

FROM THE

INBOX



2016/05/22 hrogers@goodfutures.org.au

Subject: SRV-only for individuals?

Hi Jane

I have been told that SRV is suitable for use only with individuals. I work in a service model that groups people. Can SRV be used in services like day services, group homes, nursing homes and special schools?

Thanks for any insights,

Hanna

2016/05/24 Jane Sherwin sherwinconsulting@gmail.com

Subject: SRV-only for individuals?

Hi Hanna,

Thanks for this query. When trying to help people get good lives through valued roles, it is certainly easier to work with individuals so that you can craft roles with the person that are very authentic to their identity. Even so, quite a few SRV ideas are helpful when working with either individuals or groups. These include understanding how devaluation happens in our society, the importance of mindsets that influence our actions, and ways that build bridges between people with a valued status and those with a devalued status.

One of the strengths of SRV is that it gives ideas about how to work towards the best we can do in a particular situation. If you are working with groups, then SRV helps us ask ourselves questions to move towards the ideal. What I would like to do in this email is focus on questions that are about maintaining or building the skills of individuals within the group, and look at image issues in the next email.

SRV suggests that we think about groups in two ways in order to maintain or develop skills. Is the size of the group as good as it can be? And is the composition (the make-up of the group) as good as it can be?

With regard to size, the size of the group should be a good match for the task that is being done. For example, a card game would typically have two to six people playing, but not ten. Ideally, the size of the group also allows for each group member to feel like they are not lost in the crowd, that they feel known and secure. Additionally, the size of the group should enable each

individual to receive support that is at the appropriate level of challenge and stimulation. Also, a group that is too big makes it unlikely that anyone who is not a member of that group, like an ordinary citizen, would interact with group members. From the perspective of the person supporting the group, the size should allow them to provide neither too much nor too little support.

With regard to the make-up of the group, ideally each group member should have the opportunity to learn from good role models. This generally means that those who are less capable would be in the minority. From the perspective of the person who is supporting the group, it is more difficult to provide good support when the needs of the group members are too diverse, such as having a very broad range of capabilities or ages. The inclination in that situation is to either exclude 'problematic' people or to lower expectations to that of the least capable person. The latter is clearly problematic for the more capable group members.

As you might have heard, SRV is a very big theory and the above are just some of the many ideas in it. I look forward to writing next time about how people are likely to be perceived depending on who they are rubbing shoulders with.

Hope that's helpful - SRV is so informative when improving the ways we offer services.

Thanks again and warm wishes.

Jane

Jane Sherwin is an Accredited Teacher of SRV (Senior Trainer) based in Brisbane, Australia

Reader: Stay tuned for part 2 of Jane's response about Image and Perception Issues (in the next edition).