

'SRV really expands my radar':

Lessons From People
Experienced in Applying SRV

RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY
Australian Social Role Valorisation Association

REPORT WRITTEN BY
Jane Sherwin

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'Fostering, safeguarding, and developing the theory and application of SRV'

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CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Preface | 1 |
| Acknowledgements | 2 |
| Summary | 3 |
| Introduction | 5 |
| SECTION 1: FINDINGS | 6 |
| 1. SRV was used in a range of ways with a range of devalued groups | 7 |
| (i) As a set of lenses | 8 |
| (ii) In one's ordinary life and in one's work | 9 |
| (iii) In a range of life areas in the lives of people with a devalued status | 9 |
| (iv) In service contexts | 9 |
| (v) In the context of freely given relationships | 10 |
| (vi) In advocacy contexts | 11 |
| (vii) In a Board of Management context | 11 |
| (viii) In education/training/development | 11 |
| (ix) In publications | 11 |
| 2. The breadth of rich SRV ideas that were used | 12 |
| 3. Many positive outcomes occurred in the lives of people with a devalued status | 16 |
| (i) Typical lives | 16 |
| (ii) Reduced vulnerabilities | 17 |
| (iii) Changed mindsets | 18 |
| (iv) Valued roles | 18 |
| (v) Enhanced status and reputation | 20 |
| (vi) Enhanced competencies | 20 |
| (vii) Personal social integration and valued social participation | 21 |
| (viii) Autonomy and control | 22 |

CONTENTS cont.

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 4. The journey to SRV outcomes is multifaceted | 24 |
| (i) The values journey | 24 |
| (ii) Barriers and challenges to applying SRV | 25 |
| (iii) Facilitators in applying SRV | 27 |
| (iv) Complementary knowledge and frameworks | 29 |
| SECTION 2: DISCUSSION | 32 |
| Strengths in the Australian efforts to apply SRV | 33 |
| Five pressing issues in the efforts to apply SRV | 35 |
| Opportunities in the efforts to apply SRV | 37 |
| Appendix 1. Methodology | 39 |
| References | 41 |
| Key resources | 41 |
| Glossary | 42 |

FIGURES KEY RESOURCES

Figure 1. An overview of the range of contexts in which SRV has been used

Figure 2. Range of SRV ideas used by interviewees

Figure 3. Positive outcomes

Figure 4. Some of the journeys when using SRV

Figure 5. Strengths in SRV efforts

Figure 6. Weaknesses in and threats to SRV efforts

Figure 7. Opportunities to strengthen SRV efforts

TABLES

Table 1. Frequency of mentions of SRV ideas

PREFACE

ABOUT SRV

The theory of Social Role Valorisation (SRV) is a combination of important ideas drawn from the social sciences. The themes within SRV are helpful in responding to the needs of individuals and groups with a devalued status, so that they might have access to the good things of life and in order to influence how they are perceived.

Though SRV was developed as a theory by Dr Wolf Wolfensberger in the early 1980s and based on his highly relevant work in the preceding decades, SRV still has many practical implications and so is used as a practice framework as well as a guiding theory. It is also helpful in both the design and in the analysis of support arrangements.

The theory rests on a deep understanding of social devaluation and its impacts, a societal dynamic that explains why it is that certain groups in our society are likely to experience significant marginalisation and prejudice.

One definition of SRV is

'the enablement, establishment, enhancement, maintenance, and/or defense of valued social roles for people, particularly for people at value-risk, by using, as much as possible, culturally valued means.'

Thomas, S 2017, Social Role Valorization Theory: Wolf Wolfensberger, updated April 2017, viewed 16 July, <<https://www.wolfwolfensberger.com/life-s-work/social-role-valorisation>>.

Some SRV references appear on page 41.

ASRVA is indebted to Dr Wolfensberger for his extensive writings and teachings about SRV and related topics, as well as to his long-term colleague Susan Thomas.

ABOUT THE AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL ROLE VALORISATION ASSOCIATION (ASRVA)

ASRVA commenced in 1993 as the Australian Social Role Valorisation Group (ASG). The name changed to Australian and New Zealand Social Role Valorisation Group (ANZSG) in 1999. The change to the current name occurred early in 2019.

ASRVA exists to foster, safeguard and develop the theory and application of SRV as well as accrediting Teachers of SRV – its principal points of influence are the content of SRV Teaching, the processes used, and the people who apply and write about SRV.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jane Sherwin, a member of ASRVA, is a Senior Trainer in the teaching of SRV and in the practicum, PASSING. She holds a Masters of Education & Work, following a degree in Occupational Therapy. She has worked in the lives of people with disabilities and older people for over 40 years in a range of family, community, and government settings.

When not teaching at the accredited SRV events, she works with groups and organisations on matters to do with values based quality, the learning and application of SRV, person centred approaches and directive control, power-with relationships, leadership development, and planning for better lifestyles and support arrangements with individuals. Jane is well regarded as a teacher, facilitator, coach, leadership mentor, writer, evaluator and planner.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend sincere thanks to the twenty-one interviewees who willingly gave their time and reflections. We also give special thanks to those allies who volunteered as Research Assistants.

Interviewees

Jayne Barrett, Neil Barringham, Rhiannon Brodie, Fiona Cameron-McGill, Fiona Campbell, Yvonne Donnan, Prue Gorman, Kris Lumsden, Mel Jackman, Jan Kruger, Greg Mackay, Glenys Mann, Kane Morgan, Teresa Moran, Amie Storer, Rosey Olbrycht, Peter Symonds, Lorna Sullivan, Joyleen Thomas, Jo Turner, one person asked to be Anonymous.

ASRVA members involved in the research as planners, interviewers, research assistants, analysers and editors, in alphabetical order

Rhiannon Brodie, Sarah Burrage, Prue Gorman, Mel Jackman, Greg Mackay, Kane Morgan, Jane Sherwin, Amie Storer.

Other Research Assistants

Danielle Mason, Rosa Romeo, Anastasia Spathis.

SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the findings and an exploration of the implications of research conducted by the Australian SRV Association (ASRVA). The research focused on the application of the theory of SRV in Australia. It was conducted with a view to strengthening the use of SRV in Australia and with hopes that readers beyond Australia would also be interested.

We interviewed twenty-one people in a range of roles; each had between three and thirty years of experience. We explored:

- in what contexts SRV has been used by them
- the key ideas that the interviewees drew on in their application of SRV
- benefits and outcomes from using SRV
- what experiences the interviewees had in trying to use SRV.

The transcripts and notes were analysed for recurring themes. These themes, supported by a multitude of quotes, are presented in the Findings section of the report. The quotes give readers a sense of the way that the interviewees think about and use SRV.

The interviews revealed that the 21 interviewees used SRV in both their work and in their personal lives. It was instructive to learn that SRV was used across a range of groups of people with devalued conditions and in a range of contexts, from school to work and home contexts, and from informal to formal arrangements. SRV was also used as key content in training and in publications. Importantly, SRV was used to understand our world, in particular the prevalence and driving forces of social devaluation and the resulting vulnerabilities of people with a devalued status.

An analysis of both the words used by the interviewees and also, crucially, the subtext of the words revealed the familiarity that the 21 users of SRV had with most SRV concepts. The intent by ASRVA was not to 'test' the interviewees, but rather to appreciate the 'go-to' SRV concepts.

One of the findings of interest was that none of the interviewees have latched solely onto those SRV ideas that seem relatively easy to understand, such as the language component of imagery (commonly referred to as 'labelling').

In contrast, the more nuanced work of the interviewees begins with appreciating the vulnerabilities and needs of people and holding a deep sense that life could be better.

It is exciting to reveal the many benefits and outcomes that have been made possible through the use of SRV, such as changed mindsets and access to the good things in life like valued roles, relationships, and greater autonomy.

Most readers will not be surprised to read that the interviewees experienced many challenges in trying to utilise SRV, including the engagement of one's values and the difficulty in taking what one hears in a workshop and applying the complex ideas. There are also wider challenges related to the contemporary human service environment.

Encouragingly, the interviewees were also able to share factors that facilitate the use of SRV, such as having good mentors, allies who also use SRV, the use of complementary frameworks, and having people in leadership roles who are committed to the use of SRV.

The Findings were in turn examined to reveal what ASRVA might learn about SRV efforts in Australia: the strengths, issues, and opportunities for the future.

It was found that there are many strengths in those pockets of SRV use across Australia. Some of the strengths relate to the strengths in the theory itself. Other strengths relate to the ways that SRV is being used and the benefits despite the many challenges.

ASRVA also found five pressing issues in the efforts to apply SRV. They are:

- i. Mentoring is not always available and there has been no work done to support effective mentoring.
- ii. The SRV theme of Model Coherency is not widely known and therefore not widely used. This is problematic because it is a key theme that ties many SRV ideas together and is helpful in both the design and evaluation of support arrangements.

- iii. SRV is largely invisible in Australia. It is difficult to access information about SRV; it is difficult to find large pockets of use outside of responses to people with disabilities.
- iv. Most people find it difficult to transfer what they have learnt in a workshop to 'real life'. It is also difficult for people to find avenues for deepening their understanding and use of SRV once they have been to an introductory workshop.

The good news is that ASRVA was able to use the findings and analyses to discern opportunities for strengthening the use of SRV in Australia.

Opportunities are:

- i. There are people with leadership qualities in using SRV across Australia. This is an excellent foundation for growing the base of those who use SRV.
- ii. Given that some of the interviewees had experienced good mentoring and had in turn mentored and influenced others, this is also a foundation for growth.
- iii. Generally, people like to connect with like-minded others. People generally utilise opportunities to share stories, be inspired, be challenged, and deepen their understanding from being connected to each other.
- iv. Local, informal, unfunded groups have existed in Australia across several decades. Though frequently fragile in existence, these groups show that there is a base of commitment to the teaching and learning of SRV that has endured over time.
- v. There are very few networks of people who use SRV across Australia and therefore the opportunities for shared learning and shared encouragement could be grown.

- vi. A key opportunity exists for ASRVA to use a Community of Practice mode of operation as a means of connecting people and providing opportunities for people to come together and collaborate. This is also a valid response to somewhat addressing the pressing issues facing those who try to apply SRV.

ASRVA looks forward to working with others to strengthen the use of SRV as we continue to grapple with devaluation in the pursuit of good lives.

INTRODUCTION

The Australian SRV Association (ASRVA) is committed to strengthening the application of Social Role Valorisation (SRV) across Australia and so undertook a piece of research that focused on the question, ‘In what ways is SRV used and what are we learning about its pattern of use?’ This research by ASRVA is the first in Australia to document the experiences of individuals who have intentionally tried to implement SRV in their practice.

Twenty-one people in a range of roles and contexts were interviewed about their efforts in using SRV. The notes and transcripts were analysed for common and recurring topics and sub-themes. More details about the methodology used by ASRVA can be found in Appendix 1.

The report is in two sections. Section 1 explores the experiences of the interviewees in applying SRV. The experiences of the interviewees are presented in four topics: where and in what ways SRV was used, the SRV ideas that were used, the outcomes occurring as a result of applying SRV, and the journeys to the outcomes. Section 1 provides many quotes from interviewees with the hope of providing greater insights to readers about their own use of SRV. The quotes appear in blue italics. Section 2 is an examination of what the findings tell us about SRV efforts in Australia, in particular the strengths, issues and opportunities for strengthening SRV application efforts.

Section 1: Findings

This section describes the responses by the interviewees, laid out in four themes: the contexts in which SRV was used, the SRV ideas that were used, outcomes from using SRV and the journeys to the outcomes.

The first topic outlines the circumstances in which SRV was used by the interviewees.

1. SRV WAS USED IN A RANGE OF WAYS WITH A RANGE OF DEVALUED GROUPS

ASRVA was interested to know where SRV is being used. SRV is often thought of as a theory that is only used by service workers and largely by disability services. The following findings indicate that SRV has been used much more widely than that.

Over time, the interviewees used SRV in the lives of a wide array of people (including refugees and asylum seekers, people at risk of homelessness, those who had experienced domestic violence) and a wide range of devaluing conditions, including mental health issues, disability, older age issues. The contexts included formal human services, family environments, and in everyday life.

Importantly, SRV is recognised as much more than a theory; it is highly practical. One interviewee noted this when she drew the connection between imagining a better life and how to get there: *'Families have dreams and aspirations; SRV gives a framework to support dreams to happen.'* (Interviewee 1) Another interviewee commented on the abundant strategies SRV holds, *'I get very frustrated with people who think SRV is just a theory. It's rich!'* (Interviewee 19)

Among the interviewees it was found that SRV was applied in nine broad ways: SRV was used as a set of lenses, in many areas of work and life, in a range of life areas of vulnerable people including home and work, in a service context and in the context of freely given relationships. SRV was also used in advocacy, in education/ training/development, in Board situations and in publications. Figure 1 depicts an overview of the sub-themes that emerged. Each context is then explored.

