# Collaborative Problem Solving Assessment and Planning Tool (CPS-APT) for Adults

Individual's Name _____   Date _____

Responding to life's demands requires a lot of thinking skills. If an individual doesn't have the skills to handle a trigger or meet an expectation, we call it a "problem to be solved." Until we solve that problem, the trigger or expectation is likely to result in some form of challenging behavior.

The most important task during the assessment phase is identifying the specific triggers or expectations that frequently lead to challenging behavior, as well as the thinking skills that would help the individual to handle those demands more adaptively.
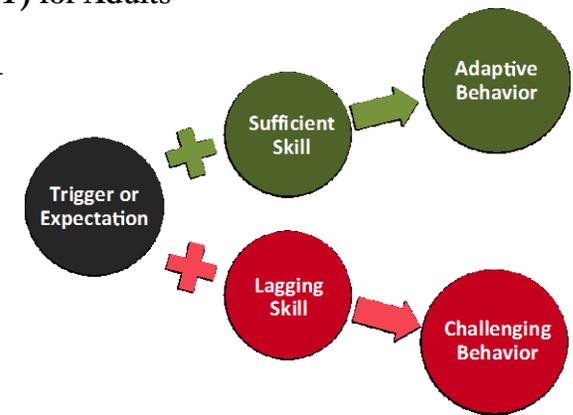
Part 1: Identifying Triggers/Expectations, Lagging Skills, and Challenging Behaviors

PLAN (complete in Part 2)	TRIGGERS/EXPECTATIONS	LAGGING SKILLS	CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS
	• These are the demands that the person is having a hard time meeting. • They are the triggers, expectations, precipitants, antecedents, situations, or contexts that can lead to challenging behavior. • When making your list, describe the who, what, when and where. Be specific!	• Lagging skills are the reasons that an individual is having difficulty meeting these expectations or responding adaptively to these triggers. • Take a guess at which specific lagging skills are contributing by looking at the list of triggers/expectations, and referring to the Thinking Skills Inventory on the following pages.	• These are the observable, challenging behaviors that often bring up the greatest concerns for caregivers, clinicians, or supervisors. • Examples are yelling, swearing, refusing, hitting, cutting, shutting down, running, lying, etc. • The challenging behaviors are the result of an individual not having the skills to handle the specific triggers or expectations.

Thinking Skills Inventory (TSI)

Instructions: Below is a list of thinking skills required to solve problems, be flexible, and tolerate frustration. Many individuals with social, emotional and behavioral challenges will have deficits in some of these areas. The skills are organized into five categories.
Rate the extent to which each skill is a strength or challenge by **marking an** "X" in one column for each skill. Use this Thinking Skills Inventory to complete the "Lagging Skills" column on the previous page.

Language and Communication Skills	Consistent Strength	Sometimes a Strength	Depends	Sometimes Difficult	Consistently Difficult
Understands and processes spoken words with adequate speed *Example:*					
Understands and follows conversations well enough to respond *Example:*					
Expresses concerns, needs, or thoughts in words *Example:*					
Is able to tell someone what's bothering him or her *Example:*					

Attention and Working Memory Skills	Consistent Strength	Sometimes a Strength	Depends	Sometimes Difficult	Consistently Difficult
Stays with tasks requiring sustained attention *Example:*					
Does things in a logical sequence or set order *Example:*					
Keeps track of time; correctly assesses how much time a task will take *Example:*					
Reflects on multiple thoughts or ideas at the same time *Example:*					
Maintains focus and concentration *Example:*					
Ignores irrelevant noises, people, or other stimuli; tunes things out when necessary *Example:*					
Considers a range of solutions to a problem *Example:*					

Emotion- and Self-Regulation Skills	Consistent Strength	Sometimes a Strength	Depends	Sometimes Difficult	Consistently Difficult
Thinks rationally, even when frustrated *Example:*					
Manages irritability in an age-appropriate way *Example:*					
Manages anxiety in an age-appropriate way *Example:*					
Manages disappointment in an age-appropriate way *Example:*					
Thinks before responding; considers the likely outcomes or consequences of his/her actions *Example:*					
Can adjust his/her arousal level to meet the demands of a situation (e.g., calming after recess or after getting upset, falling asleep/waking up, staying seated during class or meals, etc.) *Example:*					

Cognitive Flexibility Skills	Consistent Strength	Sometimes a Strength	Depends	Sometimes Difficult	Consistently Difficult
Handles transitions, shifts easily from one task to another *Example:*					
Is able to see "shades of gray" rather than thinking only in "black-and-white" *Example:*					
Thinks hypothetically, is able to envision different possibilities *Example:*					
Handles deviations from rules, routines, and original plans *Example:*					
Handles unpredictability, ambiguity, uncertainty, and novelty *Example:*					
Can shift away from an original idea, solution, or plan *Example:*					
Takes into account situational factors that may mean a change in plans *Example:*					
Interprets information accurately/<u>avoids</u> over-generalizing or personalizing (Example: <u>Avoids</u> saying "Everyone's out to get me," "Nobody likes me," "You always blame me," "It's not fair," "I'm stupid," "Things will never work out for me.") *Example:*					

Social Thinking Skills	Consistent Strength	Sometimes a Strength	Depends	Sometimes Difficult	Consistently Difficult
Pays attention to verbal and nonverbal social cues *Example:*					
Accurately interprets nonverbal social cues (like facial expressions and tone of voice) *Example:*					
Starts conversations, enters groups, and connects with others appropriately *Example:*					
Seeks attention in appropriate ways *Example:*					
Understands how his or her behavior affects other people *Example:*					
Understands how he or she is coming across or being perceived by others *Example:*					
Empathizes with others, appreciates others' perspectives or points of view *Example:*					

Part 2: Planning and Prioritizing Problems to Solve

Next, decide which Triggers/Expectations are the first to be addressed with Plan B. Mark those Triggers/Expectations with (B). If you're not sure where to start, use these guidelines:

For Triggers/Expectations that won't get Plan B right away, mark with (A) or (C) (for now).

- Choose Plan A if trying to get your expectation met is more important than reducing challenging behavior.
- Choose Plan C if reducing challenging behavior is more important than getting the expectation met for now.

REMINDER: As problems get solved using Plan B, you will choose new Triggers/Expectations from those marked A and C to be addressed next with Plan B.