

Coping Alternatives

Here are some more suggestions to deal with your emotions and stress, rather than turning to unhelpful behaviours

- Use the ideas below, and your own ideas, to make a coping bank.
- Write in your journal
- Listen to your favorite music
- Watch a sunset
- Color in a coloring book
- Play your favorite instrument
- Tell one person how you feel
- Teach a child to play a game
- Pop or stomp on bubble-wrap
- Have a water balloon fight
- Paint a picture
- Go to the pet store
- Take a long hot bath
- Go berry picking
- Hug someone
- Take a long drive
- Pack up some clothes for charity
- Go to a concert
- Take a leisurely walk
- Rent your favorite movie
- Take a trip to the toy store
- Go to a movie by yourself
- Call an old friend
- Doodle or paint
- Build with blocks. Build a tower and knock it down
- Build with Legos
- Spend time with your pet
- Wash your car with a friend
- Call a helpline
- Pick flowers
- Paint a room in your house
- Read a book
- Take a vacation
- Take a nap
- Count loose change
- Throw nerf balls, koosh balls or bean-bags at a wall (available at most toy stores)
- Remind Yourself "I will be ok" or "This feeling won't last forever"
- Take a deep breath, count to 10
- Go to a favourite "safe" location (beach, park, woods, playground, etc.)
- Think of advice you'd give someone else... and take it!
- Say something good about yourself
- Use Self Affirmation tapes and books... and make your own affirmations (use notebooks, index cards, tapes, post-it notes, journal)
- Meditate, use Relaxation

- Punch a pillow
- Do gardening or housecleaning
- Play your favorite game as a child
- Spend time with a sibling
- Stay in touch with others through contact - don't isolate yourself

Grounding Methods

Ideas for when you feel out of control, are having a flashback and/or need grounding...

- Remind yourself "I'm going to be ok."
- Plant your feet firmly on the ground
- Count up 1 to 10 then back 10 to 1
- Say out loud things you see and smell
- Touch the wall, the floor and objects close to you
- Call someone on the phone
- Walk around and watch your own feet - listen to the sound
- Listen to yourself breathe - Do deep breathing
- Listen to music and count the beats
- Don't be afraid to ask for help
- Hug someone safe
- Hold someone's hand (someone safe)
- Tear up paper, throw ice, chew ice chips
- Visualize the memory as an object and put it "away" (for example, the memory is a blue rubber ball and you put it in a toybox)
- Focus on details... leaves on trees, blades of grass, fibers in carpet
- Hold a stuffed animal
- Fight the voices - change the negatives to positives
- Play an instrument
- Gently wash your face, hands or hair
- Do gardening, shovel snow or mow the lawn
- Color in a coloring book
- Rock in a rocking chair
- Touch a familiar object that you carry with you (keys, a necklace) or listen to your watch ticking
- Hold and pet your cat or dog
- Make a list of things to do or shopping list
- Write down who and where you are
- Pray, talk yourself down or yell
- Say what you feel out loud, even if you have to yell or cry!
- Change your environment... walk out of the room, touch something different, change the sounds around you (put on music, turn on the tv, etc.), smell something different (perfume, flowers, food, grass, etc.)
- Visualize a stop sign
- Dance to music
- Say out loud "I am here right now"