Solution-focussed gastrointestinal (GI) plan for success

This is a working document meant to be used in conversation with patients to help them establish a successful treatment plan.

1. Activating strengths and resources

A. Identify what you enjoy and are good at. How did you learn these things?

What do you enjoy and/or are good at?

How did you learn this? How else?

What else do you enjoy and/or are good at?

How did you learn this? How else?

What else do you enjoy and/or are good at?

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How did you learn this? How else?

B. Coping questions

How have you coped/endured/managed/dealt with your condition?

How else have you coped?

How else have you coped?

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2. Identifying VIPs

A. Identify relationships that are most important in your life. Who are the most important relationships in your life? Who else?

I appreciate: _____

Because:

_____

_____

_____

I appreciate: _____

Because:

_____

_____

_____

I appreciate: _____

Because:

_____

_____

_____

B. What do your VIPs appreciate most about you?

They appreciate:

_____

_____

_____

They appreciate:

_____

_____

_____

They appreciate:

_____

_____

_____

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3. Identifying best hopes for treatment

A. What are your best hopes that would tell you that your treatment here is helpful and worth your time?

Think about the following areas:

1. Health and well-being
2. Managing my condition
3. Functioning (work)
4. Functioning (leisure)
5. Relationships (family and friends)
6. Sleep satisfaction
7. Gastrointestinal management
8. Pain management
9. Bathroom management
10. Dietary management
11. Symptom management
12. Medication benefits

1. Best hopes for my health and well-being are:

I would be doing:

2. Best hopes for managing my condition:

I would be doing:

3. Best hopes for functioning (at work):

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I would be doing:

4. Best hopes for functioning (leisure):

I would be doing:

5. Best hopes for relationships:

I would be doing:

6. Best hopes for sleep satisfaction:

I would be doing:

7. Best hopes for gastrointestinal management:

I would be doing:

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8. Best hopes for pain management:

I would be doing:

9. Best hopes for bathroom management:

I would be doing:

10. Best hopes for symptom management:

I would be doing:

11. Best hopes for dietary management:

I would be doing:

12. Best hopes for pain management:

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I would be doing:

13. Best hopes for medication treatment:

I would be doing:

C. What do you know about your condition?

Think about the following areas:

- Diagnosis
- Treatments
- Medications
- Alternative treatments
- Bathroom management
- Dietary management
- Gastrointestinal management
- Pain management

D. What have you tried to help manage your condition?

Think about the following areas:

1. Health and well-being
2. Managing my condition
3. Functioning (at work)
4. Functioning (leisure)
5. Relationships (family and friends)
6. Sleep satisfaction
7. Gastrointestinal management
8. Pain management
9. Bathroom management
10. Symptom management
11. Dietary management
12. Pain management
13. Medication benefits

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4: Scaling: On a scale from 1–10 (10 being the best)

Think about the following questions:

1. **How well** are you managing your pain?
2. **How satisfied** are you with your sleep?
3. **How satisfied** are you with your overall health?
4. **How well** are you managing your symptoms?
5. **How confident** are you in your ability to manage your condition?
6. **How well** are you managing your gastrointestinal challenges?
7. **How well** are you managing your anxiety?
8. **How satisfied** are you with your mood?
9. **How well** are you managing your stress?
10. **How well** are you managing your work responsibilities given your symptoms?
11. **How well** are you managing your home life given your symptoms?
12. **How helpful** are the medications for you?
13. **How helpful** are the treatments for you?
14. **How well** are you managing to remember your medications?
15. **How well** are you able to follow up with treatment recommendations?
16. **How helpful** was this appointment for you?

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Working the scale

- What's a good enough number?
- Is the number going up, down, or staying the same?
- What is the highest number it has been?
- What would you be doing at a good enough number? What else?
- Where are you now?
- What keeps the number from being lower?
- What else keeps the number from being lower?
- What number would your VIPs give you?
- What would you be doing when the number goes up by one point?
- What else would you be doing when it goes up by one point?
- How confident are you from 1–10 that you can try your best to take the next step and increase the number by one point?
- What keeps that number from being lower?
- Where do you get your confidence from?

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5. End of session feedback: compliments and positive differences discovered

A. Compliments:

Compliment:

How did you do it?

Compliment:

How did you do it?

Compliment:

How did you do it?

Compliment:

How did you do it?

Compliment:

How did you do it?

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B. Positive differences:

Positive difference:

Was it different?

How was it different?

Was it helpful for you?

How was it helpful for you?

How else was it helpful for you?

How did you do it?

How else did you do it?

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6 Follow-up sessions

1) What's better?
    a) What else is better?
2) What's been happening that you want to continue to happen?
    a) What else is happening that you want to continue to happen?
3) What's been happening that is even a "little bit more tolerable/bearable for you?
    a) What else?

This handout was written by Assistant Professor Anne Lutz and Dr Christiaan van Woerden based upon their chapter entitled "Promoting change in GI conditions – solution-focused brief therapy (SFBT)" (Chapter 12) from Knowles, S.R., Keefer, L. & Mikocka-Walus, A., (2019). Psychogastroenterology with Adults: A Handbook for Mental Health Professionals. Oxon, UK: Routledge Press.

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