

Dissecting the Problem

This form is to help gather information about the nature of the main challenge, issue, or problem facing you.

1. Summarize, in 1 or 2 sentences, what the main issue or problem is:

2. Describe, in 1 or 2 sentences, how this affects your life, and what it stops you from doing or being:

Regardless of what your problem is – whether it is a physical illness, a difficult relationship, a work situation, a financial crisis, a performance issue, the loss of a loved one, a severe injury, or a clinical disorder such as depression - when we dissect the problem, we usually find four major elements that contribute significantly to the issue. These are represented below. Please write as much as you can in each box, about the thoughts, feelings and actions that contribute to or worsen the challenge, problem or issue facing you.

Entanglement With Thoughts

What memories, worries, fears, self-criticisms, or other unhelpful thoughts do you dwell on, or get “caught up” in, related to this issue? What thoughts do you allow to hold you back or push you around or bring you down?

Life-draining Actions

What are you currently doing that makes your life worse in the long term: keeps you stuck; wastes your time or money; drains your energy; restricts your life, impacts negatively on your health, work or relationships; maintains or worsens the problems you are dealing with?

Struggle With Feelings

What emotions, feelings, urges, impulses, or sensations (associated with this issue) do you fight with, avoid, suppress, try to get rid of, or otherwise struggle with?

Avoiding Challenging Situations

What situations, activities, people or places are you avoiding or staying away from? What have you quit, withdrawn from, dropped out of? What do you keep “putting off” until later?