

Types of Coping Mechanisms

- Understanding our body's mechanisms can help us notice when subtle stressors have escaped our attention
 - Do you see something you enjoy doing/tend to do a lot? Interact with this map to read about negative coping mechanisms, and identify the ones you might be engaging in. When do you usually engage in these activities?
 - Try noticing when you are engaging in distractions, or when you are naturally inclined to practice coping mechanisms, as these might indicate the presence of stressors/dissonance.
 - **Proactive Coping** vs **Avoidance Coping**
- This is also a good 'idea pool' when looking to create a cumulative, positive and hopefully preventive effect on stress.

Distractions/Diversions

- Write, draw, paint, photography, read;
- Play an instrument, sing, dance, act;
- Take a shower or a bath;
- Garden;
- Take a walk, or go for a drive;
- Watch television or a movie;
- Watch videos on YouTube;
- Play a game;
- Go shopping;
- Clean or organize your environment;
- Take a break or vacation.

Limit-setting

- Drop some involvement;
- Prioritize important tasks;
- Use assertive communication;
- Enforce your boundaries
- Schedule time for yourself.

Spiritual

- Pray or meditate;
- Enjoy nature;
- Get involved in a worthy cause.

Cognitive

- Make a gratitude list;
- Brainstorm solutions (the enemy of anxiety);
- Lower your expectations of the situation;
- Keep an inspirational quote with you;
- Be flexible;
- Write a list of goals;
- Take a class;
- Act opposite of negative feelings;
- Write a list of pros and cons for decisions;
- Reward or pamper yourself when successful;
- Write a list of strengths;
- Accept a challenge with a positive attitude.

Social/Interpersonal

- Talk to someone you trust;
- Set boundaries and say "no";
- Write a note to someone you care about;
- Be assertive; Use humor;
- Spend time with friends and/or family;
- Serve someone in need;
- Care for or play with a pet;
- Role-play challenging situations with others;
- Encourage others.

Physical

- Get enough sleep;
- Eat healthy foods;
- Get into a good routine;
- Eat a little chocolate;
- Limit caffeine;
- Practice deep/slow breathing. ***

Tension Releasers

- Exercise or play sports;
- Engage in catharsis (yelling in the bathroom, punching a punching bag);
- Cry;
- Laugh.