

THE
SIX STEPS
OF
PROBLEM-SOLVING

1. PROBLEM ORIENTATION
2. PROBLEM DEFINITION
3. BRAINSTORMING
4. DECISION-MAKING
5. SOLUTION IMPLEMENTATION
6. SOLUTION VERIFICATION

STEP 1

PROBLEM ORIENTATION: REALISTIC THINKING ABOUT YOUR ABILITIES

1. When problems occur, what are you thinking about yourself and your problem-solving abilities?
Circle all that apply:
 - A. "I can't solve this problem"
 - B. "I'm too old to solve problems"
 - C. "This problem will never change"
 - D. "Why bother?"
 - E. "It's too much trouble"
 - F. Other: _____

2. When you have these thoughts, how do you feel?
Circle all that apply:

A. Powerless	E. Sad
B. Dumb	F. Angry
C. Helpless	G. Overwhelmed
D. Hopeless	H. Other: _____

3. What is a more realistic way of thinking about yourself and your problem-solving abilities?
Circle all that apply:
 - A. Life always has problems. This is just another problem.
 - B. I've solved plenty of problems in my life and I can solve this one.
 - C. I'll never know if I can solve this if I don't try.
 - D. Other: _____

4. With these *new* thoughts, how do you feel?

A. Hopeful	D. Less scared
B. Powerful	E. Less angry
C. Happier	F. Other: _____

STEP 1

PROBLEM ORIENTATION: REALISTIC THINKING ABOUT THE PROBLEM

1. When the problem is happening, what thoughts are you thinking?

Circle all that apply:

- A. "I'm trying not to think about it"
- B. "This problem will never change"
- C. "Maybe it will go away."
- D. "It's up to somebody else to solve this problem."
- E. "It's too much trouble to try and solve this problem."
- F. Other: _____

2. When you're having those thoughts, how do you feel?

Circle all that apply:

- A. Tired
- B. Sad
- C. Hopeless
- D. Helpless
- E. Angry
- F. Dumb
- G. Scared
- H. Other: _____

3. What is a more realistic way of thinking about the problem?

Circle all that apply:

- A. "This is not such a big deal."
- B. "Nothing will change unless I try."
- C. "I deserve to get rid of this problem."
- D. "I've solved plenty of problems in my life and I can solve this."
- E. Other: _____

4. With these *new* thoughts, how do you feel?

- A. Hopeful
- B. Powerful
- C. Less Tired
- D. Less angry
- E. More self-confident
- F. Braver
- G. Other: _____

STEP 2

PROBLEM DEFINITION & GOAL-SETTING WHAT-WHO-WHERE-WHEN-HOW

Write your problem here. WRITE JUST THE FACTS.

1. With this problem, what happens to make you feel badly?

2. Is another person part of the problem?

3. When does the problem occur?

4. Where does the problem happen?

5. What do you do when this problem occurs?

6. Write out the problem in concrete and observable terms here:

7. What would you like to see change? (What's your goal?)

STEP 3

GENERATING ALTERNATIVES

Your Goal: _____

List ten ways to meet your goal.
Write down every solution you think of.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____