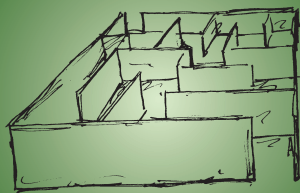


**TEEN**

**MENTAL HEALTH  
AND LIFE SKILLS  
WORKBOOK**



# Teen Practical Life Skills Workbook

**Facilitator Reproducible  
Self-Assessments, Exercises  
& Educational Handouts**

**Ester R. A. Leutenberg  
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**Teen Practical Life Skills Workbook**

Facilitator Reproducible Self-Assessments,  
Exercises & Educational Handouts

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## Using This Book *(For the professional)*

One important task of teens is learning practical life skills, critical for personal and professional success. Research indicates that life skills intelligence is as important as a teen's intelligence quotient (IQ) and emotional intelligence. Teens depend on effective life skills every day. With these skills they create a successful quality of life as they grow their inner resources.

Effective practical life skills help teens take charge and manage their lives in an increasingly complex society. Life skills can help them manage change and work effectively with their environments, their peers and other adults. The purpose of this workbook is to help teens develop the critical life skills that will assist them in meeting the demands of everyday life in a safe, mature and responsible manner.

The most important reason life skills intelligence is of such high importance is that, unlike the knowledge measured by traditional IQ tests, life skills can be learned and refined so that one can lead a successful, satisfying and productive life. \*A person's life skills IQ is a composite of many other types of intelligence:

- **Physical Intelligence** – focus on nutritional practices; interest in regular exercise; consistent and adequate sleep; ability to say NO to drugs and alcohol; responsibility for personal healthy habits; and respect for one's own body.
- **Mental Intelligence** – focus on the ability to engage in clear thinking and recall of information, with minimal interference from emotional baggage; ability to think independently and critically; possession of basic reasoning skills; interest in new ideas; knowledge of one's cultural heritage as well as others; ability to use good common sense in everyday life; and interest in lifelong learning.
- **Job, Volunteer and School Intelligence** – focus on maximizing one's own skills and abilities; ability to maintain a sense of control over the demands of school, volunteering and ultimately the workplace; responsible money management; power to balance time and energy spent at school, job, volunteering, friends, family and leisure; knowledge of one's interests, values, and personality; knowledge of procedures and expectations in each of these areas; and knowledge of strengths as well as areas of growth and improvement.
- **Emotional Intelligence** – focus on awareness of one's emotions; ability to maintain an even emotional state with appropriate emotional responses in reaction to any event; ability to maintain control over emotional states; ability to understand one's feelings; and ability to be aware and care about others' feelings.
- **Social Intelligence** – focus on sharing, friendship, and membership in groups; ability to practice active listening and empathy; interest in caring for others; awareness of social norms and cues; and willingness to caring and showing commitment to the common good of all people, community and the world.
- **Spiritual Intelligence** – focus on issues of meaning, values and purpose; interest in the importance of and search for clarity; search for greater meaning in life; commitment to faith and optimism; interest in developing the inner self and identifying purpose to life; and ability to see the whole picture, not just isolated events.

\*Liptak, J.J. (2007). *Life Skills IQ Test*. New York: Penguin Publishing.

*(Continued on the next page)*

## Using This Book *(For the professional, continued)*

The *Teen Practical Life Skills Workbook* contains five separate sections to help participants learn more about themselves and the competencies they possess in many life skills areas. Participants will learn about the importance of life skills in their daily lives. They will complete assessments and activities to keep them become better managers of life and to assist their development of greater life skills.

The sections of this book are:

- 1) **PROBLEM-SOLVING STYLE SCALE** helps teens understand how they attempt to solve problems, and provides instruction to improve their problem-solving skills.
- 2) **MONEY MANAGEMENT STYLE SCALE** helps teens to identify their style in managing money, and provides instruction for capable money management.
- 3) **TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS SCALE** helps teens identify how efficient they are at managing their time, and provides instruction for better time management.
- 4) **SELF-AWARENESS SCALE** helps teens identify their level of self-awareness related to their emotions, self-confidence and self-assessment.
- 5) **PERSONAL CHANGE SCALE** helps teens identify the changes they are experiencing in their lives, and provides instruction for managing change.

By combining reflective assessment and journaling, participants will be exposed to a powerful method of verbalizing and writing to reflect on and solve problems. Participants will become more aware of the strength and areas for growth and improvements of their daily life skills.

