



## Session 7: Problem Solving

Many things can get in the way of being more active and eating less fat and calories. But problems can be solved.

### The five steps to solving a problem:

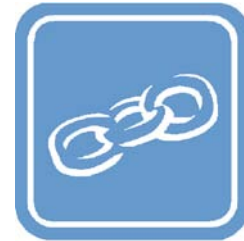
#### 1. Describe the problem in detail.

- Be specific.
- Look at what led up to the problem.
- Find the action (or behavior) chain.

### Try to see the links (steps) in the action chain.

Look for:

- Things that “cue” you (or make you want) to eat or be inactive.
- People who don't support you.
- Thoughts or feelings that get in your way.



#### Sarah's Action Chain

- Didn't eat lunch.
- Boss was critical.
- Sarah felt stressed and anxious.
- Came home tired, upset, and hungry.
- Went right to the kitchen.
- Saw cookies on counter.
- Ate cookies.

## 2. Brainstorm your options.

Links	<i>Some of Sarah's Options</i>
Didn't eat lunch.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quit her job. (Just kidding.)</li> <li>• Pack a quick bag lunch.</li> </ul>
Boss was critical. Sarah felt stressed and anxious.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk with her boss about solving the problems at work.</li> <li>• Take a break.</li> <li>• Get support from a co-worker.</li> </ul>
Came home tired, upset, and hungry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go for a walk after work to unwind.</li> </ul>
Went right to the kitchen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enter house through different door.</li> <li>• Plan something to do the minute she gets home (like getting out in the yard, straightening a closet or room in the house).</li> </ul>
Saw cookies on counter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't buy cookies.</li> <li>• Keep cookies out of sight.</li> <li>• Keep fruit in sight.</li> </ul>

## 3. Pick one option to try.

- Weigh the pros and cons.
- Choose one that is very likely to work and that you can do.
- Try to break as many links as you can, as early as you can.



#### 4. Make a positive action plan.

##### Example for Sarah:

She will

- Pack a quick bag lunch.
- 

When?

- Tuesday and Thursday next week.
- 

She will do this first

- Shop for the foods.
  - Pack lunch the night before.
- 

Roadblocks that might come up, and how she'll handle them

- I might forget.
- I will find a healthy sandwich place with quick service.
- I will order a turkey sandwich by phone.



She will do this to make her success more likely

- Ask a friend who also brings bag lunches to work to join me for lunch on Tuesday.

#### 5. Try it. See how it goes.

Did it work? If not, what went wrong? Problem solve again.

**Problem solving is a process. Don't give up!**



## The Lifestyle Balance Problem Solver

**Describe the problem in detail.** Be specific.

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<b>Find the action chain.</b> <b>Links</b>	<b>Brainstorm your options.</b> <b>Options</b>

**Pick one option.** Is it very likely to work? Can you do it?



## Make a Positive Action Plan

I will ... \_\_\_\_\_

When? ... \_\_\_\_\_

I will do this first ... \_\_\_\_\_

Roadblocks that might come up

I will handle them by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I will do this to make my success more likely: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How can we help you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## To do:

### I will:

- Keep track of my weight, eating, and activity.**
- Do my best to reach my goals.** The goal is to be active for 150 minutes or more per week. Wherever you are at this point with your activity, if you are comfortable at that level make it your goal to add 30 minutes this week. If you are struggling with activity keep up with what you have been able to do.

Try setting aside one block of time. Or find 2-3 shorter time periods. Plan activities you LIKE to do.

	What I will do	When	Minutes
Mon			
Tues			
Wed			
Thurs			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			
<b>Total minutes for the week (Goal: 150 minutes):</b>			

- Follow my action plan.**

Did it work? If not, what went wrong? What could I do differently?

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