

Even though a family may be in touch with what they want, there can be many things that keep them from believing they can create the life they want. One might be the belief that a family needs to be fixed by someone else, because they do not have the ability to solve their own problems.

# **Session 10**

## **Problem Solving with Families**

This session shares a problem-solving tool that when applied to many problems can be very helpful in finding solutions

## **Problem Solving with Families**

A problem is a situation or set of conditions that are preventing you from doing what you want to do. Problem behaviors are what you are doing that is helping create and sustain the problem.

The key to problem solving is...

- ...the ability to stand outside the problem and to view it with some sense of objectivity
- ...the willingness to never make a major decision until you are clear that there are at least two options
- ...the awareness that there are always multiple ways of coming to a solution, and

**“A problem clearly stated is a problem half solved.”**

(The first three steps fully state the problem. The next two steps move you toward a solution.)

**Problem** – Step 1 – Help the family state the problem as clearly as possible. (Ask the family questions about their current situation and how the current situation is keeping them from doing what they would like to do.)

**Impact** – Step 2 – Ask what they might be doing that is negatively impacting the situation or helping create the problem.

**Cost/Benefits** – Step 3 – Ask if the problem is not resolved, what is the cost in the short term? What’s going to happen in the long term? If the problem is resolved, what are some of the short-term benefits? What would be some of the long- term benefits?

**Brainstorm** – Step 4 – What are 5-7 Possible ways to solve this problem?

**Actions** - (small steps) - Step 5 – Select the 1-2 best solutions from the above list. What are the actions that you need to take to begin working on the solutions?

## **Worksheet**

**Problem** – Step 1 – What is the current situation and what is keeping us from doing what we would like to do?

**Impact** – Step 2 – How are we negatively impacting the situation or helping to create the problem?

**Cost/Benefits** – Step 3 – If the problem is not resolved, what is the cost in the short term? What's going to happen in the long term? If the problem is resolved, what are some of the short-term benefits? What would be some of the long-term benefits?

**Brainstorm** (big actions) – Step 4 - What are 5-7 possible ways to solving this problem?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**\*\*Discuss with the individual the possible pros and cons of each of the above solutions.**

**Actions** (small steps) - Step 5 – Select the 1-2 best solutions from the above list. What are the actions that you need to take to begin working on the solutions?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**\*\*Discuss with the family a possible timeline when these small steps will be taken.**

