

Healthy Coping Skills

Coping skills help manage intense emotions and thoughts to bring a sense of calm and safety when faced with a challenging or upsetting situation. Coping skills can be **unhealthy** or **healthy**.

Unhealthy coping skills can bring relief from intense emotions, but that relief will often be temporary and bring negative or unwanted consequences that can increase symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Healthy coping skills not only bring relief, but also help process and manage intense emotions in a productive way that can reduce the frequency and intensity of symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Coping skills can be physical, relational, spiritual, and sensory activities. In fact, since each of these areas are often affected by intense emotions and thoughts, it can be helpful to use multiple coping skills that engage each one.

Physical Activities

- Go for a walk/run
- Exercise
- Practice deep breathing & relaxation strategies
- Do a fun physical activity (i.e. go to the batting cage, play golf, shoot basketball, play pickleball, etc.)

Spiritual Activities

- Meditation/Prayer
- Journaling
- Attending worship services or small group gatherings
- Listen to a podcast or read a book that encourages spiritual growth
- SNAP: Stop, Notice, Ask, Pivot

Relational Activities

- Talk to an encouraging friend
- Serve someone in need
- Do an activity with other people
- Join a club or social group

Sensory Activities

- Listen to music that encourages, strengthens, or calms
- Smell calming scents
- Use a weighted blanket
- Play with a fidget toy

If symptoms of anxiety or depression become excessive, difficult to control, or interfere with everyday activities, please seek professional counseling and consult with your primary doctor.