

Positive Coping Mechanisms

COPING MECHANISMS ARE ANY CONSCIOUS OR NONCONSCIOUS ADJUSTMENT OR ADAPTATION SOMEONE TAKES TO DECREASE PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS (E.G., TENSION AND ANXIETY) IN ANY TYPE OF STRESSFUL SITUATION.

*EVERYONE RESPONDS DIFFERENTLY - CERTAIN POSITIVE COPING MECHANISMS WILL WORK BETTER THAN OTHERS & THEIR EFFECTIVENESS MAY CHANGE OVER TIME. TRY DIFFERENT ONES TO SEE WHICH WORK BEST FOR YOU.

Using Humor - Pointing out any amusing aspects of the problem, or "positive reframing," can help deal with small failures and stressors.

Physical Recreation - Regular exercise is a good way to handle situational stress. Aerobic and weight-training are both helpful exercise forms.

Adjusting Expectations - Anticipating various outcomes to scenarios in life may assist in preparing for stress associated with any change or event.

Seeking Support - Asking for help, or finding emotional support from trusted people can be an effective way of maintaining emotional health during a stressful period.

Problem-Solving - Especially useful at work, this instrumental coping mechanism aims to locate the source of the problem and find appropriate solutions.

Relaxation - Engaging in relaxing activities, or practicing calming techniques, can help manage stress and improve overall coping. Yoga, meditation, and progressive muscle relaxation are especially helpful.



Learn more at: seattleanxiety.com/coping-mechanisms

Maladaptive Coping Mechanisms

NOT ALL COPING MECHANISMS ARE POSITIVE. MALADAPTIVE (NEGATIVE) COPING MECHANISMS MAY FEEL GOOD IN THE SHORT-TERM, BUT THEY ARE ONLY TEMPORARY DISTRACTIONS. OVER TIME, THESE STRATEGIES CAN WEAR SOMEONE DOWN AND OFTEN MAKE THEIR STRESS WORSE

Denial

Self-Blame

Excessive Venting

Drug/Alcohol Use

Avoiding Others

Staying on Guard

Avoiding Trauma Reminders

Anger/Violence

Risky/Dangerous Behavior

Working Too Much



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Self-Help Techniques

WHEN ENCOUNTERING SIGNIFICANT STRESS DUE TO POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE LIFE CHANGES, THERE ARE SEVERAL TYPES OF STRESS-REDUCING ACTIVITIES THAT PEOPLE CAN DO TO HELP COPE IN A HEALTHY MANNER.

Getting enough, good quality, sleep.

Taking vacations away from home and work.

Eating a well-balanced diet.

Engaging in pleasurable or fun activities every day.

Exercising on a regular basis.

Practicing relaxation exercises (yoga, prayer, meditation or progressive muscle relaxation.)

Taking brief rest periods during the day to relax.

Avoiding the use of caffeine and alcohol.

