Is it actually a problem?

The first step is to determine whether this is actually a practical problem that can be resolved. To be a practical problem it needs to be present, realistic and manageable. For example, if the problem was “I’m worried that I might get hit by a meteorite on the way home tomorrow”, then the problem is in the future, outside our control, and probably not too likely to happen.

Problem solving in six steps

- **Step 1.** Identify your problem. Try to be clear and concise.
- **Step 2.** Brainstorm solutions. List as many options as you can think of regardless of how silly they may seem.
- **Step 3.** Evaluate your options. Choose your top three solutions from Step 2 and draw up a list of the main advantages and disadvantages of each option.
- **Step 4.** Choose a solution. Having evaluated the pros and cons, choose an option that you think will best resolve the issue.
- **Step 5.** Plan your actions. Take a moment to stop and actually work out the specifics steps of how you will enact your chosen option.
- **Step 6.** Implement your solution. Time to put your plan into action! Review the outcome afterwards and if things didn’t go well, go back to Step 2 and try again with a new option.
Use the plan below to assist you with your problem solving:

**Step 1 - Identify the problem**
My problem is:

**Step 2 - Brainstorm solutions**
List all possible solutions, irrespective of how realistic they may be – be as creative as possible. Do not evaluate at this stage.
1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

**Step 3 - Evaluate options**
Choose the top 3 solutions and list the main advantages and disadvantages of each solution.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solution</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
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**Step 4 - Choose a solution**
Choose the solution that will best resolve the issue:

**Step 5 - Plan your actions**
Choose the solution that will best resolve the issue:
Step 1:
Step 2:
Step 3:
Step 4:

**Step 6 - Implement your solution**
Put your plan into action. Review the outcome afterwards. If things didn’t go well, select a different solution from Step 2 and start again. The key is to keep trying new ideas.

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**Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**

Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

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- Ambulance/Fire/Police: 000
- Lifeline (24 hours): 13 11 14
- Mental Health Access Line: 1800 011 511