

One move
at a time

Problem Solving



Content



Introduction and the 4I's	3-4
Inspiration	5-6
Problem statement, Goals & Values	7-10
Raymond's story	11-13
Information	14
Anxiety, Depression and Problem Solving	15-18
Implementation	19-20
Raymond's activities	21-23
Worksheets.....	24-35
Into the Future	36
Relapse Prevention Plan	37-40

Version 1.0.

ISBN 978-0-6480216-1-2

Copyright © 2017 Flinders University Discipline of Behavioural Health.

All images used were sourced and purchased, where appropriate, from two stock image websites (www.shutterstock.com and www.pexels.com).

Discipline of Behavioural Health - Flinders University

Margaret Tobin Centre

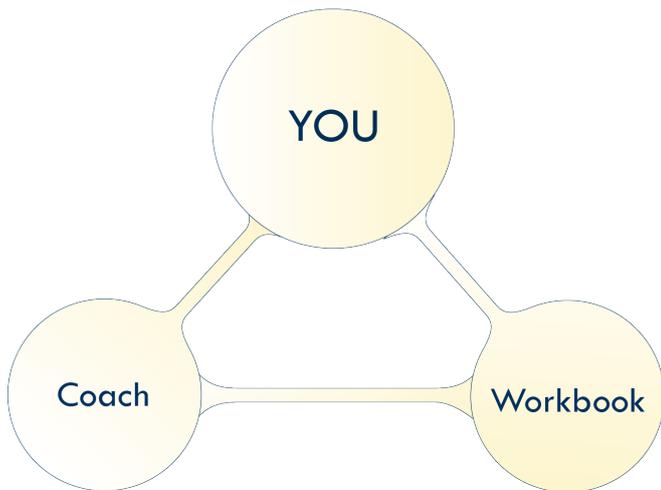
Flinders Drive, Bedford Park SA 5042 AUSTRALIA

Phone: +61 8 8404 2323

Web: <https://www.flinders.edu.au/study/health/behavioural-health>

Authors: Dr Anthony Venning, Paula Redpath & Simone Orlowski

Acknowledgements: Professor Malcolm Battersby, Professor Sharon Lawn, Andrea Morello & Tassia Oswald



Congratulations, you have committed to making changes in your life by signing up to this program! You have now met with your coach and received this workbook. The hardest part is seeking help, so you are already well on your way to making changes. This guided self-help program is made up of three major components: *you*, *your coach* and this *workbook*.

The most important component of the program is You. Your coach's role is to guide and support you to use the strategies in this workbook, to make the most of this program.

This workbook contains information, worksheets and resources to guide you through the program. Making any change takes time and persistence. Your willingness to give new challenges a go will be an important factor in seeing the change you want in your life.



*Help yourself with
the right tools and
support....*

4I'S



This workbook is made up of the four sections we call the 4I's:

- **I**nspiration - to help connect you with why you're doing this.
- **I**nformation - to let you know what this is all about.
- **I**mplementation - to direct you how to start.
- **I**nto the future - to show you how to maintain the changes that have been made.



INSPIRATION



Inspiration



When you first met with your coach, you identified the main problem you are currently experiencing. You also talked about how your behaviours, feelings, and thoughts contribute to, and maintain, the problem. Now that you have started, you and your coach will work together to identify goals to work on. Fill out the worksheets in this section of the book based on what you discussed with your coach.

As you work through this program, you will learn more about how anxiety and depression impact on your life. Sometimes it can be difficult to recognise the progress you have made. You might like to come back to the pages in this section as sources of inspiration and motivation to see how far you've come since you started.



Problem statement

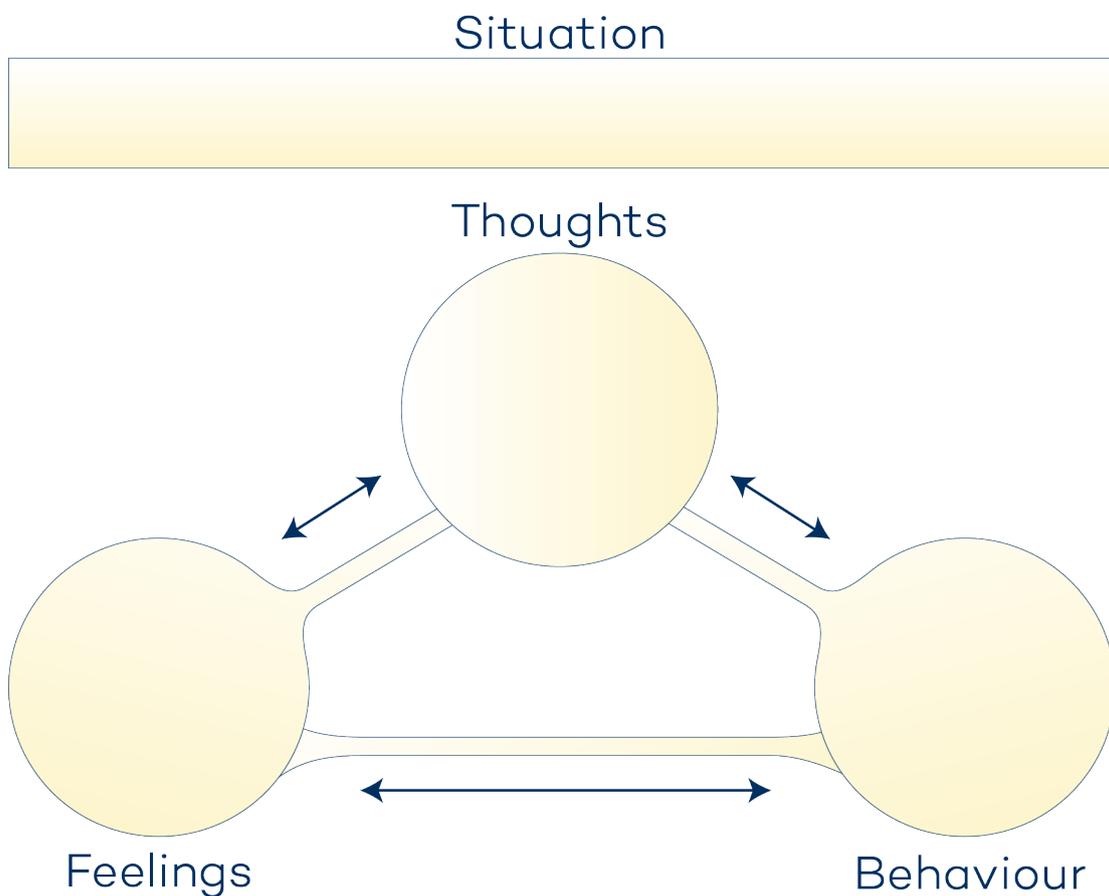
WHEN (trigger)

