

# Coping Strategies: 7-Day Challenge

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The coping strategies challenge is intended to be an easy introduction to coping strategies. It is an easy way to help teach strategies for managing emotions in the form of a monthly challenge.

In this activity, youth will get a list of coping strategies and a 7-day calendar. For each day, they will be practicing a new strategy, writing it down, and rating how effective it was for them.

## Materials

Each youth should be provided:

- A printed copy of the Coping Strategies List
- A printed copy of the Coping Strategies Evaluation Sheet
- Pen or pencil

Some strategies require additional items, such as reading inspirational quotes,

## Process

There are several options for how to choose the daily strategies:

### *Option 1: Youth Free Choice*

Give youth 10 minutes each day. They will choose a strategy completely on their own from the list and practice that strategy for a given 10 minutes. The only challenging part with this option is that not all strategies may easily be done in a dorm, and some may require materials. You may need to let youth know which strategies they can complete on their own by highlighting them before passing out the calendar.

### *Option 2: Youth Vote*

Choose two or three strategies for youth to vote on together for the day. Whichever strategy has the greatest number of votes will be the winner. Give 10 minutes to try that strategy as a whole group. This can be an effective strategy because it still gives youth some choice in what strategies they are practicing, but gives Coaches more control.

### *Option 3: Coaches Choice*

You can choose which strategies ahead of time will be done for each day of the challenge. This will give you a high level of control over what students will be doing and will give you extra time to prepare with materials, as needed.

## Before You Begin

Provide each participant with a copy of the list of coping strategies and the coping strategy evaluation sheet.

### *Points of Discussion:*

- Coping strategies are the activities we do to help us manage feelings of stress in the moment. Youth and adults need healthy coping strategies to help them deal with tough emotions, setbacks, and just everyday ups and downs. Some examples of healthy coping strategies include listening to music, coloring, and deep breathing. By engaging in these activities, we can learn to regulate their own emotions over time instead of acting out in more negative ways when we are upset. It's extremely important to

practice these strategies when we are calm, so that we can actually use them when we are upset.

- Every person has their own coping strategies that work best for them. One person might need to take a walk or move when they are feeling frustrated, while someone else does better when they are reading or coloring. We're all unique individuals, so it makes sense we have different strategies that work for us.
- You have to practice new strategies when you are calm in order to use them effectively when you're upset. Again, it's all about finding what works best for YOU and practicing until it's second nature. That way, when you are feeling angry, worried, sad, or any other strong emotion, you'll be able to use your coping strategies to get yourself back on track.
- Remember to be open-minded about trying new strategies. Not every strategy will work well for you, and that's okay! What's important is that you give it a try and notice how it makes you feel. You might be surprised at the strategies you end up liking the most!

This brings us to our Coping Strategies Challenge! For 7 days you will:

- Try a new coping strategy! Some activities might need more time than others.
- Respond and reflect about that coping strategy.
- Check off your coping strategy on your calendar.

# Coping Strategies Evaluation

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Day 1</i>	
Coping strategy:	
My thoughts and feelings about this strategy:	

<i>Day 2</i>	
Coping strategy:	
My thoughts and feelings about this strategy:	

<i>Day 3</i>	
Coping strategy:	
My thoughts and feelings about this strategy:	

<i>Day 4</i>	
Coping strategy:	
My thoughts and feelings about this strategy:	

<i>Day 5</i>	
Coping strategy:	
My thoughts and feelings about this strategy:	

<i>Day 6</i>	
Coping strategy:	
My thoughts and feelings about this strategy:	

<i>Day 7</i>	
Coping strategy:	
My thoughts and feelings about this strategy:	

# Coping Strategies List

<input type="checkbox"/>	Take deep 10 breaths	<input type="checkbox"/>	Think of something funny	<input type="checkbox"/>	Take a quick walk	<input type="checkbox"/>	Practice yoga
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stand up & stretch	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listen to music	<input type="checkbox"/>	Take a time out	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slowly count to ten
<input type="checkbox"/>	Use positive self-talk	<input type="checkbox"/>	Say something kind to yourself	<input type="checkbox"/>	Talk to a friend	<input type="checkbox"/>	Talk to an adult
<input type="checkbox"/>	Close your eyes & relax	<input type="checkbox"/>	Say "I can do this"	<input type="checkbox"/>	Visualize your favorite place	<input type="checkbox"/>	Think of something happy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Think of a pet you love	<input type="checkbox"/>	Think about someone you love	<input type="checkbox"/>	Get enough sleep	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eat a healthy snack
<input type="checkbox"/>	Read a good book	<input type="checkbox"/>	Set a goal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jog in place	<input type="checkbox"/>	Write in a journal
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hum your favorite song	<input type="checkbox"/>	Doodle on paper	<input type="checkbox"/>	Draw a picture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clean something
<input type="checkbox"/>	Meditate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use a stress tool (fidget)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Write a letter
<input type="checkbox"/>	Look at pictures	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a gratitude list	<input type="checkbox"/>	List your positive qualities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do something kind
<input type="checkbox"/>	Give someone a hug	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rip paper into pieces	<input type="checkbox"/>	Write a list	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keep a positive attitude
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write a positive note	<input type="checkbox"/>	Write a story	<input type="checkbox"/>	Read a joke	<input type="checkbox"/>	Write a poem
<input type="checkbox"/>	Drink cold water	<input type="checkbox"/>	Draw cartoons	<input type="checkbox"/>	Write a thank you note	<input type="checkbox"/>	Count to 100
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a list for the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Read inspirational quotes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Compliment yourself	<input type="checkbox"/>	Visualize a stop sign
<input type="checkbox"/>	Laugh	<input type="checkbox"/>	Smile in the mirror	<input type="checkbox"/>	Smile at others	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do schoolwork
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hyper-focus on an object	<input type="checkbox"/>	Notice 5 things you can see	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paint with watercolors	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plan a fun trip
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify your emotions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Write down your thoughts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify a positive thought	<input type="checkbox"/>	List 10 positive things about you
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ask yourself, "What do I need right now?"	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tell someone you are thankful for them	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a list of choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ask for help
<input type="checkbox"/>	Organize something	<input type="checkbox"/>	Play a card game	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ask for a break	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sit and relax all your muscles
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do wall push-ups	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slowly spin in a circle	<input type="checkbox"/>	Be mindful & focused on senses	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a list of what you can control