



Coping Skills



Coping means to invest one's own conscious effort, to solve personal and interpersonal problems, in order to try to master, minimize or tolerate stress and conflict. The psychological coping mechanisms are commonly termed coping strategies or coping skills. These are meant as a guide and should be tailored specifically for the person who needs them. Its important to understand that some techniques might work better than others and it varies per person and by the situation you are dealing with.

Counting

Counting gives you time to relax and calm down before responding to a situation.

Try these methods:

- **Counting Backwards:**

Count backwards from 10 to 0.

- **Counting Random Sequence of Numbers**

Count from random numbers you aren't used to like from 157 to 203.

- **Counting Specific Items:** This is also a method of grounding. For example, count how many chairs are in the basement or count how many times someone on the TV says the word 'no'.

Grounding

Grounding techniques help you turn your attention away from negative thoughts, memories, or worries, and refocus on the present moment.

- **54321 Technique:**

Purposefully take in the details of your surroundings using each of your senses. What are **5** things you can **see**? What are **4** things you can **feel**? What are **3** things you can **hear**? What are **2** things you can **smell**? What is **1** thing you can **taste**?

- **Categories**

Choose 3 categories and name as many items as you can in each category. Spend a few minutes on each category to come up with as many items as possible.

- **Alphabet**

Pick a category and name an item for each letter of the alphabet.

Designed and distributed by The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project, a program of The Arc of New Jersey
This infographic is made as part of our Healthy Lifestyles Project, funded by The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey



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Deep Breathing

Deep breathing reverses the fight or flight response and sends messages to the brain to begin calming the body.

- **5-10:**

Breathe in slowly for at least 5 seconds. Hold your breathe for 5-10 seconds. Breathe out very slowly. Repeat the process until you feel calm.

- **Diaphragmatic:**

Place one hand on your chest and one hand on your belly. Slowly inhale through your nose, feeling your stomach pressing into your hand. Keep your other hand as still as possible. Slowly exhale keeping your upper hand completely still.

- **Lion's Breath:**

Be in a comfortable seated position. Press your palms against your knees with your fingers spread wide. Inhale deeply through your nose and open your eyes wide. At the same time open your mouth wide and stick out your tongue, bringing the tip down toward your chin. Exhale by making a long 'ha' sound.

Imagery

- **5 Senses:**

Think of a place that's calming for you; the beach, playing with a pet, a friends house, another country you visited on vacation. Paint a picture using your 5 senses:

What do you see?

What do you hear?

What can you feel?

What can you taste?

What can you smell?

- **Mindfulness Meditation**

This can help with getting rid of unwanted imagery. To practice mindful meditation, sit or lay down in a comfortable position. Close your eyes and bring your attention to your breathing. Relax your muscles and just sit with your breath. It's normal for your thoughts to wander; acknowledge your thoughts without judgement and then return your attention to your breathing. Practice until you feel calm again.

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MENTAL HEALTH HOTLINES

HELP IS AVAILABLE 24/7 THROUGH PHONE CALL, TEXT, AND ONLINE CHATS USING THE RESOURCES BELOW.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

The 988 Lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the United States. They're committed to improving crisis services and advancing suicide prevention by empowering individuals, advancing professional best practices, and building awareness.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

If you or someone you know is in crisis, whether they are considering suicide or not, please call the toll free Lifeline to speak with a trained crisis counselor 24/7. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline connects you with a crisis center in the Lifeline network closest to your location. Your call will be answered by a trained crisis worker who will listen empathetically and without judgment. The crisis worker will work to ensure that you feel safe and help identify options and information about mental health services in your area.

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI): 1-800-950-NAMI (6264)/Crisis Text Line: Text NAMI to 741-741

The NAMI Helpline is a free, nationwide peer-support service providing information, resource referrals and support to people living with a mental health conditions, their family members and caregivers, mental health providers and the public. Helpline staff and volunteers are experienced, well-trained and able to provide guidance. Connect with a trained crisis counselor to receive free, 24/7 crisis support via text message

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

Trained expert advocates are available 24/7 to provide confidential support to anyone experiencing domestic violence or seeking resources and information. Help is available in Spanish and other languages.

National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) / Online Chat: <https://hotline.rainn.org/online>

Connect with a trained staff member from a sexual assault service provider in your area that offers access to a range of free services. Crisis chat support is also available at their Online Hotline. Free help, 24/7.

NJ MentalHealthCares Help: 866-202-HELP (4357) / (TTY 877-294-4356)

Their line staff offers telephone counseling, information and referral and assistance in helping to get the behavioral health services needed by you or a loved one. The New Jersey MentalHealthCares Helpline is funded by the New Jersey Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services. Assistance is available in many languages. A TTY line is available for the deaf and hearing impaired at (877) 294-4356 Hours of operation are Monday thru Friday 8 a.m. to 8 a.m.