




# Individual Counseling Miracle Question Technique to Overcome the Pessimistic Attitude for the Future of Client

Wieldy Caesar Nesta\*<sup>1</sup>, Abdur Razzaq<sup>1</sup> , Hartika Utami Fitri<sup>1</sup> 

Yoesoep Edhie Rachmad<sup>2</sup> , Ferdian Utama<sup>3</sup> 

Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah Palembang, Indonesia<sup>1</sup>

Universal Institute of Professional Management, Singapore<sup>2</sup>

Universitas Ma'arif Lampung, Indonesia<sup>3</sup>

 Corresponding Author: [wieldyc@gmail.com](mailto:wieldyc@gmail.com)

ABSTRACT	
<p><b>ARTICLE INFO:</b> Received August 26, 2024</p> <p>Revised September 09, 2024</p> <p>Accepted September 16, 2024</p> <p><b>KEYWORDS:</b> Individual counseling, miracle question, pessimistic attitude</p>	<p>The phenomenon of pessimism experienced by certain individuals regarding their future, especially clients in <i>Lembaga Pembinaan Khusus Anak</i> (LPKA) Palembang. This pessimism can affect their motivation and ability to plan a better future. This research aims to explore the Miracle Questions technique in individual counseling to overcome pessimistic attitudes towards the future. The client in this case study is an individual at LPKA Palembang designated as Client X. Through a series of counseling sessions, the Miracle Questions technique was used to help Client X formulate a more positive and optimistic vision about his future. This technique involves asking hypothetical questions about positive changes that might occur in Client X's life, allowing him to imagine and plan concrete steps toward those changes. The research results show that the Miracle Questions technique can help Client X reduce pessimism and feel more empowered in facing the future. This thesis shows the potential of individual counseling and the Miracle Questions technique as an effective tool to help individuals overcome pessimistic attitudes towards the future.</p>

## INTRODUCTION

Pessimism is a form of individual mindset that finds the truth of the world to be contrary to its goals (Broda et al., 2023). He often thinks that everything he does must be weak and unsuccessful. This thinking might give rise to the theory of society as a weak theory in terms of the structure of its implementation (Zamroni et al., 2020). This condition also occurs in a pessimistic attitude that needs to be worked on and elaborated on the state of mind and body to develop (Oriol et al., 2020). Pessimism originates from the destructive state of society and 8 that we continue to think about. Therefore, as someone who is pessimistic, he must look for the environment society that can motivate him in a better direction. Pessimistic attitudes in society are divided into stages, namely mild, moderate and severe (Fitria & Ildil, 2020). In the mild pessimism stage, individuals are affected by feelings of inferiority or excessive self-distrust towards themselves (Zhou et al., 2020).

The pessimistic stage is being influenced by attitudes in his environment, which causes him to feel like he is following these attitudes without realizing it (Peterson, 1988). For example, when his partner has possessions that are not at his level, he views himself as inferior and unworthy of being friends with him. The two previous phases influence the final severe pessimistic stage. At this point, depression sets in, leading to physical and mental exhaustion, suicidal feelings and negative thinking all the time (Zimmer-Gembeck & Pronk, 2012). Prisoners always consider the future. It's something that always feels certain, even though it's uncertain. The mobility of human functions is reduced as a result of increasingly rapid technological advances. Human power has replaced tools, and only knowledge and thought are still utilized. Learning is increasingly dominating, making young people believe that knowledge is mandatory and important to learn to achieve work that suits their dreams (Zhu & Aryadoust, 2020).

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The future is a definite situation for prisoners to consider. However, prisoners must also have the right to a bright future (Throuvala et al., 2019). Awareness that the past they created is different from other people's world becomes the main focus that must be helped so as not to be low self-esteem and pessimistic in achieving a brilliant future. about the bad stigma that continually makes you feel pessimistic. Moreover, the behavior of people in modern times shows. That every person who has a bad life experience will give a bad stigma to that person. The impact on the future is very fatal, namely someone who has a pessimistic attitude about the future, among other things, they will give up more easily when carrying out something so that it does not go well which will definitely disrupt life in the future (Majdi, 2024).

So it is necessary to be assisted with individual counseling (Kushendar & Maba, 2022). The miracle question technique is very useful when studying a period, to reveal many opportunities in the future (Ulandari et al., 2023). Counselors encourage free thinking to identify the transformation they truly hope for. This magic question looks into the future and imagines different activities that are not dominated by certain events, therefore, the miracle question technique can make part of the substitution method as a container for the development of expansion of self-awareness because the intervention is carried out only within a short time frame and bring about change by asking questions because the intervention is used for a short time and creates change (Fitri et al., 2023).

