



# Family Education & Support Caregiver Program Session 6

*~ Problem Solving the Tough Spots ~*

# Problem Solving Worksheet

## Page one

Date:

What is the problem?

What do you want to happen (the goal)?

What are you doing now?

Is it working?

What else could you do (list 3-5 things; don't worry about whether or not they will "work" at this point).

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

On the back of the sheet list the "pros and cons" for each idea.

What is the best idea?

When will you start doing it?

What else do you need to do to start doing it?

When will you follow-up on the outcome?

What was the outcome?



# Problem Solving Worksheet – page two

<b>Ideas</b>	<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

# DIFFICULT PEOPLE

## *You Can Deal with Them*

Everyone is irritable or indecisive at times. But some people are so difficult that they make others lives and work a strain. Dealing with difficult people is easier when you learn to recognize some common personality types. Then you can develop coping skills for dealing with each without trying to change them!

### **Difficult Personalities**

There are seven behavior types with whom most people have difficulty.

Bullies are hostile and angry, throwing tantrums to get their way.

Grippers complain about things they don't like, but rarely try to change their situation.

Silent types don't say much: you can beg, yell, or talk to them, but they don't say more than "yes" or "no."

Very nice people seem to agree with you, but won't do what they say they will.

Just say no types respond to new ideas with "That won't work."

I know better types think they know everything. They're condescending and full of themselves.

Stallers put things off until someone else takes over, or until the decision is made because of the delay.

### **How To Cope**

These behaviors are annoying and upsetting. They keep everyone but the difficult person off balance. This can be true even though they may not be trying to control others. Coping balances the power between people. It helps everyone get things done without stalling at the roadblocks difficult people set up.

When someone practices difficult behaviors around you, try these techniques:

For bullies, stand up for yourself. Use phrases like "I believe" or "I feel." Don't try to fight them. Instead, make your point firmly.

Let grippers know you've heard their concern. Directly ask, "What is it you want?"

For silent types, ask questions that must be answered by more than "yes" or "no." If you get no response, let the silent type know your plans.

Very nice people have a strong need to be liked; show them that you do. Then dig to find out what's really happening.

Don't argue with just say no types. Instead, suggest what won't work before they do.

For I know better types, have all the facts before you meet. Raise possible problems, and be ready to follow through.

Listen to stallers; find out what the real reason for the delay is. Help them, and ask them for help.

### **Worth The Effort**

You can't always avoid difficult people. Learning to cope with them is worth the effort.

You'll get more done and be less frustrated if you do.



## **Learning To Enjoy Your Life**

Everyone has hopes, dreams and plans. When they don't work out, disappointment can be strong. Yet you can use disappointment to improve your life. It helps when you understand the meaning of disappointment and what you can do to avoid disappointment and enjoy life.

## **The Meaning Of Disappointment**

The disappointment cycle begins when you expect or hope for something good to happen, and it doesn't. You may feel shocked, then disappointed. You may even refuse to believe the event has taken place. You feel a sense of loss. Eventually, you accept the loss and go on. You could avoid all disappointment by never expecting, risking or hoping for anything. But you wouldn't be able to plan your life, and you would miss out on much of what makes life worth living. Expectations are only a problem if they are unreasonable, if you are overly rigid about them, or if you are unwilling to do what's necessary to make them a reality. To avoid painful disappointment, you must see things as they are.

## **Kinds Of Disappointments**

There are several kinds of disappointments. Simple disappointments can be small and easy to forget, or deep and painful. They can be a result of poor decision making, bad luck, or unrealistic expectations. Chronic disappointments tend to be a lifestyle pattern-not learning from experience and having unreasonable expectations. Life stages, such as middle age, can produce disappointments. If your life seems settled and secure, you may find yourself disappointed that "this is all there is." Movies and TV show us people who's lives are continually thrilling and satisfying. We're often disappointed our lives aren't like that.

## **Reduce Your Disappointment**

These suggestions can help you reduce your disappointment.

Be flexible in your thinking, to help you "roll with the punches."

Look at your expectations, and make them realistic. Be willing to alter them.

Choose different activities to make your life more satisfying.

Recognize it when you are disappointed. Share your feelings with someone else or write them down.

If you can't influence an event, accept that. If you can, work hard to make your dream a reality. Recognize that, even then, it may not happen.

