



CHESSINGTON  
SCHOOL

# Solution focus and independence

## Information Evening 2020



## Miss Sier – Head of year 8 and 9

Everyone valued • Every day an opportunity • Every moment focused on success

I can't do this  
This is too hard  
I give up  
There's no point in trying  
I can't be bothered  
Miss, can you do it for me?



I can do this, I just need more time

I give up

I can't do it

Can you help me, I  
want to be able to do  
this?

This is too hard, what's the point

Miss, can I try again if I  
mess up?

This is impossible

I can't be bothered

I'm going to keep  
going with this Miss,  
I'm not going to give  
up!

Miss, can you do it for me

# What does a solution based approach look like?

Assumes that all students have some knowledge of what would make their school experience better and already possess at least the minimal skills necessary to create solutions.



# Exceptions

- Something that happens instead of the problem; often spontaneously and without conscious intention.
- “What is different about the times when this is less of a problem?”

# Exceptions Dialogue

**Teacher:** Hey, I noticed that I am missing a few homework assignments from you this week. I do have the assignment from Monday though and I wanted to thank you for turning that in. I was wondering what you did to help you remember to turn that one in.

**Student:** Um, I think I put it right back in my backpack after I was finished with it on Sunday.

**Teacher:** Wow, that's a great strategy! How did you come up with that?

**Student:** Well, I just figured that if I put it in my backpack, I wouldn't forget.

**Teacher:** That's very true. What triggered that thought? Did you do something different or give yourself a reminder?

**Student:** That day my mum talked to me about not getting my work turned in. I wanted to make sure I remembered to turn in my homework on Monday.

# Strength Based Language

- Powerful reminder to students that they engage in many useful things even in times of overwhelming difficulties. They possess abilities and coping mechanisms.
- Highlights what the student is doing that is working.
- Invite them to do more of what is working or try changes.
- “How did you do that?”
- “How have you managed to prevent things from becoming worse?”



# Strength Based Dialogue

**Teacher:** I think turning in your homework is a great way to bring your grades up. I bet we can find a way to use this strategy everyday! What do you think we could do to make sure your homework gets in your backpack every day?

**Student:** Maybe some kind of a reminder. Like a note.

**Teacher:** You mean like a sticky note on your homework or a reminder at the top?

**Student:** Yeah like a sticky note. If there was a sticky note at the top, I wouldn't forget that it belongs in my backpack.

**Teacher:** Hey, I bet that would work. That sounds like a great strategy to me. How can I help you with that?

**Student:** Um, maybe you could put a sticky note on my homework and I could write on it.

**Teacher:** Good idea, I could definitely help you with that.



# Miracle Question

- Helps to generate the first small steps of 'solution thinking' by helping students describe small, realistic doable steps they can take as soon as the next day.
- "If you woke up tomorrow and discovered that a miracle had occurred overnight, what would be different as you went through your day that would tell you things were better for you?"
- "How could you begin achieving that on a very small scale, on your own, just for the next week?"

# Miracle Question Dialogue

**Parent:** What do you think it would be like if you could wake up tomorrow and you never had to worry about turning in your homework because somehow it always got turned in?

**Student:** That would be awesome!

**Parent:** What would be so awesome about it?

**Student:** Well, I'd never get in trouble for not turning it in and you would be happy because I'd get good grades.

# Scaling

- Useful in helping students to assess their own situations, track their progress, or evaluate how others might rate them on a scale of 1 to 10.
- “On a scale of 1=the problem is in control, to 10=you are in control of the problem; where are you at today?”
- “Where would you like to be next time and what will you need to do to get there?”

# Scaling Dialogue

**Parent:** Right now, on a scale from 1 to 10, how good are you at turning in your homework? 1 being “never turning it in” and 10 being “always turning it in.”

**Student:** Uh, well, like a 3 I guess. I sometimes remember, but not much lately.

**Parent:** Ok, let’s try to bring that up a few points by using our new strategy. What goal would you like to have by next month?

**Student:** If I went up a few points that would be like a 5. I’d like to be a 5.

**Parent:** Yeah, I think that’s a good goal. Let’s try to use your great sticky note strategy to help you get to a 5.

**Student:** Ok, cool.

# Present & future-focused vs. Past-oriented

- Questions are based on the future or present.
- Reflects the basic belief that problems are best solved by focusing on what is already working rather than on the past and the origin of the problem.
- “What will you be doing in the next week that would indicate to you that you are continuing to make progress.”

