HYPNOTHERAPY TODAY

ASSOCIATION FOR SOLUTION FOCUSED HYPNOTHERAPY

Edition 19, Summer 2016

Home or Practice:

Which suits you best to see clients?

Including:

AGM Report

Internet Marketing: Boost Your Business

Supervisors' Directory

Stomach & The Mind Working Together

Wordsearch

AfSFH[§]

Association for SOLUTION FOCUSED HYPNOTHERAPY

SUPERVISORS' DIRECTORY

ST: Supervision type (e.g. Skype, One to One, Group supervision).



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Welcome!

Dozens of newly qualified supervisors (including myself) are now able to run regular supervision sessions with practitioners across the country.

It is a fantastic start to the year as it means all of the hard work put into attaining the qualification will allow AfSFH to have a greater number of supervisors around the UK - providing larger choice for yourself and future members of the Association.

It means the magazine should be able to provide you with a new Supervisors' Directory in the Autumn edition. So, if you've just qualified and want to be listed in it, make sure you contact the Editor, Duncan Little, by the start of August.

The Annual General Meeting also proved to be a positive focal point when it was held at the start of March. I was amazed at the number of people in The Clifton Practice that day!

It was great to see so many familiar faces – both new and old. We welcomed Lara Lewis onto the Executive Committee as Head of External Marketing. Her thoughts on this new role are included in this magazine.

I was also delighted to read a fantastic article from AfSFH supervisor Andrew Workman on the pros and cons of working at home or from a practice. Having done both, I can really relate to what he says (and keeping your house spotless for clients, when you have small children, is never easy)!

This year is shaping up to being a brilliant time for the Association with potentially plenty for you to get involved in, from engaging with Lara's "championing" campaign of what we do through to writing articles for Hypnotherapy Today, which I hope you enjoy as it is, as always, a great read!



CEO AfSFH:
David Mclean

Thank you to all contributors and people who have helped make this publication possible. The Journal for Solution Focused Hypnotherapy was established in 2010 to represent the practice of SFH as a distinct profession in its own right. Membership is open to those practitioners who have the appropriate qualifications and experience within the field.

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Hypnotherapy Today has tried to ensure that the contents of this magazine are accurate. AfSFH takes no responsibility for the content of articles or advertisements reproduced and articles / advertisements submitted should not be taken as an endorsement of any kind. The Editor reserves the right to edit submitted articles. If you are looking to find a Solution Focused Hypnotherapy practitioner, then ensure they are qualified and fully insured (the AfSFH website provides full member details). Seek qualified medical / expert advice when it is appropriate to do so.

The Editor writes....



I recently watched the film, The Walk, in 3D, on a very, very big screen. It tells the true story of young French daredevil, Philippe Petit (played brilliantly by Joseph Gordon-Levitt), who dreams of walking between the Twin Towers a year after their official opening in 1973.

It's an incredible film and I must admit to a tad of vertigo as Petit finally embarks on his famous (and highly illegal) walk between the North and South Towers. It was, for obvious reasons, a film marked with tremendous nostalgia and pathos.

What struck me the most was Petit's calmness and his ability to be able to focus - when half the audience was gripped by vertigo! The actual filming was undertaken at height with a lot of green screen technology used to replicate 1970s' New York. So, even actor Gordon-Levitt's stress bucket levels must have been low and his determination to perform, just like Petit, was noticeably high.

With the left prefrontal cortex fully in control, Petit was arguably always destined to succeed in his quest. He even lies down on the wire during one of his eight crossings - which spanned an incredible 200 feet. I am not suggesting we all become high wire walkers or follow illegal dreams as Petit did (as I'm sure our own primitive brains would rightly remind us of the dangers involved).

That said, his story is a great metaphor for what can be achieved when we are in a calm, positive focused state and when we relax into our role. Your dream may be to increase sales or the number of clients you are seeing each week. So, what small step can you take to help achieve that dream, I wonder?

Think of Petit, who had to smuggle equipment into both of the Twin Towers and then secretly rig it all overnight, at a height of 1300 feet, prior to his 45 minutes of fame on a wire. He shows us that no matter what the dream is, to paraphrase one of our scripts from our training days, providing it is within the realms of possibility then it is absolutely achievable.

This edition contains some pretty inspiring articles which highlight how you can turn your dreams into reality. Have you ever thought about working from home or from an established practice? If so, Andrew Workman explores how to make it work for you.

How about boosting your on-line presence? Top tips from our resident computer expert, Mark Field, can help to steer you in the right direction.

And finally, we have an even bigger word search puzzle for you to try to fathom! No one won our previous competition so here is your chance to win the rollover prize of £30 of CPHT youchers.

Our dreams can be small. They can be large. The important part is to work in a solution focused fashion to turn those dreams into reality. Petit planned carefully for six years to achieve his goal. His achievement reminds us all of how one single person can make a huge difference. He was only 24 when he finally exited the 110th floor of the WTC to make history. His walk became front page news around the world.

So, if you have a good head for heights, and enjoy watching films then The Walk is certainly the one I'd recommend. Our work may not be quite on the same grand scale as Petit's ambition - but helping someone to achieve their own dreams can make the world of difference for them.

Duncan Little

Editor - Hypnotherapy Today



Association for SOLUTION FOCUSED HYPNOTHERAPY

The Association for Solution Focused Hypnotherapy (AfSFH) ensures that it retains the highest level of professional standards from its members by adherence to its strict ethical code and structure.

The AfSFH also aims to raise the profile of the beneficial nature of Solution Focused Hypnotherapy to a wider audience, including the general public and businesses.

The AfSFH is proud to adhere to the top official standards both as a working board member of UKCHO (United Kingdom Confederation of Hypnotherapy Organisations) and also as a Verifying Organisation for the CNHC (Complimentary Natural Healthcare Council).

The CNHC is the UK voluntary regulator for complementary healthcare practitioners that was set up with government support to protect the public by providing a UK voluntary register of complementary therapists.

Membership success, technological changes and marketing 'champions'

So, quickly cutting to the chase and providing you with some eye grabbing detail about the fifth Annual General Meeting at The Clifton Practice, Bristol.

First up, the number of full members of the Association continues to grow – from 149 in February 2014 through to 269 earlier this year.

It means the total number of members, including students, has swelled the ranks of AfSFH from 234 through to a contingent strength of 332.

Social media has continued to be successful with the Association gaining 475 followers on Twitter and clocking up nearly 400 "likes" on its public AfSFH page.