## **Live And Learn**

Learn from your disappointments. Change your expectations, and allow yourself to become flexible. Feel your disappointments fully and then use what you've learned and felt to get greater satisfaction from your life.



## Getting Through An Emotional Crisis

An emotional crisis can result from a sudden upset: losing your job, being diagnosed with a serious illness, being robbed. It can also result from steady, severe distress or major life transitions. When something happens to throw you into emotional crisis, knowing where to turn can help you get through this difficult period, and deal with and accept your feelings.

## When Crisis Strikes

There are many signs of emotional crisis. Victims may have a hard time doing things that should be easy. They might forget things or have trouble focusing. Some will cry or become furious with no warning. Others will have attacks of panic, rapid breathing or heartbeat. They may have nightmares. Some may even feel suicidal.

## The Stages Of Crisis

At first, victims may be frozen in fear, especially when the crisis results from a crime such as rape or burglary. Then, they will act as if nothing has happened or as if what happened was not serious. Next, they may be unable to stop thinking about how they might have prevented it. Some people may be stuck in one stage, and will find that the effects of the crisis will hang on and on.

## The Goal Of Crisis Therapy

The goal of therapy after a crisis is to start healing and to help the victim move through each stage completely. Crisis therapy is short term, lasting about six sessions. Crisis therapists actively help people solve crisis related problems, using a variety of approaches.

## Know Where To Turn

Different kinds of crises require different kinds of emergency help. Use hot lines and community crisis centers for suicide, rape, assault, and burglary. When you're away from home, look under "Traveler's Aide" in the phone book for emergency help in an emotional crisis. (Local hospital emergency rooms are best for physical emergencies.)

## Take The Time Now

You never know when a crisis might take place. Take the time now to learn what help is available where you live or where you're going. It can make a big difference at a time when help is critical.



## Tips For Easing Problems At Work

Job troubles are common for everyone from executives to assembly line workers. Understanding what causes the majority of problems at work and what you can do to manage them can turn difficulties into opportunities.

### Common Causes

There are many kinds of troubles found on the job. Number one has to do with relating to other people. A coworker who is always late, an insensitive supervisor, or a gossip can cause problems for everyone. But even something positive such as falling in love can cause serious problems when it's at work.

Job troubles can also result from environmental concerns. High noise levels, dangerous conditions, or difficult work such as constant lifting all can become problems unless you know how to manage them.

Emotional problems can also cause trouble on the job. If you don't feel appreciated in your job, or if your chances for promotion are small, you may feel frustrated. If the work is boring, you might not do as good a job as possible.

### Managing Job Troubles

The following tips can help all of us ease job troubles:

- Take care of yourself Get enough sleep, food and exercise. Avoid alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, caffeine and sugar. You'll be better able to handle troubles which come up.
- See troubles as opportunities Someone who annoys you can end up a friend, if you let her know you'd like her help. A problem on the loading dock may turn into a promotion if you're the one who comes up with a solution.
- Manage your time Your work load may seem heavy, but it could be that you do unimportant things before important ones. Your supervisor may be able to help you manage time better if you ask.
- Speak up For example, if a coworker's behavior bothers you, ask him to stop. If you are unsure about your chances for promotion, talk to your supervisor.
- Plan Planning increases your chances of achieving your goal. Perhaps you need more advanced training. Or, you may want to plan a strategy for changing departments or positions.
- Get support Family, friends or coworkers can all be great sources of support. The stronger your connections with others, the more it will help you come up with solutions to problems.
- Enjoy your leisure time If you do, you'll come to work in a good state of mind.

### It's Your Choice

You can choose to try to make your work situation satisfying. If there are problems, you can choose to attempt a solution. There are many choices open to you. Which ones will you make?



## Facing Financial Troubles

Money problems can be as upsetting as they are commonplace. By understanding how money problems affect us and what we can do to prevent them, we can relieve unnecessary stress and help take control of our lives.

## The Trouble With Money

Money problems can cause a range of emotional and physical problems such as divorce, illness or ulcers. Money means different things to different people. Ask yourself, "How important is money? What does it mean to me?" For most people, it's associated with power, success, happiness and self-esteem. If creditors are breathing down your neck, it's easy to see that you're in trouble. But you can still be under "money stress" if you use too many credit cards too often, have no savings, or simply don't know your own financial situation.