# Primary Assumptions of SF

- Always let the student **define the goal**.
- Cooperation with the **student's worldview**, and resistance will lessen.
- **Go slowly and focus on strengths and abilities** in other situations.
- Change the time and place, and you change the context for interactions.
- Notice how and why behaviors happen, and ask **"how did you do that?"**
- Realize that change is constant.

# More SF thoughts

## People:

- respond better when they **make positive changes** in their behavior. Focus on what and when not why.
- respond better to a **present and future** orientation. **Future orientation** to time (what WILL happen). People are too stuck in past unresolved conflicts and failures. A focus on **future possibilities** and solutions enhances changes.
- **have the ability** to work through their own problems and improving their lives.
- will work at change only if they need to...we tend to work at the **goals of our own choosing**.

**Change is inevitable.** Small changes cause bigger changes. A small change may be all that is necessary for a breakthrough.

It is often more productive to **increase existing successes** than to eliminate problems.



# Building resilience

- 1. Remember, **bad feelings: don't last**; have a **purpose**; and **galvanise** us to do things differently.
- 2. Try to **normalise** young people's set-backs. Help them to see they are not abnormal in having difficulties in life.
- 3. Help them to see that **problems can be solved**.
- 4. Encourage young people to keep things in **perspective** – the problem is usually confined to only one part of their lives.
- 5. Remember the value of **humour** – laughing can be a great release (but only if it is well-intentioned).

# Building resilience

- 6. Encourage young people to accept **responsibility** for their actions.
- 7. When **reading stories**, or **discussing events**, point out how people manage to overcome difficulties.
- 8. Remember that learning is often frustrating. Encourage young people to **persist** and believe they can get there.
- 9. Provide **support**. Help them to see there are people who care about them and can give them help and advice when needed.
- 10. Create a **positive environment**, that emphasises the importance of relationships and a sense of purpose: there is more to life than the way they feel.



How can you support at home?

ON A SCALE OF ONE TO TEN...



Low levels of  
effort

Average effort

High levels of  
effort



- Independent learning approaches aim to help pupils think about their own learning more explicitly, often by teaching them specific strategies for planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning. Interventions are usually designed to give pupils a variety of strategies to choose from and the skills to select the most suitable strategy for a given learning task.
- The evidence shows that the impact of self-regulation, on average, is 'seven months' additional progress.

Independent Learning	Typical activities
<p><b>Type 1</b></p> <p><b>Basic Learning and organising</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading through class notes</li> <li>• Using course textbooks, watching GSCE POD</li> <li>• Mind maps/diagrams</li> <li>• Making/re-making class notes</li> <li>• Highlighting/Colour coding</li> <li>• Flashcards</li> <li>• Using a revision wall to display learning</li> </ul>
<p><b>Type 2</b></p> <p><b>Practice and reflection</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing exam answers under timed conditions</li> <li>• Reading and analysing model answers</li> <li>• Using past exam questions and planning answers</li> </ul>
<p><b>Type 3</b></p> <p><b>Deeper learning and reflection</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studying mark schemes or examiner's reports</li> <li>• Working with other students in groups/pairs</li> <li>• Comparing model answers against your own work</li> <li>• Creating your own exam questions</li> <li>• Handing in extra exam work for marking</li> <li>• One to one discussion with teachers</li> </ul>



# How to use the revision guide

- Go through the revision guide page by page and highlight how well they think they are doing. They could use a colour coded system :

Red - I don't understand any of this

Orange – I need to do some work on this.

Green – I'm strong on this.



- They need to start with the things they DO NOT know first.



