

Appendix 5. Non-directive problem-solving/goal-setting tool

Non-directive problem solving assists individuals to use their own skills and resources to function better.³³¹ For women who have decided that the abuse is damaging to their health and wellbeing, but whose intentions are not translated into action due to perceived external barriers, then problem-solving techniques may be helpful. Remembering of course that as GPs we should not problem-solve for the patient.

Goal setting occurs in the following stages:

- clarification and definition of problems
- choice of achievable goals
- generation of solutions
- implementation of preferred solutions
- evaluation.

When used by GPs, this technique engages the patient as an active partner in their care. It creates a framework for individuals to re-focus on practical approaches to perceived problems and learn new cognitive skills.

Whether the solution chosen by the patient is successful is not as important as what the patient learns during the process to apply in other situations. A written example of how a structured approach to problem solving can be applied with an individual is detailed on the next page.

Example of written plan for goal setting

Non-directive problem solving aims to help you:

- recognise the difficulties that contribute to you feeling overwhelmed
- become aware of the support you have, your personal strengths and how you coped with similar problems in the past
- learn an approach to deal with current difficulties and feel more in control
- deal more effectively with problems in the future.

You are asked to follow six steps:

Step 1

Identify the issues/problems that are worrying or distressing you.

Step 2

Work out what options are available to deal with the problem.

Step 3

List the advantages and disadvantages of each option, taking into account the resources available to you.

Problem	Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
1.	1. 2. 3		
2.	1. 2. 3		

Step 4

Identify the best option(s) to deal with the problem.

Step 5

List the steps required for this option(s) to be carried out.

Step 6

Carry out the best option and check its effectiveness.

Best option = _____

What steps are required to do this?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____