October: WEEK THREE

PROBLEM-SOLVING

THE AGENDA:

Discussion: What does it mean to Problem-Solve? When are some times you need to problem-solve? How is problem-solving more effective than other techniques to deal with problems? Discuss a problem you had recently, and how you went about solving it. Was it resolved? Was there a more effective way you could have handled it?

◊ 'Problem-Solving' Worksheet

_____

◊ Paint old T-shirts each of you brings from home (or pick up at a thrift shop) with paints from the arts & crafts room

◊ Draw a Picture with your eyes closed

Problem-Solving Worksheet

Step 1: Define the Problem

Choose a problem you want to work on. What is it? Write it down as you define it right now.
_____
_____

Ask yourself: Why is this a problem? Is this the real problem, or a symptom? Is your problem really a proposed solution to the real problem? Write your thoughts on these questions.
_____
_____
_____

Rewrite your problem statement.
_____
_____

Step 2: Define success in solving the problem

If you were to succeed in solving the problem you've just identified, what would success look like? Describe what would happen if you were successful.
_____
_____
_____

Step 3: Generate alternatives

What are some ways you could solve your problem and achieve the success you've just described? Come up with a list of choices – don't edit yourself, just think of as many as you can (you'll pick the best ones in a minute).

_____   _____   _____
_____   _____   _____
_____   _____   _____
_____   _____   _____
_____   _____   _____
_____   _____   _____

Which of these approaches do you like best? Pick the 3-5 you like most and circle them.

Step 4: Evaluate alternatives

It's time to pick "Plan A" and a backup "Plan B" (in case Plan A falls through) for solving your problem. Here are some things to consider in picking from your list of choices.
- How much time will this take?
- How much money?
- Are there any downsides?
- Is there any positive "multiple effect" – that is, will this option yield other benefits beyond solving this problem?
- What would I just plain rather do?

Once you've considered these questions, write the letter "A" next to your top choice, and the letter "B" next to your next-best choice.

Step 5: Agree on action

If you want to follow through on this approach to solving your problem, it's important to decide what you need to do and when. Do that below with your mentor.

My plan "A" is to

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

To accomplish this, I will:

TASK	WHO	BY WHEN