SRV WAS USED IN A RANGE OF CONTEXTS WITH A RANGE OF DEVALUED GROUPS

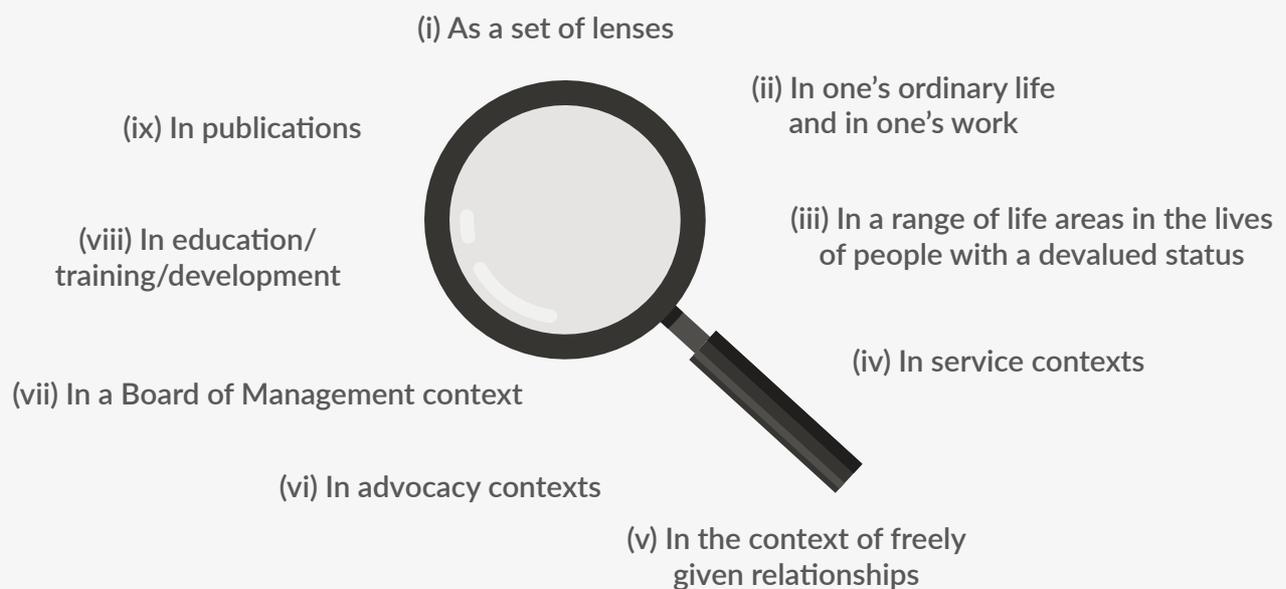


Figure 1. An overview of the range of contexts in which SRV has been used

(i) AS A SET OF LENSES

One of the strongest sub-themes was the use of SRV as a lens for understanding and critiquing one's efforts with people with a devalued status and in working with a heightened level of consciousness.

SRV was frequently used to understand societal dynamics and service practices, which is seen in the following quotes.

SRV is a critical lens, a way of analysing what is happening. If people aren't given an SRV lens, they can't see [through] what they can see, like happiness and niceness. (Interviewee 8)

SRV is a prism for looking at issues. (Interviewee 13)

It got me to smell a rat. (Interviewee 11)

SRV really expands my radar, expanding and reinforcing the radar. I think it's very easy to slip back into not questioning service practices, that we've become governed by funding options. (Interviewee 10)

SRV is a great well of knowledge. I keep coming back to it to reality check. (Interviewee 12)

There was an underpinning respect for the thoroughness of SRV theory by interviewees, in contrast to faddish ideas that come and go in the lives of devalued people: *So many ideas are fairy floss that if you poke them, you go right through them. SRV is different. (Interviewee 8)*

It was also not unusual for SRV to be used to name and understand something that the interviewees already knew was 'wrong', that is, unhelpful to vulnerable people.

SRV gave a framework for what we were thinking and doing, but we hadn't had anything to hang it on ... SRV made it solid for us. (Interviewee 8)

Similarly, SRV was used by interviewees to question what was currently happening, such as *how people were portrayed in advertising (Interviewee 13)*, and what had been done previously, *In the past I have learned that I did some great harm in trying to implement SRV to better people's lives. I was doing what I thought was best at the time, but didn't do it in the right way. Like, I've moved people around from one house to another. (Interviewee 16)*

SRV was used to inform decisions. This ranged from very large decisions, like closing a group home to smaller decisions like whether to label a bus.

This has led to more deliberate and informed decision making: *Whereas I could have possibly done [better work] by fluke, what it's brought me is a level of heightened or raised consciousness around decisions. (Interviewee 10)*

With regard to decision making, SRV was also used to find appropriate compromises: *if a decision can't find a perfect solution, then [looking for] how good can it be? (Interviewee 17)*

For the interviewees, SRV is not just a theoretical and application framework, but also a motivator for change,

For me it meant applying everything I knew about how to acquire socially valued roles or at least being seen [differently] from sub-human to human. I wanted to go home and feel like I thought that the people I worked with were less devalued and the people working with them may have changed perspectives. (Interviewee 5) and for self-reflection, *It may be naive, but I always think that there is always something that I should do or could be doing ... There are always surprises; they tend to come more as 'man that was a dumb thing to do or say'. (Interviewee 16)*

One interviewee suggested that SRV provides a framework that has an ethical basis for responding to devaluation and wounding.

I come from a system that did a lot of harm and damage and wounding. SRV provided an ethical framework that could try and save them from some death-making. In these congregated isolated settings, there are so many people cast into the deviancy roles. How on earth can we as workers work with something like that? (Interviewee 5)

Frequently, SRV is also used as a guide for how to be in relationship with people.

SRV set a framework for me to think about how I worked ... [SRV] helped me identify where I needed to improve my work. Also influenced me by getting to know vulnerable people. Vulnerability sets the scene for [devalued] people not to have a good life. We need to attend to these issues. SRV also sets the scene for our responsibility to how we talk and act with colleagues, but also in our close relationships with vulnerable people [outside of work]. (Interviewee 18)

(ii) IN ONE'S ORDINARY LIFE AND IN ONE'S WORK

The researchers were keen to discover the areas of life in which the interviewees used SRV. In answer to this question, one interviewee said: *Everything! My antenna is always ticking away whenever I go anywhere - being involved in SRV, you become acutely aware of people who are struggling. Almost an instinct. (Interviewee 16)*

The use of SRV seems to be rarely confined to just one life area. For example, one interviewee said that her work experiences with SRV shaped what she wanted for her son with a disability; another said the SRV principles she learnt and applied in her daughter's life were the same as in her work life. Another commented on her own personal life:

Probably the biggest impact is how elements of SRV, without my [conscious] knowledge, have been a part of how I have dealt with my own mental health recovery. Now I am more conscious of this, I am applying that lens when I'm looking at disclosing having a lived experience. (Interviewee 9)

All of the interviewees used SRV in their personal lives as well as in their work lives. For example, a father described what SRV brought to him.

It helps in being hopeful, finding better pathways. And it helps us affirm our family member as we see his sense of identity strengthening, as we see his skills developing. (Interviewee 4)

A mother described using SRV to shape the perceptions of her non-disabled son towards a friend with a disability. As a citizen, another interviewee used SRV to understand and respond to the actions of a neighbour towards another neighbour. This interviewee also uses SRV in a faith context to be more inclusive.

Interviewees also used SRV in their roles as sons/daughters and as adult grandchildren.

For family members, the use of SRV helped with making sense of the past and the impacts of lived experiences: *[My brother] died a long time ago but it's helped the family think back about how things were and how they could have been. And it's given me clues to understand [my brother]'s life, knowing about SRV. He had a head injury from riding a bull in a rodeo. The year he died was the year I was first exposed to normalisation.*

He had been living a very typical life at home; he was 10 years older than me, 27 or something. And without knowing anything, with family it's having just normal [expectations]' (Interviewee 3).

SRV was also used as a lens to understand the world: *Every article that I read in a newspaper or everything I see about refugees. Or what Donald Trump says about Muslims or Mexicans or whatever. I have SRV sitting there. (Interviewee 21).*

(iii) IN A RANGE OF LIFE AREAS IN THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WITH A DEVALUED STATUS

SRV was used to support people in a variety of areas. SRV was used within home environments, including supporting those who had left institutions. In work environments, SRV was used to particularly consider the type of work roles, the nature of the activities and relevant image issues. In the school environment, interviewees particularly used SRV's lessons relating to the culturally valued analogue (CVA) and their desires for their sons/daughters to go to the regular school, and to experience the regular academic and social activities of school life. For older people, SRV was used to consider their home lives, roles and connections to their communities. SRV was also used to help support the development of freely given relationships, especially in light of people's vulnerabilities to loneliness and separateness from ordinary life.

(iv) IN SERVICE CONTEXTS

There were three areas of use in addition to the direct work with individuals with a devalued status. These three areas in a service context include leadership, service design, and workforce areas.

Those in leadership roles have used SRV to influence others, because *SRV gives you the tools to be able to have concrete discussions and challenge people's thinking in a way that makes you try to bring them on board with the person as the focus all the time. (Interviewee 5)*. SRV was used to critique service practices, to do foundation work before working with individuals, and to raise awareness of the centrality of people. As one interviewee said, *After all, the bottom line is not to just talk about it but to influence someone's life. (Interviewee 11)*. While many good workers can intuit the limits and possibilities in various service models, one interviewee identified that SRV theory *gives credibility to what you are talking about ... [SRV] substantiates the challenges (Interviewee 8)*.

One of the great strengths of SRV is that it focuses first and foremost on the needs of the people and therefore what would be relevant and potent to meet those needs, using the culturally valued analogue as much as possible. As one interviewee said, *It helps us to try and look beyond the funding when we are designing services around people (Interviewee 10).*

Given the rigour of PASSING (the SRV based evaluation tool), it is not surprising that SRV is used to both plan and to evaluate service arrangements. With regard to planning, the following rhythm was very strong across the interviewees: getting to know someone, understanding their needs and vulnerabilities, imagining what a better life steeped in what is typical and valued for age and culture would be, doing no harm and finding roles that are valued. In terms of review, SRV was used to look at coherence between espoused values and *what we do, how we behave (Interviewee 21).*

One interviewee described developing a formal internal peer review tool, based on PASSING and Kendrick's (2000) work on Right Relationships. This tool was developed because:

There had been some dissatisfaction with quality systems: they measure systems and compliance matters, and we were looking for something that would measure quality of life ... It is described as a values based tool, endeavouring to focus on the needs of people. It is also strengths based and looks at areas to improve. (Interviewee 18).

Another interviewee had used this tool and found it very instructive within her work. SRV was also used to develop a service:

SRV was one of the founding theories used by Penny Barringham particularly in workshopping our early values. So, very early on in our work, we did a lot of work framing up what are our values, what's important to us. SRV was one of the reference points to guide us in naming what are the things we want to value here. SRV fitted with the voices of people. In the action research we were doing, [we were] listening to people's stories. The kind of stuff that people were saying about 'we want to belong, we don't want to be labelled, we don't just want to be medicated and diagnosed and hospitalised, we want to be treated as real people'. SRV fitted really neatly with that in terms of image, people's competencies, and valuing the individual.

So, that whole area was informing our work and our original values positions which then led us to do our work where we've made a serious attempt to be genuinely person-centred. So, I think SRV continues to inform that in terms of what it means to be person-centred ... compared to being limited by the current environment, the current housing that the person is in or the current social context. (Interviewee 4).

References to using SRV role goals (that is, to strengthen existing positive roles, to extricate people from and prevent negative roles, to find new roles, to maintain existing positive roles) were made by several interviewees.

Further, SRV has been used to inform non-programmatic matters such as recruitment, policies, meetings, training and induction. For example, with regard to recruitment, one interviewee said: *we now recruit people [who] are most likely to understand the plight of wounded people and we avoid people who are tainted by service work. (Interviewee 11)* While another looks for workers who use a developmental approach.

Another interviewee talked about recruiting specifically for the individual and their specific needs, and said they then *reflect on SRV principles as part of their [the staff's] performance review. (Interviewee 21)*

In supervisory arrangements, SRV has been used to help set priorities for action, to define the role of the worker, act as prompt questions for workers to report on their work, and role model desired responses. Engaging workers with issues of devaluation and wounding has been used to *evoke empathy and compassion. (Interviewee 11)*

(v) IN THE CONTEXT OF FREELY GIVEN RELATIONSHIPS

The wound of rejection particularly leads to a lack of, or reduced number of, relationships that are unpaid, that is, family, friend, and acquaintance relationships. An absence of these relationships can lead people to experience heightened vulnerabilities and be largely captured in the paid human service system. An interviewee who is involved with Citizen Advocacy, where an unpaid citizen is 'matched' to a person with a devalued status, uses SRV in *Seeking out and recruiting/finding protégés, [that is] people who are vulnerable who we will work with. We have a plan and need to identify what it is about this person that makes them vulnerable.*

All of the aspects that get covered in PASSING get covered in our search for people who are vulnerable and who we work with. This makes our work easier as it informs it at a deeper level. (Interviewee 16)

Another interviewee involved in a network development initiative also described the influence of SRV in their work:

We find ways to promote and invite people to take on friendship roles because friendships help keep people safe. Overlay that with what happens in valued people's lives, [ask] 'what's the culturally valued analogue?' If you're feeling safe and secure it's because you've usually got some people around you who make you feel that way. You've got a range of different relationships. You know who your go-to people are. (Interviewee 19)

(vi) IN ADVOCACY CONTEXTS

Appreciating the vulnerabilities of people with a devalued status and the potential for harm by the system and by society is of particular importance in an advocacy context. One interviewee said that one of the first conversations had with any citizen advocate is about the wounding experiences of the vulnerable person. Within an advocacy context, SRV also informs the conversation, but it doesn't necessarily inform the outcome. (Interviewee 16) In other words, knowledge of SRV can further the discussions about what's at stake for the vulnerable individual and ways to move forward. For example, SRV can highlight issues of image and competence, but does not pre-determine the results; the results are reliant on the relationship.

