



Shrinking problems so they're manageable...

Managing situations and circumstances can be truly difficult at times. Having some strategies that enable you to cope well in these moments can really help to reduce the struggle. There is one particular strategy that helps in almost all cases, no matter what the challenge, so it's well worth knowing.

Sit to the side for awhile...

The more you can sit to the side of a problem the easier it is to solve. When faced with a problem that feels 'big' it's easy to lose perspective and feel 'out of your depth'. If you're a mouse looking up at an elephant about to step on you, it might feel like there's nowhere to run, but someone standing just to the side a little can see endless possibilities of escape and safety. Our problems are the same... stepping to the side, even for just a brief interlude, is often enough to help us gain perspective and see more options.

How do you step aside when you're overwhelmed? Some people take 30 minutes and do high-intensity exercise. Unless the situation requires calling 000, 30 minutes won't make or break anything. Other ways in which you can take a step aside are: imagine you're a wise mentor for a moment. What would they say or observe about this problem? Pretend it's not your problem but a close friend's and you're the one giving the third party advice.

Become a time traveller... imagine yourself five years from now or even one. When you're looking back at this moment, what perspective or solutions do you see? How will you feel about the problem then?

Make friends with the problem

What if the problem was serving a purpose ... play with the idea that the problem before you is presenting you with a learning opportunity, one that has a secret gift waiting to be unwrapped. What might it be? Through every stretchy circumstance comes new insights, wisdom and knowledge. What's the learning? Having a positive expectation of something to be gained from an experience will make the hardship feel less and provide hope in the storm. There's an old saying which goes, "How do you eat an elephant?... One piece at a time." Allow yourself a buffer zone that's one step to the side of any problem, tell people that you're processing and will get back to them once you've had some time to really consider your options. Use the strategies above and even the biggest dilemmas can be made to feel manageable.

Bare Hands is run by allied health professionals committed to helping women embrace positive change by providing access to practical education. To find out more give us a call, email us or visit www.barehands.com.au.

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- ✓ Challenges don't discriminate - we all get the chance to solve a problem.
- ✓ Step to the side of it so that the options become clear.
- ✓ Make friends with the challenge - there may be a gift waiting to be unwrapped.

"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."

Albert Einstein

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