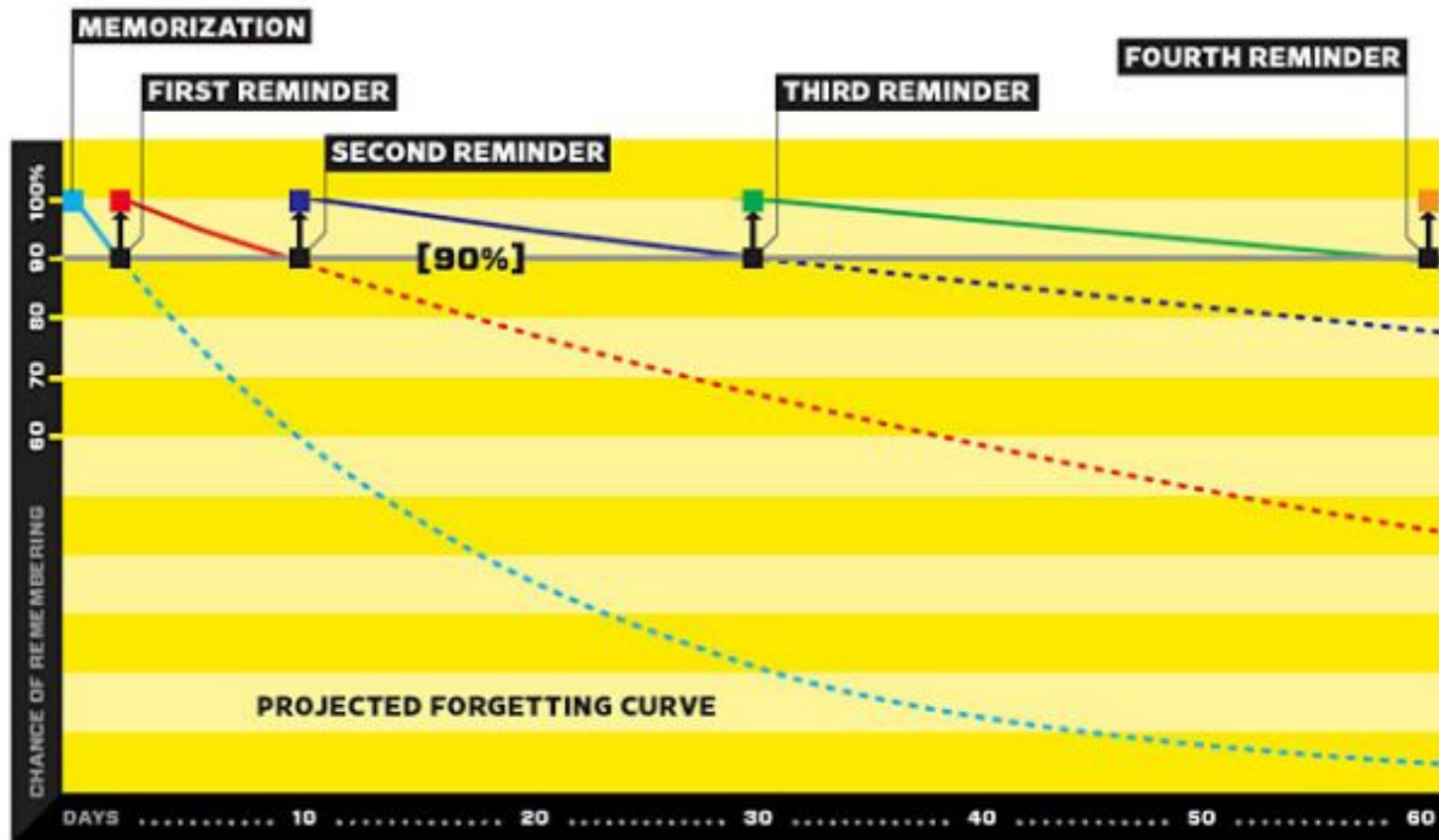


# Make a revision timetable

- Make revision timetables for short chunks of time, such as until half term and then Christmas, focussed around test dates.
- Students will always know in advance when they have a test
- Plan to do 2 topics per evening after school, but broken into short chunks of 20-30 mins. On weekends plan to do a minimum of three or four topics, again broken into short chunks of 20-30 mins.
- Students should also make time to attend clubs or have rest time to allow their brains to take a rest and recharge



# Projected forgetting curve



# FIXED MINDSET

# MINDSET CHARACTERISTICS

# GROWTH MINDSET

SET - YOU HAVE WHAT  
YOU HAVE

**SKILLS+INTELLIGENCE**

CAN BE GROWN AND  
DEVELOPED

HOW THEY LOOK  
PERFORMANCE FOCUS

**MAIN CONCERN**

LEARNING / GETTING BETTER  
PROCESS FOCUS

SOMETHING YOU DO  
WHEN YOU'RE NOT GOOD

**EFFORT**

AN IMPORTANT PART OF  
LEARNING

GIVE UP / CHECK OUT

**CHALLENGES**

PERSEVERE / WORK THROUGH  
IT - SHOW MORE GRIT

TAKE IT PERSONAL  
GET DEFENSIVE

**FEEDBACK**

LIKE IT / USE IT TO LEARN

HATE THEM / TRY  
TO AVOID MAKING THEM

**MISTAKES**

TREAT THEM AS A LEARNING  
OPPORTUNITY

# Any Questions?



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