The closed AfSFH page on Facebook has 240 members who are able to share, and discuss, non-supervision related topics in an open and solution focused fashion.

With the headline catching details out of the way then we can tuck into the actual meat of the meeting itself: Lara Lewis was warmly welcomed onto the Executive Committee as Head of External Marketing. She outlines her role, and her goals, in this edition of HT. In short, she aims to promote the Association on a day to day basis and also at events with the help of a network of "champions" who can sing the praises of AfSFH, aided by the provision of leaflets and banners.

Members will also be encouraged in the growth of their own businesses through AfSFH alongside the creation of annual awards which would provide potentially good PR opportunities for winning members!

Hypnotherapy Today was also discussed and it was decided it will continue in its current "hard copy" format but if you would prefer to access it digitally then you can simply "opt out" of receiving a copy in the post.

To do so, simply e-mail us (with your name and address) at: journal@afsfh.com

Technology has come along in leaps and bounds at AfSFH over the past year or so as the provision of 'Wild Apricot' has proved.

It effectively is now the backbone for the day to day running of the organisation and the AGM heard how it has made things more efficient – for both the management team and also members. The meeting finished with the annual voting of the Executive Committee and also AfSFH's Trustees.

All positions were carried with no objections - with an incredible one in five members getting involved in the process by submitting their votes by post! Last year's Annual Report and Accounts (for the financial period ending 2015) were also carried by an unanimous vote in favour.

It was certainly a packed agenda with attendees travelling to Bristol from as far away as Cornwall. CEO David Mclean closed the meeting by looking to AfSFH's future as it continues to grow and flourish in its strength.



Hello All. I'm Lara Lewis...

...and I'm very excited to be the new Head of Marketing. A very grand title that fills me with just a small amount of trepidation, but which I have been assured sounds far grander than it actually is.

So how am I qualified to fill this role? Before I became a hypnotherapist, my husband and I ran a video marketing company together for several years, and it is the hard won knowledge that I gained in that role that I hope to bring to this one.

The main aims of this role as I see it are:

To increase public awareness of the benefits of clinical hypnotherapy to enable them to make informed decisions as to whether or not it might be a suitable treatment option to help them resolve the issues that they are facing.

To raise awareness of Solution Focused Hypnotherapy and its specific benefits together with the advantages that it offers in comparison to other types of hypnotherapy.

To create an effective marketing tool for the AfSFH membership by providing information and resources for them to utilise.

I have a few ideas that I would like to implement in the coming months, with the largest being the creation of a network of AfSFH Champions. In other words, Solution Focused Hypnotherapy Practitioners who are keen to spread the word and raise awareness about the benefits of what we do.

These champions would be provided with tools and resources to allow them to visit businesses, attend events and speak publicly about the Association and its members.

We would initially seek to appoint one Champion in each of a number of key regions throughout the United Kingdom, and will then increase the numbers as time goes on.

The second project I would like to implement is the introduction of the AfSFH Annual Awards. As Solution Focused Hypnotherapy Practitioners you all do remarkable work. Not only in helping clients move forwards with their lives, but also by:

Contributing to the growing body of evidence that supports the efficacy of what we do.

Creating the resources and also to provide education and support to fellow Solution Focused hypnotherapy practitioners.

Working to raise awareness of mental health by giving talks, writing articles and also holding workshops (among other activities).

These achievements deserve to be recognised, with the added benefit that they can help to raise the profile for both the Association, and individual therapists, at the same time.

Having only been in the role a short time these ideas are embryonic. However I hope they have provided you with food for thought. If you have any questions, ideas or feedback or you would be interested in becoming a Champion, please send me an email at lara@laralewis.co.uk



The creation of a network of AfSFH Champions. In other words, Solution Focused **Hypnotherapy** Practitioners who are keen to spread the word and raise awareness about the benefits of what we do.





AfSFH Hypnotherapy practitioner and supervisor, Andrew Workman, explores options for where best to site your practice: at home or in the clinic?

As a therapist of any discipline, you may at some point find yourself considering whether to join a clinic or practice from which to operate. But what should you do? What should you consider? Is it worth doing so? Hopefully I will be able to give you some guidance towards answering some of those questions.

Before we go any further, I should acknowledge that I run a practice which provides space for therapists to work from. It is for that reason that you would be forgiven for thinking that I may try to offer a bias towards you joining a clinic or centre.

I would ask you to recognise, as I do, that a clinic with nothing but hypnotherapy on offer would be somewhat limited in its effectiveness (and many of you would have to commute a considerable distance to work within our building, so this is not some type of advertisement for our practice). It is my hope that you trust me to offer a balanced view of the

pros and cons for your decision making.

Most of us train as therapists in order to increase our income, develop our skills portfolio or change our career path entirely. For many of us, the thought of being able to work from home is a very positive thing, particularly as it reduces our commute and operating overheads considerably.

It's convenient and time-saving as well as having that comforting influence of you practising in familiar territory. But is working from home all that it initially seems?

I qualified at CPHT in 2008, with firm plans to work from home, at the time it seemed sensible to

I was still employed as a Police Inspector, working shifts around the clock and the convenience of rolling out of bed, taking a shower and seeing my first client within 30 minutes was a blessing. I was also very lucky that on graduating, I was kindly offered a room at The Clifton Practice – four hours every Saturday afternoon between 3 and 7pm.

With careful consideration I gratefully accepted the offer and so enjoyed the experience of working both from home and at a clinic. I soon found that both had their benefits and setbacks, which helped me to make the decisions that I have taken over my years in practice.

Expense. OK, let's not mess about. Let's get straight down to the bones of what most of us have to consider – money! Why on earth would you want to pay to work at a clinic when you can work at home for free?

I understand that point of view, of course I do, but if you stop and think about it properly, it may start to look a little different to you. Yes of course you can operate at home "free of charge," but is it really free?

Heating, lighting and water (if metered) are likely to be used more if you are using your home as a workplace. It may seem insignificant to you at first, but having visitors to you home as clients does put a considerable pressure on you to ensure that their visit is comfortable and pleasant.

You may want to heat the room or house more than usual, the vacuum may be used more often, that ambient lighting is on most of the day and the toilet is flushed far more often than when it's just you and the family there.

There is also of course, the consideration of Council Tax. If you work from home, you should consider whether or not your Council Tax may be affected as you may be required to pay Business Rates. And, of course, if it's something you should declare then make sure you do! Take professional advice on it if you feel you need to do so.

