

# Coping Skills

<b>DISTRACTION</b>	Conversation, listen to talk radio, read, do puzzles, TV, computer games, jigsaws, solve a problem, make a list, learn something new, cleaning & tidying, gardening, arts & crafts.	<b>Pros</b> Gives your heart & mind a break. Great for short term relief.	<b>Cons</b> Can't do it for too long Doesn't resolve any underlying issues. Meds can make it harder to concentrate.
<b>GROUNDING</b>	Use body & senses: smell fragrances, slowly taste food, notice the colors around you. Walk on the grass barefoot, squeeze clay or mud, do yoga, meditate, exercise.	<b>Pros</b> Helps slow or stop 'dissociation' (feeling numb, floaty or disconnected). Reduces physicality of anxiety.	<b>Cons</b> Sometimes it's better to stay a bit dissociated (that's how your mind protects you).
<b>EMOTIONAL RELEASE</b>	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 & dance crazy!	<b>Pros</b> Great for anger and fear. Releases the pressure of overwhelming emotion.	<b>Cons</b> Hard to do in every situation. You have to be selective with how and where you do this.
<b>SELF LOVE</b>	Massage hands with a 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.	<b>Pros</b> Become your own best friend, your own support worker. Great for guilt or shame.	<b>Cons</b> Sometimes can feel really hard to do, or feel superficial, even though it's not.
<b>THOUGHT CHALLENGE</b>	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?	<b>Pros</b> Can help to shift long-term, negative thinking habits. Trying to be more logical can help reduce extreme emotion.	<b>Cons</b> The more emotional you feel, the harder this is to do. In particular, feelings of shame can make this very hard.
<b>ACCESS YOUR HIGHER SELF</b>	Help someone else, smile at a stranger (see how many smiles you get back), pray, volunteer, do randomly kind things for others, pat dogs at the local park, join a cause.	<b>Pros</b> Reminds us that everyone has value and that purpose can be found in small as well as large things.	<b>Cons</b> Don't get stuck trying to save everyone else and forget about you!