Kathy's[*]*10 steps to problem solving/goal setting in everyday life:*

1   Define the problem/goal – be *very* specific.
    a. Identify the primary agent(s) – who "owns" the problem/goal? Who needs to do something (different) if there is any hope of a solution? (Hint: if *you* have identified this problem, *you* probably are the primary agent!) Remember that the only person you can *really* change is yourself; if you aren't a primary agent, you probably shouldn't be taking the lead in solving this problem or setting this goal.
    b. Identify the barrier(s) to a solution (these can be characteristics within yourself, other people, and/or resources) – list everything, no matter how big or small. You need to know what could/might derail your solution/goal and plan your solution/goal to prevent serious derailment.
    c. Identify the resources or supports that can aid in a solution (these can be characteristics within yourself, other people, and/or resources) – list everything, no matter how big or small. Not all resources are likely to be available to you at all times during the implantation phase, so having many, diversified resources that you can call on at various times will help you be successful.
2   Brainstorm possible solutions – write down *everything*, no matter how outrageous or unrealistic it may be. Sometimes the best solution comes from something that seemed, at first blush, to be totally absurd. Brainstorming with the other agents and/or someone else can give you even more ideas to choose from.
3   Rate your ideas for effectiveness, facility/ease, time, and cost.
4   Select your best solution, taking into account the ratings from Step 3. Remember, sometimes your solution is really a set of smaller solutions. Rarely is a solution "perfect," don't let your imperfect solutions keep you from selecting *some* solution!
5   Recruit agents and supporting resources to the solution.
6   Define your "Action Plan." Identify *clear and measurable milestones and a realistic timeline* for change. What will the solution look like? How long will it take? What will happen if the solution/goal isn't met on time? Or at all?
7   Take action! Remember to engage your agents and resources. Solutions are always more likely to succeed when a community implements the solution together or when several agents support the primary agent. Take all the help you can get! Change can be hard, but also very rewarding. Nothing is cast in stone, so you can make adjustments as needed and need not fear moving forward with your plan.
8   Do a mid-course evaluation. Are you reaching your milestones in a timely fashion? If not, what unexpected barriers did you encounter or what resources failed to provide support? If the solution appears to be working, are you satisfied/happy with the solution? If not, return to Step 1 to refine your solution/goal.
9   Celebrate your success! Take stock of what worked and what didn't and how you adjusted successfully.
10 Continue to evaluate and adjust your solution/goal to maintain your success over time.