WHAT (behaviour)

BECAUSE I THINK / FEAR THAT (consequences)

WHICH AFFECTS (impacts)

Impact of the problem

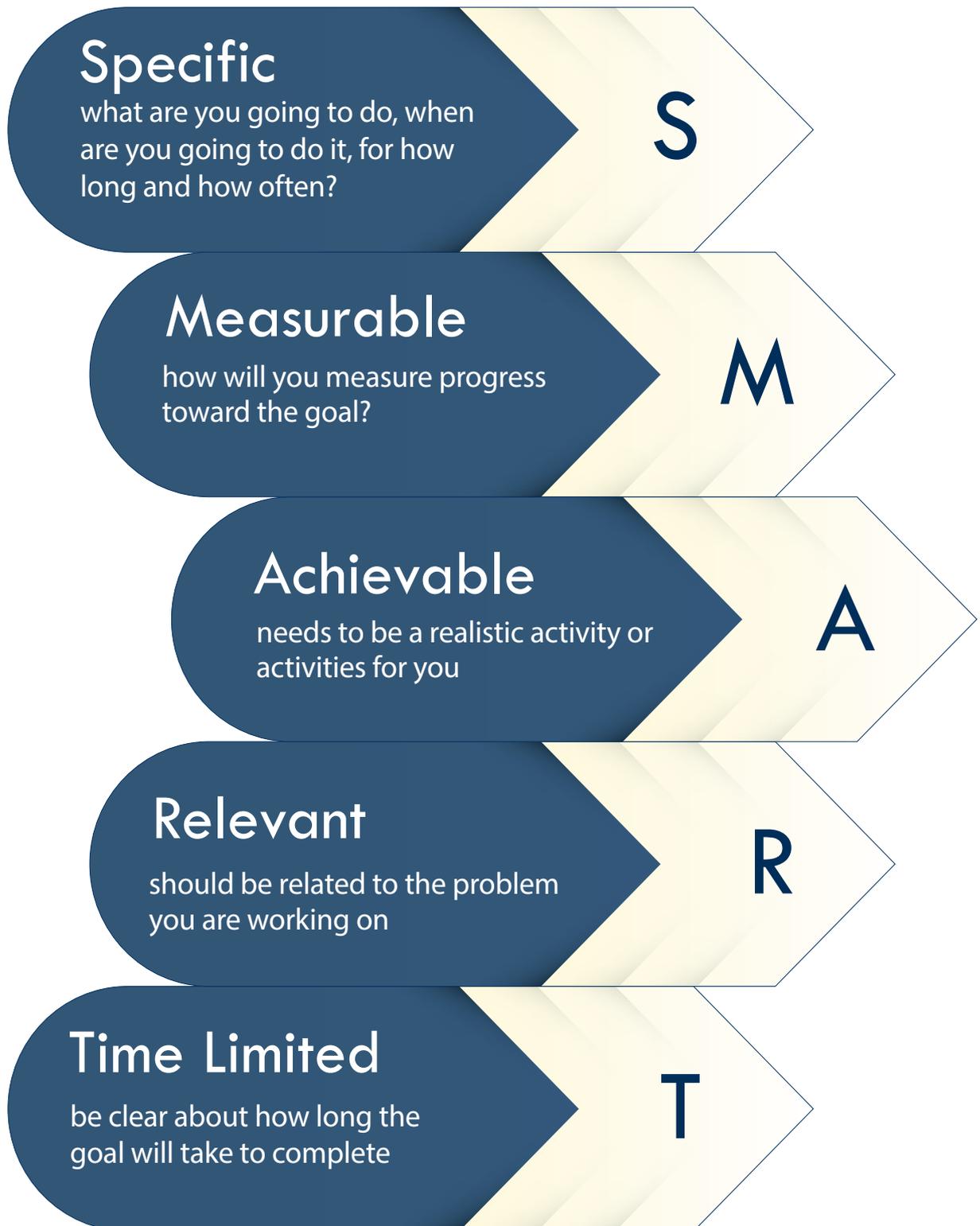


Setting goals



Working out at the beginning where you hope to be at the end is useful for identifying clear and meaningful changes. Together with your coach, you will work out some goals so that you are able to determine if what you are doing is making a difference.

