

Problem Solving

We will all experience problems from time to time. And when we are faced with a problem, it is easy to feel stressed about it. This can make you feel worried and anxious. It can also make psychosis worse.

So what can you do? Just like for everybody else, problems will come your way. You simply can't avoid all problems. **But what you can do is be armed to deal with these problems by having good problem solving skills.**

There are *five steps* to problem solving.

1. Choosing the problem
2. Understanding the problem
3. Coming up with different solutions
4. Comparing these solutions
5. Finding the best solution and putting it into action

Problem solving takes practice. It can be difficult to “step back” from our problems and look at them more objectively. **Work closely with your EPI Clinician to learn how to do this.**

1. Choosing the problem

When you are first trying this approach, start by choosing a smaller problem. This makes it easier to learn how to do problem solving. After you have successfully solved a few smaller problems, you can then begin to try and tackle the bigger ones.

Decide on what problem you want to tackle by talking to your EPI Clinician. Once you've selected a problem, describe it some detail – try to get as specific as you can in describing it.

2. Understanding the problem

Ask yourself the following questions to help you better understand the problem:

- Have I had this problem before? How did I handle it?
- Is there anything more I need to find out about this problem – any information I don't have?
- Do I have any other ideas about this problem?
- Are there people who can help support me in solving this problem (friends, family, teachers, health professionals, etc.)?

Describe your problem here:

3. Coming up with different solutions

Now think of three different ways you can solve the problem.

Don't try to decide which of the three ways is best. Just think of three different things that you could do that might help to solve this problem. Write them below in the column "possible solutions".

4. Comparing these solutions

Once you've written down three possible solutions, start to think about the good and bad things about each solution. Getting an objective opinion is very helpful – talk to your EPI Clinician to get his or her perspective about your solutions.

Possible solution	What's good about this?	What's bad about this?
1.		
2.		
3.		

5. Finding the best solution and putting it into action

Look over your list of good and bad things about each solution and decide which is the best one.

You will then need to make a plan to put this solution into action. For this you will need to have good goal setting skills. **Check out the worksheets on goal setting to put your solution into action.**