

If the situation is the problem (the emotion fits the facts) - how do we solve the problem?

If your emotion fits the facts, that means that the situation is causing your distress - and changing the situation through solving a problem might alleviate your distress. Let's go through problem-solving step by step. We've provided an example on these 3 pages and the next 3 are blank.

1 Name the emotion

Emotion: Worry

Intensity (1-10): 8

2 Describe the problem prompting your emotion

What is problematic or difficult about the situation? Focus on the facts (who, what, when, where), potential consequences, and challenges to solving the problem.

I just took my certification exam for the second time and failed again. If I don't pass by the end of the year, I won't get promoted to the position I've been working toward for a long time. Everyone at work will look down on me - what if it's so bad I have to leave? Also, it's really hard to find time to study, and the exams themselves are really expensive.

3 Re-read what you just wrote and check the facts

Does your description include interpretations (the why) or assumption mixed up with the facts? Are you catastrophizing or jumping to conclusions? Double-check.

I'm assuming everyone at work will look down on me if I don't pass and get promoted

I'm jumping to the conclusion that it may be so bad that I can't tolerate it and will have to leave

Re-write the facts if you need to:

I just took my certification exam for the second time and failed. If I don't pass by the end of the year, I won't get promoted to the position I've been working toward for a long time. I'm worried people at work will think poorly of me for failing and I won't be able to tolerate this. Also, it's really hard to find time to study, and the exams themselves are really expensive.

**This worksheet provides information but is not a substitute for therapy. It works best with guidance from a professional.*



4 Identify your goal

Decide on a short-term, realistic, simple goal. What needs to happen for you to feel better? Don't worry about solutions yet - just think about *outcomes*.

I need a new approach to studying - my old approach isn't working - so I have the best chance of passing on my third try by the end of the year

5 Brainstorm potential solutions

Write as many ideas as you can. Ask for help brainstorming if you need to. Don't throw out any ideas yet - all ideas are welcome right now.

- take PTO and study a lot
- hire a tutor
- pay for an online prep course
- skip things like socializing and exercise to study
- get advice on the best way to prepare
- get up an hour earlier each day to study
- borrow money and take the exam until I pass
- find a book on preparing for the exam
- cheat on the exam
- ask my roommate to quiz me
- study at work

6 Select a solution

Above, circle 1-2 solutions that best meet your goal and are possible and realistic to do. Using your wise mind, think through the pros and cons of your solution(s).

	Solution 1: Get advice	Solution 2: Online prep course
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - people who passed might have good ideas - others might know strategies I don't, or other ways to cover the exam fees? - I could learn if failing a few times is typical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a course <i>should</i> teach me the essentials - I might have access to practice tests - if it has an app, I could study on the bus or the treadmill
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it may be that others found the exam easy and won't have good advice for me 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - could be really expensive

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7 Time for action

Pick the best solution for you. If the solution has multiple parts, you can keep track of them below:

Steps for: Getting advice	Done?	Outcome
Decide who to talk to at work	✓	Picked 5 coworkers who passed
Set up short meetings with coworkers	✓	4 agreed; had 4 meetings
Research online advice	✓	Found advice in forums and exam site
Write down all advice	✓	Tons of different approaches
Summarize main advice themes	✓	3 major ideas
Make a plan to study in a new way	✓	Will try flashcards + free practice tests

8 Evaluate

Original emotion: Worry Intensity (1-10): 8

Did your solution solve the problem?

Yes → process complete!

No → try the next solution

I have a new problem now → start again

Emotion now: Worry Intensity (1-10): 2

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Problem Solving

DBT: Emotion Regulation Skills

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Re-write the facts if you need to:

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Problem Solving

DBT: Emotion Regulation Skills

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Above, circle 1-2 solutions that best meet your goal and are possible and realistic to do. Using your wise mind, think through the pros and cons of your solution(s).

	Solution 1:	Solution 2:
Pros		
Cons		

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Problem Solving

DBT: Emotion Regulation Skills

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Steps for:	Done?	Outcome

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Emotion now: Intensity (1-10):

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Additional Resources to Support Your Mental Health Journey

It can be hard to know where to begin looking for support in your mental health journey. Getting a referral from a primary care physician is a reliable first step. Also, sometimes family and friends have experienced similar issues and have professionals they would recommend. The experts at ChoosingTherapy.com are here to help as well, with resources we have reviewed and recommend. Our [strict editorial standards](#) ensure our reviews are fair, honest, thorough, and based on firsthand experience.

You Can Trust ChoosingTherapy.com



325+
Companies Reviewed



3,625+
Hours of Firsthand Experience



1,545+
Data Points Analyzed



[Best Online Therapy](#)

Online therapy is a convenient way to connect with a licensed therapist to address mental health issues, reduce unhealthy behaviors, develop effective coping skills, and get more satisfaction out of life. Many companies accept insurance and most have next-day appointments available.

[Best Online Psychiatry](#)

Online psychiatry providers enable patients to consult with licensed psychiatrists and other mental health professionals. They can evaluate, diagnose, and prescribe medication to help manage mental health issues. Many companies accept insurance and most have next-day appointments available.



[Best Mental Health Apps](#)

Apps can be great way to monitor mood, track sleep, journal, and practice healthy coping skills like mindfulness and meditation. There are apps specifically designed to help people reduce the symptoms of depression, anxiety, ADHD, chronic stress, and burnout.

[Therapist Directory](#)

When you're looking for a mental health provider with a very particular skill set, level of experience, or personality type, a therapist directory can be very helpful. Using the filters, you can refine your search until you find a therapist who feels like a perfect fit.





Tools for Self-Assessment and Psychoeducation

Figuring out the next step in your mental health journey can be overwhelming. Developed by psychologists, the tools at [ChoosingTherapy.com](https://www.ChoosingTherapy.com) can help. Our mental health self-assessment quizzes can help you explore common symptoms of mental health concerns, as well as find the best therapy style for you. Our mental health worksheets can guide you through therapy concepts and how to use them in your life.

[Learn More with Mental Health Quizzes](#)

Our collection of psychologist-developed mental health quizzes can help you learn if you are experiencing mild, moderate, or concerning levels of anxiety, depression, stress, burnout, and more. Each quiz also provides targeted resources based on your answers. These self-assessments are designed to offer insight, not diagnoses, and can be a helpful first step in recognizing symptoms and deciding whether to seek further support. If you have concerns about your mental health or your quiz results, we recommend you reach out to a licensed mental health professional.



[Free Mental Health Worksheets](#)

Search our collection of therapy worksheets by mental health topic, therapy modality, or demographic group. Our free, psychologist-developed worksheets make therapy exercises understandable and relevant to daily life. Find worksheets for help with ADHD, anxiety, depression, relationship difficulties, and other common mental health challenges.