(vii) IN A BOARD OF MANAGEMENT CONTEXT

Descriptions were given by one interviewee of using SRV as a member of two Boards. In one Board, he informally critiqued the model of service and found that the Charity Model was in use. In a different Board situation where other Board members had been exposed to SRV, he described having agenda items that would allow for SRV discussions such as: *who the [agency] supports and who it doesn't support, what opportunities the [agency] wants to look at, for example, should the [agency] go for NDIS registration as a Provider and what does that mean for standing independently, and will it effect the coherence of the [agency] model? Also decisions about who should be invited to be speakers at the [agency] Conference, making sure that their messages are consistent with*

SRV even if they are not SRV-influenced themselves. (Interviewee 13)

This interviewee found the SRV-informed decision making much more satisfying.

(viii) IN EDUCATION/TRAINING/ DEVELOPMENT

Interviewees used SRV to develop others in a range of ways, including to:

- i. support staff, family members or individuals to attend accredited theory workshops (In Australia, that has been 2, 3, or 4-day theory workshops and the 5 day PASSING practicum)
- ii. have SRV based discussions with family members, individuals with a devalued status and workers
- iii. develop their own short (say, 2 hours) introductions to SRV
- iv. use the PASSING manual for internal discussions and critique of their own service or program
- v. give workshop attendees readings about SRV followed by discussion, prior to attending an accredited workshop
- vi. build a critical mass of understanding about SRV, such as a significant number of staff or group of families who are familiar with SRV
- vii. shape the expectation within a service that SRV is an informing theory
- viii. use SRV to shape the content in tertiary studies for Indigenous students and those studying disability related topics such as disability studies, behavioural support and family support
- ix. orient and induct new staff
- x. select speakers at workshops and conferences who can tell their stories in ways that reinforce the ideas from SRV.

(IX) IN PUBLICATIONS

One interviewee, who works in a capacity building role, used SRV to inform publications by the small program. This could be considered as using SRV as part of a suite of information strategies.

A brief comment

It is encouraging to have discovered that SRV has been used as a relevant theoretical and practice framework in a range of environments and with a range of people with a devalued status.

We now report on which ideas from SRV were commonly used.

2. THE BREADTH OF RICH SRV IDEAS THAT WERE USED



Figure 2. Range of SRV ideas used by interviewees

The experienced practitioners referenced the majority of major SRV ideas when applying SRV. This section outlines two ways that this conclusion was reached and provides many example quotes.

Firstly, a tally of frequency of word-use was done. In Table 1, the SRV ideas have been grouped together by theme; the column indicating frequency of use provides a tally for each idea in the group, in order. For example, in the row called ‘mindsets/expectations’ there were 9 mentions of ‘mindsets’ and 29 mentions of ‘expectations’. The table is presented to give an indication of patterns of use, but it is noted that it is unlikely to fully represent the extent to which any of the SRV ideas were used by the interviewees: an SRV idea could be referenced during an interview but not named, and so would not appear in the following table.

Table 1. Frequency of mentions of SRV ideas

| SRV IDEA | FREQUENCY OF MENTIONS | TOTAL |
|---|-----------------------|-------|
| roles/role avidity/role communicators/roles stocktake | 296+1+11+1 | 309 |
| personal social integration & valued social participation/PSI-VSP/community/integration/inclusion (inclusive) | 0+0+92+13+7 | 112 |
| wounds/wounded/woundedness/wounding/ experiences/loss & losses/harm, and devaluation/devalued | 25+12+22+18 + 26 | 103 |
| competence /development(al) | 63+30 | 93 |
| image/imagery/image enhancement | 64 | 64 |
| conservatism corollary/vulnerability/bricks | 0+54+2 | 56 |
| needs | 50 | 50 |
| mindsets/expectations | 9+29 | 38 |
| CVA (culturally valued analogue)/typical | 6+25 | 31 |
| model coherency/relevance/potency | 5+9+13 | 27 |
| consciousness/unconsciousness | 18 | 18 |
| if this, then that | 7 | 7 |
| interpersonal identification | 3 | 3 |

Secondly, the research was looking for not just which specific SRV words were used, but also their sub-text. Therefore, the analysis of the research themes also looked at the meaning behind the words used by the interviewees, not just the words themselves.

The following quotes are illustrative of the understanding and use of SRV ideas. ASRVA was struck by the strength of understanding of the dynamics of social devaluation and wounding as starting points for using SRV, such as seen in the comment, *Being really clear about society's unconscious views of people with a disability and understanding the challenge of supporting people to not be seen that way. (Interviewee 2)*

Dr Wolfensberger's work in identifying and describing the wounds was foundational to the interviewees:

Wounding is a starting point. (Interviewee 17) We did a lot of thinking about wounds. (Interviewee 7) The concept of bricks and wounds was the main thing for me. (Interviewee 18)

The interviewees were clearly grounded in the experiences of the people with a devalued status. For example:

In our services we went and met people and heard what was going on for them. You don't have to be SRV educated to do that, but SRV [reminds us] to stay connected with the people and understand what's going on for them and what their experiences are. (Interviewee 3)

You can sit down with a person to look at a map of how their life has been to see some of the potentials you could use to develop socially valued roles in their life. I think it comes down to [the] meaning [of the wounds to them] but you can't understand that until you get to know them. (Interviewee 9)

Contrary to our contemporary times in which speaking of negative things is seen to be unhelpful, understanding and identifying the wounds opened the door to other understandings.

SRV, in laying out the issues of devaluation, described the wounding that had happened to [my daughter], me as her mother, and our family through our experiences. It provided a framework to understand the hurt and the notion of burden. (Interviewee 19)

[We hear] people's distress and trauma, or the kind of 'wounds' to use that SRV term, that they have experienced and then looking at how do we deal with that woundedness or that trauma, deal with the losses that that person has experienced. SRV informs the process for going forward in terms of what are positive and typical valued roles here that we can assist people with. (Interviewee 4)

Relatedly, appreciating that people with a devalued status live with heightened vulnerabilities was also very evident to the interviewees.

I would always come back to the person's vulnerability [in the face of suggestions that would increase someone's vulnerability]. It's about 'yes I hear you, may even agree with you, but we are here about this person and these strategies work.' This person can't afford the cost of that [further wounding]. He wants a meaningful life. [We] have to come back to the person. (Interviewee 14)

More than one interviewee grounded their sense of what a 'better life' might be on the actual or anticipated losses the person had experienced. This interviewee has a mother-in-law with dementia and described a desirable future for her:

[We try to find ways] to maintain her integrity in life in consideration of her dementia ... SRV has made me more aware of my potential to do harm ... Trying to find ways to keep her connected to people in her past, who know her, minimising isolation from community and intrusion of services in life; [we are] insistent and actively involved in protecting who she is, [ensuring] consistency of staff, what she eats etc. (Interviewee 16)

Consciousness about vulnerabilities improves clarity about issues, even though certain dilemmas must be faced.

My son made it to the Nationals [athletics competition] without the label of intellectual disability; why do we need [the label]? (Interviewee 17)

Even when we're taking two people to [a sports club], we will sit quite separately. (Interviewee 11)

Thinking typical and ordinary clash[es] personally for me because I value 'difference'. But I understand that a person's vulnerability is what makes the shift [in thinking]. (Interviewee 14)

Interviewees also made the connection between the foundational ideas of devaluation, wounds and vulnerabilities, and the 'needs' that should be met in order to have access to the good things in life.

You use the wounds, everything about the person and it helps us figure out what the person's needs are. SRV provides the arrows that help us identify what the needs are and the 'if this ... then that's'. How we can identify needs alongside the 'good life.' We need to specify what 'the good life' means for the person and work towards this. (Interviewee 16)

All of the ten themes of SRV were mentioned or alluded to. The following are examples from the interviewees.

The SRV idea of unconsciousness perpetuates the wounding experiences of devaluation, in which consciousness helps us to see devaluation and wounding. The challenge of acknowledging unconsciousness was identified:

Unconsciousness ... it is tricky to know what you're unconscious about. (Interviewee 12)

Consciousness was also evident in discussions related to mindsets and to the Conservatism Corollary, though the latter term was not used at all. For example, there were stories of where consciousness had been used to:

- name and weigh up vulnerabilities
- identify compromises such as when managing a group home with its inherent grouping issues
- 'see through' espoused values, such as when co-tenants were wrongly perceived to be as a person's friend in a boarding house
- not be reliant on funds as the key path to the good things in life
- shine a light on unconscious beliefs, such as when a citizen had that lightbulb moment where they think *'I did think of people with a disability as child-like or asexual or those sorts of things' (Interviewee 2)*
- raise consciousness of devaluation, such as: *The horror of that, that someone would suggest putting a little 3-year-old boy who has an intellectual impairment in a taxi with a stranger 4 times a week was just appalling to me. (Interviewee 6) and they're just overwhelmingly surprised that the system isn't protecting people or that there is that removal from community and [removal of] valued roles rather than the support of it. (Interviewee 2)*

- choose responses to the needs of a vulnerable person that don't increase a person's vulnerability
- decide whether to speak up and weigh the likely negative or positive consequences of speaking up when a citizen made racist comments
- guide one's own behaviour: *SRV challenges me in how I can interact with people in less dehumanising ways. (Interviewee 18)*
- *not to judge other groups such as refugees using unconscious bias. (Interviewee 17)*
- be alert to the impact of the dominant model of service, such as a charity model or a commercial/business model.

The SRV idea of Mindsets was also apparent, even when the term wasn't used. This was particularly evident in the interviews when the consciousness of an issue led to changed mindsets, as illustrated in the following quotes.

I started treating her as if she wasn't going to die tomorrow. That was another awakening: there is a life to be lived here. You can treat someone as if they're dying and that's a very different life to what someone has when they are going to live a life. (Interviewee 19)
After PASSING, one staff member reframed how they understand their grandmother: not cranky, but rather [that] she's lost her valued roles. (Interviewee 17)

The links between mindsets, perceptions and expectations was a strong sub-theme; assumptions about capacity and potential were recognised as either helpful or harmful:

That whole notion that people with dementia can still learn ... so [it's important to] challenge some of those assumptions around the person with dementia. (Interviewee 10)

Another interviewee talked about the importance of modelling high expectations.

The most frequently referenced SRV idea was in regard to Roles. Quotes that reference the SRV theme of 'Roles' appear more fully in Section 3 'Outcomes'.

Dr Wolfensberger's more accurate term for mainstreaming and inclusion, Personal Social Integration and Valued Social Participation (PSI/VSP), was not used at all. However, the ideas related to this SRV theme appeared frequently in the interviews.

Alertness to the mindsets and expectancies about what takes away from the person's sense of self were evident. One interviewee stated:

[There are] perspectives that you have a mental illness diagnosis and that you are sick in the head and that there is something actually morally wrong with you; that was reinforced by some of the ways people interpreted my behaviours when I was unwell. Even people that were very close to me when I was unwell ... [began] to associate those behaviours with my character and that had a very corrosive influence on my sense of self, who I was able to be and who I had a right to be.' (Interviewee 18)

While the SRV idea of Interpersonal Identification was not explicitly mentioned many times, an example of its use relates to the relationship between advocate and protégé in order to facilitate personal social integration and valued social participation.

Also evident was the 'If this, then that' way of understanding and applying SRV. One interviewee used 'if this, then that' in deciding whether her son with a disability would attend a choir, whether he would be in the school orchestra and whether to join a segregated literacy group. She said: *Basically, weighing it up and determining which has the more likelihood to do something good in this person's life and which is riskier ... There are lots of ways you can do something and what you are doing is looking at what makes someone more vulnerable, what's a greater loss if you don't do this. (Interviewee 6)*

Another story related to an Aboriginal man who had been homeless and who had removed all the cupboard and room doors in his home. The worker said to the Department of Public Housing:

'If you're going to make him put all these doors back on, he's not going to stay and what's likely to happen then?' So just using that simple thing: what do we know about people, what are his needs, and laying out his experiences. So she just kept using 'if this, then that'. (Interviewee 3)

The SRV theme of Model Coherency was referenced, but was not a strongly named sub-theme. This is disappointing given the usefulness of the theme in

designing and analysing responses to the needs of devalued people.

While the SRV ideas around Imagery were used by the interviewees, its use did not seem to be over emphasized to the exclusion of other SRV ideas. This is heartening as anecdotally it seems that Imagery is one of the easiest SRV themes picked up after a workshop.

Also identified was the tension that SRV helps us identify when there is a limited application of only one SRV idea. The interviewee with the previous example of the Aboriginal man emphasized:

They'd be saying 'no it's got to be typical, it's got to be normal stuff.' [That is] a misuse of 'normal'. They were saying 'you have to have a door, you have to have cupboard doors, that's what everyone has, it's normal and it protects you', as if that's the answer. (Interviewee 3)

A brief comment

SRV is a large and complex theory and it was a rich opportunity for the interviewees and research assistants to listen for the interviewees' SRV ideas. It is not an easy thing for participants to leave a workshop with a clear idea about how to use SRV, and we hope that readers will gather more ideas from this report.

Now that we have laid out where SRV has been commonly used and the key ideas that the interviewees referred to, we will look at what has happened in the lives of people with a devalued status as a result of using SRV.