## Common Causes

A common problem is misuse of credit (especially credit cards). It's best to limit your monthly debt payments, aside from housing, to 20% or less of your monthly take-home pay. Instead of charging purchases, stay on the safe side by saving for them. Use credit for large purchases, such as a car, that will last much longer than your payments on them.

Mismanaging money is another problem. Keep good records and make a budget, so you can see what you are able to spend on items such as entertainment, vacation or clothes. Set long term savings goals for items such as a home purchase or education for your children.

Crisis such as divorce, fire, illness, or layoffs can happen to anyone without warning. Protect yourself by having a three-month emergency fund at all times. Shop carefully for insurance which will meet your needs.

## Where To Get Help

If you find yourself struggling financially, there are many confidential places to turn. At work, your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or Personnel Department may have information and advice. The phone book usually lists many other advisors. Look in the white pages under Consumer Credit Counseling, a non-profit organization. Or check in the government section for a city or county agency, Family Service agency, Catholic Social Service, and Jewish Family Service. These organizations often provide free or low-cost financial counseling to anyone in need. They can make a big difference in your financial picture, now and in the future.



## Simple Suggestions That Work

Everyone has ups and downs, good days and bad days. But, given the choice, who wouldn't prefer to feel good? By using the following techniques you can learn how to enjoy life more, and turn those bad days into good ones in no time.

## Enjoy Your Body

A massage or eating a wonderful meal can be physical pleasures that make life worth living. Enjoy regular physical activity such as dancing, playing softball or taking walks, to uplift your spirits.

## Create A Support Network

A support network is a group of people you can turn to for comfort, a sympathetic ear, or good ideas. A support network can include family members, friends, coworkers, or anyone who cares about you. Reach out and make your network wider; you'll be glad you did.

## Make Time For Fun

Making time for fun is like taking extra vacations throughout the year. What are your favorite amusements? Movies, day trips into the country, going to a fair can all be fun. Get out of your chair and get going! You'll feel good before, during and after.

## Help Others

Few things give more pleasure than helping others. Find out about some of the programs in your community that need your help. Try something unlike anything you've ever done. It will enrich your life with new ideas, information and feelings.

## Get In The Habit

You can get in the habit of feeling good by being good to yourself and others. When you care about yourself, you'll find that life holds more meaning and pleasure.



# ***Negotiating Differences***

## **Communicate, Cooperate, & Understand**

When it comes to personal relationships, ultimatums rarely work. Instead, it helps to know how to give and take to negotiate. Learning to effectively communicate, cooperate, and understand are the most effective skills we have for successful negotiations.

## **Communicate Positively**

In order to resolve differences or to negotiate, you must be willing to face the other person. You don't need to be angry or accusing. But you should be direct. Positive communicating includes honestly saying how you feel and what you want.

## **Be Cooperative**

"Cooperate" means "work together". To begin, suggest that each person state the problem or situation from his or her point of view. Don't defend your position, but listen. Ask questions if you don't understand the other person's feelings. Next, each person can try to come up with a few ideas for solving the conflict. If possible, suggest solutions that are "win/win." Assume you share a common interest: the desire for a friendly outcome.

## **Be Understanding**

To negotiate wisely, put yourself in the other person's shoes. What would satisfy him? What does he want? Avoid criticizing; when people feel inferior, they get angry. When they're angry, you're less likely to get what you want.



## The Five Finger Exercise

Sit back, take a few deep breaths and then establish an easy, regular breathing pattern.

To begin, take a deep breath and as you exhale, touch your thumb to your index finger. Recall a time when your body felt a healthy fatigue, like how you felt after exercising, or just stepping out of a sauna or hot tub....

Next, take another deep breath, and as you exhale, touch your thumb to your middle finger and go back to a time when you had a loving experience, a time when you felt a strong sense of closeness or connection. This could be a spiritual experience while you were alone or feelings of love toward another person. Take a moment to feel that feeling as vividly as you can now....

Now take another deep breath, and as you exhale, touch your thumb to your ring finger and recall a time when you performed very well, when you mastered something and received recognition for your work. Take that sense of accomplishment in now, feel it fully and know that you deserve it...

Finally, take one more deep breath in and as you exhale, touch your thumb to your little finger and as you do, recall the most beautiful place you have ever been...or imagine how such a place would look and feel if you were there now...Take a moment to absorb the full feeling of this place.... and when you're ready, bringing with you the feelings you would like to feel for the rest of your day, come back...