

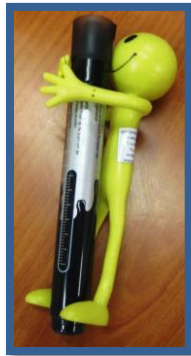
# YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA #2

*Allowing your beliefs and your thinking to be challenged stimulates creativity.*

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## Challenge Your Beliefs...

*“This is how humans are: we question all our beliefs, except for the ones we really believe, and those we never think to question. Orson Scott Card ~ American Author*



**“I Believe We Could Be Friends”**

***Do you feel uncomfortable when people challenge your thinking or beliefs?***

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Do you ever put yourself in the position where others can challenge your beliefs? Or do you seek to avoid such situations? If you do you may be missing an opportunity to stimulate your creativity and innovation.

If you have the chance to attend a workshop on Solutions Focus (SF), do attend. Solutions Focus is an approach to change and tackling people issues. It differs from more conventional approaches such as Creative Problem Solving (CPS) because it focuses on [finding a solution](#) for messy situations (i.e. there is no right answer) [rather than exploring the problem](#).

Its central hypothesis (in my words) is that [focussing on the solution builds positive energy to create change](#) whilst focussing on the problem

can develop a negative energy (resistance) for change. In that hypothesis, it has links to other positive approaches such as [Appreciative Inquiry](#) (AI).

Having attended a course on AI and read a book on SF [[The Solutions Focus](#) by Paul Z. Jackson and Mark McKergow], I had been seduced by the positive approach; it appealed to my nature. But seduction can be dangerous (de Laclous didn't call his book “Les Liaisons Dangereux” for nothing) and I had doubts that SF could replace CPS entirely. After all I have spent ten years schooling myself in various aspects of CPS and I find it works.

As a recent participant in one of Mark McKergow's workshops, I raised a number of questions with him. Afterwards people asked me why I had asked difficult questions (all of which he dealt with very well).

I hadn't felt that I asked difficult questions but Mark's hypothesis challenged my thinking and belief in the problem focussed approach. I needed him to convince me and he did a good job.

Whilst I'm still not 100% convinced, beliefs aren't that easy to change, the challenge did set me thinking in a different way. Which brings us back to my first paragraph.

# YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA #2

Edward de Bono in his book "[Serious Creativity](#)" [an excellent summary of his work over the years] talks about "the creative challenge" to conventional thinking and beliefs, how it refuses to accept that the current way is necessarily the best. He sees the challenge as one of the fundamental processes of lateral thinking.

Mark and others have challenged the conventional thinking on change and problem solving and as a result I'm thinking about various workshops and courses that I might improve by taking an SF perspective i.e. the challenge has stimulated my creativity and innovation.

## SO

Think about a strong belief you have. What might you do to challenge your that belief?

## ACTION

In the next week or so, [take a small step](#) to do just that. For example, read a newspaper that has a different political stance to your usual newspaper (the Guardian instead of the Telegraph or vice versa). See what thoughts it provokes. It might just spark some creative change.

To find out more about "The Solutions Focus" see [www.thesolutionsfocus.com](http://www.thesolutionsfocus.com).

## TO CLOSE

It is interesting to look back at our work. Since writing this article in June 2004 I have become an adherent of Solutions Focus, using it in many workshops.

I have found it to be a powerful antidote to many of the issues that are caused when we hunt for the root cause of problems e.g. blame seeking.

I still use Creative Problem Solving (or Creative Solution Finding as I prefer to call it) for more mechanistic issues, but for organic issues with plenty of people involved, SF is a wonderful tool.

For a case study of SF in action please go to [www.yesand.eu](http://www.yesand.eu) and look for "Developing a Team Using Solutions Focus" in articles.

Have a great week finding solutions.

[John Brooker](#), *Facilitate, Innovate, Transform.*



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