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## **E. Veronica Bliss**

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Psychologist/ Managing Director  
 Brief Therapy Support Service, Ltd  
 Clarks Cottage  
 Union Lane  
 Pilling Lancs PR3 6SS

Mob: 07971 569042  
[clarks@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:clarks@globalnet.co.uk)  
[www.btss.org.uk](http://www.btss.org.uk)

Date of Birth: 14 July, 1959

### **Education**

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- 2001- 2006    Master of Arts in Solution Focused Brief Therapy  
 Centre for Lifelong Learning – Selly Oak Campus  
 University of Birmingham, UK
- 1987-1989    Master of Arts (4.0 Grade Average)  
 Counselling Psychology  
 University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska USA
- 1977-1981    Bachelor of Arts (Magna Cum Laude)  
 Elementary/Special Education  
 Yankton College, Yankton, South Dakota USA

### **Employment**

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- 2007 -        Solution Focused Practitioner, Psychological Services for Children, Young  
 People and their Families, Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust, Blackburn,  
 Lancashire, UK
- 2003-        Psychologist / Managing Director, Brief Therapy Support Service, Clarks Cottage,  
 Union Lane, Pilling, Lancs, UK
- 1999-05     Honorary Research Associate, Institute for Health Research, Lancaster  
 University, Lancaster, UK
- 1996-04     Consultant Psychologist and Head of Psychology Service for Adults with  
 Learning Disabilities, Chorley & South Ribble Mental Health Service Lancashire  
 Care NHS Trust, Preston, UK
- 1996-98     Project Coordinator, National Development Team, Manchester, UK
- 1995-96     Senior Clinician (Psychology), Learning Disabilities Directorate, North Mersey  
 NHS Trust, UK
- 1990-95     Honorary Lecturer, Hester Adrian Research Centre, University of Manchester  
 (Funded by Calderstones NHS Trust) UK

## **Teaching and Training**

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**University of Bradford, University of Wolverhampton, Bolton, Salford & Trafford Mental Health NHS Trust, Lancaster University, Brief Therapy Practice London, Northumbria University, Sunderland University, Bradford University, Lancashire Care NHS Trust, European Brief Therapy Association, United Kingdom Association for Solution Focused Practitioners (2002 – ongoing)**

Introductory – Intermediate workshops on the use of Solution Focused Approaches with adults who have cognitive impairment, learning disabilities and / or autism; Conferences on extending the expertise of service users beyond the therapy room; Solution Focused Supervision

### **University of Manchester (1990-95)**

Responsible for the development, organisation and delivery of a post-qualifying diploma course for professionals working with people who have learning disabilities. This was a full time 37-week course validated by the English National Board of Nursing and Midwifery as well as the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work. The course was comprised of lectures regarding theoretical and practical aspects of interaction with people who have learning disabilities as well as practical placements within a variety of service settings. I provided support, in terms of delivering lectures, assessing work and visiting placements, for an average of 12 students per year. Lectures covered the following topics: History of care for people with learning disabilities, contemporary models of viewing human behaviour, values, attitudes, factors affecting staff-client interactions, basic behavioural principles, assessment methods, goals and objectives, barriers to effective interventions, team building, working within organisations, ethics of intervention and practice, basic research methodology, and staff stress. The course is still enjoying popularity in a part-time two-year format.

### **Functional Approaches for Parents (1994-95; 1995-96; 1996-97)**

Ten two-hour evening sessions for parents (or other family carers) of children with autism. Sessions designed around understanding the function of challenging behaviour, how challenging behaviour fits into the scheme of the family and helping carers to look after themselves. Three courses for National Autistic Society - Manchester.

