

Coping Skills

Coping skills are important to help us manage difficult emotions, to bring our stress level down and to calm down so that we can brainstorm and problem. Keep this somewhere you can find it when you need it. Perhaps place it on a bulletin board or in a binder you can get to. *Make a list of strategies.*

| Different Types of Coping Skills | Examples of things to do. |
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| Distraction – Focus your mind on something else. | Conversation, listen to talk radio, read, do puzzles, watch something suspenseful on TV, play a computer game, do a math problem, make a list, learn something new, play a musical instrument, clean up something, organize something, tidy your room, garden, art, or do something crafty. |
| Grounding – Get out of your head and into your senses. | Use your senses to calm down. Smell a calming fragrance, slowly taste your meal or snack, notice the colors or light around you or notice something that appears calming. Walk on the grass barefoot, take off your shoes if at home, squeeze a stress ball, do yoga or exercise, or meditate. Notice the seat underneath you or the back of the chair on your back. Feel the support of that chair. |
| Emotional release – Express it! | Use your words to express what you are feelings calmly to someone. Use “I feel messages.” Try a cold shower or a warm shower, Let yourself cry. Put on a funny video and let yourself laugh! Try exercise or popping balloons, or crank up some music and dance. |
| Taking care of yourself. | Massage your hands with hand cream, manicure your nails, cook a special dinner or snack, clean up something where you live, or just make your bed, take a bubble bath, or cold or warm shower, brush your hair, buy a small treat. Wear a warm sweater or sit in front of or beneath a fan. Sip a warm drink or a cool drink. |
| Thought Challenge – be aware of your thoughts | Write down negative thoughts. List all the reasons they may not be true. Imagine someone you love had these thoughts – what advice would you give them? |
| Access your higher self | Help someone else, smile, volunteer, do random acts of kindness, pat dogs or cats, join a cause. |