Let me share a warning story of one of my neighbours who works from home. Following a minor neighbourly dispute she was visited by two smartly dressed council officials who had reason to believe she was conducting a business from her premises and later presented her with not only a Business Rate demand, but also a fine of back tax for non-disclosure. In short, if you work from home, ensure everything is always above board and hunky dory.

On the other hand, if you work from a practice, the overheads are shared. In most cases your hourly rate will include a tiny proportion of the heating, power and water expenses as well as the business rates. Everyone is contributing and sharing the load. Yes, business costs for all services are slightly higher than domestic, but when shared, they become easily affordable.

The responsibility of ensuring that the bills are met, falls squarely in the lap of the Practice Directors (PDs), so you can happily use the services at their premises, knowing that it is included in your rental fees (if they are - more later) and won't cost you more.

The subject of Council Tax doesn't arise as the business will have to be registered and the taxes being paid, again as a small portion of your rent. It can be nice to just walk in, work and walk out without the concerns of who knows what you are doing, where you're doing it and how much it's costing, because everything is above board and sorted.

Another thing that a clinic or practice can offer is the peace of mind regarding insurance and public liability. We all know that it would be ridiculous and unethical for any of us to practice without insurance, but have you checked your cover? If you are working from home, it may cover you for malpractice, but does it cover personal injury or accident?

If a client took a fall at your home, would you be covered, or could you be at threat of a huge damages claim against you? Maybe even more importantly, does your home insurance, or even the conditions of your mortgage, permit you to conduct a business from your premises?

There is a chance that both have clauses to prevent you from doing so, which could prove to be very problematic. Remember my neighbour as if you don't disclose it, it could be someone else who mentions it to your provider. With a practice, the insurance held by the PDs will invariably cover the premises and those working within it, with the nature of the business being permitted by the mortgage company, landlord or their agent.

Of course, the use of the premises will also have been authorised by the council (in our case following an expensive change of use planning application), but it is unlikely that many therapists even think of this requirement, or if they have, they may consider it to be unnecessary.

If you practice more than one therapy, you may not be aware that some disciplines need licences to conduct their business. For example, any form of acupuncture requires skin piercing licences (exactly the same as a tattoo artist) – one for the practice as an authorised premises and one for each individual practitioner.

The licences are one off fees of £80 - £100 each and require a visit from the Local Authority's Health and Safety Officer to ensure that the conditions of the licence are met. These rules apply, even if you work from home, so working at a practice might cut your set up costs if the premises are already licenced or willing to meet you half way with the cost. Clearly your practitioner licence is down to you in either case.

Obviously, there are benefits to be gained from working from home. The lack of a commute or indeed any form of travel time or expense is clearly an obvious one, but that may not be all it seems. Speaking personally, I enjoyed working from home, but found that on the days I worked at The Clifton Practice, my journey there gave me time to get into the right mindset and the journey home helped me to return to my "family mode".

I know that as a Police Officer, I enjoyed my cycling commute to and from work, not just because I became fitter, but far more importantly, it gave me a chance to clear my head of the day's pressures before I got home. Having worked at home as a therapist for over seven years, I noticed that I also "lived at work".

Whilst this may suit some, I can genuinely say that having the opportunity now, to leave work at work when I go home, gives me that vital opportunity to enjoy quality time with my family, literally away from it all. We are constantly telling our clients that a life / work balance is essential, but it can be difficult for us to practice what we preach if our own home / work boundaries are blurred.

Of course blurred boundaries can also affect the other occupants of your home (if you have any). I know that one of my main drives to open a practice of my own was my desire to reduce the intrusion into our family space. I recognised, as did my wife and sons, that every client through the door was keeping the roof over our heads, putting food on the table and, thankfully, allowing us a few luxuries, but

having "strangers" walk through our home, six days a week, at all times was not always easy. We were lucky enough to have a downstairs cloakroom (toilet), which could be used by clients, if required, but of course, if you don't have that option, the intrusion into your personal space is even deeper.

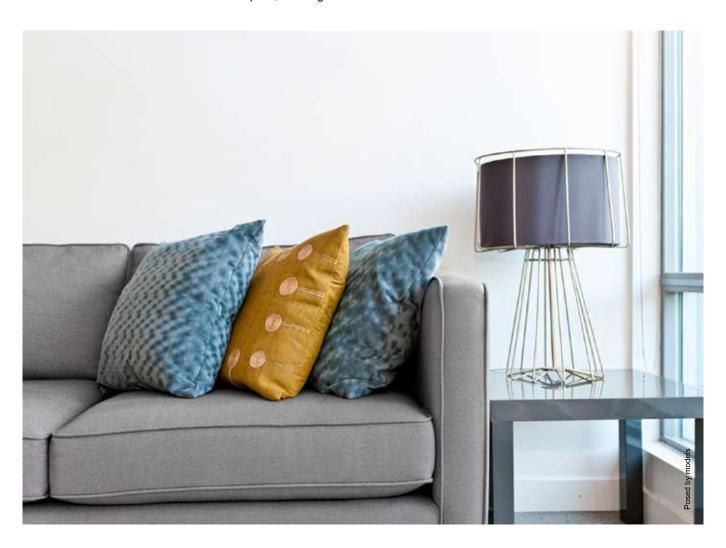
In most homes I know of, downstairs is pretty much open to anyone and everyone, whilst the first floor and beyond seems to be reserved for family and closest friends.

The intrusion into that "inner sanctum" and even the bathroom itself can be felt strongly by some without us knowing it. Our house is a home and, like most, clean and tidy, but it is lived in and the need to keep everything looking "professional" at all times can be exhausting – particularly for the family of the therapist. Our home is still clean and tidy, but at least our sons can now run around getting ready for a night out, without worrying about noise or the shocked reaction of a client as they rush downstairs to iron a shirt, dressed only in their boxers!

I know that one of the things my ever patient wife Karen felt awkward about was clients who insisted on arriving early for appointments. No matter how many times they were asked to be "punctual but not early", some continued to arrive much earlier than required – the record being one hour and five minutes early! Again we were lucky to have a separate dining room where they could sit, but as this was part of the main thoroughfare through the house, everyone had to be on best behaviour as they went about their own home.

Karen, being polite, would find it difficult to just sit them down and leave them, so as I showed my previous client to the door, I would often meet her gaze which silently said "Hurry up, I'm running out of things to say here". At practices like The Clifton Practice and my own, the provision of a Waiting Room is priceless.

