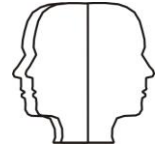


# Lesson 22 – Problem Solving:

## Skill 5 – Make a Plan



---

### Summary and Rationale

In this lesson group members learn and practice the steps of problem solving skill 5: **make a plan**. Creating and following a plan reinforces a principle that runs throughout **Thinking for a Change**: think before you act.

**Linking:** Step 5 of this skill incorporates processes group members have practiced in cognitive self-change, social skills, and even earlier in problem solving. It involves using a thought to help you maintain control as you implement your plan.

### Concepts and Definitions

**Make a plan** consists of 5 steps:

**Step 1:** Identify with whom, where and when you should take your chosen action.

**Step 2:** Choose key social skills that can help you.

**Step 3:** Identify what you will do or say.

**Step 4:** Identify how you will do or say it.

**Step 5:** Decide on a thought that will help you get started.

**Objectives** – As a result of this lesson group members will apply problem solving skill 5: **make a plan** to a real life situation.

## Major Activities

**Activity 1:** Review Problem Solving Skills 1- 4

**Activity 2:** Homework Review

**Activity 3:** Overview of Lesson

**Activity 4:** Review Problem Solving Skills 1 – 4 with the Ongoing Problem Situation

**Activity 5:** Apply Skill 5: Make a Plan to the Ongoing Problem Situation

**Activity 6:** Wrap-up

**Activity 7:** Assign Homework

## Supplements

**Charts** – Make before facilitating lesson. (See supplement section in each lesson for full text of chart page.)

Denoted in lesson plan with this symbol:



C- 22-1-Choices and Consequences  
C-22-2- Skill 5: Make a Plan

Filled-in charts for skills 1-4 for Shewan or Sherry from previous lessons.

**Handouts** – Make copies before lesson. (See supplement section of each lesson for camera ready pages.)

Denoted in lesson plan with this symbol:



H-16-1 Problem Solving Skills and Steps (Group members should bring this to class or you should keep a folder with these steps to use each lesson).  
H-22-1-Pocket Skill Cards  
H-22-2-Homework

**Presentation Slides** – Make transparencies if projector is not available. (See supplement section of each lesson for camera ready pages.)

Denoted in lesson plan with this symbol:



P-22-1-Title slide  
P-22-2-Problem Solving Skills 1-4  
P-22-3-Problem Solving Skill 5  
P-22-4-Feelings and Thinking Thermometer  
P-22-5-Homework

## **Equipment**

- Easel (chart stand)
- Projector to show presentation slides
- Projection screen or suitable surface

## **Supplies**

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Masking tape
- Copies of participant handouts

## Activity 1: Review Problem Solving Skills 1-4

We have practiced 4 of the 6 problem solving skills. Let's briefly review them. What is the first skill?

*(Answer: Stop and think.)*

What is important about it?

*(Answer: It helps you think rather than react emotionally.)*

What is the second skill?

*(Answer: State the problem.)*

What is the purpose of this skill?

*(Answer: To describe the problem objectively and to recognize our risk reaction.)*

What is the third skill?

*(Answer: Set a goal and gather information.)*

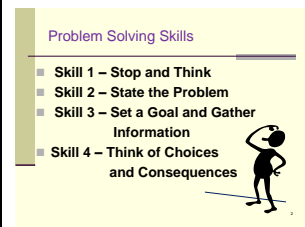
What happens when we use this skill?

*(Answer: We set a positive and realistic goal. We think about the problem, by determining the facts and the other person's thoughts and feelings.)*

And the fourth skill?



Refer group members to H-16-2 Problem Solving Skills and Steps.



*(Answer: Think of choices and consequences.)*

This skill has 3 steps to help us make the best choice to get us to our goal. Who can tell us those steps?

*(Answer: Brainstorm choices; Think about consequences; Pick a choice to get to your goal.)*

## Activity 2: Homework Review

Last time you were asked to work on your same problem situation and do the steps in problem solving skill 4: **think of choices and consequences**.

Working with someone you trust, you were asked to list at least eight different things you could do (step 1: Brainstorm choices). Then go on to step 2 for each choice (Think about consequences). Finally, step 3 was to Pick a choice to get to your goal.

We are going to begin by having each of you put your choices and consequences on chart paper so we can discuss them. You don't have to write down step 3: Pick a choice to get to your goal yet, because we are going to discuss that first.



