Problem-solving worksheet

(1) Identify the problem:

What is bothering me? Annual review with my boss coming up next week

Why is this a problem? I'm worried that it won't go well.

(2) Is there a solution to this problem that is within my control?

Yes	No
What can I do about it? (list all possible solutions) 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	What can I do to help this problem feel more tolerable? 1. *Example: Diaphragmatic breathing or other relaxation* 2. *Example: Distraction or distance from the problem* 3. *Example: Mindfulness meditation* 4. Go for a run 5. Call Maria
Consider pros and cons of each solution and choose one to try: _____ _____ _____ _____	Consider pros and cons of each technique and choose one to try: - I can try diaphragmatic breathing, that's easy - I think it would help, but I don't know if I can focus on meditation right now. - A run sounds good, but it's a little cold. - I've been meaning to call Maria anyway; maybe that will help distract me. She always knows what to say!

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How did it go? Is the problem solved? If no, try another solution (repeat as necessary).	How did it go? Do you feel more at ease? I did 12 minutes of diaphragmatic breathing and felt a little bit better. I ended up going for a run even though it was cold. I feel a lot more relaxed now. I think I needed to let off some steam! I think the review will be okay, and anyway I can't do anything about it now! If no, try another solution (repeat as necessary).

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Why is this a problem? _____

(2) Is there a solution to this problem that is within my control?

Yes	No
What can I do about it? (list all possible solutions) 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____	What can I do to help this problem feel more tolerable? 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____

Consider pros and cons of each solution and choose one to try: _____ _____ _____ _____	Consider pros and cons of each technique and choose one to try: _____ _____ _____ _____
How did it go? Is the problem solved? _____ If no, try another solution (repeat as necessary).	How did it go? Do you feel more at ease? _____ If no, try another solution (repeat as necessary).

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This handout was written by Dr Anjali Pandit and Dr Sarah Ballou based upon their chapter entitled "Stress management and mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) approaches to gastrointestinal conditions" (Chapter 13) from Knowles, S.R., Keefer, L., & Mikocka-Walus, A. (2019). Psychogastroenterology with Adults: A Handbook for Mental Health Professionals. Oxon, UK: Routledge Press.

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