By asking questions, clients can remind themselves that something miraculous will happen after being open to the possibility of it happening in the future. Like, what if your problem was solved overnight?, how do you know that the problem has been resolved and what difference does it make?.

So that clients can find a purpose and find a way out to maximize their self-portrait with activity plans. Therefore, it is hoped that prisoners will not be pessimistic about the future. And always think positively and not let the past become an obstacle to achieving a good future. Because of ALLAH SWT says in Surah Ali Imran verse 139, Meaning.

“...Do not be weak, and do not (also) be sad, even though you are the people of the highest (rank), if you are believers...”.

The urgency of this research lies in the importance of addressing pessimistic attitudes that can hinder individuals, particularly inmates at LPKA Palembang, from planning and achieving a better future. Pessimism can diminish motivation, create feelings of inferiority, and even lead to depression, thereby worsening an individual's chances of personal growth (Mardi Lestari, 2023). In this context, the Miracle Questions technique in individual counseling becomes highly relevant as an effective intervention method to help shift negative thought patterns toward a more optimistic outlook. This technique offers a practical way for clients to envision positive changes in their future and formulate concrete steps toward achieving them. Given the detrimental impact of pessimism on one's life and future, this research is essential to explore the potential of this technique in overcoming pessimism and instilling new hope for inmates.

## Objectives

The aim of the research is to find out the description of the pessimistic attitude towards the future held by the LPKA inmates of Palembang city, to find out which miracle questions can be applied in individual counseling to overcome the pessimistic attitude towards the future in the assisted residents of the LPKA in Palembang City.

As the research objectives have been explained by the researcher above, this research has the following practical uses. For counselors. In counseling practice, the use of miracle questions is a practical innovation to overcome pessimistic attitudes about the future of prison inmates. For prison inmates, this research is expected to provide initial solutions in dealing with various problems faced. For researchers, this research is an opportunity to develop knowledge and insight in the field of Islamic Counseling Guidance. This research can also be a valuable reference for further research

which will examine it in more detail. extensive about individual counseling using the miracle question method in overcoming pessimistic attitudes about the future. Apart from that, this research is also a fulfillment requirement for obtaining a bachelor's degree in social studies at the Faculty of Da'wah and Communication, UIN Raden Fatah Palembang.

## METHODS

### Research Design

This research addresses the phenomenon of pessimism experienced by certain individuals regarding their future, particularly clients at LPKA Palembang. Pessimism negatively impacts motivation and the ability to plan for a better future. To explore how to address this, the study utilizes a qualitative research design that is flexible and context-sensitive (Miles et al., 2014). The goal is to gain an in-depth understanding of how the Miracle Questions technique, used in individual counseling, can help overcome these pessimistic attitudes. The design of the study focuses on exploring the experiences of a client at LPKA Palembang (Client X) and observing how they respond to this counseling method.

### Subject and Procedure

The research procedure involved conducting a series of counseling sessions with Client X one of the residents at the Palembang LPKA, during which the Miracle Questions technique was applied. This technique involves asking hypothetical questions that encourage the client to imagine positive changes in their life and to envision concrete steps toward achieving those changes. The data were gathered through in-depth interactions, ensuring that the client's natural environment and responses were fully captured. By closely engaging with the client, the research was able to track progress over time, adjusting the approach as necessary to maintain relevance and depth in the data collected.

### Data Analysis

The information from these counseling sessions was coded and categorized to identify key themes, such as shifts in the client's mindset and emerging patterns of optimism. The analysis highlighted how the client began to adopt a more positive outlook and gained empowerment through this process. This interpretative approach allowed for a nuanced understanding of the impact of the Miracle Questions technique, which was presented in a narrative form, showing that this counseling method can be an effective tool for reducing pessimism and fostering hope for the future.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Results

#### *A pessimistic picture of Client "X"'s future*

A pessimistic attitude has 3 aspects, namely cognitive, motivation and social relationships. Based on the research results, it is known that the pessimistic attitude is still not good from two aspects, namely the cognitive and motivational aspects, but there is no change in the social relations aspect. However, after individual counseling was carried out using the miracle question technique, there were better changes related to both aspects of the three aspects.

In the cognitive aspect, before counseling was carried out, namely client "X" felt confused, lost direction, unable to think rationally, difficult to talk to at length, regarding his future he did not know what to do, what the future would be like, he was resigned to the situation.

"...I feel lost and confused about my future. I don't know what to do, and I've kind of given up. It's hard to think clearly or plan anything. I don't see any direction. Now, I feel more focused. I have a clearer idea of what I want, and I'm not as confused anymore. I still struggle with my relationships, but at least I'm making progress with my goal..."

But after individual counseling was carried out, client "X" client no longer feels confused, can think rationally, he already knows what the future should be like and already has a plan, it's just that this client cannot be asked to explain in detail and at length during counseling.