Treatment goals should be S.M.A.R.T.



Goal 1

What will I do differently?

Where will I be doing it?

How regularly will I do it?

Currently, I can complete my goal



Anytime



Often



Occasionally



Not at all

Goal 2

What will I do differently?

Where will I be doing it?

How regularly will I do it?

Currently, I can complete my goal



Anytime



Often



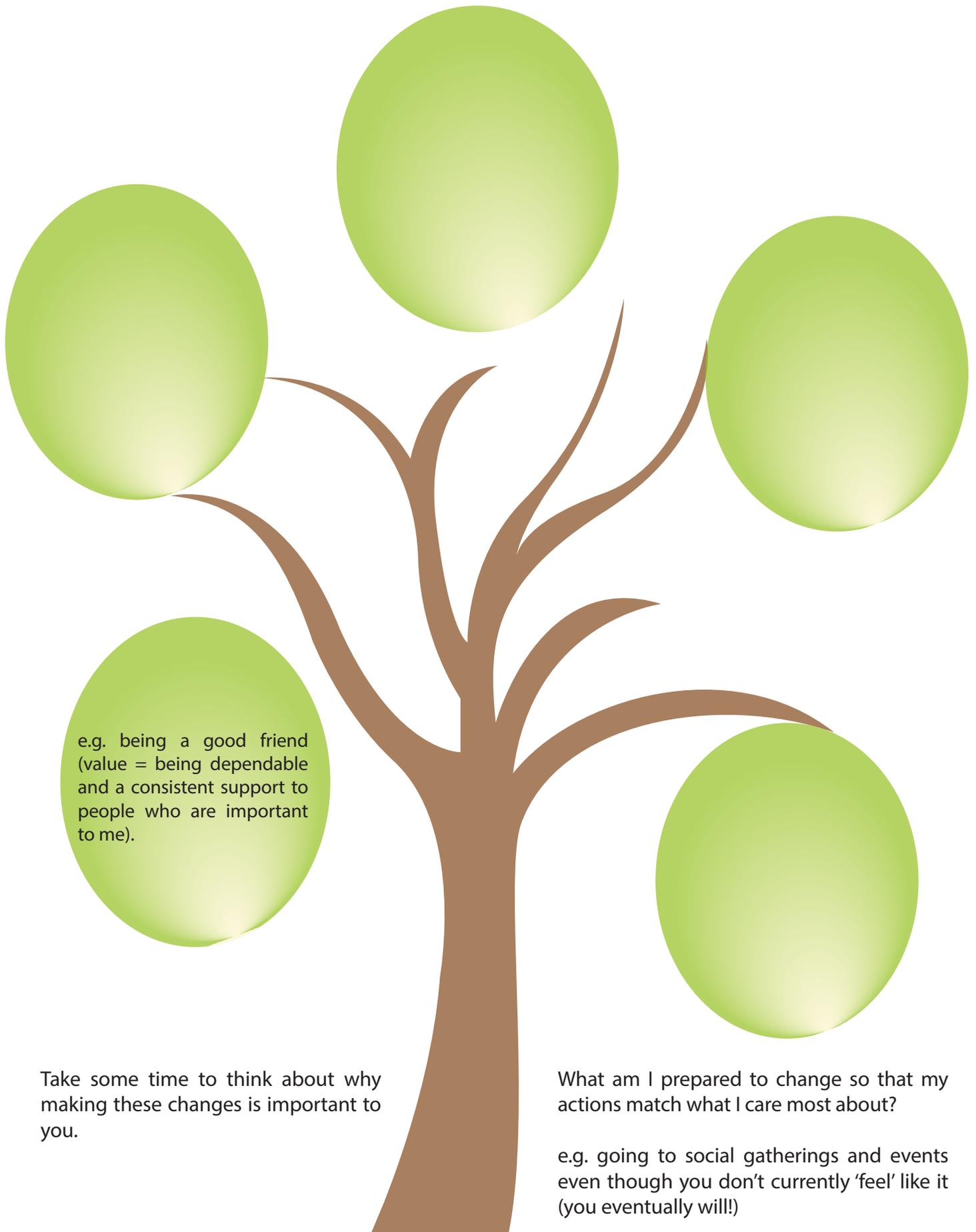
Occasionally



Not at all

Values

Areas in my life that matter the most
and give me reason to change



e.g. being a good friend
(value = being dependable
and a consistent support to
people who are important
to me).

Take some time to think about why
making these changes is important to
you.

What am I prepared to change so that my
actions match what I care most about?

e.g. going to social gatherings and events
even though you don't currently 'feel' like it
(you eventually will!)