### **Functional Approaches to Challenging Behaviour (1994-95; 1995-96)**

Two modules (five days each) regarding assessment of and interventions for challenging behaviour in the community. The first module centred on functional assessment of behaviour with the second module focusing on the design and implementation of functionally based interventions. Modules were separated by a period of months to allow for practical work to be accomplished. A half-day introductory session was scheduled for managers to familiarise them with the requirements of staff they send, and to help them think through how to make the best use of staff who complete the modules. Courses run in, Bury, Bolton and Liverpool.

## **Clinical Work**

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### **Psychological Services for Children, Young People & Families – Lancashire Care Trust – Blackburn – (2007 – current)**

An on-going project to establish a Solution Focused Brief Therapy Clinic within this service. Involved reducing the waiting list, teaching, training and supervising psychologists, establishing treatment integrity, outcome and process measures and evaluating the effect of SFBT on this service.

### **Brief Therapy Support Service – Pilling (2003 – current)**

This is a private service set up by myself, with input from a person with learning disabilities, a person with autism and a carer who is a survivor of mental health services. We supplement existing services by providing support to people who cannot access mainstream support or community services. We also offer training and workshops in Solution Focused Approaches.

### **Lancashire Care Trust – Chorley (1996 – 2004)**

Work is done as part of a multi-disciplinary Community Team for Adults with Learning Disabilities. Cognitive and memory assessments are undertaken as necessary. Clinical work with individuals focuses on a solution focused approach and uses a range of activities to help facilitate co-construction of a preferred future for the client. SFBT is also used with family members and staff who provide support for clients. Over half of the clients are individuals with mild learning disabilities and / or Asperger's Syndrome.

### **Learning Disabilities Directorate – Liverpool (1995-96)**

Emphasis was principally in two areas: 1) Developing service standards and monitoring systems to ensure a coherent approach to providing support for people who have complex needs and 2) Direct work supporting staff as they assessed and planned interactions for service users with a variety of needs. This involved introducing, and initially chairing, individual programme planning teams, setting management objectives, writing operational policies, teaching staff about data collection, evaluating and summarising data, writing interventions, and training staff in functional approaches. It also involved supporting staff and managers through a process of change, and making expectations, as well as the feedback of performance, clear.

### **National Development Team - Manchester (1996-98)**

Coordinated the project team which developed the North West Residential Audit Tool. This process involved ascertaining the views of people with learning disabilities, their families, inspection officers, care staff, managers and purchasers as to the qualities of a good residential service. These views were then incorporated into a tool which can be used to audit the quality of residential services. The tool required an audit process, which involved training teams of auditors.

## **Management**

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### **Psychological Services for Children, Young People & Families – Lancashire Care Trust – Blackburn – (2007 – current)**

Supervise Solution Focused Practitioners, supervise the SFBT work of Clinical Psychologists. Train and consult with other children's services in the area.

### **Brief Therapy Support Service – Pilling (2003 – current)**

Oversee the establishment of this service. Plan, supervise and deliver training days and workshops as well as deliver Solution Focused Therapy to individuals, couples and groups.

### **Lancashire Care Trust – Chorley (1996 – 2004)**

Provide supervision for one part-time assistant psychologist plus trainees on six month placements from clinical psychology doctorate programmes. Also managed the Community Learning Disability Team for a period of 18 months.

### **Learning Disabilities Directorate - Liverpool (1995-96)**

Provided clinical supervision for a Behavioural Approaches Group which consisted of qualified and unqualified members of staff who wished to develop particular expertise in functional approaches to challenging behaviour. In addition, I provided clinical management of service users within the Directorate's admission unit for people with complex and challenging needs. All clinical management work involved developing within staff an understanding of the behaviours which challenge, giving clear written expectations and giving to them, as well as receiving from them, regular feedback on progress and performance.

### **Calderstones Trust- Whalley (1992-93)**

Provided clinical supervision for behaviour therapists working on the Chestnut Drive Medium Secure Unit. Chaired monthly meetings and met regularly with behaviour therapists to assist them in their assessment and interaction with individuals who challenged services and/or who had offended.