C-22-1

Hand out chart paper and markers for group members to write what they did for homework on chart paper.

Prepare an example to show the group

members the format you want them to use.

The primary goal of this homework review is to get the choices and consequences listed on chart paper.

These charts will be used in upcoming problem solving skills lessons.

Another goal is to use the group process to expand members' ideas about possible choices.

Group members can work in pairs and share the task of writing on the charts. The idea is to have charts that can be read by the group. And, for the end product, each group member will have

Now, each of you will have a chance to present your “Choices and Consequences” chart.

Who would like to begin?

Please remind us of your problem statement then explain your chart.

Now that, (*group member*), has described his/her goal, and choices and consequences, let’s see if we as a group can brainstorm some other possible actions he/she could take in this situation.

his/her own chart.

Pair those with better reading/writing skills with those who may have reading/writing issues.

Be prepared to assist group members who may be slow writers, have poor handwriting or may be embarrassed with their spelling.

Have first volunteer present his/her chart.

Have the group member briefly review his/her problem situation, then read through the chart.

Invite the group to add suggestions and provide reasons for their suggestions based on the possible consequences.

Keep track of the number of suggestions

*(Group member)*, the group has helped you think about *(insert number)* additional actions you could take in this situation. Are there choices that the group has suggested that you would want to consider?

What might be the consequences of those choices?

Group, which choices do you think will get *(group member)* to his/her goal?

*(Group member)*, now which action do you think you can do to get you closer to your goal?

made by group members.

If the group member indicates agreement either you or the group member writes it on the chart paper and also on homework sheet.

After group members give suggestions, the focus group member should pick an action from the chart. It may be the one identified for homework or it may be one suggested by the group. Write it on chart and homework sheet.

Repeat the homework review process with each group member.

Make sure to actively involve the



### Activity 3: Overview of Lesson

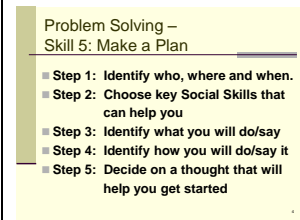
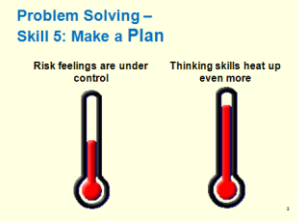
If you look at the risk feelings and thinking skills thermometers you can see that during this skill you are keeping your risk feelings in control. In contrast, your thinking skills have heated up even more.

In problem solving skill 5: **make a plan** you will use many of the thinking skills you have developed throughout this program. Here are the steps:

- Step 1:** Identify who, where and when
- Step 2:** Choose key social skills that can help you
- Step 3:** Identify what you will do or say
- Step 4:** Identify how you will do or say it
- Step 5:** Decide on a thought to get you started

Let's take a look at each of these steps, one at a

group in each member's homework presentation.



Refer group members to this handout as you go through the **make a plan** steps.

time.

### **Step 1: Identify Who, Where and When**

In step 1 we identify who we will communicate with. We also decide where and when we will be taking the action we chose in skill 4. Timing can be very important in problem solving. If we act too soon our risk feelings may still be heated up, making it difficult for us to use our thinking skills; if we wait too long we may have lost our chance to take action.

### **Step 2: Choose Key Social Skills That Can Help You**

In step 2 we want to identify one or two social skills that can help us reach our goal. We have learned nine social skills in this program and some of these skills can help us in most problem situations.

What social skills can you remember?

*(Example answers: Any of the social skills from the curriculum is acceptable.)*

### **Step 3: Identify What You Will Do or Say**

In step 3, we figure out what to do or say. This means that we are going to think about the words we are going to use and the specific actions we are going to take.

It might be helpful to have copies of the table of contents available, or to list the social skills on a piece of chart paper.

**Step 4: Identify How You Will Do or Say It**

In step 4, we identify how we will do or say it.

What do you think this means?

*(Example answer: This means thinking about your body language, your tone of voice, facial expression and eye contact.)*

**Step 5: Decide on a Thought to Get You Started**

In step 5 we identify a thought that will help us get started when we do our plan. This is something we did in cognitive self-change when we tried out new thinking. It is also something we have done in social skills when we use thinking steps. This is even similar to the first skill of problem solving, when we use thoughts to calm us down during **stop and think**.