Raymond's story



Raymond is a 70 year old retired teacher who lives with his wife. Lately he has been feeling low, particularly since he has been unable to spend time with his close friend George who had a heart attack last month. Raymond is worried about what he thinks he should be doing with his time, and as a result he is unsure and staying at home more often. He becomes annoyed when his wife tries to organise future plans and social outings which he has no interest in attending. He worries about whether he is a good husband, about letting his wife down now that they are both retired, and about his health following his friend's heart attack. He feels lost, insecure and drained, as he has a hard time falling asleep and wakes up tired most days.

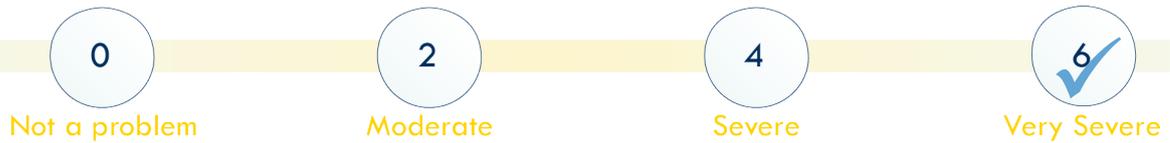
Raymond found out about the program and made a call. He met with a coach for an assessment and learned that what he was experiencing was more common than he realised, and that when people feel down they tend to break their regular routine(s) and withdraw from usual activities. He was introduced to Low Intensity Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and a particular approach to problem solving. With the help of his coach Raymond was able to identify his problem, put it into a statement, and rate the impact it was having on his life.



Raymond's problem statement

In the last few months I have become irritable, increasingly worried and down on myself. I have stopped seeing my friends, spending time in the garden and am not sleeping well. I am arguing more with my wife and am worried that I am becoming a burden to her. This leads me to withdraw and spend more time alone

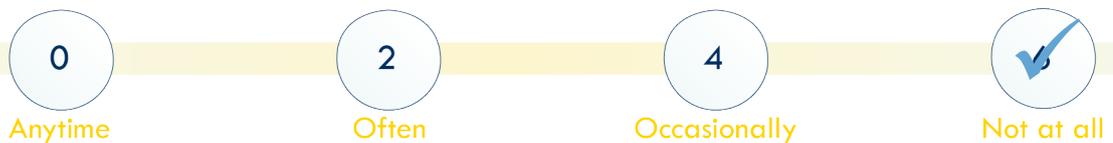
Impact of the problem



Goal 1

Play a round of golf every Saturday morning with my friends Bill and Jim for the next three months

Currently, I can complete my goal



Goal 2

Go for walk with my wife twice a week for an hour for the next two months

Currently, I can complete my goal



After identifying the main problem, Raymond explored other areas that, if addressed using problem solving, could improve his engagement with activities. Raymond and his coach worked together using the activities in this workbook to help address his problems. The activities and regular contact helped Raymond to see that he was making progress towards achieving his goals.

Where is Raymond now?



Throughout the program, Raymond learnt valuable problem solving skills which helped to improve his daily life. By addressing his sleep problems first, Raymond then had the energy to start working towards his goals. He now feels more confident with the way he spends his time and feels more relaxed at home. Raymond's relationship with his wife has also improved throughout the program - she says that she can see a lot of positive changes in Raymond already.

Raymond plans to continue using the problem solving skills he learnt throughout the program to keep up his positive progress. The *Implementation* section of this workbook will show you some of the activities Raymond completed to get to where he is now, and will be a space for you to try your own!



INFORMATION



Anxiety and Depression



Anxiety is when you might feel overwhelmed, upset, or worried about things in your life. When this happens what you **Do**, what you **Feel**, and what you **Think** impacts on how you go about your life. For example, you may go out less, avoid seeing friends, or continually take days off work.

When you are anxious;

You might **Do**
Avoid the situation, keep to what's safe...

You might **Feel**
Tense, short of breath....

You might **Think**
I can't escape, I can't handle this....

Depression may be when you feel consistently low for two or more weeks and lose interest in the activities you used to enjoy. When this happens what you **Do**, what you **Feel**, and what you **Think** impacts on how you go about your life. For example, you may stay home more, stop going to work and seeing friends, and stop participating in activities.

When you are depressed;

You might **Do**
Spend more time alone, enjoy things less....

You might **Feel**
Flat, unmotivated, sad....

You might **Think**
It's too much effort, I'm useless....



Problem solving



Problem solving provides you with the steps to effectively deal with problems. It involves identifying what the problem is and thinking of possible ways to deal with the problem. Once you have decided on an option, you write out the steps to carry out the plan and then review the outcome.

The first thing you need to ask yourself before launching into 'how am I going to solve this problem?' is if it is an actual problem that can be solved using this strategy.

The six steps to problem solving are:

1. **Write down the problem as clearly as possible.** Be specific about the behaviour, situation, timing, and circumstances that make it a problem.
2. **Generate all possible solutions.** Be creative. Write down as many as you can come up with, regardless of their quality. Then, eliminate the unreasonable or impractical options, and list the remaining ones in order of preference.
3. **Advantages, disadvantages and resources.** Evaluate the top few in terms of their advantages, disadvantages and what resources you will need to carry them out.
4. **Decide on a plan.** Choose the best solution and make a plan. Who will take action, when and how?
5. **Implement the plan.** Carrying out your plan is important!
6. **Evaluate the outcome.** Revise if needed?



