

# Coping Skills Inventory

Coping strategies are ways of responding to stress when dealing with real-life problems. But even without specific strategies, coping is something that we all do when we implement specific skills to overcome adversity.

We all possess coping skills, whether we implement them consciously or not.

This exercise introduces some common coping mechanisms. Use it to help you understand how you have successfully overcome adversity in the past, and identify skills that you might wish to develop with practice.

## Instructions

Six common Coping Skills are described in the Inventory below, on the left-hand side:

- **Thought Challenging**
- **Releasing Emotions**
- **Practicing Self-Love**
- **Distracting**
- **Tapping Into Your Best Self, and**
- **Grounding**

Writing in the right-hand column, list some ways that you feel you could apply these skills when facing a challenging or difficult situation.

Coping Skill	Examples
<p><b>Thought Challenging</b> Challenging thoughts involves recognizing, confronting, and disputing unhelpful thinking patterns - or automatic thoughts that pop up.</p>	<p><i>E.g.: Finding evidence and facts that disprove negative thoughts.</i></p>
<p><b>Releasing Emotions</b> Healthy emotional release can include any activity that provides an outlet for your feelings.</p>	<p><i>E.g.: Going for a long walk.</i></p>
<p><b>Practicing Self-Love</b> Showing compassion to oneself through activities that comfort, relax, or invigorate you. Exercising self-compassion and -kindness through nurturing, healing activities.</p>	<p><i>E.g.: Taking a long, hot bath.</i></p>

Coping Skill	Examples
<p><b>Distracting</b></p> <p>Positive distraction involves engaging in any healthy activity that takes your mind off negative and difficult experiences.</p>	<p><i>E.g.: Reading an interesting book or magazine.</i></p>
<p><b>Tapping Into Your Best Self</b></p> <p>Tapping into your best self is about implementing your core character strengths or acting positively in accordance with your personal values.</p>	<p><i>E.g.: Helping out in the local community.</i></p>
<p><b>Grounding</b></p> <p>Centering yourself in the present, or grounding, is focusing your mind on what you experience in the moment, calming you and giving you perspective.</p>	<p><i>E.g.: Meditation or yoga.</i></p>

## References

- Skinner, E. A., & Zimmer-Gembeck, M. J. (2007). The development of coping. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 58, 119-144.