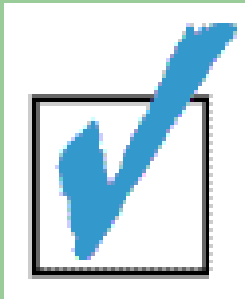


Steps of Problem Solving in Health Management

Going for the 3 Increases: Increase in Health, Increase in Happiness & Increase in Energy

Strategies for
Success in Health
Management

By: James J. Messina, Ph.D.





Steps in Problem Solving

Step 1- Recognize the problem

- Recognize the problem (“Is there a problem?”)
- Recognition of problems may come from several clues, including
 - Worry, anger & depression
 - Having problems pointed out by others
 - Being preoccupied
 - Always feeling like one is in crisis



Steps in Problem Solving

Step 2- Clarify what the problem is

- Identify & specify the problem (“What is the problem?”)
- It is easier to solve problems that are concrete & well defined than those that are global or vague
- For large problems that seem over whelming, it is important to try to break them down into smaller, more manageable steps.



Steps in Problem Solving

Step 3-Brainstorm alternative solutions

- Consider various approaches to solving the problem (“What can I do to solve the problem?”)
- Brainstorm-generate as many solutions as possible without considering, at first, which are good or bad ideas
- It is important for quantity, rather than quality, in the beginning
- Writing these ideas down is very helpful-you may want to return to the list in the future
- It is also important to recognize that not doing anything immediately is an option



Steps in Problem Solving

Step 4- Select most promising solution

- Select the most promising approach (“What will happen if . . . ?”)
- This step involves thinking ahead
- Review each approach, considering both positive & negative consequences of all solutions
- This step may also involve collecting more information & assessing whether some solutions are feasible (e.g., “Can I borrow Tom’s car to take the driving test?”)



Steps in Problem Solving

Step 5-Assess Effectiveness

- Assess the effectiveness of the selected approach (“What did happen when I . . . ?”)
- While some problems are easy to solve, others are more difficult



Problem Solving Journal Exercise

1. Identify the problem
2. Brainstorm alternative solutions
3. Rate the possibility of the alternatives as solutions
4. Order alternatives in priority of being most likely to successfully solve the problem you are working on



So What Problem(s) Do You Need to Solve, to Manage Your Health?

Look at this list and decide what issues you need to problem solve:

- How to stop smoking
- How to eat healthier
- How to lose weight
- How to start & maintain exercising
- How to reduce pain
- How to control my diabetes
- How to reduce my blood pressure
- How to stop drinking
- How to regain my own health
- How to handle stress
- How to control my temper
- How to be good to myself
- How to get off pain killers
- How to trust others in a group
- How to get off drugs
- How to not lie about myself
- How to gain self-confidence
- How to deal with my losses
- How to live healthier
- How to reduce my debt
- How to handle relapse
- How to manage my time
- How to stop making excuses
- How to be honest with myself



So now put problem solving to work

For each of the issues you identified which you need to problem solve

- In your journal apply the 5 steps of problem to each of these problems you identified so that you can manage your health in a more productive way
- Share with your group members the problems you have identified which you want to work on within your group setting