

SELF-CARE VS. COPING SKILLS

Self-care can be defined as any healthy, deliberate activity, intended to nourish your mental, emotional, and/or physical wellbeing. Coping skills are activities or behaviors we have learned, or may do naturally, utilized in the moment to help manage stressful situations or overwhelming emotions. Regularly utilizing healthy coping skills is an integral part of a self-care routine. While thinking about self-care routines and coping skills you would like to use or develop, the most important thing to consider is what works best for YOU!

STRESS EFFECTS DIFFERENT PARTS OF YOUR BODY

Stress can be defined as the feeling of being overwhelmed or unable to cope with mental and emotional pressure. It triggers the body's fight-or-flight response and can have physical and mental consequences. Stress can affect different parts of your body - all in different ways - including your hormones, central nervous and endocrine systems, respiratory and cardiovascular systems, digestive system, muscular system, and immune system.

EVERYONE EXPERIENCES STRESS

It's important to know that everyone experiences stress, and we all have different ways to navigate stressful situations. Below are examples of actions you can take the next time you are stressed as well as how to implement some of these into routine actions that will help improve your wellbeing.

• EXAMPLES OF SELF-CARE

- Regular movement - some form of exercise (can be as simple as walking).
- Eating nutritious foods and balanced meals.
- Routine journaling to start or end your day.
- Partaking in hobbies that help you stay calm, relaxed, and fulfilled.
- Having time carved out of your day to meditate or have mindful moments.
- Keeping scheduled therapy or other appointments.

• EXAMPLES OF HEALTHY COPING SKILLS

- Taking a deep breath and counting to ten before responding to a stressful situation.
- Practicing exercise to reduce stress or negative thoughts.
- Journaling when you begin to feel uncomfortable, overwhelmed or have a lot on your mind.
- Using distractions to keep your mind busy elsewhere (reading, craft projects, cooking, etc.).
- Having mindful moments or meditating when you are feeling overwhelmed or uneasy.
- Reaching out to a friend, family member, or therapist for support.

• APPLICATIONS TO TRY

Headspace and the Calm App are two great tools to add to your self-care or coping skills tool belt. Headspace offers meditation and mindfulness tools helping to create habits to support mental health. Calm has a vast audio library has something for just about everyone – including kids. Not only are there ways to help you improve your sleep but Calm also can help to manage your stress or anxiety, learn to meditate, practice mindfulness, help to improve sleep, or invest in your personal growth. Both services offer a free to demo if you would like to check out the experience before investing in a plan.

LOOKING FOR MORE SELF-CARE OR HEALTHY COPING SKILLS?

Try looking up more information on:

- Breathing exercises, you can try to implement into your day or stressful situations.
- Body scans and different types of meditation or mindfulness.
- Brown noise and other ASMR noises to help promote relaxation.
- Self-care or healthy coping skill ideas