Clients can arrive when they wish, family in tow if need be, and wait for as long as required. There is no pressure to finish early with one person because you know the next is waiting and the opportunity for clients to read about the other therapists and events at the practice is perfect for client acquisition. Many practices, including mine, also have an area where products can be displayed, allowing for CDs and the like to be sold by therapists, creating another income stream.



That leads us nicely into that other incredibly important subject – advertising! We all know that it's pointless being a therapist without clients and one look at the AfSFH Facebook page will tell you that where, what and how to advertise is the main subject of the majority of posts. As an individual it can be expensive and time consuming as well as incredibly frustrating. In my experience, it is so much easier and cheaper as part of a practice.

For instance, a small advertisement (one sixteenth of a page) in the classified section of our local magazine costs around £20, whereas our much more striking and detailed half-page, full colour advert for our practice shared among all of us costs £18 each. We know from experience that the small classified ad gets next to no response, but the large joint one has increased our business and footfall considerably. In addition to that, we co-operate and share costs on exhibitions and events, making our individual overheads for fairs and shows almost negligible.

Working at a practice can also help you to gain clients in a number of other ways. Cross referrals between therapists of different disciplines is common, both by recommendation and by clients reading the leaflets and posters of colleagues whilst waiting for their appointment, we also have a number of people just wander in from the High Street to see "what's on offer," something that never happened at home, and would have been quite disconcerting if it had. These, very welcome, chance visits are converted into appointments in the majority of cases, justifying the cost of good commercial signage and an open door.

Another benefit that can be gleaned from being part of a practice, slightly easier than by a home based therapist (largely because it doesn't occur to them) is membership of local business groups such as a Chamber of Commerce. They can be a great source of information as well as exposure and networking opportunities. As a practice we were invited to join. As an individual? They had never heard of me and it had never occurred to me that they might.

Apart from the financial considerations (which are clearly important), there are also welfare issues you might like to consider. Working from home, as your own boss and to your own timetable is great - it's rewarding, satisfying and convenient. I promised an unbiased view and I can absolutely confirm, after 32 years of being under the direction of others, suddenly not having to work when and where someone else demanded was an absolute joy!

The independence was uplifting. Having said that (and not detracting from it), the isolation took a little while longer to set in. Working at home, on your own, can be a little lonely. But you see different people all day, every day! Yes, you do, but treating clients is NOT the same as being WITH people. When you've had a difficult or tiring session, when you need some confirmation everything's okay, when you would just like to talk to anyone about anything other than their dire mood, it can feel a little empty to be drinking that well-earned cuppa on your own.

I tried talking to the cat, but confidentiality got in the way of me sharing everything and her suggestion of a replenished bowl of "Chicken Felix" as the panacea for all ills doesn't suit everyone as much as she thinks. Seriously though, the opportunity to work as part of a friendly, supportive team, with mixed skills and experience can make life interesting, as well as offering some "brain candy" in the shape of positive interaction. Those around you can offer support, advice, confirmation (and warnings) and in some cases supervision as well as a (sometimes well needed) social outlet that you don't necessarily enjoy when working at home.

Having other people around can also be beneficial to you as an individual, in the form of security. We have people come to us as clients, many of which are complete strangers to us. In the vast majority of cases, we are perfectly safe and in no danger of injury or loss, but I have had a couple of clients who have caused concern. I am a tall,

'Working from home, as your own boss and to your own timetable is great - it's rewarding, satisfying and convenient'



heavy built and physically fit man (no inflated ego intended) but even with my previous police and military experience to fall back on, I have been wary of at least two clients who were potential problems.

Both were at a time when I was working at home, on my own, with no immediate support available and might have been interesting to say the least, if things had not gone as well as they did. At a practice or clinic, you can usually count on someone else being there or for any client to assume that there is. I know someone at one practice used to put the lights on in empty rooms to create the illusion that she was not there alone.

If a client came to see her, she would knock on the door of an empty room, pop her head in and ask 'John' (the vacant couch) "What time are you leaving today as I have a client with me now?" Having received no reply, she would say "Oh, that's OK, you'll still be here when I go, I'll leave you to lock up then".

It gave the illusion of someone being on the premises and that they would be throughout the appointment. It also gave her some confidence throughout the session. You could of course do this at home, but it may seem a little less convincing. Having said that, the times you are likely to be alone at a successful and busy practice are few and far between, affording you the security of numbers should anything go wrong.

One of the things I found to be a double edged sword about working from home is the convenience. What? I hear you cry and I understand that, but let me explain. It's very convenient to work from home with no commute or rent overheads, but it's also convenient to do that washing up, put the washing machine on, just pop the duster around, finish that piece of craft or art that you started, have a cup of coffee (no longer 30 minutes after the last one), catch up with that TV serial you missed last week..... you get the picture. Most of us do not just work within our practice of hypnotherapy for the sixty minutes of the consultation. We do research, we study further, we write, we prepare presentations, we organise events. In fact we do a myriad of different things to enhance our businesses - if we don't get distracted!

I know my work and certainly my concentration on it improved dramatically when I "went to work" as opposed to "settling down to do it - in a minute". Some (no most) will have an ability to focus that is so much better than mine, but I know that my productivity and the quality of my work improved noticeably when I wasn't constantly distracted by the demands and attractions of home life and the procrastination it can encourage. It may cost money to rent a room, but the way in which I was personally able to concentrate on my work was worth every penny when I looked at how much it enhanced my productivity and earning potential.

One of the things that can affect your earning potential and client acquisition is the kudos gained from working at an establishment. Now you and I both know that the place in which you practice, whether home or at a clinic, is no reflection or

measure of your skills, knowledge or ability - but in my experience, that is not the way the public see it. In the seven years I practiced with a foot in both camps – home and at The Clifton Practice – I was amazed at the countless times people said "Oh Wow! You work at a clinic!" I know that I did nothing differently within my sessions wherever I held them, but for many people the fact that I worked within a practice or clinic seemed to be some form of step up in my professional image.

Whether they felt I would have to have some higher qualification to work there or that it was some kind of endorsement for my skills or abilities I don't know, but it never failed to surprise me how many people would travel further to come to the clinic rather than to my home, which they had never visited to even try.

A few identified that they themselves felt more comfortable if they didn't intrude into my home. The other consideration of course is that many people will search the internet for hypnotherapists and wrongly perceive that a "clinical" hypnotherapist who actually works at a clinic, seems to be fitting the bill better than someone who works from home. I know that I had to try not to be offended when a good number of clients came to my home and seemed genuinely surprised at the number of other clients I saw during the week.

