

Coping Skills Activity Guide Grade 6-12



Know Your Neuro

Coping Skills Quiz

It is important to know what coping skills work best for you, especially while your brain is growing and developing. Take the quiz below to determine which coping skills are the best fit for you. Then, practice these skills to grow long networks of neurons in your brain for positive coping behaviors.

Centering

- Do you like to sit and think of nothing?
- Do you like to use deep breathing to calm down?
- Do you use your imagination to visualize yourself doing things?
- Do you like to listen to calming music when upset?
- Do you use positive self-talk when you are angry or anxious?

Channeling

- Do you like to exercise when you are upset or angry?
- Do you like to distract your thoughts by working on a project?
- Does doodling, drawing, sculpting, or painting help you calm down?
- Do you prefer to distract yourself when bored?
- Do you turn on the TV to stop thinking negative thoughts?

Reflecting

- Do you need to think about something a long time before calming down?
- Do you need time alone with your thoughts when you are upset?
- Do you like to talk to family or friends when you need to vent?
- Do you write in a diary or journal to clear your mind?
- Do you write out lists of positive affirmations to replace negative self-talk?

Structure

- Do you like to stick to a schedule?
- Do you use lists to help you stay on track?
- Do you like to practice or rehearse what you are going to say to others?
- Do you like to get massages, get your nails done, or soak in a tub to relax?
- Do you regularly eat well and get enough sleep?

Activities

H.A.L.T.S.

Share Pair Activity #1

In pairs, ask your partner the following questions:

- What negative feelings are the most difficult to cope with?
- Where in your body do you feel the sensations from these emotions?
- What information are these emotions trying to communicate?
- What needs or wants does your body and mind have when you feel these feelings and sensations?
- What are your favorite coping skills?

Group Activity #2

Ask students to share 1-2 of their favorite coping skills from their list and explain why they choose them. Ask:

- Which coping skills are active vs. avoidant skills, meaning either they help you solve issues or escape from them? (not all avoidant skills are bad)
- Does anything on your list have negative consequences such as substance use or technology overuse?
- What coping behaviors could you try instead? Why or why not?

Grounding Activity #3

Guide students through a calming activity designed to focus the five senses. Take a deep breathe before each step. Ask how they feel after the activity.

- 1) Silently name 5 things you can see
Close your eyes if you are comfortable.
- 2) Silently name 4 things you can hear
- 3) Silently name 3 things you can feel or touch
- 4) Silently name 2 things you can smell
- 5) Silently name 1 thing you can taste