

The Skilled Helper Model

[From *The Skilled Helper* by Gerard Egan. Summary by Tim Cimino.]

Stage I: Identify and clarify problem situations and unused opportunities. (= "Where we are.")

A. Telling the story.

- * Reveal problem situations and missed opportunities.
- * Tell what is going wrong *and* what is going right.

B. Focusing.

- * Screening: Is this problem worth our time and effort?
- * Focusing: Which issues are key? (to be dealt with first.)
- * Clarify: What are the specific experiences, feelings, behaviors?

C. Blind spots and new perspectives.

- * Seeing the situation in more creative ways. Are there other ways to look at the problem?

Stage II: Goal Setting — developing a more desirable scenario (= "Where we want to be.")

A. Constructing new scenarios.

- * Envision more constructive patterns of behavior.

B. Critiquing the new scenario(s).

- * The goal(s) need to be: clear, specific, realistic, in keeping with one's values, adequately related to problem situation, and capable of completion in reasonable time.
- * Review the consequences of possible goals (to determine the best.)

C. Choice and commitment.

- * Choose the best goal or combination of goals.
- * Develop incentives for working toward the goal(s).

Stage III: Action — moving toward the preferred scenario. (= "How to get from where we are to where we want to be.")

A. Discovering strategies for action.

- * Researching
- * Brainstorming

B. Choosing strategies and devising a plan of action.

- * Choose best single option or combination of options.
- * Develop these into a step-by-step plan.

C. Action — implementing goals and achieving plans.

- * Realistically foresee hindrances (as well as helps.)
- * Maintain incentives.

Continuous Evaluation of the process: Keep asking at each stage of the process whether or not one's time is being used effectively. For example, "What is the best, most loving use of my time, right now?"