

## Exercise: Harry's Magic Square

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Take a piece of A4 paper and fold it into quarters and then unfold it. Write on each box consecutively, 'problem', 'miracle', 'scale', 'resources'.

**In the 'problem' box** write down the descriptions of the problem in the client's (or family's) own words.

**In the 'miracle' box** write down the answers to the miracle question or other 'preferred future' questions, in their own words.

**In the 'scale' box** write down the answers to the scaling question/s and mark where they are now.

**In the 'resources' box** write down any qualities, strengths, internal and external resources that the client/s have mentioned in answers to the other questions. Add a couple of your own that you can back up.

When the paper is full (assuming you don't have larger than normal handwriting!), take the break. If you need more than one paper you probably have too much information. If there is nothing in any of the boxes (other than 'problem') you have too little.

During the break collect your information. You need a statement you can feed back saying:

- Their problem in their own words ('problem' box) and expressing sympathy for this difficult and serious problem and the hard work that lies ahead in order to solve it.
- You then express some admiration for the good things they want to have happen in their life ('miracle' box) and their good sense and realism for wanting exactly these things.
- Tell them how impressed you are by their having already started with (things between 0 and their point on scale) and at their resources.

Then bridge with something like: "So because of all this I/we have this idea that might/could be useful."

- **If they know how they did it**, tell them to do more of it.
- **If you know they *don't* know how they did it**, tell them they must be doing something right and ask them to try and figure out what that is till you see them the next time ("pay attention to whenever good things happen and you make them happen/what makes them happen")
- **If you are very confused**, tell them you are very confused and then give them all the compliments you can think of and ask them to pay attention to whatever happens that they want to continue to have happen.
- **If they have a clear picture of what the miracle will look like** (you will intuit this), ask them to pretend the miracle (or part of it) is happening on certain days. If they are uncertain about whether they can do that, add a random element like a coin toss or a secret practice time.