Take away



Anxiety and depression can make it difficult to recognise there *are* solutions to the challenges you currently face.

Anxiety can fill you with doubt. Depression can lead you to feel overwhelmed.

Problem solving involves recognising a problem, exploring different options and testing them out.

Problem solving is most effective when applied to problems that you have direct influence over.



The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking down your complex and overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one.

Mark Twain

IMPLEMENTATION



Making change



Now that you have identified sources of **I**nspiration to complete this program, and have learnt valuable **I**nformation about anxiety, depression, and problem solving, it is time to **I**mplement some strategies.

This section contains worksheets that you can use to help solve your problems.

First, you will see how Raymond completed some of these worksheets during his program. With the guidance of your coach, you will then have the opportunity to start implementing them yourself!



Raymond's 6 Steps to Problem Solving



Step 1

Define your problem

Write down the problem to be solved:

Need to improve my sleep.

Step 2 Generate possible solutions	Step 3 Advantages, disadvantages and resources for each possible solution		
	Advantages	Disadvantages	Resources
<i>To visit the GP and discuss the possibility of using sleeping tablets.</i>	<i>Able to get an appointment with my GP, who I trust, very quickly. May be a simple solution.</i>	<i>Ideally I don't want to be reliant on medication to sleep at night. I may not respond well to the medication.</i>	<i>Get to the doctor for appointment. Prescription from the GP for sleeping tablets.</i>
<i>To sleep in the spare room.</i>	<i>Able to go to bed later, when I feel tired, as I am not worried about waking my wife when I get into bed.</i>	<i>My wife may become upset at the thought of us sleeping in separate bedrooms - add to marriage problems. May make my sleep worse.</i>	<i>Nil</i>
<i>To visit a sleep clinic.</i>	<i>Professional assessment and advice.</i>	<i>May be expensive. May take a long time to get an appointment. May not be close to my home.</i>	<i>Financial. Transport. Time inconvenience. Referral from GP.</i>
<i>Find some self-help information on good sleep habits.</i>	<i>Relatively easy access to information over the internet. Able to do it on Sunday's when I go to my daughters for dinner. Cost effective</i>	<i>I am not very confident using the internet. I will need to talk to my daughter about what is going on in order for her to help me. The information accessed may not be accurate.</i>	<i>My daughter to help me use the internet on her computer.</i>
<i>Keep a record of what happens each day and how my sleep was that night.</i>	<i>Try to understand what, if anything, during the day may be impacting on my sleep.</i>	<i>Requires me to be committed to noticing & recording what I am doing throughout the day and how I am sleeping at night. May take a while to notice any patterns - not a quick fix.</i>	<i>A notepad to record daily events and quality of sleep at night.</i>

Raymond's 6 Steps to Problem Solving



Step 4

Based on the solution you have chosen, decide on a Plan

My plan: *Keep a record of what happens each day and how my sleep was that night.*

When? *From today, each day for the next week. Each evening after dinner & complete entry about quality of sleep over breakfast each morning.*

How? *Keep specific and detailed notes about day's events (activities) and quality of sleep (numbers of times woken up, time taken to fall asleep & how rested I felt in the morning).*

Where? *At home, in the same notebook.*

With whom? *By myself.*

Potential barriers to completing my plan may be: *Forgetting to complete an entry every evening and morning.*

Possible options for dealing with these barriers: *Keep to a routine by recording entries at the same time (e.g. evening entries after dinner, morning entries over breakfast).*

Step 5

Implement your plan

Remember, planning is important, but doing is better! Make sure you carry out your plan.

Step 6

Evaluate the outcome

What happened? Write down what you did and what you noticed: *I managed to complete evening entries 5/7 days and morning entries over breakfast every day. On the days I forgot to complete the entry in the evening I wrote down what I remembered from the day before during my morning entry. I noticed that there were patterns to the nights where my sleep was poor and what went on during the day. I noticed that on the days where I didn't do much, I found it difficult to sleep at night. I was really surprised about how well I stuck to my goal of completing evening and morning entries. I think this is because I am so sick of feeling tired and grumpy that improving my sleep is really important to achieving my other goals.*

What have you learnt from using problem solving steps and implementing your chosen solution?

Stepping back and taking stock of what I am doing and not doing and how that influences my sleep, really helped me to feel more confident in tackling this problem.

Based on what happened when you carried out your plan, what other solutions would you now implement?

I am going to try out Solution 4 - gathering information about getting a good night's sleep and see what suggestions are the easiest to put in place. This means I need to do Steps 4 to 6 again for this solution.

Alternatively, which other problem would you like to solve?

N/A

Raymond's 6 Steps to Problem Solving



Step 4

Based on the solution you have chosen, decide on a Plan

My plan: *Find some information on good sleep habits - ask Tori my daughter to help.*

When? *Over dinner this Sunday evening.*

How? *Using the internet.*

Where? *At Tori's house.*

With whom? *Tori.*

Potential barriers to completing my plan may be: *Finding a way to ask Tori for the information I need without worrying or burdening her with my problems.*

Possible options for dealing with these barriers: *Keep it small and manageable - just tell Tori I haven't been sleeping well and ask her to help me find the information I need.*

Step 5

Implement your plan

Remember, planning is important, but doing is better! Make sure you carry out your plan.

