

# Coping Skills

Coping skills help us get through difficult times - they can give us an important break from mental and emotional distress, and sometimes they are literally life-saving.

Keep this list of coping skills handy for when you need it... folded up in your wallet or bag or post it up on the wall somewhere handy at home.


**Make this list work for you**  
Use a highlighter pen to mark the skills that work best for you & add your own ideas over the page.

<p><b>Distraction</b></p> <p>Absorb your mind in something else</p>	<p>Conversation, listen to talk radio, read, do puzzles, TV, computer games, jigsaws, solve a problem, make a list, learn something new, cleaning &amp; tidying, gardening, arts &amp; crafts.</p>	<p><b>Pros</b></p> <p>Gives your heart &amp; mind a break. Great for short term relief. Great to get through a crisis.</p>	<p><b>Cons</b></p> <p>Can't do it for too long. Doesn't resolve any underlying issues. Meds can make it hard to concentrate.</p>
<p><b>Grounding</b></p> <p>Get out of your head &amp; into your body &amp; the world</p>	<p>Use body &amp; senses: smell fragrances, slowly taste food, notice the colours around you. Walk on the grass barefoot, squeeze clay or mud, do yoga, meditate, exercise.</p>	<p><b>Pros</b></p> <p>Helps slow or stop 'dissociation' (feeling numb, floaty or disconnected). Reduces physicality of anxiety.</p>	<p><b>Cons</b></p> <p>Sometimes it's better to stay a bit dissociated (that's how your mind protects you).</p>
<p><b>Emotional Release</b></p> <p>Let it out!</p>	<p>Yell, scream, run! Try a cold shower. Let yourself cry... and sob. Put on a funny DVD and let yourself laugh! Try boxing, popping balloons, or crank up some music &amp; dance crazy!</p>	<p><b>Pros</b></p> <p>Great for anger and fear. Releases the pressure of overwhelming emotion.</p>	<p><b>Cons</b></p> <p>Hard to do in every situation. Feels odd. Some people might think you're acting 'crazier' (be selective with how &amp; where you do this)</p>
<p><b>Self Love</b></p>	<p>Massage hands with nice cream, manicure your nails, cook a special meal, clean your house (or just make your bed), bubble bath or long shower, brush hair, buy a small treat.</p>	<p><b>Pros</b></p> <p>Become your own best friend, your own support worker. Great for guilt or shame. You deserve it!</p>	<p><b>Cons</b></p> <p>Sometimes can feel really hard to do, or feel superficial (but it's not).</p>
<p><b>Thought challenge</b></p>	<p>Write down negative thoughts then list all the reasons they may not be true. Imagine someone you love had these thoughts – what advice would you give them?</p>	<p><b>Pros</b></p> <p>Can help to shift long-term, negative thinking habits. Trying to be more logical can help reduce extreme emotion.</p>	<p><b>Cons</b></p> <p>The more emotional you feel, the harder this is to do. In particular, feelings of shame can make this very hard.</p>
<p><b>Access your higher self</b></p>	<p>Help someone else, smile at strangers (see how many smiles you get back), pray, volunteer, do randomly kind things for others, pat dogs at the local park, join a cause</p>	<p><b>Pros</b></p> <p>Reminds us that everyone has value and that purpose can be found in small as well as large things.</p>	<p><b>Cons</b></p> <p>Don't get stuck trying to save everyone else and forget about you!</p>

# Your Personal Coping Skills List

Use this page to write your own list of coping skills. You might take some from my list, some that you already know, and others may still be out there for you to discover...

**Distraction**  
Absorb your mind in something else



**Grounding**  
Get out of your head & into your body

**Emotional Release**  
Let it out!

**Self Love**

**Thought challenge**

**Access your higher self**

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# Coping Skills

Coping skills are things we can do to make ourselves feel better when we are going through difficult times.

The activities listed below are things you can do to help you feel better when you are upset.

## Take Care of Yourself:

- Eat Healthy Food
- Sleep Well
- Understand How You Feel

## Exercise:

- Go for a Walk
- Ride a Bike
- Do Yoga

## Do Things You Enjoy:

- Draw
- Enjoy Nature
- Laugh
- Sing
- Hang Out with Friends
- Play a Game
- Watch a Movie
- Paint
- Listen to Music
- Make a Playlist
- Make a List of Things You Like

## Get Help:

- Talk to a Friend
- Talk to a Trusted Adult

## Get Away from the Problem:

## Change Your Thoughts by Using different Parts of Your Brain:

- Read
- Write a Story or Poem
- Set a Goal
- Learn Something New
- Journal

## Keep a Positive Attitude:

- Make a List of Things You Like
- Focus on What You Can Control
- Say Positive Affirmations

## Use a Stress Ball

## Take 10 Deep Breaths

## Helping Other People Can Shift Our Focus and Make Us Feel Better.

- Perform a Random Act of Kindness