

PROBLEM-SOLVING GUIDE FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

Step 1: Problem Definition

- a) Select one problem to be discussed.
- b) One family member states their view of the problem in clear terms, using "I-statements" and avoiding accusations.
- c) Each family member reflects that view without debating or challenging it.
- d) Repeat steps "b" and "c" until each family member has had a turn.
- e) Discuss only this problem; do not bring up the past or other issues.

Step 2: Listing Possible Solutions

- a) Family members take turns listing ways to solve the problem.
- b) Be creative; anything goes!
- c) Do not evaluate the solutions suggested by each person at this time.
- d) Write down ALL solutions that are suggested; stop after 8-10 solutions.

Step 3: Decision-Making

- a) Family members rate each solution as positive (+) or negative (-).
- b) Try not to rate a solution based on who came up with it.
- c) Choose the solution(s) that has the most pluses.
- d) If necessary, combine solutions that are rated as positive.
- e) If you are unable to choose a solution, break down the problem into smaller parts and start again at Step 1.

Step 4: Putting the Solution into Practice

- a) Decide on how long the solution will be tried.
- b) Write out a plan for monitoring the success of the solution.
- c) Each family member should have a role to play in the solution.

Step 5: Evaluation and Revision of the Solution

- a) After the trial period, evaluate the success or failure of the solution.
- b) If necessary, go back through these steps until the problem is solved.