Step 6

Evaluate the outcome

What happened? Write down what you did and what you noticed: *My wife and I went to Tori's place for dinner on Sunday evening. After dinner we spent some time on the internet searching for sleep information. We found lots of information and resources that were from trustworthy sources e.g. government and university produced materials. At the end, Tori mentioned that if I needed anything else, to just let her know - I felt reassured in hearing this.*

What have you learnt from using problem solving steps and implementing your chosen solution?
That asking for help isn't as hard as I thought it was and it doesn't mean that I have to talk about things that I am not ready to talk about.

Based on what happened when you carried out your plan, what other solutions would you now implement?

From the information I now have, I will read it and decide on what changes I can make to my current sleep routine.

Alternatively, which other problem would you like to solve?

N/A

6 Steps to Problem Solving



Step 1

Define your problem

Write down the problem to be solved:

--

Step 2 Generate possible solutions	Step 3 Advantages, disadvantages and resources for each possible solution		
	Advantages	Disadvantages	Resources

6 Steps to Problem Solving



Step 4

Based on the solution you have chosen, decide on a Plan

My plan:
When?

How?

Where?

With whom?

Potential barriers to completing my plan may be:

Possible options for dealing with these barriers:

Step 5

Implement your plan

Remember, planning is important, but doing is better! Make sure you carry out your plan.

Step 6

Evaluate the outcome

What happened? Write down what you did and what you noticed:

What have you learnt from using problem solving steps and implementing your chosen solution?

Based on what happened when you carried out your plan, what other solutions would you now implement?

Alternatively, which other problem would you like to solve?

6 Steps to Problem Solving



Step 1

Define your problem

Write down the problem to be solved:

Step 2 Generate possible solutions	Step 3 Advantages, disadvantages and resources for each possible solution		
	Advantages	Disadvantages	Resources

6 Steps to Problem Solving



Step 4

Based on the solution you have chosen, decide on a Plan

My plan:
When?

How?

Where?

With whom?

Potential barriers to completing my plan may be:

Possible options for dealing with these barriers:

Step 5

Implement your plan

Remember, planning is important, but doing is better! Make sure you carry out your plan.

Step 6

Evaluate the outcome

What happened? Write down what you did and what you noticed:

What have you learnt from using problem solving steps and implementing your chosen solution?

Based on what happened when you carried out your plan, what other solutions would you now implement?

Alternatively, which other problem would you like to solve?

6 Steps to Problem Solving



Step 1

Define your problem

Write down the problem to be solved:

--

Step 2 Generate possible solutions	Step 3 Advantages, disadvantages and resources for each possible solution		
	Advantages	Disadvantages	Resources

6 Steps to Problem Solving



Step 4

Based on the solution you have chosen, decide on a Plan

My plan:
When?

How?

Where?

With whom?

Potential barriers to completing my plan may be:

Possible options for dealing with these barriers:

Step 5

Implement your plan

Remember, planning is important, but doing is better! Make sure you carry out your plan.

Step 6

Evaluate the outcome

What happened? Write down what you did and what you noticed:

What have you learnt from using problem solving steps and implementing your chosen solution?

Based on what happened when you carried out your plan, what other solutions would you now implement?

Alternatively, which other problem would you like to solve?

6 Steps to Problem Solving



Step 1

Define your problem

Write down the problem to be solved:

--

Step 2 Generate possible solutions	Step 3 Advantages, disadvantages and resources for each possible solution		
	Advantages	Disadvantages	Resources

6 Steps to Problem Solving



Step 4

Based on the solution you have chosen, decide on a Plan

My plan:
When?

How?

Where?

With whom?

Potential barriers to completing my plan may be:

Possible options for dealing with these barriers:

Step 5

Implement your plan

Remember, planning is important, but doing is better! Make sure you carry out your plan.

Step 6

Evaluate the outcome

What happened? Write down what you did and what you noticed:

What have you learnt from using problem solving steps and implementing your chosen solution?

Based on what happened when you carried out your plan, what other solutions would you now implement?

Alternatively, which other problem would you like to solve?

6 Steps to Problem Solving



Step 1

Define your problem

Write down the problem to be solved:

--

Step 2 Generate possible solutions	Step 3 Advantages, disadvantages and resources for each possible solution		
	Advantages	Disadvantages	Resources

6 Steps to Problem Solving



Step 4

Based on the solution you have chosen, decide on a Plan

My plan:
When?

How?

Where?

With whom?

Potential barriers to completing my plan may be:

Possible options for dealing with these barriers:

Step 5

Implement your plan

Remember, planning is important, but doing is better! Make sure you carry out your plan.

Step 6

Evaluate the outcome

What happened? Write down what you did and what you noticed:

What have you learnt from using problem solving steps and implementing your chosen solution?

Based on what happened when you carried out your plan, what other solutions would you now implement?

Alternatively, which other problem would you like to solve?

