

solution focused art therapy lom® and solution focused brief therapy sfbt

in the early eighties Bettina Egger and Jörg Merz in Zurich, Switzerland started to develop the solution focused art therapy lom® and at about the same time Steve de Shazer and Insoo Kim Berg in Milwaukee, USA started to develop the therapy SFBT.

Both brief therapies developed further from the client-centered, humanistic approach of Carl Rogers 1902-1987. non-directive therapy, trusting as a therapist that the client carries an original motivation within him to develop and self-actualize as a human being on the basis of experience.

in both methods:

- the focus is not on the problems but on the solutions is future oriented.
- the client's point of view is essential, the therapist stays neutral.
- every human being has all the skills and resources to solve their problems.
- right at the beginning the client defines the goal of the treatment
- clear, simple questions are used to find out what is already working successfully
- the therapist uses scaling questions to involve the client in the process
- it is possible to review the success of the process together.

both approaches seem simple, but they require a well-trained, experienced therapist, who works precisely and is attentive to every second of the treatment time, actively listens and accompanies, because he is an expert in the use of the tool of the method and is responsible for the client's active participation and cooperation in the process at all times.

60% of the brain activity happens in images, these influence our feelings, our actions and our view of things and of ourselves.

the clear questions of the sfbt method, which are asked by the therapist, inspire the client to create new images that guide him to his desired goal. the power that arises also changes the client's self-perception. he sees himself in a new way and becomes aware of his potential to successfully deal with difficulties in everyday life. with the miracle question, the client is seduced to imagine his own solutions in detail. a positive feeling arises, what it feels like to apply already existing qualities in everyday life.

in the art-therapeutic method solutions focused art therapy lom® the paintings also emerge through evaluation and questioning during the conversation, but the focus is painting these pictures. Bettina Egger and Jörg Merz have discovered which paintings work and which ones don't and have tested this again and again, developed it further and proven the success of therapy lom® in a detailed, comprehensive research paper.

our brain responds to simple clear pictures. often lom® works with metaphors. these are asked precisely and then painted with the untrained hand without a brush. in trauma work the effectively stored, seen picture is painted and overpainted until the saving image appears which offers desired relief. the human brain does not distinguish between the painted and the effectively seen picture. after the painting is

completed, the client assesses this by means of scaling. the paintings are neither analyzed nor interpreted, nor are the colors assigned to any specific meaning. a successful painting process is a sensual experience and looking at difficult things can be a positive experience.

both approaches are fascinating and extremely efficient. it might be quite worth trying to combine them. as an art therapist, i would probably miss the scent, the power of the paintings and the precious experience of the client during the painting process. it is a very special, sometimes even a magic moment when a client stands in front of his finished painting and simply marvels.

sfat lom® by Bettina Egger and Jörg Merz has been worked with in switzerland for a long time in many psychiatric clinics and practices. their book about lom® is available in german. **lösungsorientierte maltherapie** / hans huber verlag