

Problem-solving Worksheet

Practice Exercise

Choose a problem that may arise in the near future. Describe it as accurately as you can. Brainstorm possible solutions. Evaluate the potential outcomes. Prioritise solutions.

Identify the problem situation:

Brainstorm a list of possible solutions:

Pros:

Cons:

	Pros:	Cons:
1. _____	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

Session 4: Problem-solving Worksheet

Adapted from: Budney, A. and Higgins, S. (1998). *A Community Reinforcement Plus Vouchers Approach: Treating Cocaine Addiction*. NIDA. Pages 79-80.

Problem-solving Worksheet

Procedure:

1. *Gather information:* Recognize that a problem exists. Is there a problem? You get clues from your body, thoughts, feelings, behaviour, reactions to other people, and the ways that other people react to you. Think about the problem situation. Who is involved? When does it happen? Exactly what takes place? What effect does this have on you?
2. *Define the problem:* Describe the problem as accurately as you can. What goal would you like to achieve? Be as specific as possible. Break it down into manageable parts.
3. *Brainstorm for alternatives:* List all the things that a person in your situation could possibly do. Consider various approaches to solving the problem. Even list alternatives that seem impractical. Try taking a different point of view, try to think of solutions that worked before, and ask other people what worked for them in similar situations.
4. *Consider the consequences:* Look at each of your alternatives in turn. What things could you reasonably expect to result from taking each action? What positive consequences? What negative consequences are long-term? Which are short-term? Which do you think you could actually do?
5. *Make a decision:* Which alternative is the most likely to achieve your goal? Select the one likely to solve the problem with the least hassle. *Do it!* The best plan in the world is useless if it isn't put into action. Try it out.
6. *Evaluate its effectiveness:* Which parts worked best? Reward yourself for them. Would you do anything differently next time? After you have given the approach a fair trial, does it seem to be working out? If not, consider what you can do to strengthen the plan or give it up and try one of the other possible approaches. Remember that when you've done your best, you have done all you can do.

Continued on next page