6 Steps to Problem Solving



Step 1

Define your problem

Write down the problem to be solved:

--

Step 2 Generate possible solutions	Step 3 Advantages, disadvantages and resources for each possible solution		
	Advantages	Disadvantages	Resources

6 Steps to Problem Solving



Step 4

Based on the solution you have chosen, decide on a Plan

My plan:
When?

How?

Where?

With whom?

Potential barriers to completing my plan may be:

Possible options for dealing with these barriers:

Step 5

Implement your plan

Remember, planning is important, but doing is better! Make sure you carry out your plan.

Step 6

Evaluate the outcome

What happened? Write down what you did and what you noticed:

What have you learnt from using problem solving steps and implementing your chosen solution?

Based on what happened when you carried out your plan, what other solutions would you now implement?

Alternatively, which other problem would you like to solve?

INTO THE FUTURE



Relapse prevention

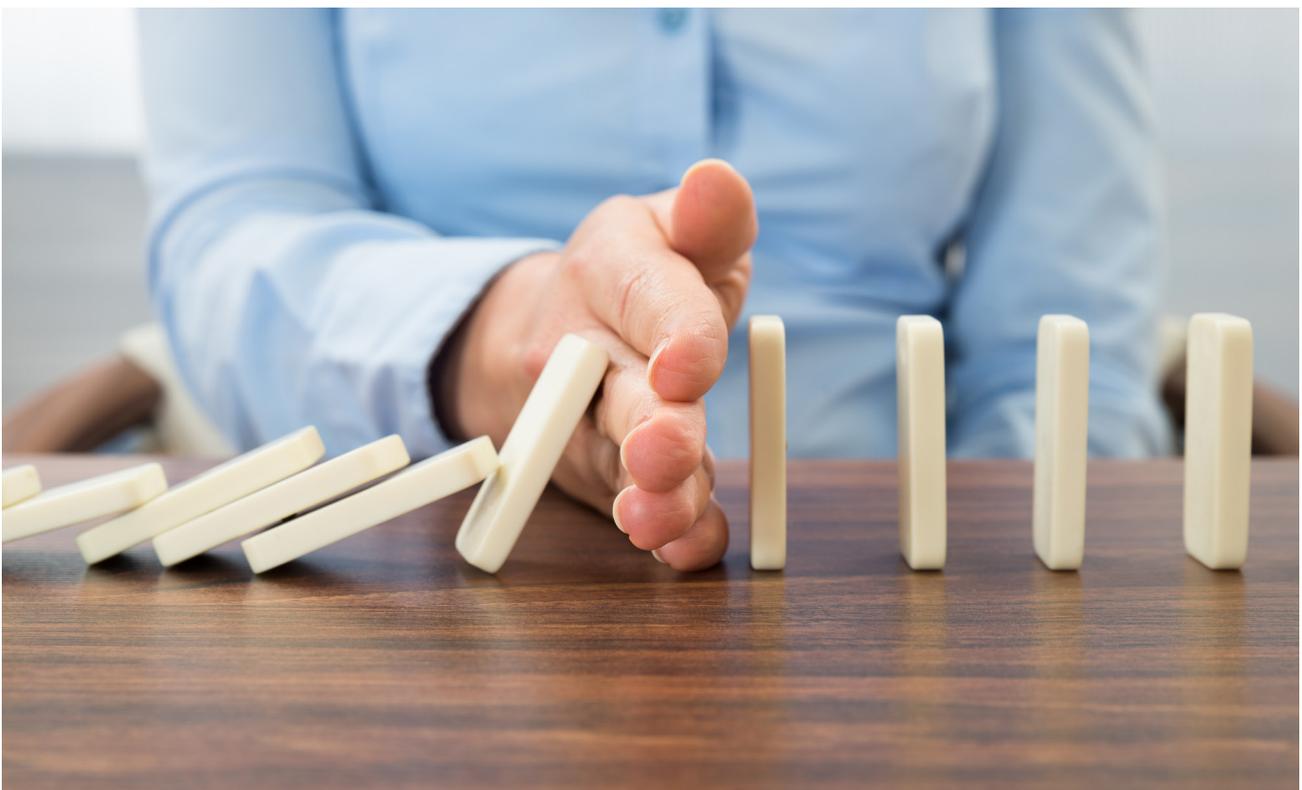


Throughout this program you have been provided with information and an opportunity to apply skills. You have been encouraged to learn more about yourself, and in particular, how the interactions between what you do, feel and think, impacts on you. At this point, we hope you have made some important changes to your life.

Having experienced anxiety or depression can increase the likelihood of experiencing them again in the future. If you notice changes to what you are doing, how you are feeling, and what you are thinking, that last anywhere from a few days to a week, you may be experiencing a *setback* – this is common. A setback is when unhelpful behaviours, feelings or thoughts become more frequent. Responding to a setback by using the techniques you have learnt throughout this program can get you back on track.

If your mental health declines for longer than that, then you may be experiencing a *relapse*. Relapse is when you return to the previous behaviours, feelings and thoughts which caused the anxiety or depression in the first place, and are causing significant disruption to your life.

Relapse is not inevitable and does not happen without warning signs. The techniques you have learnt throughout this program can help you avoid or reduce the severity of relapse. Your confidence will grow as you continue to apply the techniques that you have put into practice. Supported by NETTS and your Relapse Prevention Plan (see next pages) you will have a clear plan to respond to any setback and get back on track.



