WORKSHEET 65 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

Solving a problem step by step

A simple method for moving from worry to action

AIM

Teach a structured problem-solving method: defining the problem, generating solutions, evaluating them, choosing, planning and evaluating the outcome.

WHO IT IS FOR

Concrete problems that cause anxiety or rumination; a sense of helplessness.

DURATION

20 min in session; putting it into practice over one or two weeks

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Define the problem precisely and concretely (who, what, when).
2. List all possible solutions without judging them (brainstorming).
3. Weigh up the pros and cons of each one and choose one.
4. Plan the steps, carry them out, then evaluate and adjust if needed.

POINTS TO WATCH

> A poorly defined problem makes all the solutions vague: spend time on step 1. If the problem has no solution (grief, illness), point towards acceptance.

REFERENCES

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Beck, J. S. (2020). Cognitive Behavior Therapy: Basics and Beyond (3rd ed.). Guilford.

PSYCHOLOGIST'S NOTES

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WORKSHEET 65 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

Solving a problem step by step

When a problem keeps going round in your head, putting it on paper in steps helps you move into action. Take one step at a time.

1. The problem, precisely (who, what, when): _____
2. All the possible solutions, even if they seem odd (in the table).
3. For each one, the pros and cons. I choose: _____
4. My steps, and when I will review: _____

Possible solution	Pros	Cons	Rating /10

How did it go, and what needs adjusting?

These exercises do not replace therapy. If you are in distress or having suicidal thoughts: 112 (European Union), 3114 (France) or the emergency number of the country where you live.

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