3. MANY POSITIVE OUTCOMES OCCURRED IN THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WITH A DEVALUED STATUS

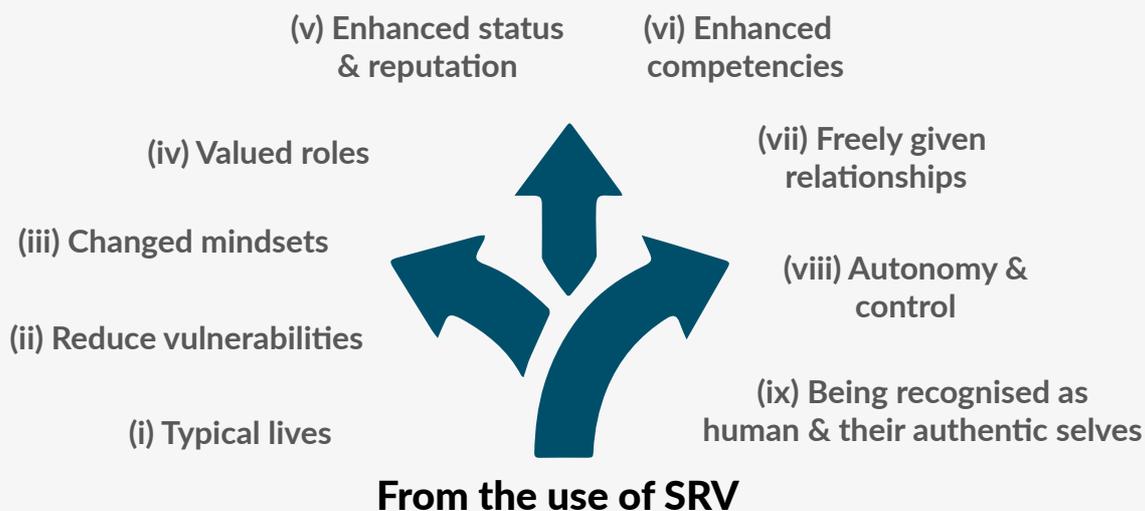


Figure 3. Positive outcomes

One interviewee reflected having seen positive outcomes from the application of Normalisation (the precursor to SRV) and SRV from the 1980s to now, *'The real outcomes for people is how they are about themselves ... People have become confident, they have identity, they have expectations, it's like they become real people. They have energy, they have vision, and views. People become liberated. (Interviewee 3)*

Interwoven into the stories on outcomes were stories of people with a devalued status finding purpose and meaning in life. These people were described as more autonomous in their thinking and decision-making and having experienced social participation in ordinary community places. A decrease in service dependencies was seen in the stories of those people who used generic services and had freely given relationships, as well as in those who increased their own competencies and who recruited their own staff.

Frequently mentioned outcomes are now described: typical lives, valued roles, enhanced imagery, enhanced competences, being recognised as human beings and becoming their authentic selves.

(I) TYPICAL LIVES

The joy in observing people with a devalued status experience the good things in life was palpable in the stories by interviewees.

I see lots of examples where families realise this isn't about that right group home; it's about 'I want the right life for my son/ daughter' and starting from that point and looking at what is the right life, not what house he can fit in ... They raised that bar which is really wonderful. (Interviewee 5)

Seeing people who have been disengaged, whose families [and] workers have all had very low expectations of them. Seeing them come to life and step into a role, 'I've got my own business', 'I've got my uniform that says [the name of my business] [and] I'm going to work'. So yes this person who was really hard to get out of bed each morning is jumping out of bed because she's going to work, and is going to the bank because she's got money to put in to the bank. It's those powerful real illustrations of what is possible ... If you can change your thinking, change other people's thinking, facilitate support in the right spots and then enable these opportunities to flourish. That's what's really exciting. (Interviewee 21)

The interviewees used SRV to pursue ordinary lives with intentional efforts, underpinned by high expectations and high consciousness of the wounds and vulnerabilities to further wounding. For example, one interviewee recalled the high expectations her parents had of her sister, such as to *go to a local school, do swimming lessons with her siblings, little Nippers, ballet. (Interviewee 1)*

These expectations and other opportunities were fulfilled and now the person is a woman who lives in her own home, *is a poet, is a sister, works in the city. She's not a woman with Down syndrome with an IQ of X; we choose not to share that. (Interviewee 1)*

The pursuit and the experience of 'typical lifestyles' was frequently described as being linked to having a positive vision for a desirable life. The following story shows additional high points in life; *SRV led to huge opportunities for [my daughter] that I would never have expected. She was invited to present at a conference in Edmonton, Canada. She travelled overseas. She skated on an ice rink in the middle of winter in Alberta. Those experiences I didn't expect would happen. The good things in life were so unlikely and had to be worked for. Those were some of the surprises. (Interviewee 19)*

Even the ways that people look and move when in valued roles and with access to the good things in life are positive outcomes. One interviewee related the story: *We were down the coast over the summer holidays. We went to an art gallery and the artist had met our kids because I kept going back there. But he really warmed to [my son], and then when he learned a bit about the work that I do, he sort of said well it's really evident in the way [my son] holds himself and presents himself that you are implementing what you're doing for your job in [my son]'s life. (Interviewee 15)*

(ii) REDUCED VULNERABILITIES

Another set of benefits related to reducing degrees of vulnerability and low social status. One interviewee showed a high consciousness of vulnerability to wounding when her husband was in a mental health hospital.

My SRV helped me to have the tools to get my husband to be perceived differently and positively, being aware that how I behaved was how my husband would be perceived. When he was incarcerated in the mental

health system there was a painting of Munch's painting, The Scream. That was the welcoming you got in the first room he walked into in acute care! I had to make sure I used every single technique to make sure that things were done right. Just going in as a family member. His [Dr Wolfensberger's] writings about the hospital were very helpful [so we brought] his personal belongings, food, books, clothing. Things get stolen all the time, [so] just being there, making sure that my husband wasn't seen as an isolated man, that he had family and someone that would care about him and check in and that someone was making sure what was going on. Sometimes I would turn up twice a day to be a safeguard, not to cause trouble. Then when he escaped [from hospital], my teachings helped me advocate for him. This led to an independent review, which showed that he should have never been treated this way and put in that place under the circumstances. (Interviewee 5)

Another interviewee intentionally tried to raise the consciousness of family members whose sons/daughters lived in a group home. *Talking about negative roles, families could see lots of it. And they could see that continuing with negative roles wouldn't be good for their son/daughter. And the community seeing them in negative roles leads to further wounding. (Interviewee 12)*

One story concerned the vulnerability to losing the role of father so the service *assisted one man to practice his reading so he could read to his son, affirming his role of father. (Interviewee 4)*

This service also worked intentionally to find new roles, such as *assisting a young woman to explore alternative media through her iPad to develop her role as a painter. (Interviewee 4)*

Consciousness to avoid further wounding was further demonstrated, *By avoiding the creation of devalued environments where people with disabilities may be gathered together in ghetto-like situations or in static situations ... Their time is not to be wasted with irrelevant or inactive pursuits and so we need to look for effectiveness. (Interviewee 4)*

Avoiding negative image juxtapositions was used to reduce vulnerabilities to rejection. In one example, the son of an interviewee was initially attending a literacy program in a setting and grouping that had positively valued juxtapositions.

The program was then moved to another building as part of a respite program, where he was sitting with a group of other students with a disability in amongst a larger group of people with disabilities. The interviewee reflected:

Again, that was one of the things that those SRV alerts sounded. It was very upsetting. So, all those filters from doing PASSING all those years ago influenced [my analysis of the] juxtaposition of the programs. We didn't continue. (Interviewee 6)

Having the interests of the person represented at decision-making junctures was seen to be important, given people's heightened vulnerabilities. One interviewee described being at a meeting to decide whether a person should part-purchase a car for a group home and was sure to ask questions like: *'What does she gain from that?' and 'how is that fair that she is contributing to that?'* (Interviewee 11)

Avoiding reinforcing the negative stereotypes was also an outcome of SRV application, such as *'Gangs' of [devalued people] picking up rubbish as a job [was] painted as a meaningful job, whereas we now know to go to a higher level. Even working in McDonalds, you know that's a typical teenager job but we would probably [aim for] a higher status role. (Interviewee 15)*

(iii) CHANGED MINDSETS

One interviewee observed the changed mindsets in family members following both educational SRV workshops as well as SRV-based discussions. She noted that *Families haven't been exposed to SRV before, it's life changing for them because they've never thought of it in that way before. So it's a whole different way of viewing the world. Accepting. So it's not about saying 'well society's not accepting our son or daughter, so they [society] should change'. It's actually giving them something that they can be working on themselves or their family member to then take up roles in the community or build skills or competencies in certain areas. So then they are more likely to be able to succeed. So yeah it's a bit of a revelation for some people. (Interviewee 15)*

In appreciating the dynamics of social devaluation, there is an implicit question of 'what do I think about devaluation?' and engaging one's own values. One interviewee said,

I think helping people understand well firstly, what makes up the good things in life. And then helping people move to a position of, 'why would that be any different for a person with a disability?' And then starting to help them see that it's all about society's perception. (Interviewee 15)

(iv) VALUED ROLES

Roles explicitly mentioned included roles at home, such as neighbour; work roles, including small business owner; leisure and sports roles; as well as relationship roles. Roles of contribution were also identified, such as the man who set up a Heart Foundation walk (Interviewee 17). Another interviewee described that even though one young person was attending a segregated unit in a school, *he got meaningful work while he was still at school and that's very rare. He was in a unit so it was even more unlikely that he was going to get meaningful employment. That job helped make the transition out of school into adult life much easier. (Interviewee 15)*

One interviewee worked with a young woman in a sheltered workshop for two years, and then supported her into a valued volunteer role. *We started off doing voluntary work in library settings. [At some stage she moved to a paid role.] Last year I was invited to her celebration of 20 years as an employee at the local council which was fabulous to think that she had stuck at that for 20 years ... The family rang me to ask me to be involved in the civic ceremony which was lovely. (Interviewee 10)*

Another interviewee reflected on roles related to being in one's own home as an outcome of high expectations. This story also illustrates that mindsets can be changed.

Having a home, being a homeowner, being a host, all of that. So home [roles] are really critical to what we do ... [We help] families to plan for the future and see capacity [including] where families might have held very low expectations of what they're capable of. With the right support and the right conversations, ... people can actually step up. One woman we support whose parents had very low expectations of her including thinking that the agency was going to provide all the support she needed ... that woman has got a really strong network of friends, she's got a whole range of volunteering and community engagements. She's flourished.

She's got a brother and a sister who also have very low expectations for her, but they've been able to see what she's been capable of and that's changed how they have thought about her as well. So changing people's expectations through helping people to be competent and to have a valued role within a home setting is really powerful. And also the safeguarding that freely given relationships brings and the advocacy it can bring and the sense of security for the future. (Interviewee 21).

The stories of valued roles were interwoven with consciousness of wounds and vulnerability, and holding higher expectations.

Another illustration of roles through higher expectations came from an interviewee who identified that the valued roles in *[a young man]'s inspirational speaking business ... [where he] has a gift of sharing experiences and motivating people (Interviewee 1)* would not have been possible without the higher expectations that SRV helps people think about.

Being in a valued role also opened the door to other valued roles, illustrating how a competency-based role could open the door to a relationship role.

[My son] started [in] a drama class. So we are always on the lookout for who is in the drama class, [and] are they in the same school? ... And we've just noticed that there are kids that are going to the same venue but are doing different things. So one of his friends from school, he's doing tutoring. [That leads us to question] how can we get him to be hanging out, you know to take up the role of friend. It's so complex. People can go and have all of this therapy around how to maintain friendships, but to me you've got to have that role of friend and work with it in the moment. It's not about preparing with a therapist and then having to transfer that knowledge to reality. (Interviewee 15)

Paying attention to those features that convey expectations of a role was seen to contribute to the success of a role.

I think it's crucial to talk about the role communicators because that's where things can go awry. [It doesn't work] if the image is not coherent with the role or the people that are surrounding the person are full of paid support people and it sort of jars with what the role should look like and particularly the image of those support workers. (Interviewee 15)

One interviewee who lives with mental health issues reflected on her own journey with valued roles.

My role as a student was driven by my role to be a good mother for my son; my role as a worker was driven for a long time by my desire for better things for my son. (Interviewee 9)

At least one interviewee acted to defend against the loss of roles for an older relative who had moved into residential care: *We tried to make sure that we keep her in her roles. Trying to keep her in her aunt role, sister role and to keep her connections [with friend and family]. (Interviewee 6)*

Trying to increase the value in a role was evident in a story where the role goal of someone who enjoys craft activities, but could easily move into the sick role, was supported into the photojournalist role rather than a lesser valued role of scrapbooker (Interviewee 9). While both are examples of positively valued roles, one is more likely to be more highly valued because of the perceived level of competence required, as well as the kind of people photojournalists spend time with.