"...I used to feel confused and lost about my future. But now, after counseling, I can think more clearly. I know what I want my future to look like, and I even have a plan. I just find it hard to explain everything in detail..."

Then in the motivational aspect, before the counseling was carried out, Client "X" lost direction, lacked self-confidence, really wanted to change and become better and really loved his parents and after the counseling was carried out the Client had a good and focused life goal, regretted his actions and was determined.

"...Before counseling, I felt lost and had no confidence. I really wanted to change for the better, especially for my parents. Now, after counseling, I have a clear and focused life goal, regret my past actions, and I'm determined to move forward..."

To change for the better and promise to support his parents when he is free. In the aspect of social relations, before counseling was carried out, client "X" remained kind to friends around him and continued to carry out positive activities, this was inseparable from the coaching carried out by LPKA.

"...Before counseling, I was always kind to my friends and engaged in positive activities, thanks to LPKA's guidance. After counseling, there hasn't been a change in my social relations because this is a part of the LPKA disciplinary program that we must follow..."

And after the counseling was carried out, there were no changes regarding social relations before and after counseling because this aspect of social relations is one of the LPKA disciplinary programs that prisoners must carry out.

### ***Application of individual counseling using the miracle question technique to overcome pessimistic attitudes about the future (case study of Client X LPKA Palembang City)***

In this research, the counseling process using the miracle question technique was carried out in 3 meetings × 50 minutes per meeting with three stages, namely the initial stage, core stage and final stage. The initial stage of the counselor will carry out individual counseling services by saying hello, asking for news, making an agreement on the day, date, time and time of the counseling, the counselor introduces the implementation of individual counseling, explaining the purpose of implementing individual counseling, the counselor encourages client openness, so that clients voluntarily express feelings related to the problem.

"...During the initial stage, the counselor greeted me, discussed the schedule, introduced the counseling process, explained its purpose, and encouraged me to openly share my feelings about my issues..."

As much as possible, the counselor creates a comfortable atmosphere for the counselee from the beginning to the end of the counseling process in order to obtain results that are in line with the targets that were created at the beginning of the meeting.

Next, the counselor formulates the problem experienced by the client, where client "X" is a person who is pessimistic about the future because of mistakes that have harmed many people who need to overcome his pessimistic attitude that his future will be better than before.

"...The counselor helped define my problem, which is my pessimism about the future due to past mistakes that affected others. The focus was on overcoming this pessimism and believing that my future can be better than before..."

Next, the counselor and client make an agreement that the counseling process will be carried out in 3 meetings with a duration of 50 minutes each meeting at the core stage, the counselor gives the client the opportunity to convey his complaints about his problems. Then the counseling process is carried out using the techniques contained in the miracle question technique. These include: The counselor invites the client to imagine, exclude problems, and good and bad conditions using the miracle question technique. Then the counselor also invites the client to imagine in solving the problem with questions.

"...The counselor gave me space to express my complaints and concerns about my problems. Then, using the Miracle Questions technique, the counselor guided me through various exercises. For example, I was asked to imagine a future without my current problems and to think about both good and bad scenarios. The counselor also encouraged me to envision solutions by asking specific questions, helping me explore different ways to address my issues..."

Assumes that the change situation is good in the future or is called a technique (miracle question). The counselor provides options for solutions to solve the counselee's problems, provides mental strengthening and provides input on what needs to be done in the future, the counselor provides scale questions to determine changes that occur during the counseling process and the counselor applies appreciation for changes or what is called a feedback technique to the counselee in terms of maintaining the changes that have been achieved by the counselee.

Next, at the final stage, the counselor says that the counseling will end soon and the counselor will evaluate the results and process of individual counseling services. Based on individual counseling which has been carried out 3 times, client X is better than before in the sense that he is no longer too pessimistic about the future through individual counseling using the Miracle Question technique.

"...They mentioned that they would evaluate how things went and how the individual counseling had helped. After these three sessions, I definitely feel more optimistic about my future. The Miracle Questions technique really helped me shift my perspective and think more positively about what's ahead..."

The result of applying individual counseling with the Miracle Question approach to client "X" is that the client no longer feels confused, can think rationally, he already knows what the future should be like and already has a plan, it's just that this client cannot be asked to explain in detail and at length. At the time of counseling, the client had a good and focused life goal, regretted his actions and was determined to change for the better and promised to support his parents when he was free. There were no changes related to social relationships before and after counseling because of the social relationship aspect. This is one of the LPKA disciplinary programs that prisoners must carry out.

## **Discussion**

In this study, researchers conducted individual counseling using the Miracle Question Technique to overcome the pessimistic attitude about the future of client "X". The Miracle Question technique is appropriate to use to overcome pessimistic attitudes about the future, because this approach focuses on solutions to overcome pessimistic attitudes about the future and does not focus

on the causes of the problem (Sopah et al., 2023). So, to overcome a pessimistic attitude, this approach is successful in helping clients not to be pessimistic anymore (Sutoyo, 2013).

