Decision-Making Skills

Leaders put the people first. Leaders in our community are those who know how to make good decisions using patience and careful thought.
Formulate Your Decision-Making Power

1. Define the Problem
   - Figure out exactly what the problem is.
   - Set goals or steps to address the problem.

2. Reevaluate the Situation
   - Consider the options you have to solve the problem.
   - Don’t rush into making a decision. Maybe you should think on it for a while.

3. Gather Information
   - Use the time you have to get information to help make your decision.
   - Ask those you trust (elders, family members, community members, support) for advice, prayers, and guidance.
   - Use lots of resources (library, Internet, etc.)

4. Think of Alternatives
   - Brainstorm for a wide variety of solutions.
   - Get all your ideas out before you decide what to do.
   - Write down all your ideas.

5. Try Out Your Alternatives
   - Imagine the consequences of each of the alternatives.
   - Be realistic. Ask yourself, “Can these plans be carried out?”
   - You might need to combine more than one of your ideas to solve the problem.
   - Be creative.

6. Put Your Decision to Work
   - Make the decision and do it!
   - Tell others involved what you have decided to do.
   - Ask for feedback.
   - Readjust the decision over time if you need to.
Sample for Formulating Your Decision-Making Power

1. Define the Problem
   • Figure out exactly what the problem is.
     ~ The problem is that my boyfriend wants to have sex.
   • Set goals or steps to attack the problem:
     ~ I want to say, “I don’t want to have sex.”
     ~ I want to say “School comes before sex for me.”
     ~ I want to say “I don’t want to get pregnant in high school.”
     ~ I want to keep going out with him.

2. Reevaluate the Situation
   • Consider the options you have to solve the problem.
     ~ We can still go on dates.
     ~ We can break up and I can date some one else.
     ~ I can give in and have sex with him.
     ~ We can just be friends.
   • Don’t rush into making a decision. Maybe you should think on it for a while.
     ~ Can you wait or do you need to act now on a decision?
     ___ I can wait.
     ___ I need to act now.

3. Gather Information
   • Use the time you have to get background information to help make your decision.
   • Ask those you trust (elders, family members, community members, support) for advice, prayers, and guidance.
     ~ I will talk to my older sister, my grandmother, and my Indian advocate at school.
   • Use lots of resources (library, Internet, etc.)
     ~ I might read about teenage pregnancy and STD’s on the Internet.
4. **Think of Alternatives**
- Brainstorm for a wide variety of solutions.
- Get all your ideas before you decide what to do.
- Write down all your ideas.
  ~ *My ideas for solutions from brainstorming:*
    - **Solution 1:** I'm going to tell him I don't want sex now.
    - **Solution 2:** I'll make plans to do things with friends if he breaks up with me.
    - **Solution 3:** I'll get involved in other activities I like and meet new people.

5. **Try Out Your Alternatives**
- Imagine the consequences of each of the alternatives.
- Be realistic. Ask yourself, “Can these plans be carried out?”
- You might need to combine more than one of your ideas to solve the problem.
- Be creative.
  ~ *The consequences of my solutions would be:*
    - **Solution 1:** This will be difficult, but I think I can do this.
    - **Solution 2:** I can call friends and make plans to go out with them.
    - **Solution 3:** I can spend more time on homework and I have always wanted to be in the Anishinaabe Club.

6. **Put Your Decision to Work**
- Make the decision and do it!
  ~ *The date I carried out my decision: January 25, 2002*
- Tell others involved what you have decided to do.
  ~ *Feedback I got from others: My friends were glad to hear from me; they wanted to do things together; my parents were glad to see more of me.*
- Ask for feedback.
- Readjust the decision over time if you need to.
  ~ *Adjustments I made on my decision after trying it out: I didn't tell him until I had other plans to back up my weekend so I wouldn't feel so bad if he rejected me.*

* The most important lesson I learned from this decision was —
  ~ *I have power over my own decisions and over my own body.*
Formulating Your Decision

1. **Define the Problem**
   - What is the problem?
   - Set goals/steps to address this problem:

2. **Reevaluate the Situation**
   - Name your options to solve this problem:
   - Can you wait or do you need to act now on a decision?
     ___ I can wait.
     ___ I need to act now.

3. **Gather Information**
   - I will talk to these trusted people for advice:
   - I will use these additional resources:

4. **Think of Alternatives**
   - My ideas for solutions from brainstorming:
     Solution 1:
     Solution 2:
     Solution 3:
5. Try Out Your Alternatives
   • The consequences of my solutions would be: (Remember to be realistic. Ask yourself, “Can I really follow through on this?”)
     Solution 1:_________________________________________________________
     Solution 2:_________________________________________________________
     Solution 3:_________________________________________________________

6. Put Your Decision to Work
   • The date I carried out my decision:
     ________________________________________________________________
   • Feedback I got from others:
     ________________________________________________________________
     ________________________________________________________________
   • Adjustments I made on my decision after trying it out:
     ________________________________________________________________
     ________________________________________________________________

7. The most important lesson I learned from this decision
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________