On countless occasions I would hear "Oh I didn't realise it was your proper job, I thought it was just a paying hobby". I have never heard the same said by those who attended the clinics I have worked from. I would like to repeat that I recognise that your place of work should not reflect on your professional image, but the sad truth is that many people don't think that way and it's them we need to convince. So, if you do consider working within a clinic or practice near you, what should you consider? Well, apart from considering the pros and cons outlined above, the following may help you:

What are the room costs? These can vary massively so be careful. I know that there are some clinics out there who charge 60% of the therapist's earnings. Some of them charge only for the hours which the therapist actually works, but some charge the percentage for the hours worked and a lower fixed fee for the time when you have no clients. Some, like us, charge a fixed fee per hour, regardless of whether the therapist has clients or not, but the charges should be fair (a word which is open to personal interpretation). Sometimes the price can vary, depending on how many hours you book. We, for example, offer lower rates for every block of hours you want and I know that many others do the same.

Adhoc Hours or Fixed Times? To many the appeal of working as and when you wish is attractive, but fixed hours have their advantages too. Many practices will allow adhoc hours but may charge a little more for them as the income into the practice is less assured. Fixed hours (for example, a four hour block as we offer) allow the rent charges to be lower per session, but they also have benefits to the client, therapist and PD. With fixed hours, the client knows when they can expect to see the therapist, rather than

having to wonder when they will next be available. For the therapist? It is often better to have a set time in your week for when you work and when you don't, particularly if you have other employment, child care or other responsibilities to consider. The other benefit is that you can prevent your work from taking over your whole existence. Clients can be very good at persuading you to work when you really didn't want to. With fixed hours, they can be as persuading (or sometimes bullying) as they wish, but you can use your agreed hours as an excuse to stick to your guns. In the case of the PD, it can make life a good deal easier to recommend or refer clients to you as the calls come in to reception, if they know your regular hours. With adhoc hours it can be awkward (and potentially seen as unprofessional) to say "We've got a hypnotherapist, but I don't know when they're next in, can I call you back?"

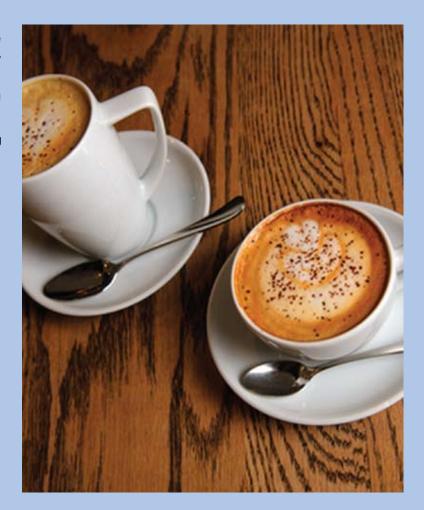
What happens if you pay for the room but don't fill all of the allocated hours with paying clients? This is going to happen at some stage, if not regularly, but it's not the end of the world. When working at a practice, I knew (and still know) that my pricing strategy meant that I had to see one client a day to pay for my room fees, anything else was my profit.

In the early days I saw maybe one or two clients on some of the Saturdays I worked at a practice, on others I would fill my spaces. That meant that I sometimes had two or three hours with no clients, but that didn't mean I couldn't work. I utilised the time and space to concentrate on developing my knowledge, researching particular issues or just soaking up the support and atmosphere available from the other colleagues there. It was worth every penny to be able to apply myself to my work without the distractions of home.

A general word of caution regarding potentially hidden costs. Some room rental may not include everything. Don't be afraid to check. Does it include power, lighting and heat? It should but don't take anything for granted. Are there drink facilities available to you for when you have some down time? Is that included? We provide coffees, teas, milk and biscuits for therapists as part of their rent, but others might charge extra.

If joint advertising is offered, is that part of your fees or do you pay extra. For example, we include social media and website advertising in our fees, but any printed advertising is an optional extra (at an equal share of the cost) for anyone wishing to appear in the ad. Does the rent include Wi-Fi, printing costs and any other necessities? You know the sort of thing you'll need for your personal requirements don't be afraid to ask.

So, the upshot of all this is that it's your choice – it always has been – but if you come to a time in your work where you are considering the question of where you might practice, hopefully this has given you some food for thought. There is no perfect place, each of the options will have its drawbacks and benefits, but in my personal experience, I am very pleased to have the opportunity of sharing my working experience with others in a professional environment. No matter what you decide or where you work, I wish you ever success in your delivery of our fantastic work.







Making the web work for you

Internet expert Mark Field, who regularly talks about on-line marketing on both sides of the Atlantic, examines how to use the World Wide Web to your advantage.

In part one of two exclusive articles written for Hypnotherapy Today, Mark looked at on-site optimisation and how to harness the technical power of the net. This second part continues the same theme with something called "off-site optimisation" which Mark will now explain....

What do we mean by off-site optimisation?

Off-site optimisation is the continued process of promoting your website and individual web pages across the web. The aim is to build brand awareness, improve rankings in search engines and to attract visitors.

On-site optimisation focuses on your website in terms of your text, graphics, layout, navigation and links, so off-site optimisation has a broader focus and will include advertising, reviews, social media, online directories and encouraging third party sites and their visitors to interact with you.

Think of off-site optimisation as being all the activities you do online to promote your website other than your actual website. It is very much an on-going process – not a one-off, "set and forget" approach.

Getting started

Let's take a look at some of the important areas of off-site optimisation. But first it is advised to setup a Gmail account. Why? Because when you sign up for all these social media accounts, directories, and advertising platforms, all the communications can be directed to this one Gmail account without disturbing or 'polluting' your business email account. Your business may be called www.xyzhypotherapy.co.uk

so it makes sense to obtain the Gmail account xyzhypnotherapy@gmail.com or something very similar.

Having a Gmail account opens up a Pandora's Box of online marketing opportunities such as YouTube channel, Google My Business, Google Analytics, Google AdWords, free Cloud storage, Google Docs and Calendars and a whole host of other business building and promotional tools, most of which are free.

Facebook Advertising

If you are familiar with Facebook then you are aware of the great ways in which you can connect with your followers. It's free, easy to use, accessible and can be managed via a desktop computer, tablet or smartphone. Apart from gaining relevant followers and posting fresh and up to date news you can also advertise on Facebook and lead people back to your website.

Make sure you setup a separate business page if you only use Facebook on a personal level. This ensures a professional presence that can be branded with your company logo.

