

TRAUMA COPING SKILLS

Coping skills are things we can do to help us better manage trauma symptoms.

They can help calm our minds and bodies and develop inner strength to overcome past trauma.

Health habits and self-care

- Practice self-compassion
- Get 7-9 hours of sleep each night
- Move regularly
- Make a self-care box
- Practice daily hygiene
- Drink plenty of water and eat regular, balanced meals
- Reduce your caffeine consumption
- Enjoy time outside
- Monitor or reduce your drug and alcohol use



Relaxation skills

- Practice deep belly breathing with long out breaths
- Use a relaxation app
- Tense and relax your muscles
- Visualize a peaceful place
- Self-massage neck or shoulders
- Take a nap
- Stretch or practice yoga



Grounding skills

Practice mindfulness: using the senses you have available to you

- Look: Name 5 things you can see
- Feel: Name 4 things you can touch
- Listen: Name 3 things you can hear
- Smell: Name 2 things you can smell
- Taste: Name 1 thing you like to taste



Shifting your mindset and thoughts

- Identify your trauma symptoms
- Identify your triggers for distressing emotions
- Notice and challenge negative or unhelpful thoughts
- Encourage and coach yourself through difficult moments
- Think of 3 things you're grateful for each day



Emotional and physical release

- Engage in physical activity
- Do push-ups, wall sits or planks
- Squeeze an ice pack
- Yell into a pillow, let yourself cry
- Dance, laugh, run or use a punching bag



Mindful isolation and distraction

- Remove yourself from triggering interactions or places
- Enjoy creative outlets like writing, art, music, building or hobbies
- Watch TV or a movie, read a book
- Color, work on puzzles or do a word search
- Play with a pet



Developing resilience

- Set and work toward goals
- Focus on your strengths
- Practice flexibility
- Practice gratitude



Ask for help or support

- Talk with supportive friends, family or mentor
- Talk with a free and confidential advocate counselor at the Office of Victim Assistance (OVA)
- Connect with a trauma support group
- Talk with your doctor or a psychiatrist if you think medication may be helpful



**Modified from Mental Health Center Kids.*