It is important to identify one or two thoughts we can use that will help us take the action we have chosen. This is one way to reduce risk thinking. Remember one of the fundamental principles of **Thinking for a Change**: *Thinking controls behavior!*

Here is a skill card with the **make a plan** steps. You can use this card while you practice the skill here in class, as well as when doing your

Encourage answers.



H-22-1-Make a Plan  
Pocket Skill Cards

homework.

### Activity 4: Review Problem Solving Skills 1 – 4 with the Ongoing Problem Situation

In a minute we will try out problem solving skill 5: **make a plan** using Shewan's/Sherry's problem situation.

First let's review how we applied the first four problem solving skills to her situation.

What do you know about what Shewan/Sherry did for the **stop and think** skill?

*(Example answer: Group members should read the answer from the skill 1 chart for the ongoing problem situation.)*

How did she **state the problem**?

*(Example answer: Group members should read the answer from the skill 2 chart for the ongoing problem situation.)*

What is her goal?

*(Example answer: Read information on skill 3 chart.)*

What information did Shewan/Sherry consider?

*(Example answer: Group members should read and describe the information provided on the skill*



Display charts for skills 1-4 for Shewan or Sherry from previous lessons. Review information for each step by asking the questions in the left column.

3 chart.)

What are some of the choices she brainstormed?

*(Example answer: read some of the choices from the skill 4 chart.)*

Which choice did Shewan/Sherry pick to get her to her goal?

*(Example answer: read choice from skill 4 chart.)*

### **Activity 5: Apply Skill 5: Make a Plan to the Ongoing Problem Situation**

#### **Step 1: Identify Who, Where, and When**

Based on the action she chose, who will Shewan/Sherry communicate with? Where and when should she do it?



C-22-2

Restate the problem solver's goal and choice.

Either lead a large group discussion or ask pairs to discuss their ideas and then call on pairs to share their ideas. If there seems to be consensus, put that information on the chart. If not, call on one individual and let that person make the final decision and note that

**Step 2: Identify Key Social Skills That Can Help You**

You have learned nine social skills in this program. Let's identify two social skills you think would be most helpful to Shewan/Sherry with her choice.

**Step 3: Identify What You Will Do or Say**

What words do you think Shewan/Sherry should use (*if the action chosen involves saying something*)?

Should she start by saying something directly or by asking a question?

How important will it be for her to listen?

What might she expect Ms. Shells/Ms. Porter to say to her?

**Step 4: Identify How You Will Do or Say It**

on the chart.

Write two social skills on the chart.

Lead a discussion by asking the questions, one at a time, giving group members time to think about and discuss each question before you move on to the next question.

The group does not need to come to a consensus on answers.

Note key ideas presented by the group on the chart.

Either lead a large group discussion or ask pairs to discuss their ideas and then call on

What tone of voice can help Shewan/Sherry communicate effectively? Consider how loud or how soft, how respectful or how insistent.

What should she do with her body? Stand? Sit?

How close or far away should she stand? Be straight, lean forward or back?

What should she do with her hands and arms?

What should she do with her face? Look pleasant, frown, neutral?

And what should she do with her eyes, eye contact? Look away? A combination?

### **Step 5: Decide on a Thought to Get You Started**

What can Shewan/Sherry think as she starts

pairs to share their ideas based on the questions.

Note ideas to use for the plan on chart paper after discussing each question.

Once discussed, ask for a volunteer to say something in the tone of voice which was decided upon.

After discussion, ask a volunteer to demonstrate.

Once discussed ask for a volunteer to show the facial expression which was decided upon.

Write the thought/s on

taking her action that will help her keep her risk feelings in control?

*(Example answer: "I can handle this.")*

### Activity 6: Wrap-up

You have done a lot of work today. We have explored problem solving skill 5: **make a plan**.

Congratulations on all the work you did in our session today.

### Activity 7: Assign Homework

For your homework, I want you to work on skill 5 by making a plan for the choice you identified today. Keep your goal in mind. Use this homework handout to guide you. In our next session, we will put your plans into action.

the chart paper.


**Keep filled-in Chart 22-2 for next session.**



P-22-5

**Homework**

- Write a plan for the problem situation you have been using for homework
- Use the choice from skill 4, step 3 that you finalized today during homework review





H-22-1

Homework