Holding the tension between needs and roles was evident in some stories, such as around the natural care that one shows toward a sibling and the additional demands when the sibling has a disability. *I often had that juggle with my daughters' [roles] and [my son], to keep him in that role of brother so that as a family we look out for each other. But I didn't want it to get to a point where he became their responsibility or a burden on them. I wanted him to be in a legitimate role of brother and for them to have some responsibility as his sisters but not feel as they were his keeper. So, I think SRV has influenced those thoughts too. What role is he in, in the family? (Interviewee 6)*

Role outcomes also included relationship roles. One interviewee related the story of a man who lived in poor circumstances in a boarding house with other people with mental health issues. This interviewee relates the outcome that resulted when this man was introduced to two ordinary citizens. *One guy who goes walking with him and another who tutors him and they have developed a friendship where they say they are like brothers. Here we are with this highly vulnerable situation where he wants to get out of this house. You could say that the work has gone nowhere because all we have done is link him with two allies in two years but there is affection [between them]. (Interviewee 4)*

(v) ENHANCED STATUS AND REPUTATION

SRV created benefits and outcomes of people being perceived more positively by being associated with positively valued settings, people and activities, in valued roles, with other positive consequences.

I looked at where I wanted [my daughter] to be when I had choice and capacity to employ someone to support her as a young teenager. I learnt very quickly about highly valued roles. The importance of being in places that are highly valued. [My daughter] attended the local youth group at the local church. That moved on to the local high school that her two younger sisters were attending. It became about having her accepted and enrolled at Mitcham Girls High School. That was a huge, huge challenge! She got kicked out pretty quickly. She was deemed an OH&S issue by the Department of Education. Then it was about her doing some senior class and then through another strong SRV ally, in Dimity Peter, who was then lecturing up at Flinders Uni, I was introduced to several people who were happy to have [my daughter] in their university classes. So she started auditing university in her later teen years. Importantly, she was auditing at university not at TAFE. She joined the Flinders Friends of Shakespeare Association. (Interviewee 19)

One interviewee who has experienced devaluation reflected on the impact of her appearance, her behaviour and who she associates with as an aspect of her personal imagery.

I know that people will accept me more if I dress more appropriately and professionally than if I dress differently. I probably would not know this if I did not have to work so hard with other elements early on in life. I am also aware that when I sit with people who do dress differently or choose to dress differently, it will change people's estimations of me but I still choose to sit with them. Recently there have been many family funerals and I have behaved myself very well in terms of what the expected behaviours are for a person with mental health issues very consciously. (Interviewee 9)

For other interviewees supporting very vulnerable people, an understanding of imagery issues showed in their efforts to improve factors related to image: *With her we had to think really carefully about image because she looked dreadful. She dribbled because of the cerebral palsy, and her breath smelled because she took anticonvulsants.*

And she always had an [unflattering] haircut and so we had this whole effort to [help] her look better. [She got] a girly hairstyle and was wearing make-up and even when she was in her uniform for work, we made sure that she looked like a [valued] person. That [negative appearance image] was really important to break down. Her communication aids were also fantastic; they ended up being beautiful. She had a little book that was the size of a diary; they had a page per topic and she could turn to it and point to the pictures to tell you as an adjunct to her speaking. (Interviewee 7)

(vi) ENHANCED COMPETENCIES

As SRV explains, having and maintaining competencies of the body, mind, and in one's social behaviours are highly valued in society. Acquiring competencies were observed as worthwhile benefits of using SRV. In turn, competencies were linked to the achievement of valued roles in the following story.

We definitely talk about building the competencies for the roles. We work with a lot of families who have kids of school age, and leaving-school [age] and getting in to work. So really trying to help them break it all down, tasks that are quite suited to the person's skills, but then building on skills to match the job. [We also] help them make the least dangerous assumptions around their capacity and competencies. (Interviewee 15)

Another interviewee talked about the years of bodybuilding and coordination work for a person to be in the role of rower and member of a rowing club. For one person, improvement in mobility and nutrition led to the person doing fun-runs and raising money for charity. Another interviewee told the story of a person who was supported into the role of volunteer and the skills that she learnt in that role led her to get a second volunteer role for which she did not need support.

For another person who had a life of many wounds, the role of swimmer was strengthened through developing skills in buying their admission ticket, choosing a lane, and navigating around other people. The interviewee emphasised the importance of the 'right' physical environment, which for this man involved using the neighbourhood pool that he could walk to.

Developing competencies also reduced the level of dependence on services. One interviewee reflected on a person who had two crises in one week that in earlier times would have led to the person wanting to commit suicide.

The increased competencies over time paid off at a time of crisis:

I had tried to get hold of her [by phone] but couldn't and the reason I couldn't get her on the phone was because she was on the phone sorting out the whole thing that needed to be sorted out. (Interviewee 9)

Interviewees talked about competencies as not just task-based but in social relationships as well. One story told of competencies in the role of church member that opened the door to another valued role.

(vii) PERSONAL SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND VALUED SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

The challenges for those who had experienced the wounds of rejection and distancing were noted, *Looking out for a long-term commitment and being attentive to when people show an interest. (Interviewee 11)*

SRV has a clear definition for what is commonly referred to as integration or inclusion. To meet the SRV criteria, the individual has a typical number and range of freely given relationships with ordinary citizens, in valued settings, and doing valued activities. In SRV terms, this is considered 'personal social integration and valued social participation'. SRV also highlights what personal social integration and valued social participation (PSI/VSP) is not: friendships with others who have a devalued status and gatherings in devalued places with devalued activities. One interviewee noted that *People [who experience PSI/VSP] are in relationships in ways that are different from other people with disabilities. (Interviewee 8)*

The benefits of being in valued places and engaging in valued activities bore fruitful relationships in the following story;

From youth group [membership] comes special relationships. A lass named Lisa stepped out as wanting a friendship with [my daughter]. So being in those places with like-minded people ended up taking care of a whole lot of things that I didn't have to create. They rolled on from one another ... Interestingly, people started to speak to her.

People in the general public who used to only talk to the support worker now engaged with her on the topic of Shakespeare, water purification, National Parks. (Interviewee 19)

The following story illustrates that being in the role of student at a regular school led to freely given relationship roles that endured over time.

With [my son], I think he has had a very good life. He is a very privileged man. He has been abseiling, canoeing, at music camps and the list would go on and on and on. All of these things, if he hadn't been there [at the regular school] and if I hadn't been alert to that necessity [of good schooling] then he wouldn't have experienced those [experiences]. He has friends now. Also, for example, six years later [after finishing high school], one of his friends from school died in that plane crash in Darwin. Somebody from [my son]'s class texted me and said that we are having a class service and [my son] needs to be there. That is really moving I think. The other place [for] connections is at the golf club. [My son] has gone to pay golf with his dad for years now on a Saturday. The same principal of the school goes there regularly; he is a good connector through his association to [my husband]. So, by association [my son] is [connected] too. He is now thoroughly embedded in that club as a social member. Once a week he works for a couple of hours; that has come from being embedded in the club. Everybody knows him and if he is not there he is missed. It really helps to strengthen his role as an adult and as a man. (Interviewee 6)

For some devalued people, the outcome of freely given relationships came from having a valued role, such as was evident in the story of a café owner who gave a person his private number after he sold the café business. Other freely given relationships came from intentional invitations to citizens, such as through using intentional network development. Church was the catalyst for her. It opened the door *and taught her some skills. Taught her how to interact with others, taking on valued roles such as teaching sign language. She has blossomed ... she had no reason to get up before. Now she is up and ready to go as she has a sense of purpose. She has conversations about things that matter. (Interviewee 14)*

Another set of benefits was described by an interviewee who reflected that within a freely given relationship, the person with the devalued status was seen at her best, and that this was *held up for others [to see]*, therefore influencing how she was perceived. This interviewee noted that the *team has helped to rebuild family relationships. The community is the safeguard for her into the future. (Interviewee 14)*

Family relationships, such as sister and daughter were also emphasised by many as important. Relationship roles can also be beneficial for one's own healing and health.

The role of mother was so desirable for one woman, yet she so feared her own (in)competence that she said: *I had to push that side of myself to decide to develop this connection and intimate bond with this child ... I made a conscious decision when my son was young to be with him and care for him full time and that was very difficult. (Interviewee 9)*

(viii) AUTONOMY AND CONTROL

Outcomes related to autonomy and control are significant given the number of people who experience the wound of loss of control, especially once there are services and systems in their lives. This is especially sharp in these contemporary times where many services are *about control and risk mitigation, not about the people and the relationship. (Interviewee 8)*

Interviewees related contexts of greater autonomy and control, such as the following: *I'm really aware of the life wasting that goes on and did go on for [my son]. His life is a whole lot different in the last five years because we now have more control over the things that happen in his life. (Interviewee 20)*

When I finally got some funding to employ [my daughter]'s workers it was all pitched around having control as close to the vulnerable person as possible. (Interviewee 19)

The dilemmas in trying to increase autonomy were known to the experienced practitioners. As one person said, *Just giving choice and control does not always make a good life. Sometimes it [i.e. choice] is even harmful. Yet we can't just take over from people. (Interviewee 18)*

Even for those experiencing high levels of loss, such as in the story of an aunt moving to a nursing home, the interviewee tried to maintain the aunt's autonomy as much as possible. *In the whole process we made sure she was the driver. She went through her things that she would take with her and what she would leave. When she got to her place we tried to encourage her to set up her space so that it was very clearly about her life. (Interviewee 6)*

One parent, in reflecting about autonomy in the life of her son, highlighted the importance of enabling him to make good decisions in his own favour. *She works at making sure that our son is aware. I think that often gets missed, where people don't actually try and bring along the person's awareness of how they're perceived. So we will definitely point out to our son, 'oh if you do that, it's probably not what teenagers do; it's probably what someone younger would do'. So he now starts asking, 'is that okay?', 'is this what a teenager does?' because he really wants to look cool ... I think that a part of his impairment is that he doesn't understand the consequences of a lot of his actions. So helping him be more aware of that is then empowering him to be his own person and making his own decisions. (Interviewee 15)*

(ix) BEING RECOGNISED AS HUMAN AND BECOMING THEIR AUTHENTIC SELVES

Applying SRV brought benefits that spoke deeply to the humanity of us all. One interviewee saw developing roles, not wasting people's time, developing competencies and enhancing image as *appreciating the sacredness of each person's life (Interviewee 4)*, a significant outcome in the life of people with a devalued status. Another said, *SRV has paved the way for [a better life], even through very tough times. I know it's possible because I've seen it, even coming from very dark times and places, to where someone is able to realise who they are. (Interviewee 14)* One interviewee reflected, *People would say things like 'what's wrong with your son?'. Well there's nothing wrong with him but, by God, there is a whole lot of stuff wrong with society and the way that they treat him. 'Who is he? What's wrong with him?' and I go, 'well there's nothing [wrong]'. 'Well tell me about him, describe him.'*

So the description now is that he's 30 years old, he's the oldest of four brothers, he's a renter, he rents a private property, he's a gem and mineral enthusiast, he's somebody who really loves people, he's someone who likes pizza and then way, way down the list, he also happens to have an intellectual disability. (Interviewee 20)

The impacts of the mental health system and the accumulation of negative roles, such that the person identifies largely with the identity of 'sick', was also highlighted. The interviewee went on to say, *I have been able to support people to rediscover aspects of their identity and some of the skills that are involved with their identity prior to becoming unwell, even if that was some time ago. That has been the bulk of the conversation I tend to have with people around some of those places in their life where they have a sense of connection and connectedness with others and what sort of identity they were in inhabiting at the time, what sort of roles they were fulfilling. (Interviewee 9)* The work to emphasise the shared humanness of people with a devalued status is highlighted by the following interviewee who said, *SRV has also helped me try to shine a light for other people, 'how is he like you, not how is he not like you?*

What is it about him?' I try to draw from people their connection to him by bringing to the forefront those things that are similar; 'oh you've got a Ford, yeah he really loves Ford cars.' So always trying to bring to the attention of other people, 'what it is that makes him like you, not what makes him different'. I think that's a really strong thing in SRV. (Interviewee 20)

A brief comment

The benefits and outcomes stemming from SRV application are clear, not only for the people with a devalued status but also for the people around them and those applying SRV. Equally impressive was the appreciation that the interviewees had for the many dilemmas and compromises that are inherent in working for better outcomes.

Having described the contexts in which SRV was used by the interviewees, including the key SRV ideas used and the outcomes from applying SRV, we will share the brief thoughts of the interviewees about their experiences in trying to apply SRV.

4. THE JOURNEY TO SRV OUTCOMES IS MULTIFACETED

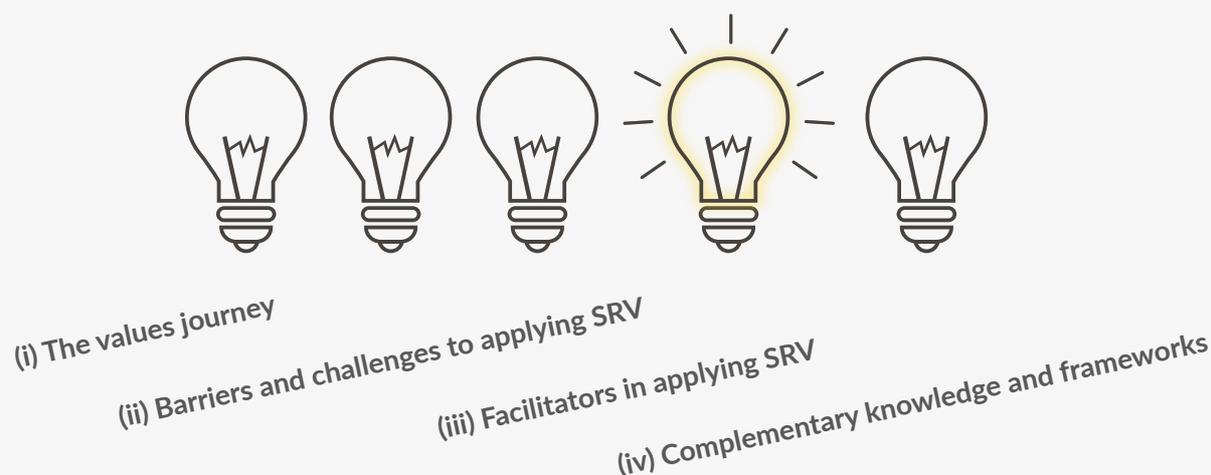


Figure 4. Some of the journeys when using SRV

A brief opportunity was taken during the interviews to explore those things that helped and hindered the application of SRV. The interviewees reflected on the engagement of their values, the barriers and challenges, and complementary frameworks and change strategies that assisted the application of SRV.