Facebook store a wealth of data on each user and has access to third party lists which it can cross reference to build up a profile on each user. This data can be used for advertisers on Facebook who can target users that are a good fit for your product or service.

You can reach people on Facebook based on location, gender, age, specific interests, keywords and so much more. With Facebook Adverts you can build your ad based on what you want to achieve. You can get people to: invite others to an event, go to your website, shop or take a specific action on your site, install an app and so much more. Each ad type will have a series of screens that will guide you through the process. To access the ads page, on the top right of the Facebook screen there is a drop down menu; you will see 'create ads'.

You can select from a range of criteria and add an appropriate image with a compelling headline and that is it. You can control how much you want to spend for the entire campaign and set a daily budget, all within a start and end date that suits your particular needs. For a better success rate always focus on a specific area of SFH rather than advertising all your services.

The National Centre for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) used Facebook ads to recruit young adult smokers for a cessation trial. Its budget and geographical reach was, obviously, greater than a practitioner might have available but the principle is identical and they reported the campaign to be very successful.

Twitter Advertising

As with Facebook, there are two sides to the coin. The first is having a Twitter account and using it to Tweet relevant and informative information to your followers. The other side is Twitter advertising. Having a Twitter account enables you to advertise to other users on Twitter in a number of clever ways. We can break this down into three objectives: increasing followers, increasing traffic and increasing leads to follow up.

Increasing followers

By increasing the number of relevant followers you have, it is more likely that they will engage with you or visit your website. Twitter calls this a Promoted Account campaign. Your Tweeter account or an individual Tweet can be advertised to an audience of your choice. You control the ad together with the audience (for example: gender, region, age and interests) and Twitter does the rest.

Drive traffic to your website

Twitter allows you to show ads that encourage the user to click on a link that takes the user a specific page of your website. Again you need to target the right audience, set a budget and have a compelling call to action. It is then over to you to ensure the landing page (your website) delivers on the promise of the offer.

Generate and capture leads

With Twitter you can get people to opt in with a simple click. Opting in means you receive a notification and the person's details and email address. Twitter has all the details of the person who clicks your ad and as soon as they click 'signup' or 'subscribe' you are notified.

Let's take an example. You target a region and a specific demographic for phobias. You upload a compelling image; offer a free report on 'Five Ways To Eliminate Phobias' which has all your contact details and an offer for a free initial consultation. The targeted user will see your ad and all they need to do is hit the submit button. You then have the chance follow up and arrange that all important face to face initial meeting.

Video

When mentioning making videos most people freeze and think of large production teams, extensive post editing and a lot of money. Nowadays it is easier than ever to produce professional quality video and to get it published and noticed. You are an expert in your field so what better way to present yourself than via video? One short 3-5 minute video can be published on your own branded YouTube channel (via that all important Gmail account) and then distributed on social media and embedded in your website.

All smart phones and digital cameras have full HD quality video (1080p) and many new models have 4K (typically 3840p to give you a comparison) so focus on the points below to get that professional feel.

You can do your own videos with surprisingly good results if you follow these few simple rules.

- Ensure you have the correct environment. You won't have studio lighting so choosing a well-lit room with natural daylight is adequate. Better still, film outside. This way you won't have any lighting issues.
- Always use a lapel microphone that clips on to your shirt and attaches to the camera. These are around £20 and ensure a professional and clear recording.
- If filming indoors, go for a neutral plain background as this makes you the focus of attention. If out side, make sure there are no background distractions or noises.
- Dress appropriately for your audience. Remember video is the next best thing to meeting someone so you want to give the correct impression.

Top Tips

- Remember we talked about having a Gmail account? Your
 Gmail account allows you to create a free branded YouTube channel where you can display your logo and business details.
- Use YouTube as a free channel for uploading and storing your videos. All the major brands have a YouTube channel for a good reason.
- Repurpose the videos by embedding them in emails, your website, social media and e-newsletters.
- Produce short videos (3-5 mins) on a regular basis, each on a distinct topic and theme.
- Ensure your 'call to action' and your contact details are clearly shown on the last few frames.
- Make a keyword rich title, provide a full description and fill in the key word box in YouTube. These are three of the most important elements used by YouTube to index and rank your videos. If done correctly your videos can appear on the first page of Google videos for the search term a user types in.



Pay per click advertising

We have all seen the ads on Google on the top and bottom section of the page. Until recently you will have seen ads on the right hand side but since the end of February 2016 Google are no longer showing ads on the right hand side. These ads are pay per click ads and the website owner is charged each time a user clicks on the ad that leads to one of your webpages.

With your Gmail email account you can sign up to an AdWords which is the Google platform for pay per click advertising. When you sign up to AdWords you have the option to create campaigns. Each campaign will then contain Ad Groups which are containers for the ads and keywords, which when matched with a user's search query, will show on the search results. You produce the ads and a list of keywords or key phrase that you wish to trigger the showing of your ads.

Although you are bidding for search terms against other users, Google takes into account the relevancy of the ad, your location and the quality score of the landing page. In other words, tightly focused ads that follow the theme of the websites landing pages will get shown. Google also shows ads that are in proximity to the user who is doing the search, so it's great for local businesses.

Let's look at an example. A campaign called Phobias may contain several Ad Groups which, as a SFH practitioner, you may label 'Agoraphobia', 'Arachnophobia' and 'Acrophobia.' Each ad Group will contain three to five advertisements uniquely focused on that particular ad Group phobia.

The ad Group 'Agoraphobia' will contain a list of keywords that you believe people will type in Google. For instance, "help with open spaces phobia," "help with agoraphobia," "hypnotherapy and agoraphobia," or "agoraphobia help." You can see we could build quite a list of keywords that could trigger your ad showing to the user.

You can allocate a daily budget, restrict the ads to only show in certain geographical locations, run the ads on certain days and at certain hours, target only mobile users - the list of possibilities is extensive. Ad-Words is a powerful platform and certainly worth investigating further.

Backlinks

Ever heard of the search engine BackRub? The name BackRub (established in 1996) came about because of the importance of webpages that link to other webpages. The fact that relevant and well respected web pages link to your web page or pages for the desired keyword or key phrased typed in the search engine help establish your page as





being important in the eyes of the search engines and thus you get a higher ranking on the page, all things considered. Some 20 years on it is still one of the most important aspects of getting your site highly ranked on the search engines. Incidentally, Backrub came to be known as Google.

