

RQ Dimension — Problem Solver

About this Dimension

One of the many challenges that people face when confronted with change, loss, trauma, and so forth is the sheer “newness” of ground upon which they are now walking. Not having been to this “place” before — whether this place is a new physical space, a new job role, the absence of a loved one, the aftermath of a loss, and so forth — can create challenges for us when we try to keep walking forward. This is where the problem solver dimension is most powerful: it enables resilient people to find a pathway toward their goals.

In the face of uncertainty and stress, resilient people have the ability to analyze their situations and problems, view problems and challenges as opportunities for learning, discover the root causes behind the challenges that they face, and find creative solutions that provide a healthy way forward. Resilient people are also effective at seeing the relationships between the specific challenges or problems they face with other issues, challenges, and problems within a larger system or network of deeply interdependent issues. This awareness of the bigger picture enables resilient people to recognize the limits of their own influence, leverage their insights into greater gains, and to expect (and not be blindsided by) the unexpected.

Strategies for Developing the Problem Solver Dimension

Problem solving involves a combination of personal and situational awareness, insight, and the application of problem solving skills. Any attempt to develop and strengthen problem solving in an individual, therefore, must involve focusing upon and developing each of these problem solving capacities.

- Enhance your awareness of your surrounding environment and your responses to this environment. Explore such questions as:
 - *What, exactly, is the problem I face? What are its boundaries?*
 - *What is the relationship between the challenge before me and other issues and challenges in my life?*
 - *What are the forces within me and within the larger environment that helped create or that sustain this problem or challenge?*
 - *What is the “worst-case” scenario for me if this problem/challenge doesn’t turn out right? What might be a healthy response from me if this happens? How might I become stronger and more able as a result of this outcome?*
 - *Who could help me work through/think through this problem?*
 - *Which of my past life experiences has best prepared me for this challenge?*
 - *What are the life lessons that I might take away from this experience?*

- *What might I have done differently to have avoided this problem or challenge?*
- *What are the root causes of this problem or challenge? And, to what extent could I have influenced/can I influence any of these causes to avoid or reduce this problem today and in the future?*
- *What is the “silver lining” for me as a result of this challenge/problem?*
- Reflect upon the problem or challenge that you are facing and identify three positive steps that you could take to reduce the negative effects of this problem/challenge.
- Identify one thing that you could STOP doing and one thing that you could START doing to prevent, reduce the impact of, or directly solve the problem/challenge that you are facing.
- Identify the single greatest obstacle that you see to successfully solving the challenge or problem that you are facing — and the actions that you could take to reduce or eliminate this obstacle.
- If you are facing a significant challenge or crisis, reflect upon your personal assets/strengths to guide yourself through the challenge and identify one or two changes that you could make in your life to enable a healthy, learning-centered, positive response to this challenging situation.