



# Take Charge of Your Weight

## Session Overview

This session addresses the techniques for solving weight management-related problems.

### OBJECTIVES FOR SESSION

1. Engage group to describe weight management problem-solving
2. Understand the 5 steps to problem-solving
3. Complete a problem-solving case example and/or partner activity

### SESSION PREPARATION

- Have the following materials available to share with participants:
  - My Problem-solving Worksheet
  - S09 Change Your Behavior
  - B13 Boost Your Confidence
- The following materials may also be helpful for facilitator review when planning the session or for participants to review independently, after session:
  - B14 Guiding Thoughts and Images
  - Strive for a Healthy Weight Healthy Living Message
  - NCP video – Strive for a Healthy Weight
  - Share link to [www.veterantraining.va.gov](http://www.veterantraining.va.gov) for on-line problem-solving training
- Prepare to evoke as much information as possible from the group.
- Your role is to facilitate discussion without lecturing.

## **Session Outline** *(60 minutes)*

- Check-in (5 minutes)
- Discussion Topics (40 minutes)
- Stretch Activity (2 minutes)
- Putting It All Together (10 minutes)

### **CHECK-IN** *(5 minutes)*

- Facilitate weigh-ins; enter weight into the CPRS Vital Signs package.
- Collect Daily Food and Physical Activity Diaries, and affirm completion.

### **DISCUSSION TOPICS** *(40 minutes)*

#### **Introduction**

- Welcome everyone to the session. Affirm attendance, express hope that they will be able to continue to attend for all 16 sessions, since folks who do more sessions lose more weight. (e.g., "It's great that you are here today. You may remember that folks who attend more sessions, lose more weight, so you are all on the right track just by being here!")
- Very briefly recap or point to Group Guidelines as a reminder.
- Before starting new content today, be sure to check participants' progress from last week. When ready to begin, let participants know that this session focuses on problem-solving. It will be easy to move into problem-solving by relating to participants' concerns since last session.
- Consider asking "Why do you think problem-solving is important?"
- Engaging tip: Do your best to evoke the information from the group, rather than teaching or lecturing to them.
- Invite participants to discuss their homework, daily food and activity diaries, progress, and problems since the last class. Can invite a couple of people to share.
- Facilitate group problem-solving for any barriers, with an emphasis on asking permission before offering advice (i.e., "May I make a suggestion?" or "shall we see if someone from the group has ideas that might help?").

### **Discussion #1: How do I solve weight management problems?**

- Introduce the concept of the 5 steps to problem-solving and examples of weight management problems.
- You may want to ask the group “How have you solved weight management challenges in the past?” Ask 2–3 to share their challenges. Do the challenges they mention fit the 5 key steps of problem-solving... note for later.
- Discuss being realistic and understanding that problems will occur. Note that they may have some experience or past success in solving problems that will help now.

### **Discussion #2: What are the 5 steps to problem-solving?**

- Ask participants to share a weight management problem they have experienced and use this as an example to identify the 5 steps to problem solving listed below. Write the steps on a flip chart or white board as you discuss them.

- One way to begin is to ask the question, “What are some steps you would take in solving a weight management problem?” Try to elicit key steps of:

1. Describe it
2. Brainstorm options
3. Pick 1 to try
4. Make an action plan
5. Try it and adjust as needed.

- If any are not identified by the group, ask “is it okay if I share some more problem-solving strategies?” before filling in any of the missing 5 steps.

- Keep the following tips in mind as you encourage participants to solve their problems:
  - Things may get in the way of successful weight management, but problems can be solved.
  - Brainstorming allows people to see that they are not powerless to change their situation.
  - When choosing an option:
    - Weigh the pros and cons.
    - Choose an option that is doable and realistic.

- Tips for making a positive action plan:
  - Ask group for ideas about how to make an action plan – evoke their ideas first, maybe fill in missing concepts only as needed.
    - Describe in detail what you will do.
    - Determine when you will do it.
    - Identify what you will do first.
    - Make a plan for any roadblocks (problems or barriers).
    - Build in steps that will make success more likely.
  - It often takes many tries to find a solution.
  - Problem-solving is a process. Don't give up!

### **Stretch Activity** (2 minutes)

Incorporating physical activity into the session reinforces the healthy lifestyle message and provides opportunity to demonstrate some simple but effective exercises.

### **Ask participants to join you, if they wish, in doing the following Stretch Activity:**

Invite participants to stand up if they are able. If not, they may remain seated.

#### **Simple Stretch:**

Extend your arms overhead with elbows straight. Lower arms to sides and reach away from your body. Reach arms behind you and extend away from your body within your comfort zone.

### **Discussion #3: Using personal examples and partner activities**

- Refer to the key problem-solving points above and explain that participants will now have an opportunity to practice problem-solving by working with a partner. The worksheets can be helpful but don't worry about exact sequence or covering all content. Help participants understand what leads to the problem, several options for response, and their preferred plan of action.
- Using the 5 steps to problem-solving and the [My Problem-solving Worksheet](#), ask participants to pair up and discuss one problem for each and complete the steps and worksheet. Answer any questions that arise and allow time for group discussion.

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER** (10 minutes)

### **Session recap:**

- Problem-solving steps can be helpful in weight loss.
- Refer to handout [S09 Change Your Behavior](#), and suggest that participants review this periodically.
- Share that handouts [B13 Boost Your Confidence](#) and [B14 Guiding Thoughts and Images](#) may be helpful resources if needed, to maintain a positive attitude when dealing with problems.

### **Goals and action planning for the next week:**

- Have Veterans review handout [B13 Boost Your Confidence](#). Ask them to identify how confident they are about losing weight. Use the ruler on the handout as a guide. Be sure to follow up on confidence ratings (e.g., by asking “Why 6 and not 2?” and, perhaps, “what would help you move up to a 7 or 8?”)
- Ask Veterans to use the problem-solving worksheet to identify a weight-related problem and work through the steps.
- Emphasize the importance of solving problems, identifying options, reviewing the options and re-working as needed. Solutions to problems are personal, varied and numerous! There is no one right answer. Be creative and open to options. Remind the group that problem-solving will always be helpful with weight loss as it is with other life challenges.
- Ask, “What was most helpful today? What could have been better?”

### **Homework for next week:**

- Remind participants to continue logging in their Daily Food and Physical Activity Diary and to bring the diary and their pedometer to every session.
- Invite them to apply the problem-solving steps to the challenges they encounter this week. Assure them you will follow-up on their progress with problem-solving at the next session.
- Provide information necessary for attending the next session (date/time/location, etc.).

### **Topic for next week:**

[Go Good Fat](#)