**Preparation for using the assessments and activities in this book is important. The authors suggest that prior to administering any of the assessments in this book, you complete them yourself. This will familiarize you with the format of the assessments, the scoring directions, the interpretation guides and the journaling activities. Although the assessments are designed to be self-administered, scored and interpreted, this familiarity will help prepare facilitators to answer participants' questions about the assessments.**

### Use Name Codes for Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a term for any action that preserves the privacy of other people. Because teens completing the activities in this workbook might be asked to answer assessment items and to journal about and explore their relationships, you will need to discuss confidentiality before you begin using the materials in this workbook. Maintaining confidentiality is important as it shows respect for others and allows participants to explore their feelings without hurting anyone's feelings or fearing gossip, harm or retribution.

In order to maintain confidentiality, explain to the participants that they need to assign a name code for each person they write about as they complete the various activities in the workbook. For example, a friend named Joey who enjoys going to hockey games might be titled JLHG (Joey Loves Hockey Games) for a particular exercise. In order to protect their friends' identities, they may not use people's actual names or initials, just name codes.

## The Assessments, Journaling Activities and Educational Handouts

The Assessments, Journaling Activities, and Educational Handouts in the *Teen Practical Life Skills Workbook* are reproducible and ready to be photocopied for participants' use. Assessments contained in this book focus on self-reported data and can be used by psychologists, counselors, therapists, teachers and career consultants. Accuracy and usefulness of the information provided is dependent on the truthful information that each participant provides through self-examination. By being honest, participants help themselves to learn about unproductive and ineffective patterns, and to uncover information that might be keeping them from being as happy and/or as successful as they might be.

An assessment instrument can provide participants with valuable information about themselves; however, it cannot measure or identify everything about them. The purpose of an assessment is not to pigeon-hole certain characteristics, but rather to allow participants to explore all of their characteristics. This book contains self-assessments, not tests. Tests measure knowledge or whether something is right or wrong. For the assessments in this book, there are no right or wrong answers. These assessments ask for personal opinions or attitudes about a topic of importance in the participant's career and life.

When administering assessments in this workbook, remember that the items are generically written so that they will be applicable to a wide variety of teens but will not account for every possible variable for every teen. Use them to help participants identify possible negative themes in their lives and find ways to break the hold that these patterns and their effects have.

Advise the teens taking the assessments that they should not spend too much time trying to analyze the content of the questions; their initial response will most likely be true. Regardless of individual scores, encourage teens to talk about their findings and their feelings pertaining to what they have discovered about themselves. Talking about and working on practical life skills will improve their quality of life as well as assist them in developing the skills to self-access throughout life. These exercises can be used by group facilitators working with any teens who want to strengthen their overall wellness.

A particular score on any assessment does not guarantee a participant's level of life skills. Use discretion when using any of the information or feedback provided in this workbook. The use of these assessments should not be substituted for consultation and wellness planning with a health care professional.

***Thanks to the following professionals whose input into this book has been so valuable!***

Carol Butler, MS Ed, RN, C

Annette Damien, MS,PPS

Jay Leutenberg

Kathy Liptak, Ed.D.

Eileen Regen, M.Ed., CJE

## Layout of the Book

The *Teen Practical Life Skills Workbook* is designed to be used either independently or as part of an integrated curriculum. You may administer one of the assessments and the journaling exercises to an individual or a group with whom you are working, or you may administer a number of the assessments over one or more days.

### **This book includes the following reproducible pages in the first five sections:**

- **Assessment Instruments** – Self-assessment inventories with scoring directions and interpretation materials. Group facilitators can choose one or more of the activities relevant to their participants.
- **Activity Handouts** – Practical questions and activities that prompt self-reflection and promote self-understanding. These questions and activities foster introspection and promote pro-social behaviors.
- **Quotations** – Quotations are used in each section to provide insight and promote reflection. Participants will be asked to select one or more of the quotations and journal about what the quotations mean to them.
- **Reflective Questions for Journaling** – Self-exploration activities and journaling exercises specific to each assessment to enhance self-discovery, learning, and healing.
- **Educational Handouts** – Handouts designed to enhance instruction can be used individually or in groups to promote a positive responsibility for safety at home, in the classroom, and in the community. They can be distributed, scanned and converted into masters for overheads or transparencies, projected or written on boards and/or discussed.

### **Who Should Use This Program?**

This book has been designed as a practical tool for helping professionals, such as therapists, school counselors, psychologists, guidance counselors, teachers, group leaders, etc. Depending on the role of the professional using the *Teen Practical Life Skills Workbook* and the specific group's needs, these sections can be used individually or combined for a more comprehensive approach.

### **Why Use Self-Assessments?**

Self-assessments are important in responding to various teen life skills issues because they help participants to engage in these ways:

- Become aware of the primary motivators that guide their behavior.
- Explore and learn to “let go” of troublesome habits and behavioral patterns.
- Explore the effects of unconscious childhood messages.
- Gain insight and “a wake-up call” for behavioral change.
- Focus their thinking on behavioral goals for change.
- Uncover resources they possess that can help them to cope better with safety.
- Explore their personal characteristics without judgment.
- Be fully aware of their strengths and areas for growth.