## **Publications**

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### **Book**

Bliss, E. V. & Edmonds, G. (2007) *A Self-Determined Future and Asperger Syndrome: Solution Focused Approaches*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

**Booklet Series**

- Bliss, E. V. (1999). *Understanding Difficult Behaviour*. National Autistic Society.
- Bliss, E. V. (2000). *Writing Things Down: Keeping Track of Behavioural Changes*. National Autistic Society.
- Bliss, E. V. and Nally, B. (2000). *Managing Stress: A Guide for Carers of Children with Autism*. National Autistic Society.

**Chapters**

- Bliss, E. V. (in press) Extreme Listening: Taught by People with Asperger Syndrome. In Thorana Nelson (Ed.) *"Practices in Solution-Focused Brief Therapy"* London: Routledge.
- Bliss, E. V. (in press) My Fur Lined Bucket. In D. Worton & L. Beardon (Eds.) *Asperger Syndrome and Mental Health*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Bliss, E. V. (2008) Social Relationships I've Had and From Which I've Learned. In G. Edmonds & L. Beardon (Eds.) *Asperger Syndrome and Social Relationships*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
- Bliss, E. V. (2008) The Importance of Motivation and Clear Communication at Work. In G. Edmonds & L. Beardon (Eds.) *Asperger Syndrome and Employment*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
- Raghavan, R. & Patel, P (2005) *Learning Disabilities and Mental Health: A Nursing Perspective*. Contributed section on Solution Focused Brief Therapy pages 167-171. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Kiernan, C. and Bliss E. (1994). Preparing Professionals to Work with People who have Learning Disabilities and Challenging Behaviour. Conference Proceedings of *Innovations in Training for Those Working with People Who have Severe Learning Difficulties*. Kidderminster: British Institute of Learning Disabilities
- McGill, P. and Bliss, E. (1993). Training Clinical Practitioners. In C. Kiernan (ed.) *Research into Practice? Implications of Research for Services for People with Learning Disabilities and Challenging Behaviour*. Kidderminster: British Institute of Learning Disabilities.

**Papers / Articles**

- Bliss, E. V. (2010) Imagine There's a Future: The Miracle Question and Asperger Syndrome. *Solution Focused Research Review*, (1), 2.
- Bliss, E. V. (2009) Alternative Therapy. *Communication*.: London: National Autistic Society, Autumn p 50.
- Bliss, E. V. & Bray, D. (2009) The Smallest Solution Focused Particles: Towards a Minimalist Definition of When Therapy is Solution Focused. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 28, (2) pp. 62–74.

- Bliss, E. V. (2008) Solution-focused brief therapy and autism. *Clinical Psychology Forum* 185, pp 11 – 14.
- Bray, D. & Bliss, E. V. (2008) On Being a Therapy Connoisseur A New Language of Shared Expertise. *Solution News*, 3 (2) pp 4 - 7
- Edmonds, G. & Bliss, E.V. (2006) Solution Focused Asperger Syndrome: The Service User's Expertise Experience into Practice. *Solution News*, 2 (2) pp 8 - 10.
- Bliss, E. V. (2005) Common Factors, A Solution Focus and Sarah. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 24, 4 pp 16 – 31.
- Bliss, E.V. (2002) A Psychology Service for Adults with Learning Disabilities and Challenging Behaviour: Caseload Management. *Clinical Psychology*, 10, 23-26.
- Bliss, E. V. (1991). Behavioural Approaches for Professionals Working with Individuals who have Learning Difficulties. *Mental Handicap Nurses Association Journal*, 7, 14-15.

**Masters Theses**

- Bliss, E. V. (2006) *Imagine There's a Future: Helping People with Autism Express Their Preferred Future*. University of Birmingham.
- Bliss, E. V. (1989). *Staff Perception of Client Behavior Problems as Related to the Quality of Life of Adults with Mental Retardation*. University of Nebraska-Lincoln.