

COLLEGE OF THE CANYONS

Counseling Department

Problem Solving

Step 1: Define the problem.

What do you observe that makes you think there is a problem?

What do you do that perpetuates the problem?

Where is it happening?

How is it happening?

When is it happening?

With whom is it happening?

Why do you think this is a problem?

Step 2: Brainstorm the potential causes for the problem.

What are all the reasons you think the problem is happening.

What are all the reasons you think other people would say the problem is happening.

Step 3:

a) Identify alternative actions to resolve the problem.

Brainstorm all the possible solutions without thinking what would work or not. Write every idea without passing judgment if it's good or bad.

b) Evaluate alternative actions to resolve the problem.

What is the positive consequence for each possible alternative action?

What is the negative consequence for each possible alternative action?

Which action is the most likely to solve the problem for the long term?

Which is the most honestly realistic?

Step 4: Choose an action to resolve the problem from the alternatives evaluated.

What will the situation look like when the problem is solved?

Will this chosen solution take you to your expected outcome?

Step 5: Outline a plan to carry out and implement the chosen solution. An Action Plan includes:

What steps need to be taken to implement the solution?

When will each step of the plan be taken?

Who is responsible for each step of the plan?

How will you know if the plan is working?

Step 6: Evaluate the action plan.

Are the steps being taken according to the plan?

Are you seeing the results that you would expect from each step?

If the plan is not being followed as expected, then reconsider.

Was the plan realistic?

Should the plan be changed?

Step 7: Verification

Was the problem resolved or not?

Should you choose a different alternative action to address the problem if this one is not working?

What changes should be made to avoid this type of problem in the future?

What did you learn from this problem solving experience?

Problem:			
Possible causes	Possible solutions	Positive consequence	Negative consequence
1.			
2.			
3.			

ACTION PLAN:

Step 1:	Who?	What?	When?
Step 2:			
Step 3:			
Step 4:			
Step 5:			