

80 (or so) Skills For Coping - *We All Gotta Cope With Stuff*

Ask for Help (reach out to someone you trust)

Inspire Yourself (create something positive - like a poem or a bench or a new friend)

Leave a Bad Scene (when things go wrong, get out immediately)

Persist (never, never, never, never, never give up)

Honesty (secrets and lying are at the core of many many problems & honesty heals them)

Cry (let yourself cry . . . crying is often the bravest thing to do . . . it will not last forever)

Choose Self-Respect (choose whatever will make you like your best self tomorrow)

Take Good Care of Your Body (healthy eating, exercise outdoors, plenty of sleep, etc.)

List Your Options (you always have options)

Create Meaning (remind yourself what you are living for: your friends, your children, love, truth, justice, God?)

Do the Best You Can with What You've Got (make the most of the available opportunities)

Set a Boundary (say no to protect yourself)

Compassion (listen to yourself with respect and care)

When in Doubt Do What's Hardest First (the most difficult path is often the right one)

Talk Yourself Through It (self-talk helps in difficult times)

Imagine (create a mental picture that helps you to feel different - remember a safe place and go there)

Notice the Choice Point (in slow motion, notice the exact moment when you made a critical poor choice)

Pace Yourself (if overwhelmed, go slower. if stagnant, go faster)

Stay Safe (do whatever you need to do to put your safety above all)

Seek Understanding, Not Blame (listen to your behavior; blaming prevents growing)

If One Way Doesn't Work, Try Another (as if in a maze, turn a corner and try a new path)

Link Trauma and Substance Abuse (recognized substances as an attempt to self-medicate)

Alone is Better Than a Bad Relationship (but you've got to be kind to yourself)

Create a New Story (you are the author of your life: be the hero who overcomes adversity)

Avoid Avoidable Suffering (prevent bad situations in advance)

Ask Others (ask others if your beliefs are accurate)

Get Organized (you'll feel more in control with 'to do' lists and a neat & clean living space)

Watch for Danger Signs (face a problem before it becomes huge. notice *red flags*)

Healing Above All (focus on what matters)

Try Something, Anything (a 'good enough' plan today is better than a perfect plan tomorrow)

Discovery (find out whether your assumptions are true, rather than staying "in your head")

Attend Treatment (A.A., self-help, therapy, medications, groups - anything that gets you healthy)

Create a Buffer (put something between yourself and danger - time & distance)

Say What You Really Think (you'll feel closer to others - but only do this with safe people)

Listen to Your Needs (no more neglect - really hear what you need)

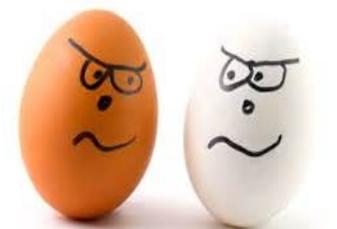
Move Toward Your Opposite (for example: if you are too dependent, try being more independent)

Replay the Scene (review a negative event: what can you do differently next time?)

Notice the Cost (what is the price of anger, poor decisions or substance abuse in your life?)

Structure Your Day (a productive schedule keeps you on track and connected to the world)

Set an Action Plan (be specific, set a deadline, and let others know about it)



Protect Yourself (put up a shield against destructive people, bad environments, and substances)

Soothing Talk (talk to yourself very gently - as if to a friend or a small child)

Think of the Consequences (really see the impact for tomorrow, next week, next year)



Trust the Process (just keep moving forward; the only way out is through)

Work the Material (the more you practice and participate, the quicker the healing)

Integrate the Split Self (accept all sides of yourself; they are there for a reason)

Expect Growth to Feel Uncomfortable (if it feels awkward or difficult, you're probably doing it right)

Replace Destructive Activities (exercise or eat just a bit of candy instead of getting high or drunk)

Pretend You Like Yourself (see how different the day *feels* - fake it till you make it)

Focus on Now (do what you can to make today better: don't get overwhelmed by the past or future)

Praise Yourself (notice what you did right: this is a powerful tool for growth)

Observe Repeating Patterns (notice your patterns of behavior that are done over and over)

Self-Nurture (do something that you enjoy - take a walk or see a movie, etc.)

Practice Delay (if you can't totally prevent a self-destructive act, at least delay it as long as possible)

Let Go of Destructive Relationships & Destructive Thoughts (if it can't be fixed, detach)

Take Responsibility (take an active, not passive approach)

Set a Deadline (make it happen by setting a date)

Make a Commitment (promise yourself to do what's right to help your recovery)

Rethink (think in a way that helps you feel better)

Detach from Emotional Pain (distract, walk away, change the channel)

Learn from Experience (seek wisdom that can help you next time)

Solve the Problem (don't take it personally when things go wrong - just seek a solution)

Use Kinder Language (make our language less harsh and our thinking less harsh)

Examine the Evidence (evaluate both sides of the story)

Plan it Out (take the time to think ahead - it's the opposite of impulsiveness)

Identify the Belief (examples: *shoulds*, deprivation, reasoning)

Reward Yourself (find a healthy way to celebrate anything you do right)

Create New Tapes (literally, take a recorder and record a new way of thinking to play back)

Find Rules to Live By (remember a phrase that works for you like 'stay real,' 'ignore lies' or 'one day at a time.')

Setbacks are Not Failures (a setback is just a setback, nothing more)

Tolerate the Feeling (no feeling is final: just get through it safely)

Actions First, and Feelings Will Follow (don't wait until you feel motivated: just start now)

Create Positive Addictions (examples: sports, hobbies, close friends, gardening, exercise, A.A.)

When in Doubt, Don't (if you suspect danger, trust your instincts)

Notice the Source (before you accept criticism or advice, notice who's telling it to you)

Make a Decision (if you're stuck, choose the best solution now, don't wait)

Do the Right Thing (do what you know will help you, even if you don't feel like it)

Prioritize Healing (make healing your most urgent and important goal, above all else)

Reach for Community Resources (lean on them - they can be a source of great support)

Get Others to Support Your Growth (tell people what you need)

Make the Familiar Strange (take a fresh look at things you think you already know)

Make the Strange Familiar (become comfortable with aspects of life that have been foreign to you)

Notice What You Can Control (list the parts of your life you *can* and *do* influence - e.g. job, friends, etc.)



(adapted with deep appreciation & respect from "Seeking Safety" by Lisa M. Najavits, 2002, The Guilford Press)