

LEARNING

TO WORK IT OUT

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WELCOME!

Goals

In the Learning to Work It Out program, we will learn to:

1. Improve our awareness of how our beliefs, thoughts and feelings affect the problems we have.
2. Improve our ability to stop and think when upset and to deal with feelings without making problems worse.
3. Learn to successfully solve problems related to getting and keeping good jobs.

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Dedication

This is dedicated to the memory of Judy Kaufmann, former DWI Project Director whose vision began this project and whose spirit has seen it through. Hey Jude...

Rationale

The "Workin' It Out" program series was developed by the Denver Workforce Initiative to meet the needs of both employers and employees by (1) better preparing the residents of low-income neighborhoods for the interpersonal challenges of the workplace, and (2) better preparing employers to support and manage entry-level workers.

The "Learning to Work It Out" program is designed to help individuals with multiple barriers to employment (such as prior addiction, homelessness, or abuse) improve self-esteem while developing the self-awareness and interpersonal "soft skills" needed to successfully enter into and advance in the world of work.

LWIO Lesson 7

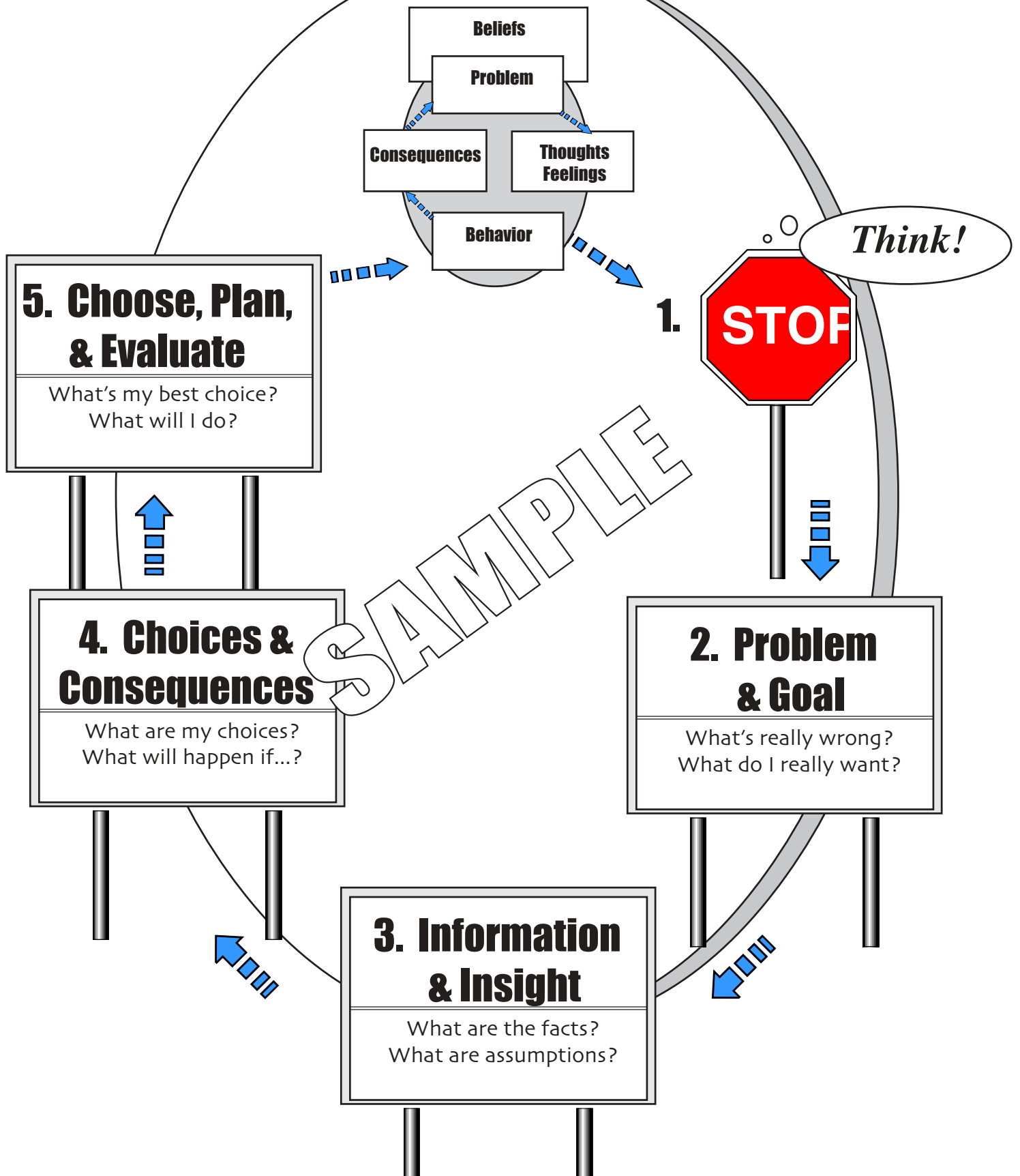
Problem & Goal

SAMPLE

Pearl of
WISDOM

**“Poor Problem Solvers Focus on BLAME...
Good Problems Solvers Focus on Solutions.”**

Problem Solving Steps



Problem Solving model © Juliana Taymans & Steve Parese, 1994, 1998. "Problem Solving Skills in Action."
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Kathy's Story Part 1

Kathy was a 29-year-old mother, a recovering addict who was just beginning to put her life back together. She had lost custody of her 7-year-old daughter Nichole a year ago due to her addiction, and desperately wanted to get her back.