This section begins with an exploration of the values that are engaged when applying SRV and their impacts.

(i) THE VALUES JOURNEY

One motivating set of values in applying SRV is the belief that people with a devalued status deserve to have the good things of life, in other words, lifestyles that others with a valued status generally take for granted. This set of values led the interviewees to work against circumstances, such as segregation and congregation, that are likely to wound people. One interviewee recounted the values clash when the institutionalisation of an older aunt was inevitable:

For me the tension of having that SRV background and walking alongside someone heading to institutionalised living was a clash. I suppose with [my aunt], knowing that [moving to a nursing home] was inevitable because I couldn't do really any more than what I was doing because of [my son] and mum. (Interviewee 6)

Yet the interviewee still found SRV helpful, which was indicated when she said: *it was being conscious of what could protect her from what was happening and how to help her make this adjustment in way that was keeping her in the role of being a competent adult who could make her own decisions ... I was very conscious of her having memorabilia of who she was, her interests. (Interviewee 6)*

In this circumstance, the interviewee also spoke of trying to defend against the loss of valued roles.

Another interviewee pointed out a common experience of those who apply SRV: *Sometimes we can't help, and we have to stand there and bear witness to the suffering. (Interviewee 5)*

One interviewee framed this as both a weight and a responsibility and went on to identify the values choice that a witness to suffering has.

Existentially, I have no choice. I can't undo all this [SRV] thinking. Once you know all this stuff, you have a choice ... You can either block it all out and walk away and pretend like it didn't happen, but to do that would take so much more effort than to say I know something and I am going to change that. (Interviewee 16)

The interviewees seemed to find ways to apply SRV even when the physical and social environments were less likely to meet people's needs, despite personal costs such as to one's reputation or wellbeing. So not only is being a witness to suffering difficult, but also *the system is designed to work against [those who try for change] ... it's not impossible ... but the Empire [that is, the system] will strike back. (Interviewee 8)*

Another interviewee also referenced a comment made by Dr Wolfensberger during a Moral Coherency workshop:

That's the challenge when you're working in systems that wound and you're trying to un-wound. There is always a price to be paid. I never get worried about the ones that have been burnt out, I worry about the ones that don't [get their fire lit with enthusiasm]. (Interviewee 2)

The challenge of working in dysfunctional and chaotic systems tests the values and practices of those who try to apply SRV.

Young leaders experience cognitive dissonance once they've been exposed to SRV, and are not in a position of [much] influence, so they leave or they think that it's a good idea but can't do anything with it. (Interviewee 8)

Other personal challenges included one's own unconsciousness, one's perceptions and the insidious nature of devaluation and wounding. As a result, *because it [unconsciousness] is there, you have to do the dance every day. (Interviewee 12)*

Another interviewee described this as *The challenge is setting aside your service hat to see something for what it is. And to stop defending certain actions that you might see in your service/practice. You are always challenging unconscious assumptions. (Interviewee 5)*

When there is coherence between one's personal and organisational values, enacted through SRV, the experience is more rewarding. One interviewee described the uplifting feelings evoked from being on the Board of an agency that actively applied SRV to guide their decision making. He said that he used the organisation as *a soul enrichment process* because of the coherence between the espoused values of the agency and the values in action, and his own personal values and the agency values that underpinned the application of SRV.

(ii) BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES TO APPLYING SRV

The interviewees had met many challenges and barriers when trying to apply SRV. These difficulties relate to the theory itself, characteristics of the service systems and society, and low commitment by others. This section provides a brief overview of each.

(a) Barriers and challenges regarding the theory itself SRV itself is a complex and multilayered theory; it has many valuable practical implications that interviewees found were thwarted by a series of challenges.

Regarding the theory itself, challenges included the journey to gather sufficient knowledge. One interviewee described how difficult it was to get access to SRV material outside of a workshop and getting access to others who knew the material well. Therefore, it is *hard to get depth (Interviewee 8)* required to understand or apply SRV more readily. Another challenge is the complexity of the theory itself. The same interviewee identified, *People have picked up elements of SRV but translate these elements into the 'simple', like person centred planning; the problem is that people don't have the SRV foundations which give depth.*

Another interviewee identified the challenges in contexts where people 'hear' something that the theory doesn't teach, such as *in mental health, issues of normalcy are really important and it can look like SRV is trying to push people to become more normal. (Interviewee 4)*

On a related note, the issue of 'choice and control' is so highly valued that 'choice' can be the main guiding principle to meeting someone's needs. Even when unchecked 'choice and control' could cause harm to the person due to their vulnerabilities, as identified previously.

A further challenge highlighted by interviewees related to the complexity of the concepts and the technical language, which makes it difficult for those without high levels of education and English comprehension to understand the material. One interviewee identified the *issue that many front-line workers who have English as a second language struggle with the material.*

Others hear the material and *they might love it but they don't know what to do with it, partly because the theory is so inaccessible ... getting exposure to SRV is hard for them, for example, there is not a big SRV presence on line. (Interviewee 8)*

The interviewee cautioned though that a learner might start at a simple level, but if they stay at a simple level, it means that they finish at the simple level and will not be able to deal with challenges.

Interviewees also identified issues when SRV is taught by those who don't have a good knowledge of SRV, which perverts key understandings about SRV. In addition, the complexity of the theory makes it hard to know where to start: *After the training I thought to myself, 'what will I do with this now? How will I inject it into my little service that I run?'*

It was overwhelming. Where do you start? After all, the bottom line is not to just talk about it but influence someone's life. (Interviewee 12)

(b) Barriers and challenges related to characteristics of service systems

Descriptions of the ways that many services currently function includes the understanding of what a relevant and potent service looks like, which comes *at the very bottom of things that organisations typically focus on*. In this instance, the interviewee was referring to the priorities given to finance, human resource systems, corporate governance and compliance standards. Furthermore, the interviewee identified that *even when the rhetoric of SRV is used, [there is] no understanding* and that *services are about control and risk mitigation, not about the people and the relationship. (Interviewee 8)*

Such comments remind us of the range of stakeholders whose needs compete with and often trump the needs of the people with a devalued status.

The commercialisation of services, *the commodification of people (Interviewee 8)*, and *systems that are deeply resistant to change (Interviewee 8)* are contemporary characteristics of formal human service systems that create many barriers to the implementation of SRV.

Another interviewee identified that the widespread embrace of managers without content knowledge and those with faith in administrative processes like form filling, data collection, audits etc., has led to *a diminishment of skills and a diminishment of understanding the overarching concepts that might drive what a national policy looks like, that is, what social and economic participation means. (Interviewee 13)*

Concurrently, the ongoing societal forces to devalue and wound were still very familiar to the interviewees. One interviewee who is also a parent described the pressures placed on her to choose a special education unit for her son, when *we have a*

kindy just down the road; that's where his sisters went; why wouldn't he go down there? They [the unit] phoned me a number of times to ask me if I was going to enrol [my son] there. I explained that I wanted him to just go to the local kindy. (Interviewee 6)

While the previous quote reflects social devaluation as a driving force for congregation and segregation, the next quote reflects the power of non-programmatic forces.

The actions of special units of pressuring parents to choose 'special' quite possibly relates to 'keeping the numbers up' – without adequate enrolments, special units become financially untenable. (Interviewee 3)

The pressures to devalue people are such that it becomes difficult to know what is typical and valued in our culture: *The system perverts the understanding of what is socially valued because they are conditioned to service responses. (Interviewee 8)*

This interviewee was referring to a habitual response to use paid formal services rather than generic community resources and other means that people with a valued status use to get their needs met.

(c) Barriers and challenges related to low commitment by others

Most of the interviewees relied on other people, such as those who they supervise, to apply SRV with vulnerable people. A common sub-theme was that there is a challenge to get the 'right' people and to get them to do the 'right' things'. One interviewee said, Support workers need to understand about highly valued roles, how to *support the person to look and act in the role so they are seen as competent ... If a worker doesn't get it [right] quickly they are moved on. And we don't employ the best of a bad bunch [of applicants], it's the beginning of the demise of moving forward. (Interviewee 19)*

Ordinary citizens in community life, such as doctors and teachers, were also seen to present barriers to the presence and participation of people with a devalued status such as when they bring low expectations of typical lifestyles and when they recommend placement in the segregated system.

Interviewees also found that low commitment to applying SRV from those in leadership roles in an agency, or by workers, and parents led to many challenges.

Our bosses were people who hadn't done the study that we had and so they knew nothing, quite frankly, about this sort of thing. (Interviewee 3)

Even though the organisations were keen to have the workshops, there was no change observed because the leadership was not clear about what is required to apply SRV and so the system's demands such as compliance requirements prevailed. (Interviewee 8)

Challenges were experienced when the values of an agency clashed with values that would help the application of SRV. This could be considered an example of a hostile environment. One interviewee said, *Young leaders experience cognitive dissonance once they've been exposed to SRV, and are not in a position of [much] influence, so they leave or they think that it's a good idea but can't do anything with it. (Interviewee 8)*

Interviewees reflected on their unsuccessful attempts to transform agency practices, including using combative advocacy, such as *I have to realise that behaving in ways that got in people's faces was actually just hurting me more. (Interviewee 9)*

In a similar vein, interviewees reflected on early times when the teaching and learning of SRV *took almost this 'zealot' like approach. [SRV was seen to be] too much the 'be all and end all' rather than understanding [SRV's] limitations. This mindset can do a lot of damage if there is misunderstanding of SRV or focusing mainly on particular elements. (Interviewee 16)*

Having limited knowledge of SRV can be a barrier in itself for a range of reasons. There are many examples where SRV and its precursor Normalisation were misapplied, such as in the following story. *One man would walk all around the institution delivering the mail every day. He got to know everyone, all of the nurses and all of the residents. He had a very social life and generally a pretty good life ... We, not me, the program, moved Les into a one-bedroom unit in the city; he didn't really want to go. He was moved away from his brother, away from everyone who knew him ... He was moved into a one-bedroom place and he had no one to assist him to make new relationships and he'd lost all of his roles. You can see why people [when they are] introduced to SRV with stupid examples like that, think it was appalling and think 'no, I'm not interested.' (Interviewee 3)*

This interviewee also highlighted that the user of SRV might not appreciate their own limited understanding of its principles: *Often we've talked to people and they've said 'I do this because SRV says so' and I think 'well, no it doesn't.' (Interviewee 3)*

There are also impacts on devalued people: *Unless [great skills and concepts] are really embedded in the way I do things they're just going to come across as really stilted to the other person. And they are going to feel like they [the people] are a project and I'm always trying to resist trying to make people feel like they are project. (Interviewee 18)*

Interviewees had other stories that illustrated good intent, but *sophistication wasn't there and no one was able to teach us that. (Interviewee 3)* In part, this lack of understanding has arisen from such things as a lack of good mentors, subtle expressions of devaluation that haven't been noticed, chaotic system changes, and poor change strategies.

There were frequent personal costs when trying to apply SRV, especially through the witnessing of suffering. One interviewee recounted a story where a man said to her, *'It's alright for you because you can go home to your husband, house, and life, while I have to stay here.' He had an ability to step out and say this with such perception and clarity, and then step back into the role of being the 'vulnerable person' and a 'menace' ... When I look back at things I realize that I have so many of these people's stories of their suffering, I have the responsibility of carrying these people's stories, their suffering. (Interviewee 16)*

Based on experiences in both disability and other social justice systems, one interviewee said: *Working to change systems makes you the target for those who resist. All the negative energy is directed toward the messenger, so you have to absorb that and work to get people to look at the actual system design problems. (Interviewee 3)*

(III) FACILITATORS IN APPLYING SRV

Interviewees identified a range of conditions that had facilitated the application of SRV in their experience. A brief overview is provided. Facilitators included:

- a) Developing knowledge of SRV through formal accredited events and training that is accessible. A caution was sounded that in making SRV accessible, it shouldn't be *fluffy*

(*Interviewee 8*) and lose depth. PASSING was seen as particularly likely to sharpen one's commitment to using SRV. Others shared that PASSING consolidated the issues and was also very effective in developing alternative understandings in family members and workers. In relation to helping people get the most out of training, interviewees used strategies, such as giving participants things to read before the training and being part of an in-service study group.

