

Ideas for Coping

Here are some possible adaptive coping strategies to ease distress (adapted from Psychological First Aid, Brymer et al., 2006).

Try one or more of these coping strategies, and then monitor how you feel afterward:

- Talking to someone for support
- Getting adequate rest, nutrition, exercise
- Engaging in positive distracting activities (sports, hobbies, reading)
- Maintaining a normal schedule
- Allowing yourself to be upset for a period of time
- Scheduling pleasant activities
- Eating healthy meals
- Taking breaks
- Spending time with others
- Participating in a support group
- Using relaxation methods
- Using calming self-talk
- Exercising in moderation
- Seeking counseling
- Keeping a journal
- Focusing on something practical that you can do right now to manage the situation better
- Using coping methods that have been successful for you in the past

Coping actions that are considered unhealthy and should be avoided include:

- Using alcohol or drugs to cope
- Withdrawing from activities
- Withdrawing from family or friends
- Working too many hours
- Getting violently angry
- Excessive blaming of self or others
- Overeating or not eating enough
- Using TV or computer games as a distraction
- Doing risky or dangerous activities
- Not taking care of yourself (sleep, diet, exercise, etc.)

For more information on coping strategies, including anger management and sleep problems, visit the Psychological First Aid manual, pages 81-84: https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources//pfa_field_operations_guide.pdf