Use this Decision Map as a tool to help you think most strategically about the problems you are confronting.

**Core Practice:** Strategic Thinking

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**Decision Map Flowchart**

1. **Can you clearly articulate the problem?**
   - Yes
   - No

2. **Are you sure? Is this really the problem, or is it a symptom of the problem?**
   - Yes, I’m sure
   - No, I’m not sure

3. **Great! Can you name the strategic purpose or “north star” that you are working towards by solving this problem?**
   - Yes
   - No

4. **Name it in a sentence or less, and then go to the next step.**

5. **If that is your strategic purpose, does solving your named problem actually get you closer to that purpose?**
   - Yes
   - No

6. **If you solve this problem, what opportunities will be created to get you closer to your strategic purpose?**

7. **Use WHY questions to test your beliefs/assumptions about how you think answering this problem will get you closer to your strategic purpose.**

8. **OK. We believe you have a clear grasp of the problem and purpose. Now it’s time to think about the timing of things.**

9. **Where are we in the life cycle of the problem/challenge?**

10. **Are there other events/conditions on the near or far horizon that would impact opportunities, leverage points, or deep challenges?**

11. **Test the validity of HOW it’ll get you closer to the purpose. Is your believe/assumption widely held? Is it based in something factual? Has it been tested?**

12. **What are the critical questions, the answers to which would significantly guide and/or improve our chances of success?**

13. **What does our rhythm need to be in order to intersect the rhythm of the problem/challenge?**

14. **What are your next steps? A habit of planning is to think of it as “we need to get there, what do I need to do to get there?” Often you run out of time and won’t get there. Plan backward: start with where you need to go, and from there, go backwards to get to where you currently are.**

15. **What are your best opportunities for solving this problem?**

16. **What are your next steps? A habit of planning is to think of it as “we need to get there, what do I need to do to get there?” Often you run out of time and won’t get there. Plan backward: start with where you need to go, and from there, go backwards to get to where you currently are.**

17. **Repeat these steps/this process as needed.**