

7 KEY COPING SKILLS

MY "GO TO"
COPING SKILLS

DISTRACTION

HEALTHY
puzzles, cleaning, crafts
computer, TV, Netflix,
reading, art, blogs,
Instagram, letter writing,
cooking, hobbies, plays

UNHEALTHY
over/under eating,
gaming addictions, other
addictions, risky
behavior, sleeping too
much, substance abuse

PROS
Gives heart & mind a break,
Short term relief, Great to
get through a crisis,
Easy & familiar

CONS
Cannot do for too long,
Does NOT resolve
underlying issues. Meds can
make it hard to focus

EMOTIONAL RELEASE

HEALTHY
Exercise, scream, run,
shower, dance, belly
laugh, sing loudly, pop
balloons, pillow punch,
bike ride, cry, jump rope

UNHEALTHY
self-harm, manic
behavior, risky behavior,
public nuisance,
inappropriate time or
location

PROS
Releases stress & strong
emotion, great for anger
management, helps with
fear, guilt, shame

CONS
Hard to do in public, may
feel unnatural or odd, too
lazy or worn out to make
effort

GROUNDING

HEALTHY
Yoga, hiking, smells, nature,
biking, journals, meditate, 5
senses, walk barefoot on grass,
sounds, slowly chew food, hold
ice cube in hand, hugs,
mindfulness

UNHEALTHY
excessive exercise,
unhealthy food habits,
illegal drugs, triggers, zoned
out, over/under sleeping,
obsession/addiction

PROS
Reduces physicality of
stress/anxiety, feel
belonging, reduce
numbness or apathy, feel
peace, connection

CONS
Takes time/effort, your mind
tries to stay disassociated
to avoid real issue, hard to
let go & feel or 'not' feel

REALITY CHECK

HEALTHY
Thought challenge: is it
reality or worry? Do
thoughts sound rational?
Time mngt, organization,
prioritize

UNHEALTHY
Over worry what 'may'
happen, can't live in present.
Irrational, focus on 'rumor'
than truth, expect to put in
no effort and still get results,
freak out

PROS
Helps shift long term
negative thinking habits,
logic balances emotion,
solve own problems, realize
UR okay, focus on what
matters most

CONS
Can be hard if overly
emotional, difficult if feel
shame, no more group pity
award, may not seem
logical at moment, hard
to face reality

ACCESS HIGHER SELF/POWER

HEALTHY
Belief in something greater that
yourself, positive affirmations,
prayer, faith, meditation,
journals, connections, worship,
listening, feeling, spirit, forgive
self/others

UNHEALTHY
Obsession, leave all to
chance/grace and make no
effort, crime in name of
religion, judge self or others
unrealistically, frozen with
shame, overtaken by guilt

PROS
Great for guilt, shame,
grief, build connection,
gives hope, purpose, value,
ownership, mind/body
connection

CONS
Hard to do in public,
feeling unworthy makes it
difficult to accept love, may
think it's easier to stay
angry or judgmental

SERVE SELF & OTHERS

HEALTHY
Smile, open doors, safe
driving, physical labor, gifts,
phone calls, food,
humanitarian, cleaning,
notes, volunteering,
relaxation, time-out

UNHEALTHY
Obsess with others, forget
self, self-esteem from others
acceptance, overly focussed
on 'self', think you 'deserve'
this & neglect others/duties

PROS
Helps get mind off
problems, realize you have
value and can contribute,
realize others values,
social, friendship, calm
energy

CONS
May feel superficial, hard
if fear rejection, hard to
always be the giver, takes
time & energy, planning
ahead

SOCIAL CONNECTION

HEALTHY
Talking, playing games,
being active, team building,
build relationships, dating,
classes, competition, family
dinners, intellectual
discussions

UNHEALTHY
Lower values for
acceptance, focus on social
forget other responsibilities,
text as main communication,
online obsessions, no face
interaction

PROS
Feel support, not alone,
someone understands, build
trust, security, power in
numbers, energy increases,
something to look
forward to

CONS
Can be hard if shy or insecure,
trust issues, plan ahead, effort,
fear rejection, lack resources or
opportunity, feel superficial