PROBLEM INVENTORY

There is a variety of ways you could use this Problem Inventory sheet: (a) read the questions and answer each in your mind; (b) read the questions and write down the answers; (c) get someone else to read the questions to you whilst you answer them either out loud or in your mind; (d) use this to help someone else understand their problem. I suggest to pick whichever answer comes to your mind immediately as you read/hear the question, even if it doesn't seem to make complete sense at the time.

WHAT?..

What is the problem?

More specifically?..

Anything else about it?

And when [insert the problem here], it's like what? [think of a symbol or metaphor representing the problem]

What steps have you taken so far to deal with the problem?

What happened then?
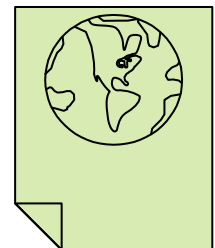
WHERE?..

Where is it a problem? Where specifically?

Where else?

Where has it first happened?

Where is it not a problem?

Where else?

WHEN?..

When is it a problem? When else?

Times of the day, week, month, year?

When did it start?

How frequent/prolonged is it?

When is it NOT a problem?

Have there been any periods of time when it wasn't a problem?

WHO?..

Who is involved in, or affected by, the problem?

Who else?

What is the relationship between the problem and [people]?

Who is around when there isn't a problem?

Who will be happy if you get rid of the problem?

Who will be unhappy if you get rid of the problem?

HOW?..

When the problem occurs:

What are you thinking?
[internal dialogue, mental images]

What are you feeling physically in your body?

What are you feeling emotionally?

What are you doing?

What are you believing at the time?

What is important to you at the time?

Where is your focus of attention?

What happens just before the problem arises?

What happens just after?

Who are you when you have the problem?
You are like what? (allow a metaphor or symbol come to mind)

Who are you when you don't have the problem?
You are like what then? (allow a metaphor or symbol come to mind)

WHY?.. AND WHY NOT?

What are the advantages of changing?   And the disadvantages of changing?

What are the advantages of not changing? And the disadvantages of not changing?