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Articles:

Healthy coping skills for
uncomfortable emotions



99 Healthy coping skills



Coping with grief



Substance Misuse Prevention: A Collection of Readings

Healthy Coping Mechanisms for Times of Stress



<https://online.maryville.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/97/2019/01/stress.jpg?w=640>

Why is it important to learn to cope with stress? (Cleveland Clinic, 2023)

Coping occurs when changes in our life or environment are perceived to be stressful. Psychological stress usually occurs in response to negative life events and usually requires some sort of adaptation. When we experience multiple changes in a brief period of time, a feeling of a lack of control can result. A sense of not having control over what is happening around us can lead to low self-esteem and contribute to the development of anxiety or depression. When coping with stressors, more energy and effort are needed compared to what is normally required during the daily routines of life. Experts have stated that coping is more of a process than a singular event. Certain coping strategies may work better for some people than others, but it is essential to practice self-care and engage in a healthy coping mechanism that works best for you in the wake of stressful events.

Examples of stress-reducing activities (Cleveland Clinic, 2023):

Get enough good quality sleep

Eat a well-balanced diet

Exercise on a regular basis

Take rest periods during the day to relax

Take vacations away from home, school, and work

Engage in pleasurable activities every day

Practice relaxation exercises such as yoga, prayer, meditation, or progressive muscle relaxation

Avoid use of caffeine and alcohol

Coping mechanisms can challenge you to:

- Lower expectations
- Ask others for help
- Take responsibility for a situation
- Engage in problem solving
- Maintain emotionally supportive relationships
- Challenge previously held beliefs that are no longer adaptive
- Distance yourself from the source of stress



Substance Use and Stress (American Addiction Centers, 2023)

There are numerous reasons why individuals turn to mind-altering substances as a coping mechanism for stress, difficult emotions, physical ailments, and other issues. Drugs and alcohol can provide temporary relief from reality, however, substance use as a coping mechanism can be both psychologically and physically damaging. Withdrawal symptoms that are associated with drug use can make mental illness symptoms like depression, anxiety, and sleep difficulties worse, and can contribute to a decline in overall health.

For comments on this newsletter or suggestions for future articles please contact: Diane Geyer LCPC, LADC, CCS, NCC~ Clinician and Coordinator of Clinical Substance Use Services at USM or Mary Furlong, Graduate Assistant~ Email: diane.geyer@maine.edu, mary.furlong@maine.edu