

Excerpted from *Veterans: Surviving and thriving after trauma*
By Ester R.A. Leutenberg and Carol Butler, MS Ed, RN, C
Forward by John Sippola, LTC, ret., MDiv

Problems Can Be Opportunities Facilitator's Guide

Measurable Behavioral Objectives

Veterans will ...

- ✓ Define their problem(s) that contribute(s) to emotional discomfort.
- ✓ Set specific, measurable goals and identify internal and external resources.
- ✓ Brainstorm solutions, weigh the pros and cons, select feasible options.
- ✓ List related steps, take action, and evaluate the effectiveness of their solution(s).
- ✓ Acknowledge improved attitudes and abilities as a result of their efforts.
- ✓ Determine what worked for them in the past and how to use those skills in current situations.
- ✓ Identify productive actions to meet their needs.
- ✓ Identify their constructive and destructive habits.
- ✓ State ways constructive habits will improve their relationships, moods and lives.

Introduction

1. Before the session begins, read this guide and the reproducible pages.
2. Decide on one of the interactive variations or the traditional approach (below).
3. Photocopy reproducible pages but retain them until after the introduction.
4. Write on the board *Problems are only opportunities in work clothes* ~ Henri Kaiser.
5. Ask whether group members agree or disagree and discuss times their problems became opportunities.
6. Explain that group members will practice problem solving techniques.

Activity

1. Distribute the reproducible pages.
2. Take turns reading the Education portion aloud.
3. Allow time to complete the written Insight and Empowerment questions.
4. Encourage participants to share their responses through number 19.

Conclusion

- Encourage participants to share how they will use constructive habits (number 20).

Interactive Variations

- ✓ Copy the Problem-Solution chart on the board (number 8).
- ✓ Ask participants to take turns sharing their problems while peers brainstorm solutions, pros and cons;
- ✓ A volunteer writes them in the chart's boxes on the board.
- ✓ Ask peers to help each other decide on Plans A and B (number 9).