

# Problem Solving

Tips, Tools, Techniques

Decision Making Methods & Tips

# Problem Solving

## Identity the Problem

- What is it – specifically, in behavior terms?
- It is static or changeable?
- When did it start?
- Frequency?
- Duration?
- Intensity?

## Identify and Understand the System around the ‘problem’

- How did it start and become a problem?
- Who does it involve?
- Factors and events surrounding it?
- How does it maintain itself now?
- What happens before and after it occurs?
- How is it influenced or affected?

## Decision Making Methods

### Chance

- Flip a coin
- Random answer generator

### Depend on others

- Do what I’m told by ....

### Balanced Problem solving

- Use a technique I know which is ...
- Ask myself, what would ##### do in this situation
- Weight up the pros and cons (advantages and disadvantages)
- Logical thinking

### Go with my gut or feelings

- Follow my heart
- Go with what I feel

### Be guided by popular opinion

- Ask experts
- Ask my family and friend for opinions

# Identify the sources of pressure & Level of Control

When you identify the sources of pressure in your life you can start to manage them. You can tick [ ✓ ] the sources of pressure impacting on you OR write down the specific circumstances for you at the moment.

## Seems to be about the load on your plate?

- Too many competing demands
- Spread too thin in your tasks
- Working at tasks longer than normal
- Responsibilities are mounting
- Feeling time pressured
- Some tasks are quite demanding
- Adapting to changed circumstances
- Adapting to new or higher duties

## Seems to be about how you're feeling or thinking about things?

- Self-critical about your own performance
- Setting the bar too high for your personal standards
- Feeling frequently cranky or frustrated and can't seem to shake it
- Pessimistic thinking pattern
- Worry about things that you can't change
- Recent or chronic injury, pain or illness

## Seems to be about relationships or communication?

- Unsure about others' expectations of you
- Difficult giving feedback when it's due
- Find it challenging to receive feedback or criticism
- Strain or distancing in either personal or work relationships
- Challenging interactions with clients seem to 'stick' with you
- Some sort of clash or conflict not resolved

## Write down, specifically, what the source of the pressure (puts you in the RED Zone) is for you and why:

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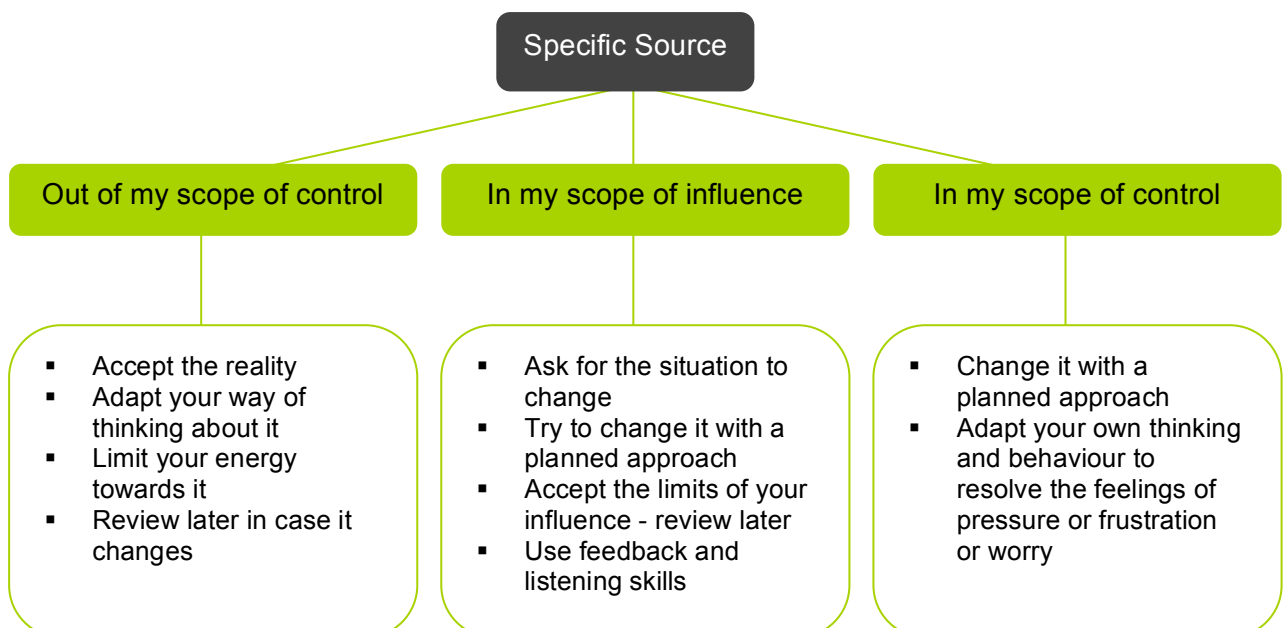


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Now consider if the source of your pressure is something within your control to change right now. The chart below will help you determine some actions based on your scope of control and influence.



# Problem Solving Technique

Problem solving is a skill, which becomes easier if you take time to write things down OR talk about it with someone else who has a level head. The plan that results from this will help give you a sense of control.

## Steps in Problem-Solving

**1) Define the pressure or problem as specifically as you can: what needs to change to make it better?**

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**2) List a range of possible options which could resolve it:**

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**3) Choose the best option from the list; ensure it meets the following test... the solution or step is:**

- Safe and sensible
- Assertive versus aggressive
- Achievable or practical

**4) Plan how you will achieve it:**

What \_\_\_\_\_

When \_\_\_\_\_

Who with \_\_\_\_\_

**5) Act on your plan and review how it went:**

It worked – why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

It didn't work – why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**\* Don't Give UP – try again & seek another opinion**

## A FRESH approach to the issue

### Re-fresh your information:

- Check you have your information and facts right about the pressure or concern
- Ask for more information
- Go back to others and clarify what their expectations are – of you and the situation

### Re-fresh your thinking about it:

- Try not to jump to conclusions
- Tell yourself – 'this is manageable'
- Accept that pressures are normal AND can be handled
- Are you being realistic or fair in your judgment?
- Who is this impacting the most?
- Are you catastrophising unnecessarily?

### Seek a fresh perspective

- Zoom out and look at the bigger picture – where does this fit?
- Is the pressure an annoyance or a serious issue?
- Consider what others would think and do about this situation
- Consider what the next best and effective step might be
- Sleep on it and come back to it, if not urgent