Think of a link on another webpage that links to your webpage as a 'vote'. Notice I use the term 'web page' and not 'website' because the link can point to an internal webpage. The more votes you have the better. Not all 'votes' are equal so going out and getting one hundred sites to link to you will not work very well. So, how do we achieve high quality backlinks? Aim for highly relevant and industry related sites that have a lot of traffic. The fact that a highly credible site links to your site will increase your standing with Google.

Links back to any one of your pages from sites with a .gov, .ac.uk, or .org extension will carry a lot more weight than a link from a totally unrelated site that has few visitors. Think about what associations, organisation and directories you can join and sign up to. Most will have a section where you can link back to your website.

As Google values the backlinks you have it makes sense to join various local and national online directories. You can search for 'free directory' listing and submit your site. It's a long manual process so you could use a service like UBL (Universal Business Listing, https://uk.ubl.org/) which will give you a template to fill out with all your business details, including images, videos and social media links. They will then submit your details for a fee and it is valid for one year. Do ensure you do your due diligence before signing up to any of these services.

Using online PR

A sure way of gaining visitors to your site and growing your SFH business is by PR (Public Relations). The Web has an offline equivalent to the traditional newspaper editorials we are all familiar with and many journalists are looking for great content for their sites. Submit an article to a paid online PR service such as www.uk.PRWeb.com or www. PRLeap.com. PR Web will distribute your article to more than 40,000 organisations, social media sites and online news outlets such as Google, Bing and Yahoo news and has more than 250,000 subscribers and 30,000 bloggers and journalists. It's a sure way to gain traffic.

Reviews

These are very important for SFH practitioners. You will have seen the star rating of products and services showing on the Google results, Facebook and other platforms. These significantly increase the clicks to your website. Google aggregates these reviews from various sites on the web including reviews from 'Google My Business,' 'Yelp' and 'Trust-Pilot' to mention a few and then shows the average rating in stars.

You can also encourage people to post a review on your Facebook page. It is found on the left hand side of your page, under Facebook Ratings & Reviews. All users have to do is go to the Reviews section of your Page, click the grey stars to choose a rating, and then write an optional review. This review can be made public, visible to friends, or visible only to them.

Alternatively make it a habit to request feedback using Google My Business. As you now have a Gmail you are able to add all your business details to 'Google My Business' and once verified you will be able to direct people to your Google page where you they can leave a review.

The internet provides a vast array of opportunities for all businesses to be able to thrive in an online world. Making the most of those golden opportunities which it provides to us all can really make the difference when it comes down to expanding and growing your business.



About Mark Field: Mark runs
DM Informatics Website Design and
Development. He is a certified Google
Partner and Digital Marketing
Consultant with more than 15 years
experience in helping businesses
thrive online, both here in the UK,
Europe and the US.



Our Gut Feelings: Mind And Stomach

AfSFH Head of IT and supervisor Trevor Eddolls takes a look at the link between your GI tract and how you feel

We're all completely familiar with our GastroIntestinal tract (GI tract) or, as we familiarly call it, our gut. We know that it's responsible for digesting and transporting foodstuffs, absorbing nutrients, and getting rid of waste. But what few of us are aware of is how much it affects our brain and how big an impact it has on how we feel.

The current theory is that animals developed brains in order to coordinate their movements - to make them less random. And once they had a brain they started to use it for other things, like thinking and feeling (although they probably didn't evolve in that order).

It's interesting to note that the gut has a huge number of nerves and these nerves are different from other nerves in the body. The Enteric Nervous System (ENS) is one of the main divisions of the nervous system and consists of a mesh-like system of neurons that governs the function of the gastrointestinal system. Some people refer to the gut network of nerves as the 'gut brain'.

With so many nerves, it could be argued the gut must do more than simply digest food. And we find that many of our common phrases and sayings refer to 'gut feelings' or actions.

Signals from the gut go to different parts of the brain, including the insula, the limbic system (including the amygdala and hippocampus), the anterior cingulate, and the prefrontal cortex. A number of studies have been carried out looking at the effects of the gut on the brain.

Because of the large surface area of the gut, it is our largest sensory organ, and information is sent to the brain so it can know about what's going on in this internal environment. In fact, for a baby, most of what it knows about the world comes from its gut - and that affects how it feels. A baby cries if it's hungry or needs its nappy changed. It smiles with the pleasure of a full stomach.

This link between the gut and the brain doesn't disappear as we grow older, and it can still affect our mood and sense of well-being. In fact, a 2013 study found that after four weeks of swallowing certain bacteria, there were unmistakable alterations to areas of the brain associated with pain and emotions of people.

In another experiment, people had small balloons in their intestines inflated. Healthy patients didn't show any unusual brain activity. People with IBS (Irritable Bowel Syndrome) showed activity in the emotional centre of the brain, making them feel uneasy.

IBS sufferers are known to show a higher than average incidence of depression and anxiety. Similarly, people who suffer from Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis also have increased rates of depression and anxiety.

Let's suppose that you're under pressure at work you have to complete some long and complicated task by Friday. You are feeling stressed. Your brain needs more resources (food and oxygen) in order to complete the work, and it gets it by redirecting blood that would have gone to the gut towards the brain.

Messages travel through sympathetic nerve fibres to use less energy in digestion and produce less mucus as well.

If the stress continues, and supplies to the gut stay at the lower level, the consequence can be fatique, loss of appetite, general malaise, and diarrhoea. If the stress continues even longer, the health of the gut will decrease, resulting in a weaker gut wall.

As a result of this, immune cells in the gut (and there are more here than anywhere else in the body) become more sensitive – and so you become more sensitive to what you eat. This suggests that many food allergies are a consequence of stress.

Another suggested consequence of prolonged stress is that it affects the bacteria that live in your gut - making it a better environment for some and worse for others. And there is a time delay after the stressful period ends before the gut bacteria return to their original levels.

It may be that the brain remembers the negative feelings from the gut and is less likely to put itself in the same stressful situation again. It may be why people feel less keen on given a presentation, even though the first one appeared to be quite successful.

It's recommended that meal times are stress free events because any kind of stress inhibits digestion, which means we get less energy from our food and it takes longer to digest it, which adds to our stress.

We know that travel sickness tablets numb the nerves of the gut. It's also been found that as the feelings of nausea disappear, so do any feelings of anxiety. Alcohol reaches the gut before it reaches the brain.

Perhaps its relaxing effects come from what it does to the nerves of the gut? And if you want to achieve the same effect with bacteria, experts say Lactobacillus reuteri may be able to inhibit the pain sensors in the gut and they add that Lactobacillus plantarum and Bifidobacterium infantis can help with IBS.