**Because the assessments are presented in a straightforward and easy-to-use format, individuals can self-administer, score and interpret each assessment at their own pace.**



## Teen Introduction

Learning powerful skills that you can use throughout various stages of your life is essential for your personal development. These skills will help you to develop a sense of individualism, succeed both in school and in the workplace, and develop practical abilities to improve your relationships. Life skills are those skills that you take for granted, such as cleverly managing your money and your time, solving problems that you encounter, dealing with change that occurs in your life, and becoming more self-aware.

Life skills practice allows you to develop skills needed to deal in a smart way with the personal challenges and changes that occur in your life, and which will continue to help you as an adult. Lack of powerful life skills, whether they are direct in helping you achieve your goals, or not, have a tendency to keep repeating themselves if they are left unexamined. That is the reason many people go through life using ineffective life skills over and over again and expecting different results each time. Once you have identified your negative patterns and skills, you will have the power to alter them so that you begin to experience positive results as you build your repertoire of positive and strong life skills.

Life skills training can help you to begin taking responsibility for managing your own life by mastering the skills that will help you to become the best person you can be and realize your full potential. Successful life skills allow you to deal with the inevitable setbacks and problems you will encounter in life. This book, the *Teen Practical Life Skills Workbook*, is designed to help you learn more about yourself, identify your effective and ineffective life skills, and find better ways to use these skills to positively adapt to and deal with the unique challenges in your life.

### Confidentiality

You will be asked to respond to assessments and exercises, and to journal about some experiences in your life. Everyone has the right to confidentiality, and you need to honor the right of everyone's privacy. Think about it this way – you would not want someone writing things about you that other people could read. Your friends feel this way also.

In order to maintain the confidentiality of your friends, assign people code names based on things you know about them. For example, a friend named Sherry who loves to wear purple might be coded as SWP (Sherry Wears Purple). **Do not use any person's actual name when you are listing people – use only name codes.**

# Teen Practical Life Skills Workbook

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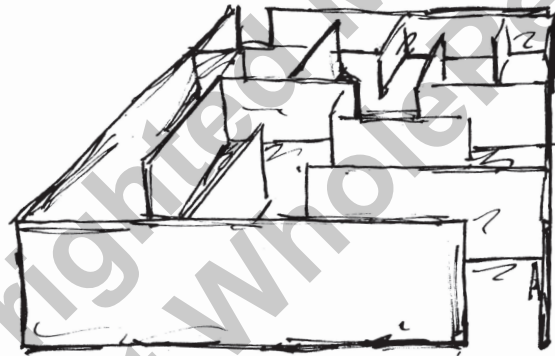
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SECTION I:

# Problem-Solving Style Scale



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## Problem-Solving Style Scale Directions

Problems occur in the lives of all people. Some problems are large and some are small. The ability to solve problems determines how satisfied you will be in many aspects of your life. By being able to solve problems effectively, you will live a healthier and less stressful life. Different people have different approaches to solving problems and the approach that you use is largely based on your own personality. The *Problem-Solving Style Scale* is designed to help you understand how you attempt to solve problems and guide you to additional skills in effective problem solving.

In the following example, the circled 1 indicates the statement is not at all descriptive of the person completing the inventory:

**Please answer the following statements based on a recent problem you solved.**

**Describe the problem:**

*EXAMPLE: I saw someone being bullied and I told a trusted adult.*

**Read each of the statements and decide how descriptive the statement is of your recent problem. Circle the number of your response of each statement.**

	A Lot Like Me	Somewhat Like Me	A Little Like Me	Not Like Me
<b>1. When I solved this problem . . .</b>				
I focused on what really happened to cause the problem . . . .	4	3	2	1

This is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time thinking about your answers. Your initial response will likely be the most true for you. Be sure to respond to every statement.

*(Turn to the next page and begin)*

## Problem-Solving Style Scale

Please answer the following statements based on a recent problem you solved

Describe the problem:

---

	A Lot Like Me	Somewhat Like Me	A Little Like Me	Not Like Me
<b>1. When I solved this problem . . .</b>				
I focused on what really happened to cause the problem . . . 4	4	3	2	1
I paid attention to specifics and details . . . . . 4	4	3	2	1
I looked for the pros and cons . . . . . 4	4	3	2	1
I tried to find a practical solution to the problem . . . . . 4	4	3	2	1
I viewed the problem realistically . . . . . 4	4	3	2	1
I relied on experience and standard ways to solve it . . . . . 4	4	3	2	1
I gathered as many facts as possible . . . . . 4	4	3	2	1
<b>TOTAL #1 = _____</b>				

