



There are a number of steps to effective problem solving:

- 1) Stop long enough to realize that a situation is a problem and you may need time to find a resolution.
- 2) Define the problem in detail. What is the situation? Who is involved? What is happening or not happening that is a problem? Where did it happen? When did it happen? How did it happen? How often does it occur? Why does it happen? How do you feel? What do you do in response? What do you want to change?
- 3) Describe how the problem interferes with your goals. If the situation does not interfere with your goals, it is likely not your problem.
- 4) Identify all the options/alternatives. It is important to find at least 3 potential solutions in order to avoid the black/white thinking we were programmed to use.
- 5) Describe the consequences of each option/alternative. Seek additional knowledge if necessary.
- 6) Identify the steps needed to resolve/take action. Make a list of when and how the steps will be taken and then take the required action.
- 7) Evaluate results. If the steps taken were successful to resolve the problem, acknowledge that you successfully solved a problem and give yourself some credit. If the steps taken were not successful to solve the problem, learn more about what would be needed to solve the problem and follow steps 4-7 again until the matter is resolved.

Continue to the next page...



Practice

Instructions: Over the next week, please practice the **Problem Solving** skill as often as you can.

Observe and describe the problem/situation. Describe exactly what is problematic.

Describe the obstacles/conflicts that would make it difficult in solving the problem.

Check the facts – are your facts correct? How distressing is the situation? Do the conflicts or obstacles you’ve described reflect the facts?

Identify your goal in solving the problem. Keep it simple and something you can achieve.

What ideas did you brainstorm to solve the problematic situation?

What solution fits the goal and is likely to work?

Put the solution into action; what were the results of implementing the solution?