- b) Having many SRV conversations. One example was using the PASSING tool to analyse a team's own program, having critical conversations and giving feedback to each other. The process of the Foundation Discussion typically used in PASSING was seen as a process that allowed for a focus on the individual or group. Another interviewee related regularly discussing a single theme of SRV in a team meeting. Talking with others who also struggled to apply SRV helped.
- c) Having access to mentors and role models. This was a strong sub-theme; the words 'mentor'/'mentored'/'mentoring'/'mentors'/'mentorship' was mentioned 30 times across the interviews. One interviewee said that a mentor helped because *it's hard to see the bigger picture; I sometimes need a clear direction to keep going. (Interviewee 14)* Others referred to the many dilemmas that present themselves when trying to apply SRV and that mentors have a role to play in both exploring the issues and providing critical comments. One interviewee reflected that the workers supporting her sister had little formal SRV training, but that they had received a lot of mentoring which helped them apply SRV principles.
- d) Being a part of SRV networks was also seen as part of the journey to applying SRV. One interviewee relied on peers *who were well studied in SRV ... SRV was part of the conversation we would have. (Interviewee 9)* Another was advantaged by using the network when they *pointed me in the right places by our allies looking for examples of where people were doing this really well ... and they've created links to others overseas ... people who were struggling with the same issues and trying to understand together.*

(*Interviewee 19*) A related reflection, *Not acting alone* was recommended, providing the allies shared a vision of a better life even though they might not necessarily understand SRV.

The interviewees revealed that there were some circumstances that made it more likely for SRV ideas to lead to more positive outcomes.

These circumstances included where:

- a) the work is with individuals with individualised funding
- b) the person or group and their needs are well known
- c) there is a depth of relationship with the individual or group
- d) there is an understanding of behaviour as a communication and a reflection of needs
- e) the primary focus is on the individual or group with a devalued status
- f) the focus is on valued roles, such as *roles is the biggest idea (Interviewee 17)*
- g) formal paid human services are not the (primary) answer for most needs
- h) the understanding of what 'good service' is relates to the vulnerable people, with commitment to offering responses that are relevant to people's needs and that use effective strategies
- i) the people who are employed, the ways that they are recruited and the roles for which they are recruited support goals that are consistent with SRV, such as *We were careful with where we advertised (Interviewee 7); we recruit people we think are most likely to understand the plight of wounded people (Interviewee 12); workers who can transfer competencies to my sister (Interviewee 1)*
- j) utilising one's own role as a leadership role through influencing and role modelling to others. This includes moral leadership, seen in the comment *standing alongside people matters; persistence pays off in believing in people (Interviewee 5)*
- k) the agency or program is small, such as *'pockets of goodness sit in small agencies or in individual lives. (Interviewee 8)*

(iv) COMPLEMENTARY KNOWLEDGE AND FRAMEWORKS

Many interviewees referred to frameworks they use in addition to SRV. An interviewee highlighted that SRV in itself might not be sufficient in order to apply SRV. He observed, *Applying SRV, if you just know some SRV theory or if you know the theory really well, but don't know all this other stuff around SRV, it makes it less useful, or possibly not as relevant. (Interviewee 3)*. Another interviewee said, *When talking about SRV, it's a really helpful theory and it equips people on the journey, but it's not the whole answer. (Interviewee 10)*.

It was not uncommon for the interviewees to mention that they used additional frameworks through which to implement SRV ideas. Strengths based approaches, including Appreciative Inquiry (Barrett et al, 2005) is seen to help with positive mindsets. Frameworks for Accomplishment (O'Brien, c1991) was used to create a sense of possibilities in people's lives. Community development strategies were used to assist with the SRV theme of personal social integration and valued social participation. SRV was used for the content of an action learning course to both learn and apply SRV around individuals and to influence other workers.

Personal Outcome Measures were used by one interviewee as a way of measuring the extent to which the level of supports facilitate good lifestyles as a way to inform planning by the organisation. One of the findings was that *'[devalued] people don't have roles and staff don't know what a role is.'* (Interviewee 8).

Another framework for measurement, CIMPACT (ACH Group) was informed by both PASSING and Right Relationship (Kendrick, 2000) to measure service processes and their impacts.

A level of knowledge of Right Relationship was also seen as helpful both in applying SRV and also in countering common service ways of working. *Kendrick's work in being 'of service', ethical partnering/ right relationship; working relationally and not transactionally is foundational for getting what you need, but services are about control and risk mitigation, not about the people and the relationship. (Interviewee 8)*.

Advocacy frameworks developed by Dr Wolfensberger were mentioned, as was material from Dr Wolfensberger's other works, such as on moral coherency and sanctity of life.

In order to work for change in complex systems, it was evident that the interviewees used both personal and organisational change strategies in order to get the most out of using SRV. These included:

- a) Create visions of 'better lives'. This was a strong sub-theme, reflected in the following quotes.

to be around different people and to do the hard work of dreaming, scheming and conversing with people in highly vulnerable situations as to what a better life might look like. (Interviewee 4)

Someone has to hold onto that optimism ... People need that little seed of hope, and it has to be watered, SRV can help us do that. (Interviewee 14)

What we need to promote is inspiration. (Interviewee 9)

One interviewee pointed out that when mindsets are positive, then *I think people are able to then craft a vision for the future more easily because then they are looking at what everyone wants for a good life. So it helps them paint that picture and then it's about thinking, well, how do we then implement that with the right support to give that person the best chance. (Interviewee 15)*

- b) Have positive examples. One interviewee found speakers at workshops very influential, such as the woman who *talked about her negative roles: she had been in prison, she was homeless, pretty shocking negative roles that she had had. But now she is an author, she works for the public service. So it's really hard for people to imagine her in those negative roles. It's helping people bring it together and say, well this is what we've done or this is what she did to get there. (Interviewee 15)* Another uses positive illustrations in everyday discussions: *I think having good stories which reflect SRV and making sure that everyone in the service had good training around SRV and understood the significance of it - [these all] had a big influence on the impact of service provision. (Interviewee 2)*

Another interviewee uses stories in educational forums. She said: *It shows people what's possible ... We are really trying to help people understand that this has happened as a result of people being really clear about SRV and what helps them obtain a role. (Interviewee 15)*

- c) Notice positive changes: *Build in small celebrations (Interviewee 14)*
- d) Build a base for change: *You have to create energy. Why would they be bothered otherwise? ... share the change [outcomes] with people around [the vulnerable person] and this shares momentum and it's nice to see change and that's motivating in itself. (Interviewee 12)*
- e) Move at the right pace. The results from applying SRV typically takes time and requires tenacity: *It takes commitment, it takes belief, mistakes will be made, the important thing is not leaving the person when it doesn't work.' (Interviewee 14); 'use little steps. (Interviewee 17)*
- f) Use intentionality: *Making sure that you set it up to achieve the end goal, that it is highly intentional with the highest outcome as the goal. (Interviewee 14)*
- g) Build a culture to support the SRV application. One interviewee said: *building a culture that will support [better lives] such as in management, leadership, structures, processes that will affirm these kinds of things rather than cut across it. (Interviewee 4)*

Another described what she did when the culture and its policies were not conducive to applying SRV: *Much of the time I am trying to twist and bend policies, rules and frameworks both organisational, government and system. Bureaucracy doesn't give people a good life. belonging and opportunities help people get the good things in life. (Interviewee 19)*

- h) And have the leadership of the organisation in agreement, indicated by *where you see really good leadership, you see an SRV base ... [SRV] gives the understanding and the connections [to others who think similarly]. SRV gives a way of seeing and talking about things. (Interviewee 8)*

A brief comment

It is evident that, for a range of reasons, it is not easy to apply SRV. The good news is that people have found ways to apply SRV and there are opportunities to learn from those with experience in using SRV.

Section 2: Discussion

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to explore what the findings tell us about SRV efforts in Australia. In order to make sense of the extensive findings, ASRVA members used the following method:

- i. We identified the strengths in the efforts to apply SRV in Australia. A 'strength' was defined as a set of circumstances that were highly conducive to the application of SRV.
- ii. We identified weaknesses in SRV efforts and threats to SRV efforts. We then sorted the issues according to their degree of seriousness, urgency, potential for growth if the issue was addressed, and ease of making a difference in the issue.
- iii. We rank ordered the issues and identified the 'top' five issues.
- iv. Finally we identified those human or material resources that present opportunities to strengthen and further the application of SRV in Australia.

This chapter explores the strengths, issues and opportunities in the efforts to apply SRV and concludes with ASRVA's hope for the future.

STRENGTHS IN THE AUSTRALIAN EFFORTS TO APPLY SRV

A summary of the areas of strengths appears in Figure 5. A brief exploration of each of the areas of strengths follows.



Figure 5: Strengths in SRV efforts

The existing use of SRV is considered a strength because it creates a good foundation on which to build. Significantly, the research revealed that SRV has been used in a range of contexts by people in a range of roles and that good outcomes are possible from using SRV. Those who use SRV are in every state and territory across Australia, although they seem to be concentrated in metropolitan areas and exist in some states more than others. This is likely because of the history of SRV in any one state, the degree of exposure to accredited workshops, the existence of local teaching and application leaders and where people like Dr Wolfensberger, his colleague Susan Thomas, and Michael Kendrick have led important teaching events. SRV related workshops have also been conducted, including Dr Wolfensberger's 11-day 'Conceptual and Moral Foundations of Human Services with Special Perspectives on Contemporary Realities' workshop and Michael Kendrick's work on Right Relationship. It is likely that these topics help to integrate SRV ideas with other important concepts. Application workshops have also been conducted by Australian Senior Trainers John Armstrong, Peter Millier, Anne Cross, and Jane Sherwin, and North American Senior trainer Michael Kendrick, though these have reduced in number in more recent years.

Notably, SRV has been used in formal human services, in advocacy contexts and in informal unpaid arrangements, such as families. The use of SRV by people in both their work and personal life roles also illustrates SRV's relevance to a range of circumstances, and to devalued groups beyond those who have a disability.

It is also noted that SRV was used in arrangements without funding and by people without tertiary qualifications.

In a way, the findings listed above are not surprising because SRV helps us understand the world we live in. SRV explains the 'un-level playing field' and the human predilection to judge others. For those who experience devaluation or who love someone who is devalued, SRV speaks to their reality.

For those who use SRV in their work, SRV is helpful in both the design of support arrangements as well as critically reviewing arrangements. The use of SRV supports various movements such as the inclusive education movement, the movement for open employment and the community living movement. The theory and practical strategies are helpful in making harmful arrangements less harmful.

It is also a strength that Australia has people who have experienced good mentoring and have also been a mentor themselves regarding the use of SRV. This is noted because mentoring is a well-respected developmental strategy in many fields of endeavour.

All of the 21 interviewees had influenced others through their own knowledge and use of SRV. This is a crucial strength because it illustrates that good examples of sustained application of SRV is as important as good teaching and learning of SRV.

Having a good mentor is likely to be more relevant and potent than only having a group of peers who are enthusiastic about using SRV; nevertheless, being connected to like-minded others was found to be helpful in sustaining the use of SRV. This is a strength because these connections open doors to people learning from each other, either through the many conversations that are helpful and necessary to integrate the themes of SRV into one's thinking and practice, or through hearing stories or observing SRV in action.

The use of SRV contributes to social justice. This is a strength because not only does the use of SRV bring benefits to individuals with a devalued status but also can bring benefits to groups and classes of people: one of the intents of SRV is to influence the perceiver and to challenge and shift mindsets. Shifting attitudes is a potent social justice strategy.

Those who apply SRV have an opportunity to be proactive and supportive of a world that is socially just by more clearly seeing devaluation in its many guises, appreciating the heightened vulnerabilities of devalued people and having a range of ideas that are helpful in making a difference. SRV brings enlightenment. Those well versed in SRV can see patterns across devalued groups. This 'noticing' is important in contemporary times, whether people are devalued by skin colour, age, religion, poverty, impairment or homelessness. Having SRV as an informing framework brings a clarity to those working for social justice about the dynamics of social devaluation and the power of unconsciousness in perpetuating social injustices. Not only does SRV bring clarity and capacity to see what is happening, it also leads to thoughts and actions about what to do next, either at an individual, group or systems level.

The strengths in the SRV efforts in Australia are founded on the strengths of SRV as a theory. Despite criticisms that deem it an 'old' theory, SRV is an empirical meta-theory, combining a number of well tested social science ideas. Furthermore, SRV's complexity adds to its rigour and internal coherence. For those who have found SRV a helpful theoretical and practice framework, it is difficult to find another framework that is as comprehensive and has withstood the tests of at least 30 years in Australia.

ASRVA reject notions that SRV is no longer relevant or effective in these times. One view is that SRV is the original 'person-centred' approach, given that the starting point for all SRV based discussions and actions is about the devalued person or group. SRV is a theory that helps us discern fads from those approaches that have substance; it allows us to be cautious about claims, such as 'more money is the answer' or simplistic solutions, such as the direct funding of individuals as being 'the' answer.

With a theory that is as complex as many of the issues that face individuals, groups and systems, which engages our values in a way that can lead to a desire for action, it is wonderful to have discovered that there are indeed solid bases in SRV efforts on which to build.

FIVE PRESSING ISSUES IN THE EFFORTS TO APPLY SRV

ASRVA explored the weaknesses in and threats to SRV efforts and noted that the issues are both serious and deeply concerning if there is no action to address them. These weaknesses and threats were also selected for their potential to make a positive difference if addressed.

(a) MENTORING IS NOT ALWAYS USED

As previously indicated, mentoring is a very potent way of fostering the application of SRV. The issue is that SRV mentoring does not occur widely or with great regularity and consistency. It is highly likely that little thought and explication has gone into what good mentoring looks like, what mentors need in order to be competent and what it takes to be a good mentor.

