

MENTAL HEALTH

INTRODUCTION TO SELF-HELP COPING SKILLS

Self-help skills are actions used to help us manage our feelings and reactions to stressful situations, events, and challenging conditions. Effective self-help skills can improve our mental and emotional well-being.



TYPES OF SELF-HELP COPING SKILLS

1) Active Coping



You understand what is happening and do something to reduce the effects of the stressful event. This form of self-help is the healthiest.

Examples:

- Breathing exercises or grounding techniques
- Counting down from 10 to 0 at a slow pace
- Physical activity

2) Avoidance Coping



You focus your attention on another activity to postpone, ignore, or avoid the situation or problem. These skills can be useful for short-term self-help but are not recommended for long-term use.

Examples:

- Distancing yourself from the problem
- Listening to your favorite music
- Thinking activities, such as doing a puzzle or crosswords

3) Negative Coping (Inadequate)



You react to the stressful event in a way that is harmful to your health or the health of others. This coping mechanism is not recommended and can be counterproductive.

Examples:

- Self-harming behavior (e.g., cutting oneself)
- Substance use
- Unhealthy eating
- Social isolation
- Aggressive behavior

This information is based on the following resources: [Children's Hospital Colorado](#), [UCLA](#), & [GoodTherapy](#).

For more information on self-help coping strategies, visit our Unaccompanied Children Resource Center: ucresourcecenter.org.

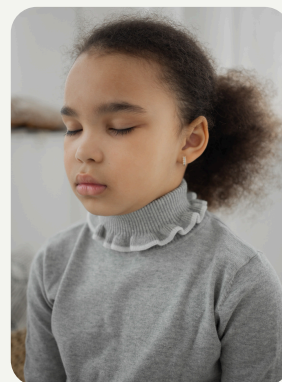
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TRY THE FOLLOWING SELF-HELP SKILLS

Everyone is different, and some techniques may work for you while others may not. We recommend trying various techniques and choosing the ones that work best for you.



1. Doing breathing exercises
2. Using positive self-affirmations
3. Doing grounding exercises
4. Eating something you like, such as a piece of candy or something flavorful
5. Talking to someone you trust
6. Going for a walk
7. Painting or drawing something you like or anything at all
8. Learning something new
9. Writing something, for example, describing how you feel
10. Reading something you like
11. Using the progressive muscle relaxation technique
12. Using the body scan technique
13. Doing meditation exercises
14. Playing something you like
15. Exercising or trying a new sport



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