The good news for us is that hypnotherapy has been proven to work with patients with IBS and is a recommended treatment by NICE (The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence).

If 95% of all serotonin produced by the body is in the gut then it is perhaps not surprising that taking SSRIs (Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors) may have an impact on the gut as well as an effect on the brain. It has been suggested that the next breakthrough drug for depression will only affect the gut and not the brain. It's an interesting idea.

Your gut contains a number of bacteria:

Bacteroides produce enzymes for digesting just about any carbohydrate. It may be these bacteria that produce more usable simple sugars from the food we eat and allow some of us to absorb more calories than someone else eating the same food with fewer of this family of bacteria in their gut. Prevotella tend to dominate in the gut of vegetarians.

It's also worth mentioning that invasive bacteria can change the way people behave. For instance, Toxoplamata in the gut can cause animals and humans to seek out dangerous activities that they wouldn't otherwise. For example, people may self-harm.

Some areas affecting the gut can be down to a feedback loop in our own bio-chemistry. Any changes in the brain cause changes in the gut. And any changes in the gut can cause changes in the brain. So, having a "funny tummy" today could be caused by the stress at work yesterday and could lead to that low mood tomorrow.

As with any medical condition then seeking advice from a fully qualified doctor is always the sensible step forward.

If the root of stomach issues lies in underlying stress then SFH may be able to help and, it could be argued, they will also benefit from seeking professional advice from a dietician to look at what changes they can make in what they eat.

It's a powerful two pronged attack on an issue which goes back to the dawn of time and is still affecting our primitive brains today.



Trevor Eddolls is a supervisor for AfSFH and is also Head of IT for the Association.

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A coffee break puzzle with a chance to win £30 voucher off your supervision costs.

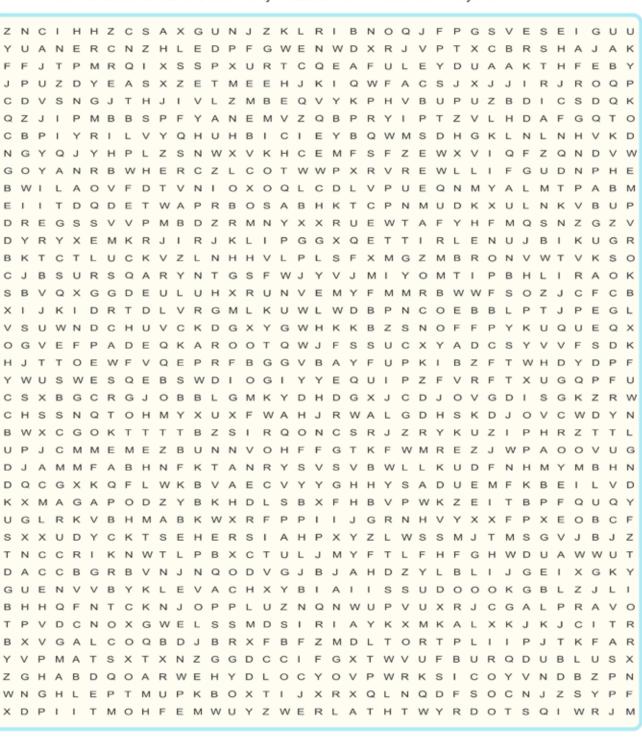
Following the incredible success of the last edition's Word Search Puzzle, and the countless demands for another one, then we decided to put our thinking caps on and come up with the ultimate challenge!

To make it a bit easier for you, we've given you all of the answers! All you have to do is find the words, circle them, scan the page and send it (with your contact details) to: journal@afsfh.com

It's our very first rollover and, as such, we now have £30 of CPHT vouchers up for grabs which you could use to offset against supervision and CPHT training costs (where accepted by your supervisor).

You have to be a member of AfSFH to enter. The closing date is 1 August 2016 so there is plenty of time to find the following: Steve de Shazer, Insoo Kim Berg, Limbic System, Ratey, Dr David Rock, Miracle Question.

The first correct set of answers received by the Editor will win! Good luck everyone!



Committee Members



Association for SOLUTION FOCUSED HYPNOTHERAPY

Chairman and Trustee: David Newton

Trustee: Matthew Cahill

Head of IT: Trevor Eddolls

David Newton founded the AfSFH and is an avid supporter of getting the word out to the public of what Solution Focused Hypnotherapy is all about. His inspiration brought the Association to life and has allowed us to flourish rapidly in our early days. His support of all that we do is greatly appreciated.



Trustee: Susan Rodrigues
Susan is our mainstay who oversees our Executive meetings to ensure we're on the right track! Her knowledge ensures that our brain waves keep to the ideals (and regulations) of the solution focused world.



Matthew is one of our Trustees whilst also being heavily involved in training Solution Focused Hypnotherapy. He is also a director of UKCHO which is involved with moving the hypnotherapy profession forward.



David has moved from the research post to taking on the job of CEO. David champions solution focused hypnotherapy and is extremely keen to help to move our association forward. David says, "There are some fantastic times ahead, one I'm privileged to be part of".



Journal and Newsletter Editor: Duncan Little Duncan Little's past was predominately in journalism where he worked for 15 years for various news organisations. He retrained following time as a SFH client himself and has found it useful in his quest to repeatedly run the Paris Marathon.



Trevor, for his sins, is charged with updating the website and inspiring us with ideas to further progress the site. A challenging and key role as we grow bigger!



Head of membership: Denis Caunce

Denis will be helping you to renew your membership and resolve any membership issues that you have.

Before being a hypnotherapist, Denis spent 30 years in IT, so knows how to switch the computer off and on to get the membership system to work. A definite plus, especially as we grow bigger!



Head of research and campaigning: Tiffany Armitage Tiffany is excited to be joining the parts of her life together to head up the research component of the Association. Having previously studied scientific research to post graduate level, and worked in training people across the globe in scientific methodologies. She says that it is great to be able to now work to inspire and coordinate the efforts of the members of the Association to promote our valuable work.



Head Of External Marketing: Lara Lewis
Lara has been a Solution Focused Hypnotherapist for just over a year now and is excited to be a part of helping to promote the incredible work that SF Hypnotherapists do.

In this issue we have contributions from:



Duncan Little
Hypnotherapy
Today Editor



Lara Lewis Solution Focused Hypnotherapy Practitioner



Mark Field DM Informatics



Andrew Workman Solution Focused Hypnotherapy Practitioner



Trevor Eddolls
Solution Focused
Hypnotherapy
Practitioner