

# THE MINISTRY OF COUNSELING

## Stage 1 Problem Definition How are things with You?

### Active Listening:

Confirming or repeating  
Denying or confusing

Strengthening or emphasizing  
Controlling or regulating

### Inadequate Listening:

Physical attraction  
Differences  
Physical condition

Bias- positive or negative  
Overeagerness  
Prejudice

Helping a person means helping them understand their part in the overall problem situation.

### Telling the story:

What is going right?  
What is going wrong?  
How big is your world?  
Family Background?  
How is the family?  
What is the place of work in your life?

Conflicts between systems?  
What are your strengths?  
What are your weaknesses?  
Life Skills?  
Self-management skills?

## Stage II Goal Development How do you want things to be?

### 1. Screening

What deserves consideration?  
What is the problem and what is the symptom?

### 2. Focusing

All problems cannot be solved at once.  
Don't ignore painful symptoms.  
Decide what they would like to deal with first.  
"I'd like to get rid of these headaches."

### 3. Exploration and clarification

Relevant experiences, behaviors, emotions.  
A clear understanding of issues chosen for attention.  
Begin with a problem which can be handled relatively easy.  
When possible, move from less severe to more severe problems.

## Stage III Action What are you going to do about it?

### 1. Create new scenarios.

- The challenge to own the problem.
- Challenge strengths instead of weaknesses.
- Build on success.
- Be specific.

### 2. Critique of possible scenarios.

- Manageable
- Achievable
- Measurable

### 3. Choice and commitment

- Set goals
- Formulate plans
- Implement plans

Gerald Eagan, *The Skilled Helper: A Systematic Approach to Effective Helping*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1986).