NETTS:

New skills and knowledge, Exploring opportunities, Traps and Triggers, Solutions



New knowledge and skills you have learnt



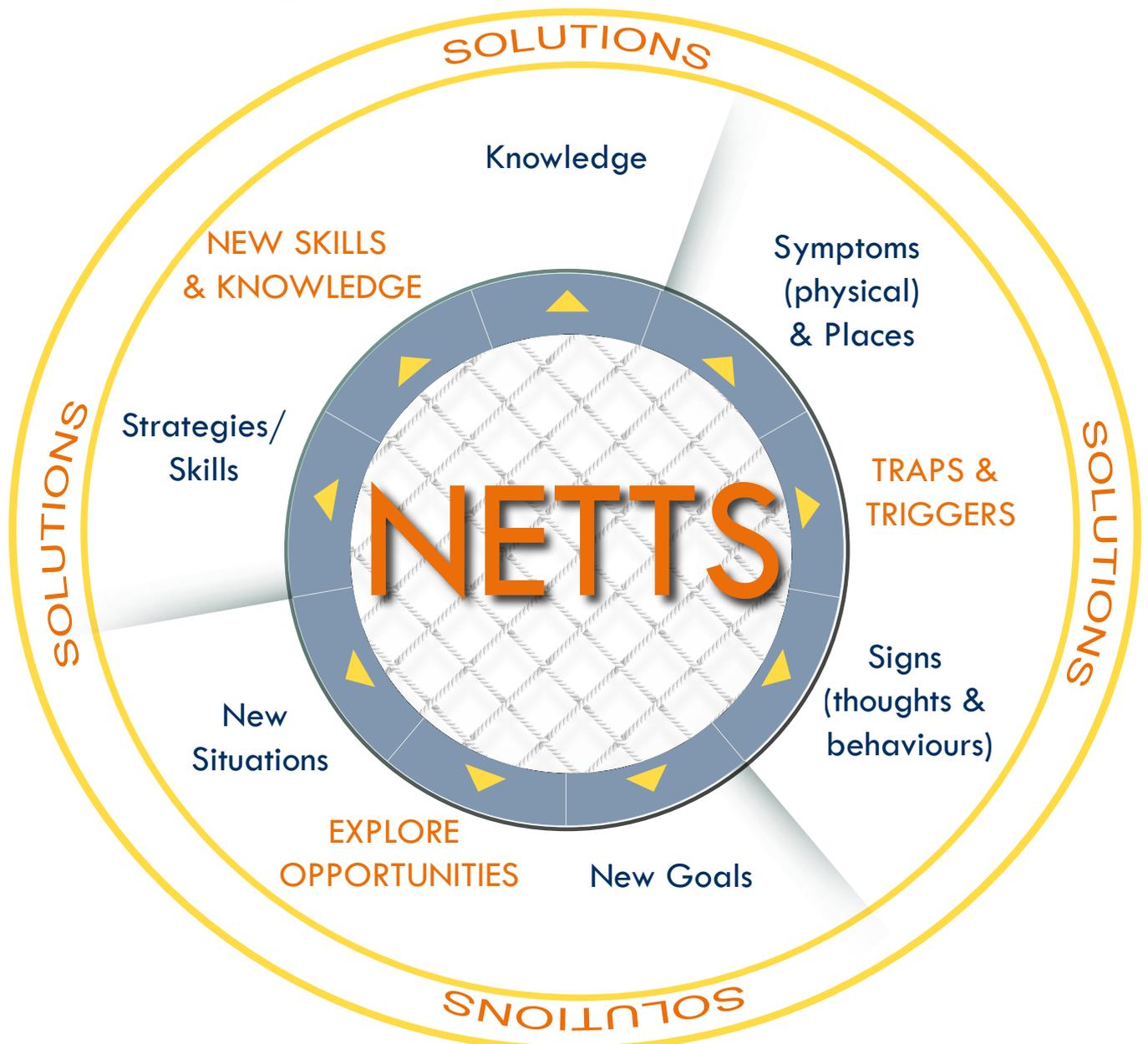
Exploring how these skills and knowledge can be applied to other areas/situations in your life



Traps and Triggers that can disrupt your recovery



Solutions for when you feel you may be experiencing a setback or relapse



Relapse prevention plan



Refer to the worksheet below to develop your RPP with the help of NETTS

New knowledge and skills I have learnt

What I have learnt about the problem:

What I have learnt about what works:

Exploring opportunities

How can I use this further in other parts of my life:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Traps and Triggers

What early warning signs, thoughts, and feelings I need to be aware of:

People and places that can disrupt my recovery:

Solutions

What's next?

People and/or services I will contact if I need some additional support:

When will I schedule my routine 'Wellbeing Check-in' day and time?

- Developing your RPP is something that you will do together with your coach as part of this program.
- We recommend that you keep this resource and refer to it as you need.
- It may also be helpful for you to choose a routine 'Wellbeing Check-in' day and time every few weeks to review your progress (e.g., by re-rating your initial problem statement and goals you recorded in the INSPIRATION section of this workbook and adding in and rating any new goals that you have developed).





This guided self-help workbook is designed as an essential resource in the delivery of Low Intensity Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (LICBT).