Without paying attention to good mentoring, there continues to be risks that the application of SRV will be fraught with things such as:

- the adoption of only superficial ideas such as ‘consciousness about labelling’ without the wider understanding of the loss of identity and imagery issues
- SRV efforts remain isolated and therefore fragile
- the challenges in sustaining the application of SRV over time are made even more difficult
- an absence of critical eyes and lenses.

If people have good mentors in SRV, then SRV is more likely to be used. This makes sense given the complexity of the theory and the challenges in converting learnings in a classroom situation to application in real life. This argument also makes sense when one considers that SRV is not applied in a vacuum; people are frequently trying to use SRV in complex contexts, such as in large agencies and technocratic environments.

(b) MODEL COHERENCY IS NOT WELL KNOWN OR USED

The second issue concerns the SRV theme of model coherency. In a way, it is no surprise that mention of model coherency was largely absent from the interviews as it is a small half-hour module in the SRV 10-theme workshop and not mentioned at all in the two-day introductory workshop done in Australia. Yet the SRV theme of model coherency is helpful in the application of SRV as it guides us to consider the relevance of what is offered to meet people’s needs and the effectiveness of the strategies used to meet people’s needs. Model Coherency also helps us to explicate underpinning assumptions and is a theme that unifies many of the other SRV themes. Model coherency, with the associated notions of relevance and potency, guides us to consider the coherency between identity of the people, what is offered to meet their needs and the strategies used. It asks us to consider the coherency of the goals of developing or maintaining valued roles, with strategies for image and competency enhancement.

Furthermore, model coherency can be used in service deconstruction exercises, such as within a service evaluation, as well as in designing a set of responses.

Without the use of model coherency it is very easy to ‘cherry pick’ SRV ideas, such as paying attention to ‘appearance’, ‘choice’, and the ‘look of the physical environment’.



Figure 6. Weaknesses in and threats to SRV efforts

(c) SRV HAS LOW VISIBILITY

A third issue in SRV efforts in Australia is that SRV is largely invisible. The community living movement, and movements for inclusive education and real employment are strong in Australia. Within SRV networks, it is known that SRV is part of the stories that have led to many of these outcomes. It is also known that many Australian leaders in these movements have been exposed to SRV's teachings. Yet, it is rare for SRV based analysis or stories to appear at conferences or in publications.

A further sign of invisibility is that the primary text by Dr Wolfensberger about SRV is only 258 pages long, yet the teaching notes for SRV are hundreds of pages. It is very difficult to obtain extensive writing about SRV either in plain English versions or even the more conceptual and nuanced versions. There also very few SRV resources available on-line. The lack of workshops available is also an issue, given that workshops are largely conducted within capital cities. If there was more accessible teaching and writing about SRV, then this too could aid those who want to know more about SRV and its application.

There is little dissemination of SRV through conference presentations, writing in periodicals or social media about efforts that clearly show the application of SRV.

The issue for ASRVA is that if we want people to use SRV well, then it would be helpful for people to hear and read about SRV, how SRV has been used well and what the lessons from using SRV have been. Another form of invisibility is that SRV in Australia is primarily used in the lives of people with disability and to a lesser extent, in the lives of older people. Those who were interviewed demonstrated the relevance of SRV to other devalued groups, but SRV is mostly absent in responses to the needs of those who experiencing homelessness, have a refugee background, have mental health issues, are poor, or who are experiencing domestic violence.

The problem with these forms of invisibility is that the majority of people in the lives of people with a devalued status do not know of the existence of SRV as a very helpful theoretical and practice framework.

(d) THERE IS LOW TRANSFER OF LEARNING

A fourth key issue in SRV efforts concerns the transfer of learning. This issue can have two forms: the transfer of learning from a theory workshop to application in the 'real world', and a transfer of learning from superficial understanding to an understanding of depth and nuances.

There are at least three dynamics that contribute to this situation. One is that when participants return to the real world after attending a workshop, there is little to help them know where to start given the vast number of ideas presented. Related to this is the issue that many participants return from a workshop to environments that are not fertile grounds for SRV application. Perhaps there is a lack of leadership and mentorship to pave the way or perhaps the non-programmatic matters (the administrative and organisational matters) trump matters to do with meeting the needs of people. For example, this situation can be seen when the focus of the work is on funding or on the processing of files, records, and compliance requirements. Of equal concern is that attention to non-programmatic matters is rewarded more than efforts that make key differences in people's lives.

A related issue is that not many people seem to be able to integrate SRV ideas together or to integrate SRV ideas with other helpful theories or approaches.

(E) THERE IS A LACK OF NETWORKS OF PEOPLE WHO USE SRV

The fifth pressing issue in SRV efforts is that there are few networks of people who apply SRV, and the networks tend to be small and fragmented. This analysis is not to take away from the efforts of local SRV groups; it is to acknowledge that it takes a lot to sustain these networks over time (which they have so far managed) and there is no vehicle to 'join up' the local groups to each other. There is no local group known to ASRVA outside of the capital cities. There are few ways for those who do apply SRV to get together. It is also noted that the majority of local groups focus on hosting SRV learning workshops, not on building relationships between like-minded people, or the application of SRV.

One fledgling network consists of those graduates of the SRV study groups which were facilitated by the Australian Senior Trainer, John Armstrong. Currently this group is not joined up to other groups.

The problem with this situation is that efforts to use SRV are isolated, which contributes further to the invisibility of SRV and the fragility of application efforts.

ASRVA did note other issues in application efforts. These include the dominance of the market paradigm in contemporary services and the ageing of Senior Trainers.

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE EFFORTS TO APPLY SRV

ASRVA considered ‘opportunities’ as the existence of knowledge, experience, and human and material resources. Fortunately, there are (at least) five opportunities that present themselves. These are depicted in Figure 7.

(a) Firstly, there are existing leaders in the use of SRV in Australia. ASRVA was very impressed with the extent of experience and the thoughtful insights that the interviewees shared.

It is strongly acknowledged that there are more application leaders than the ones who were interviewed. ASRVA makes the assumption that application leaders could be mobilised to connect with each other and with those wanting to deepen their use of SRV.



Figure 7. Opportunities to strengthen SRV efforts

(b) It is also apparent that mentoring played a part in the development of the interviewees, and it is an observable fact that mentoring plays a part in the development of other users of SRV too. ASRVA makes the assumption that more could be done to develop resources and support for those engaged in mentoring roles.

(c) There have been four small local groups in four Australian capital cities who have endured for more than two or even three decades. These groups have primarily been responsible for ensuring that accredited SRV events were hosted regularly. The Australian SRV safeguarding group has also endured in some form since the early ‘90s. That there are small formal groups across Australia committed to the teaching and learning of SRV is a strong opportunity on which to build.

(d) There is much anecdotal evidence that people value meeting like-minded others, discussing situations that are working well and even not well. ASRVA makes the assumption that in the right circumstances, where there is trust and where people feel supported and accepted, people would value meeting others, hearing stories, discussing what works and doesn’t, pitfalls and possibilities, and sharing resources.

(e) Members of ASRVA have a range of knowledge of and experiences in different organisations, including formal, legally constituted associations, informal interest groups, informal voluntary social action groups, formal social action groups and Communities of Practice. It is apparent that a properly and intentionally formed Community of Practice would allow us all to capitalise on the other four opportunities identified through the research.

In searching for a mode to capitalise on the above opportunities, ASRVA looked for three things:

- i. a structure through which to operate
- ii. a set of relationships so that ASRVA is not an isolated disconnected body in Australia
- iii. a mode of operating that would both foster the use of SRV as well as build relationships between interested parties.

ASRVA makes the assumption that it could do intentional work to develop an SRV Community of Practice, where individuals could opt in or out and where there is an emphasis on members relating with each other to develop shared knowledge and resources. Such a community would create a closer connection between the teaching/learning and application of SRV as each would inform and strengthen the other. There is no sense that the teaching of SRV would be weakened, nor that there would not be a commitment to also developing leadership in the teaching of SRV.

A brief comment ...

This is an exciting time in the history of SRV in Australia. The context for people with a devalued status is as dire as ever. Our human services and we as humans are as fallible as ever, AND there are people across Australia who want to make a difference in the lives of devalued people and in the quality of the responses to their needs. We believe that SRV has much to offer these people and we are looking forward to working with others to strengthen the application of SRV.

APPENDIX 1. METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the methodology used in the research. More details are available from ASRVA.

1. HOW THE INTERVIEWEES WERE SELECTED.

A list of approximately 70 individuals and groups were identified as potential sources of interviewees, based on their involvement in SRV theory workshops, membership of various networks sympathetic to the use of SRV and known to use SRV in some ways.

ASRVA developed a matrix of people using the following criteria:

- extensive experience of using SRV in services and in their personal lives
- the roles that people were in
- the devalued groups with whom they were involved
- the states/territories they lived in.

A total of 32 potential interviewees were identified.

2. THE INTERVIEW PROCESS.

Templates and forms to support the interview process were developed. These included a participant (interviewee) information sheet and consent form, interview guidelines and questions, and a demographic form about the interviewee. A confidentiality form was used by the interviewer and research assistant.

It was decided that the interviewers would be members of ASRVA. Research assistants who had the responsibility for taking notes during the interview and submitting them for analysis were also identified.

Interview questions were identified. Interviewees were free to ask questions to clarify and expand responses.

The first set of questions framed the interview. They were intended to get a broad sense of areas of work that have been influenced by SRV using the following questions:

- What areas of your work and life are influenced by SRV?
- For each area, how is SRV used?

Questions to identify whether there are any particular SRV ideas that are most commonly used were:

- Which elements of SRV seem to be most critical in achieving changes/outcomes in people's lives?
- In what ways are these elements used?

We were also interested in broad reflections about outcomes from SRV use. Questions to identify what happens when SRV use is effective were asked:

- What outcomes have been achieved by using SRV?
- What are your reflections on the journey to these outcomes?

It was decided that a formal semi-structured interview process would be used.

Rehearsals of the interview process were conducted.

The interviews were conducted in person. Each interview was audio-recorded. Transcripts and detailed notes were taken and collated.

3. ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEWS

By the time 21 interviews had been conducted, there was a sense that we had sufficient breadth and depth of data and that we had conducted sufficient interviews. There is approximately 421 combined years of experience in the interviewees, ranging from two years to thirty-two years since they were first formally exposed to SRV Theory.

We moved into an analysis phase.

The interview notes and transcripts were printed. Two members analysed each interview record for common and recurring themes, with reference to the research questions. The four broad themes were determined as:

- i. where/how is SRV used
- ii. key SRV ideas
- iii. outcomes that have occurred
- iv. journeys to the outcomes.

During the analysis, the researcher looked at both the text and the sub-text for meaning. In other words, the meaning of the interviewees' words were sought. Salient points were highlighted using texta pens. The interpreted meaning was noted in the border of each piece of data. The interpretation of meaning was checked by having two people review each interview record. The meaning was again reviewed during the development of the report.

Paragraphs of the highlighted salient points were physically cut from the interview record. All of these texts from each interview were then collated by theme and sub-theme.

4. THE REPORT

The report is a collation of ideas, messages, thoughts from the sub-text and actual text, and presented by theme.

5. COSTS

It is noted that ASRVA did not bear any financial costs incurred in conducting this research project or in the publication of the report. ASRVA members, interviewees, and research assistants met their own financial costs and gave their time willingly.

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GLOSSARY

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| Culturally valued analogue (CVA) | The concept of the culturally valued analogue is a touchstone in SRV. It is a familiar societal practice through which people with a valued status get their needs met. The word 'analogue' means a practice that is parallel to the service system and is found in ordinary life. Using the concept of the CVA involves 'thinking typical' when considering how best to meet the needs of someone with a devalued status. For example, the CVAs of a special school include a regular school or private tuition. |
| Conservatism corollary | The theme of 'Conservatism corollary' relies on understanding that people with a devalued status have a heightened vulnerability to negative life experiences (wounds) because of the existence of social devaluation. If it is accepted that heightened vulnerability exists, then the corollary (resulting action) is to do no further harm and to bend over backwards to protect people's valued roles, competencies and image. |
| Freely given relationships | Freely given relationships are relationships that are unpaid, such as those found in families, friendships, neighbours, peers etc. |
| If this, then that | The 'if this, then that' way of thinking about and applying SRV is based on an understanding of social devaluation and assists us to forecast what the consequences are likely to be of doing or not doing certain things. For example, not paying attention to someone's appearance is likely to increase the likelihood that the person will be rejected. |
| Interpersonal identification | Perceiving the similarities in one another. This is an appreciation of what one has in common with another, rather than focusing on differences. If people identify with each other, they generally wish good things for each other, and could act on these wishes. |
| Juxtaposition | An object is juxtaposed to another by being on, next to or near it. |
| Model Coherency | Model coherency is a theme in SRV that outlines the elements of all human service models and explains how it is possible to provide relevant and effective responses to the needs of people with a devalued status, in role valorizing coherent ways. |
| PASSING | The practicum following an introductory theory workshop is called PASSING. The training experience involves visits to at least one human service and working in small teams to conciliate the evidence, using the PASSING evaluation tool. |
| Personal Social Integration & Valued Social Participation (PSI-VSP) | The SRV theme of Personal Social Integration & Valued Social Participation describes the experience of being with people with a valued status, doing valued activities, in valued settings, at typical times. |
| Wounds | The negative life experiences that result from experiencing social devaluation, such as, being equated to one's impairment, rejection, put into negative roles (ie stereotyped), separation from ordinary life paths, all of which can impact on one's sense of self. |