	A Lot Like Me	Somewhat Like Me	A Little Like Me	Not Like Me
<b>2. When I solved this problem . . .</b>				
I reacted to my gut feelings . . . . . 4	4	3	2	1
I looked at the big picture, not small details . . . . . 4	4	3	2	1
I did what felt right . . . . . 4	4	3	2	1
I tried to be creative . . . . . 4	4	3	2	1
I relied on internal signals about what feels right . . . . . 4	4	3	2	1
I thought about how this will affect everyone involved. . . . . 4	4	3	2	1
I valued insights over facts . . . . . 4	4	3	2	1
<b>TOTAL #2 = _____</b>				

*(Continued on the next page)*





## Problem-Solving Style Scale *(Continued)*

	A Lot Like Me	Somewhat Like Me	A Little Like Me	Not Like Me
<b>3. When I solved this problem . . .</b>				
I looked at it logically . . . . .	4	3	2	1
I analyzed the facts and put them in order . . . . .	4	3	2	1
I wanted to find the one right answer . . . . .	4	3	2	1
I thought about what one of my role models would do . . . . .	4	3	2	1
I paid attention to all details of the problem . . . . .	4	3	2	1
I did not get overly emotional . . . . .	4	3	2	1
I concentrated on the problem, not the outcome . . . . .	4	3	2	1
				<b>TOTAL #3 = _____</b>

	A Lot Like Me	Somewhat Like Me	A Little Like Me	Not Like Me
<b>4. When I solved this problem . . .</b>				
I tried to be helpful in the best possible way. . . . .	4	3	2	1
I concerned myself about the other people involved . . . . .	4	3	2	1
I tried to sense how others felt about my solution . . . . .	4	3	2	1
I wanted the best solution for everyone involved . . . . .	4	3	2	1
I let my emotions be part of the process. . . . .	4	3	2	1
I tried to work out a solution best for everyone . . . . .	4	3	2	1
I trusted my feelings about the situation. . . . .	4	3	2	1
				<b>TOTAL #4 = _____</b>

*(Go to the Scoring Directions on the next page)*

## Problem-Solving Style Scale Scoring Directions

The Problem-Solving Style Scale is designed to measure the way you solve problems. For each of the four sections, add the scores you circled for each of the items. Put that total on the line marked "Total" at the end of each section.

Then, transfer your totals to the spaces below:

		<u>Problem-Solving Style</u>
<b>1. TOTAL</b>	=	_____
		Practical Thinking
<b>2. TOTAL</b>	=	_____
		Intuitive Thinking
<b>3. TOTAL</b>	=	_____
		Logical Thinking
<b>4. TOTAL</b>	=	_____
		Social Sensitive Thinking

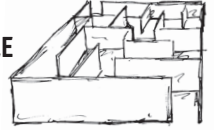
## Profile Interpretation

Individual Scales Scores	Result	Indications
<b>Scores from 22 to 28</b>	high	Scores from 22 to 28 on any single scale indicate that you have many of the characteristics of people with that particular problem-solving style.
<b>Scores from 14 to 21</b>	moderate	Scores from 14 to 21 on any single scale indicate that you have some of the characteristics of people with that particular problem-solving style.
<b>Scores from 7 to 13</b>	low	Scores from 7 to 13 on any single scale indicate that you do not have many of the characteristics of people with that particular problem-solving style.

Go to the next page to learn more about the various problem-solving styles.

For scales which you scored in the **Moderate** or **High** range, find the descriptions on the pages that follow. Then, read the description and complete the exercises that are included. No matter how you scored, low, moderate or high, you will benefit from **every one of these exercises**.

**In the following exercises, remember to use Name Codes for the people you describe.**



# Problem-Solving Style Scale

## Profile Scale Descriptions #1 – Practical Thinking

**A PRACTICAL THINKING Problem-Solving Style is one in which you take in information that is clear and real. You want to know what is happening in the situation. You notice what is going on around you, especially the practical realities and facts. You may overlook recurring themes, focusing instead on the concrete issues involved in the situation. You rely on and trust your previous experience in dealing with similar problems.**

**If this is your style, place a check in the box by the characteristics that sound like you:**

- You stick with it until you find a solution to a problem.
- You focus on what is really happening.
- You trust your experience from previous problem situations.
- You trust facts rather than other people.
- You are perceptive.
- You are able to remember specific facts about the problem.
- You understand ideas through practical applications.
- You carefully work toward conclusions.

Write about a time when the Practical Thinking Problem-Solving Style worked well for you.

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Write about a time when the Practical Thinking Problem-Solving Style did NOT work.

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