

Insoo Kim Berg, one of the co-founders of the Solution-focused approach, died suddenly on 10 January 2007 at home in Milwaukee.

As you know, Insoo was the professional and life partner of Steve de Shazer and together they were part of the team that developed Solution-focused Brief Therapy and they were very much the parents of the Solution-focused community worldwide (or ... if not the parents ... at least the Great Aunt and Uncle!).

Steve died a little more than a year ago, following a long illness. Insoo continued with seemingly non-diminished energy, crossing the globe, speaking at conferences and conducting training ... and encouraging and supporting Solution-focused people in many and varied places.

Her death, only yesterday (our time), was completely out of the blue. Our mutual colleague, Brian Cade, had spoken with her only two days ago, and she had said she was well. I had had an email from Insoo not too long ago that was her usual "feisty" self. For a woman who seemed never to stop, it is perhaps fitting that she died peacefully, while resting after a work-out at her local gym!

Insoo was well known to people in Australia. She and Steve presented workshops here in the early 90s. Insoo was here a number of times in the later 90s, speaking to child protection workers, family support workers, and many others. I know a number of counsellors and workers in various parts of Australia who attended a workshop of Insoo's, became enthused about Solution-focused ideas, emailed Insoo with a question or experience ... and were overwhelmed by the generosity with which she replied, shared suggestions and offered genuine encouragement.

My own memories of Insoo are many and varied. At a very personal level, I remember Insoo conducting a workshop here in Sydney and then being VERY gracious (and patient) as my children decided they needed to perform "a concert" for this distinguished visitor. Professionally, I have enjoyed "sparring" with Insoo over the last 20 years. We met at conferences and sometimes disagreed about the "important" issues; however, her passion and vision for Solution-focused work was something that transcended other differences. I have admired her tenacity and she taught me the most important lesson of my professional life - how to ask the SAME question again and again, seventy-five times in at least eighty-four different ways!

I have spent the last 2 years working with my colleague Svea van der Hoorn. Svea consolidated her Solution-focused training through an online course with Insoo. I am aware that this course excited, stimulated and extended Svea's Solution-focused vision and contributed greatly to the richness of our work together and I am extremely grateful to Insoo for this.

I have been extraordinarily fortunate to have known Insoo (a little bit!) personally as well as professionally. I have enormous respect for her and am shocked and saddened by her death.

I will post this information on our web site in the next day, and any new news will be available there.

Regards,

Michael Durrant

Brief Solutions - incorporating:

- Brief Therapy Institute of Sydney
- Strengths in schools project
- Brief Solutions "Solutions in Business"