The Miracle Question technique, as utilized in this research, serves as a powerful tool in individual counseling to address pessimistic attitudes about the future (Marianti et al., 2022). This approach involves asking clients to imagine that a miracle has occurred overnight, resolving their problems and achieving their goals (Arsini et al., 2022). By focusing on the ideal future rather than the current issues, clients are encouraged to envision positive changes and identify concrete steps toward achieving those changes. In the context of this study, the technique was applied over three counseling sessions with Client X, who initially faced significant pessimism about his future. The results indicated that the Miracle Question technique effectively helped Client X develop a clearer, more positive outlook, fostering a sense of empowerment and direction (Rahmawati, 2023).

The research highlights the effectiveness of the Miracle Question technique in overcoming pessimistic attitudes by shifting the focus from past difficulties to future possibilities (Capuzzi & Gross, 2007). This solution-focused approach not only aids clients in visualizing their desired outcomes but also encourages them to take actionable steps towards these goals. The success observed in this study underscores the value of incorporating solution-oriented methods in counseling practices, particularly for individuals struggling with negative outlooks and low motivation. However, the study's limitations, such as its short duration and specific population, suggest that further research is needed to explore the broader applicability and long-term impacts of the Miracle Question technique (Brasher, 2009).

This is the same as research conducted by Kushendar (2016) with the title Counselor's Efforts to Increase the Achievement Motivation of Bullying Victims Viewed from the perspective of the Solution-Focused Brief Therapy Counseling Approach, that the Solution-Focused Brief Therapy Counseling approach, that the SFBC approach has as its foundation that if The counselee focuses on the problem, then the counselor and the counselee can find exceptions to the problem and a way out, for the condition of the problem, enthusiasm and empowering the client which results in future actions and success. Based on research conducted by (Jordan et al., 2013), it is known that the SFBC approach is suitable for building trust in clients who feel they have no power over the problems they are experiencing (Pangestuti, 2018).

Pessimism reflects a mindset where individuals perceive the world as counter to their goals, often leading to feelings of inadequacy and failure (Hsieh et al., 2008). This mindset can be viewed through a structural lens, likening individuals to interconnected parts of a body that must work together to achieve their goals. Pessimism often stems from a destructive societal environment, exacerbating feelings of inferiority and self-doubt. It progresses through stages: mild, characterized by self-distrust; moderate, influenced by external attitudes leading to feelings of inadequacy; and severe, where depression and pervasive negative thinking emerge. In the context of prisoners, these stages are particularly pronounced as they grapple with an uncertain future, exacerbated by technological advancements and societal pressures to acquire knowledge and skills for success (Sugiarto et al., 1970).

## Implication

The implications of this research highlight the significant impact that the Miracle Questions technique can have on overcoming pessimistic attitudes, particularly in individuals facing challenging circumstances like prisoners. By focusing on solutions and fostering a positive outlook, this technique not only helps clients envision and plan for a better future but also empowers them to shift from a mindset of helplessness to one of proactive engagement. This approach underscores the importance of integrating solution-focused strategies in counseling practices, suggesting that such techniques can effectively address and mitigate pessimism, ultimately contributing to improved mental well-being and future-oriented thinking.

## Limitation

One limitation of this research is that it focuses on a specific population prisoners at LPKA Palembang which may not fully represent the experiences of individuals in different settings or with different backgrounds. Additionally, the study is limited by its short duration of three counseling sessions, which may not capture long-term effects or variations in outcomes. The reliance on the Miracle Questions technique alone might also overlook other potentially effective methods or factors influencing pessimism. Furthermore, the research does not account for potential external influences, such as the broader social environment or additional support systems, which could impact the effectiveness of the counseling approach.

## CONCLUSION

The description of client "X"'s pessimistic attitude includes cognitive, motivational and social relations aspects. In the cognitive aspect, before counseling is carried out, client "X" feels confused, has lost direction, cannot think rationally, is difficult to talk to at length about the future. he doesn't know what to do, what the future will look like, like giving up on the situation. Then in the motivational aspect, before counseling is carried out, namely Client "X" has lost direction, lacks self-confidence, really wants to change and become better and really loves his parents and aspects of social relations Before counseling was carried out, client "X" remained kind to friends around him and continued to carry out positive activities, this was inseparable from the coaching carried out by LPKA. The application of individual counseling using the miracle question technique with 3 meetings through 3 stages, namely the initial stage, core stage and final stage. In the initial stage, establish a good relationship between the client and the counselee, and form an agreement based on counseling activities, and identify the client's problems.

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