changing events, the stories invite us to consider how we respond when things do not unfold as we had expected. Read more about the book on Goodreads.

The idea of re-tuning feels particularly relevant to solution focused practice. Rather than trying to get everything back on track, perhaps we can pause, notice what has changed and become curious about what might work now.
A thought-provoking read for anyone interested in how we find our way forward when life doesn't stick to plan.

A question to take into your next conversation: When things don't go as expected, what helps you find your next note?

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS

We're grateful for the generous support of our 2025 SFBTA Conference sponsors, whose partnership helps make Moving Conversations: Advancing Solution Focused Practice and Research in Toronto possible. Our Gold Sponsors include Microanalysis, the University at Buffalo School of Social Work, Relationspaces, and Arnold Street, and we're also pleased to acknowledge Wander in Harmony as a Bronze Sponsor — thank you for helping us advance solution focused practice and research around the world.

Be part of SFBTA 2026

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