After completing rehab, Kathy moved into a 6-month halfway house for women with substance abuse problems. The rules at Hope House were very strict. All the women were required to attend house meetings, do chores, and work at least part time to pay monthly rent. The staff were helpful, but they didn't accept excuses. Either you followed the rules, or you got kicked out.



Kathy's court counselor, Mrs. Jennings, met with her the day she got released from rehab. "This is your last chance to get Nichole back, Kathy. It's been 18 months, and the court will be looking for adoption if you mess up again. You really need to prove yourself by successfully completing the program at Hope House." Mrs. Jennings gave her a list of things the court would be looking for at the first review in 3 months. Kathy felt her head spinning as she read the list. *'I'll never be able to do these things on my own!'* she thought. *'How do I even get started?'*

Mrs. Jennings could see that Kathy was feeling overwhelmed. "I'd recommend that you find yourself a job right away. I have a friend who owns a restaurant here in town, and sometimes hires my clients. I could give Jerri a call, if you like..."

A few days later, Kathy filled out an application for the waitress job at the Carlton Restaurant. "I'm so nervous," she told one of the other women the night before her interview. "My husband Donny didn't let me work, so I've never had a regular job before. Do I have to tell them about being locked up? Or about, you know, using drugs? I need this job or I'll never get Nichole back, but I can't imagine that they'll want me if they know all about my past! I wish I knew what to expect! What should I do?" The more she thought about it, the more scared and nervous Kathy felt.

Problem Statements



Rules of good problem statements

- Start with "I" and avoid "you"
- Tell how you FEEL
- Explain WHY

"I am _____ because _____."

"I felt _____ when _____."

Example 1. "I am so frustrated that I can't find affordable child care anywhere!"

Example 2. "I feel depressed because I got turned down at my last job interview."

Directions: Rewrite the poor problem statements below.

1. Susan moves to a new city looking for work. She is worried, and thinks, 'I have looked everywhere in this city for a good job. How am I supposed to take care of myself when no one will hire me? What will I do if I run out of money before I find a job?'

'My problem is that no one will hire me.'



A better problem statement for Susan would be: _____

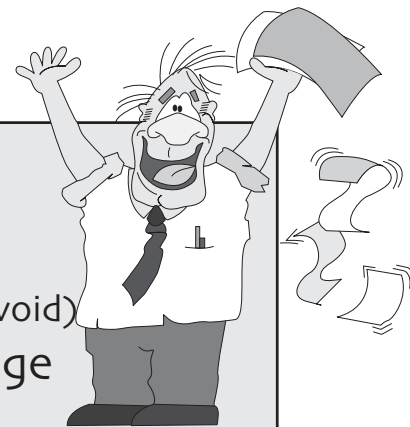
2. Randy waits nervously to talk to the center director after nearly getting into a fight with another student at the training center. He thinks: 'Was I supposed to let that guy just talk that trash? I HAD to stand up for myself! Now I'll probably get kicked out...'

'My problem is that I never get a break!'



A better problem statement for Randy would be: _____

Goal Statements



Rules of good goal statements

- Simple, realistic and positive
- What you want (and *sometimes* what to avoid)
- Focused on what YOU can do or change

"I want _____ (but not _____)."

"I'd like _____ (without _____)."

Example 1. "I want to find a safe child care place without spending over \$ __/day."

Example 2. "I want to learn how to be more successful in my next job interview."

Directions: Write good goal statements to match the improved problem statements.

1. Regarding Susan's problem:

Goal: _____



SAMPLE

2. Regarding Randy's problem:

Goal: _____



KEY POINTS

in Lesson 7

1. Identifying the real problem and goal keeps us focused on solving a problem rather than looking for blame.
2. Good problem solving helps us get from where we are now (our problem) to where we want to be instead (our goal).

MiniQuiz #7

PART 1: Fill in the blanks with the correct words.

1. The first step of problem solving is _____ & _____.
2. Good problem statements should start with _____, tell how you _____, and explain _____.
3. Good goal statements should be _____, r_____, and p_____.

Part 2: The discussion with the principal went all right, and Thomas didn't lose his job. He spent some time thinking as he walked home, and talked with his wife later: "I was so worried that I would lose my job that I didn't even think about how badly I scared the little boy when I grabbed him! Now I feel awful! He'll probably be terrified of me. How can I ever make it up to him?"

A good problem statement for Thomas might be:

A good goal statement for Thomas might be:

