

thrive

living resilient and renewed.



Mental Health Grace Alliance

"The Grace Alliance"

Mental Health Grace Alliance is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization providing mental health support and recovery programs, support groups, training, and collaborative partnerships to impact mental health care.

Mental Health Grace Alliance

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Anyone can recover.
Everyone has a role.

Various statistics reveal that 1 in 4 adults and 1 in 5 adolescents in a given year deal with a diagnosable mental illness. In the Church, the numbers are the same. Imagine about a quarter of our population and their families being affected by the impact of mental illness.

However, there is hope ... through a whole health approach and professional care anyone can recover. It doesn't have to be lonely ... everyone has a role. Learn to Thrive.

What is Thrive?

Thrive is designed to help anyone have great mental health recovery, which means having mental health strength, recovery, and resilience from any mental health difficulty or disorder. This workbook will help to deal with:

1. *Depression, anxiety, and panic.*
2. *Racing and negative thoughts ... suicidal.*
3. *Mood stability (irritability, highs and lows).*
4. *Addictive habits.*
5. *Sleep and eating problems.*
6. *Relationships and isolation.*
7. *Disappointing church life and Christian faith.*
8. *Feeling life is hopeless and purposeless.*

Thrive will guide you through the process to have better:

1. ***Stress Reduction*** – *Developing effective stress-management.*
2. ***Healthy Thoughts*** – *Overcome racing and negative thoughts.*
3. ***Relief of Suffering*** – *Reduce the pain from depression, anxiety, addiction, and other negative challenges.*
4. ***Healthy Living*** – *New balanced lifestyle, easy and affordable.*
5. ***Community Life*** – *Create safe and authentic relationships.*
6. ***Life Purpose*** – *Regain hope and a sense of personal purpose.*
7. ***Love of God*** – *Faith with a sense of true rest, love, and grace.*
8. ***Life Renewal*** – *Resilient strength and a confident outlook.*

Mental illness recovery and hope?

Mental illness is ...

“Genetic or circumstantial factors causing a disruption in the brain affecting a person’s thoughts, moods, behaviors, and relationships. The severity of symptoms requires professional treatment, whole health (holistic) care, and life-giving community support.”

Mental illness affects the brain, which in turn affects your / their whole life ... physically, mentally, spiritually, and relationally. As you learn about mental illness and how it affects someone’s life, it is good to remember the balance between having a mental health disorder vs. the diagnosis becoming a personal full identity.

Friend ... you are not the illness or disorder. Mental illness is part of the journey and God is not intimidated by it! You are a child of God, fully cherished, loved, and accepted by God ... God longs to reveal His compassion and hope at every step of this journey.

There is hope!

Anyone can begin the journey for greater mental illness recovery. It is not impossible to see life renewed. Many people with debilitating mental illness have found incredible recovery and live full and meaningful lives.

Mental health or mental illness recovery is a strength-based and whole-health (holistic) process of change that focuses on rebuilding a sense of self-worth and purpose, self-management for symptom relief, life giving community support, and a pure and simple rest in Christ.

Mental illness recovery is mental health resilience and renewal of life.

By learning about mental illness, self-management, support, and other professional interventions you become more resilient with a high quality of life. Over time mental illness recovery has a reduction of symptoms, even a reduction of frequency and intensity of episodes or cycles.

A whole health wellness and management approach.

Treatments that focus solely on a single aspect of one's being can bring only limited relief at best. A whole-health approach to care and treatment relieves physical and psychological distress (suffering) with medication, psychotherapy/counseling, healthy environment, and community support, while revealing love and limitless grace that is available through a personal relationship with Jesus.

Faith and Patience for a journey of hope not a quick fix.

Mental health resilience and renewal is not about achieving specific steps, it is a process that takes time. The Thrive workbook will give you specific topics that will lead toward your mental health resilience and life renewal ... recovery. You are not trying to achieve a new level of perfection, rather a new journey of hope.

Think about this “recovery” in months and years, rather than days and weeks. This is not about getting mental illness fixed; you are rebuilding a new resilient strength and life renewal. Thus, this is not trying to achieve an expectation; there is grace for this, go as slow as, “one day at a time.”

There are no easy answers, and there is no cookie-cutter set of action points that will be effective in every situation. Sometimes it may feel as if you are feeling your way in the dark, but this guide will reaffirm your steps are headed in the right direction. The best advice we can give you is to let grace be your guide as you walk towards greater mental health resiliency and life renewal ... mental illness recovery.

What is a whole health approach?

The Physical.

We exist in a **physical BODY** so that we can interact with the material world around us. Our bodies have been specifically designed by God to take in information from the environment and relay it to our brains. We see, hear, taste, smell and touch the world around us. The processing of sensory information by our brains produces thoughts, feelings and emotions, which then result in an outward behavioral display.

The Mind.

There is also an immaterial, non-physical aspect to our being, what some would call our **MIND**. Our thoughts, feelings and emotions are more than simple neurochemical changes and electrical discharges in our brain. While the functioning of our brain is integral to the existence of our mind, that alone is not sufficient to explain it. Similarly, to imagine our mind as completely separate and unrelated to the physical is not correct either. Mind and body are intimately connected and each affects the other.

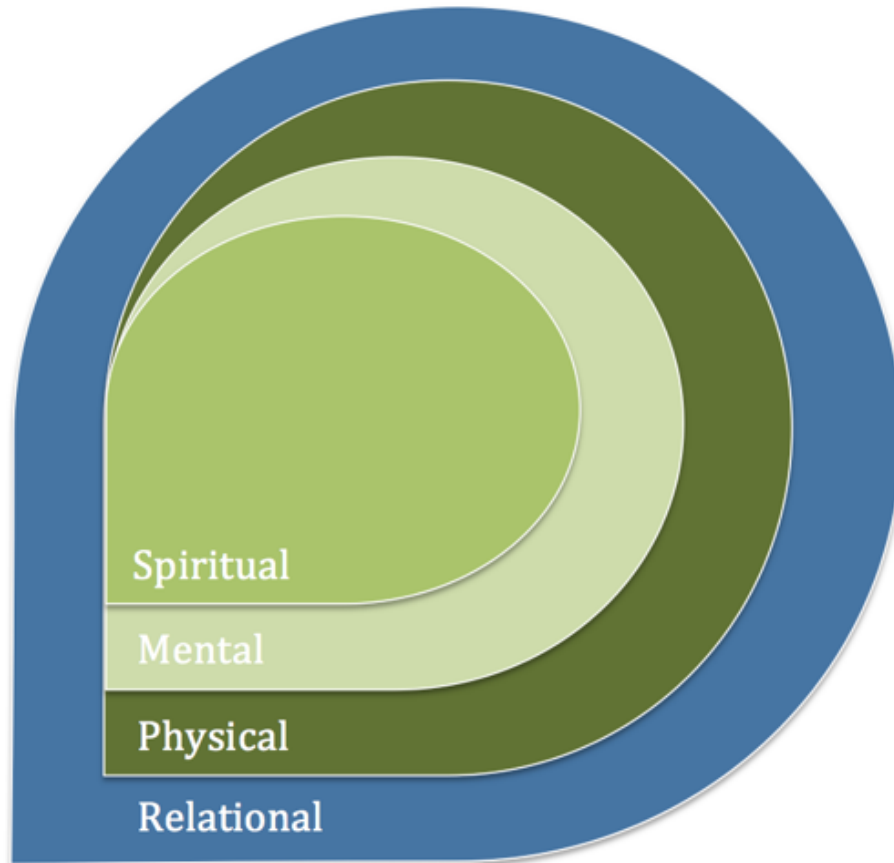
The Spirit.

The scriptures teach us that we also have a third and even more amazing level of being, a **SPIRIT**. God created us as a three part being, much like Himself. In our inmost being, we are spirit, the very breath of God placed into a shell of dust. As a being with a spirit, it is possible for us to be in an intimate, spiritual union with our Creator who is also spirit.

The Relational.

Lastly, all of our lives are encompassed in various frameworks of **RELATIONSHIPS** from family to friends. As God lives in the full expression as Father, Son, Spirit with life-giving fellowship His children (i.e., church), we are to live out our fellowship with God with one another that lend to life and restoration (Romans 15:1-3; Galatians 6:2). These healthy relationships will strengthen our body, mind, and spirit and help to create a thriving environment.

The **figure** below shows the **BODY, MIND, SPIRIT, and RELATIONSHIP** in relation to one another, each separate but they are intertwined and interacting with one another.



The brain, via the body’s sensory systems, is in contact with the earthly environment and relationships (outside) and the mind within. The middle circle listed “mental” is the mind, which is connected to the body through the functions of the brain and nervous system but is also in contact with our immaterial spirit (the inner most circle). The body senses and reacts to the external environment and the mind uses that information to perceive, understand and interpret our surroundings. The mind also forms our thoughts and plans our actions. The spirit, when connected to God, works to transform the mind into the very image of Christ, which results in an ever increasing display of godly behaviors through the body.

Mental illness recovery is
the mastery of grace.

God can do miracles of what seems impossible, however God's most beautiful miracles are done over the long haul. Typically, mental illness recovery is not a complete cure, but over time there can be a significant reduction in distressing symptoms. Mental illness recovery is the art of resilience and the mastery of grace ... a life renewed.

Mental illness recovery is about relieving suffering, revealing Christ, and restoring lives.

How to use Thrive workbook.

1

+ CHOOSE YOUR TOPIC

Look through the different sections and choose one or two topics to work on for a particular week. Keep managing them weekly.

**We suggest to first start on the physical needs.*

2

+ RENEW YOUR PERSPECTIVE

Read through the purpose, goals, and facts.

This will give you many important neuroscience facts and other information to understand “the why” behind the topic.

3

+ SELF AWARENESS & TOOLS

Each section will provide various questions to evaluate your journey on each topic. Then, there are various exercises and tools to improve your mental health. Continue to practice the tool through each day and week. The more you apply the tools, the more it becomes a new nature of health.

4

+ GRACE TO ADAPT

Some changes will be immediate, however others will take time. Making changes is uncomfortable and can often feel discouraging. This is to be expected. Give yourself grace to do what you can and to see progress over time, not immediately.

Remember to apply the tools as they can work and do not stay stuck if a tool is not working. Adapt it to work for you.

Living Balanced

"Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."

Psalm 90:12

Purpose

The ups and downs of mental health difficulties can be very chaotic. A daily structure and routine helps one gain stability and thrive. The purpose of the present session is to help you develop a daily schedule and routine that will give you purpose and control.

Goals

1. Evaluate your present daily activities and responsibilities.
2. Develop a purposeful daily structure and routine.

Facts to Consider

- The goal of a routine and schedule is to **establish habits** that allow you greater control over what you're doing and greater freedom to focus on what's important in your life.
- Within a recovery process **routines do not bring boredom** or monotony. Rather, they bring peace and a sense of safety.
- Routines and schedules **reduce stress and anxiety** in our lives. They help us to live more relaxed lives. We don't have to be constantly making decisions nor guessing about the future.
- When starting to implement a routine or schedule into your recovery do not overburden yourself with too much to begin with. **Start off slow**. During the first month or so of recovery, just tend to what's absolutely necessary.

Self-Evaluation: Living Balanced

1. Describe a usual day from the time you get up until you go to bed?

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2. During which part of the day do you have the most energy and motivation?

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Self-Evaluation: Living Balanced

3. *Are there any tasks or activities that you have to complete every day? List them.*

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4. *What is the most enjoyable part of your day? Least enjoyable part?*

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Establishing Daily Structure and Routine

1. Develop a schedule for a single day this week (from waking-up till you go to bed). Be sure to include the responsibilities you listed above and at least one enjoyable activity. Follow the schedule and evaluate the experience of having a highly structured day. Adjust the schedule to what you prefer or what builds your confidence and helps you succeed. Keep it simple. Take your time and don't feel like you have to rush and get everything in place at once.
2. Taking what you learned from the single day schedule, develop a schedule for the week (Monday-Friday). Involve your supportive friends and loved ones in developing the schedule. Follow the schedule and evaluate the experience of having a highly structured week. As you recover and gain more stability, you will be able to do more and will move beyond a highly structured routine or schedule. Adjust accordingly as you become more independent and successful at navigating daily life.

Establishing Daily Structure and Routine

List out 5 Activities you want to include in your daily and weekly routine. Then, add them into your planner.

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Activity ideas

- Sleep
- Meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks)
- Shower/bathing
- Exercise
- Hobbies
- Responsibilities / Work / School
- Personal leisure activities
- Social events

Establishing Daily Structure and Routine

When life is too difficult

Do not worry about the length of time (5-10 min is okay). Focus on being creative with the energy level you have at the moment. It will increase over time. List some ideas and then add them to your planner.

Morning:

What is one refreshing thing you can do:

What is one productive thing you can do:

Who can help you with these activities if needed:

Afternoon:

What is one refreshing thing you can do:

What is one productive thing you can do:

Who can help you with these activities if needed:

Evening:

What is one refreshing thing you can do:

What is one productive thing you can do:

Who can help you with these activities if needed:

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
5am							
6am							
7am							
8am							
9am							
10am							
11am							
12pm							
1pm							
2pm							
3pm							
4pm							
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7pm							
8pm							
9pm							
10pm							
11pm							
12am							

Renewing Your Mind

"... be transformed by the renewing of your mind."
Romans 12:2

Purpose

Unhealthy or negative thinking can cause us to become emotionally disconnected and overly critical toward others and ourselves. Learning healthy thinking skills can bring peace and help stabilize moods. The purpose of this session is to help you learn skills and techniques to take control of your thoughts and minimize negative thinking.

Goals

1. Assess your present level of unhealthy or negative thinking.
2. Determine the common thinking traps you fall into.
3. Develop skills for renewing your thoughts and minimizing negative thinking.

Facts to Consider

- Our **emotions and behaviors** are the result of what we think or believe about ourselves, other people, and the world (Thinking = Feeling). These thoughts shape how we interpret and evaluate what happens to us, influence how we feel about it, and provide a guide to how we should respond.
- Unfortunately, sometimes our interpretations, evaluations, underlying beliefs and thoughts contain **distortions, errors and biases**. The more a person's thinking is characterized by these distortions, the more likely they are to experience negative emotions and engage in maladaptive behaviors.
- Healthy thinking does NOT mean **positive thinking!** No one can look at things positively all the time. Sometimes bad things happen, like getting fired at work, having an argument with a friend or losing someone you love. It's normal and healthy to feel upset and have negative thoughts when these things happen.
- Unhealthy thinking often **develops in childhood** as the result of unfortunate and difficult life experiences (e.g., trauma) and/or being taught maladaptive thinking by parents and friends.
- Healthy thinking means looking at the entire situation, the positive and the negative, and then coming to a conclusion. In other words, healthy thinking means looking at life and the world in a **balanced way**, not through rose-colored glasses.
- We are more prone to unhealthy thinking when we are under stress, because when we are under pressure we are more likely to take thinking "shortcuts" which result in less accurate and more extreme interpretations and reactions.

Self-Evaluation: Renewing Your Mind

1. *How do you think your thoughts affect your feelings and emotions?*

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2. *Do you struggle with or have negative thoughts about yourself or others? If so, how often?*

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Self-Evaluation: Renewing Your Mind

3. *How are you managing these negative thoughts?*

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4. *Do you know of other people who seem to not struggle with negative thoughts and what is the quality of their lives?*

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Renewing Your Thoughts

Try one of the following simple distractions to break a cycle of negative thinking.

- a. **Supportive, Positive Friends** – When you’re stuck in a negative spiral, a group of supportive, positive friends can help you put things into perspective and won’t feed your negative thinking.
- b. **Choose to Serve Others** – This takes the focus away from you and quiets negative thinking.
- c. **Make a List** – Making lists of all the things you are grateful for (e.g., family, friends, things you've achieved so far) and the things you like about yourself (e.g., looks, personality) will help break a focus on negative thinking.

While unhealthy thinking patterns are often deeply ingrained, they are changeable. On the Common Thinking Traps page, there is a list of maladaptive thought patterns (sometimes called “thinking traps”). Look over the list and identify the thinking traps you commonly find yourself falling into. These are the patterns of thinking that you want to be aware of and focus on changing.

Which top three “traps” do you tend to fall into the most?

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Why do you think you tend to always do this?

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Common Thinking Traps

All-or-None Thinking:

Looking at things in absolute, black-and-white categories, instead of on a continuum. People who think in black-and-white terms see a small mistake as a total failure.

“I really thought I would feel better by now. This medication isn’t working! I might as well stop taking it.”

Overgeneralization:

Thinking that a negative situation is part of a cycle of bad things that happen. People who over generalize often use words like “always” or “never.”

A co-worker made a joking but rude comment to you in front of other employees. As a result you conclude that all people are mean, superficial, and no one likes you.

Mental Filter:

Focusing only on the negative part(s) of a situation and ignoring anything positive or good.

Edmond was angry and doubted his work because he noticed that one student got up and left during his talk.

Fortune Telling:

Predicting that things will turn out badly without any evidence.

“I’ve been studying hard but I know that I’m going to fail my test tomorrow.”

Emotional Reasoning:

Assuming that one’s negative feelings necessarily reflect the way things really are.

Daniela’s apartment is untidy and she is overwhelmed by the prospect of cleaning. She feels that it’s hopeless to even try and clean.

Labeling (Name-Calling):

Saying or thinking only negative things about yourself or others.

Crystal just cheated on her diet. She thinks to herself, “I’m a fat, lazy pig!”

Should Statements:

Telling yourself that you or others “should” or “must” act in a certain way.

“I should be able to handle this without help from others!”

Mind Reading:

Concluding what others are thinking without any evidence or making any effort to check it out.

John’s friend Cindy did not say hello to him when she passed him on the street. He decides that she doesn’t like him anymore.

Personalization and Blaming:

Believing that everything others do or say is your fault or a direct, personal reaction to you in some way.

Ralph’s son is doing poorly in school. He feels that he must be a bad father. “It’s all my fault that he isn’t studying.”

Renewing Your Thoughts

***Note:** Take your time and do not rush this process. If this becomes uncomfortable, put this aside and have a healthy distraction by doing something relaxing. You can skip this section and return to it when you personally have more emotional energy.*

Or talk to your therapist about using this tool or your therapist's exercises or tools (they will have more advanced healthy thinking tools better suited for you). If working with a Thrive Mental Health Coach or other Mental Health Peer Coach they can help you with this exercise.

Restructuring maladaptive thoughts is a process that takes time, so be patient. The Renewing Thoughts worksheet outlines the process that you will follow each time you are having negative or upsetting thoughts. A description of the steps is listed below.

1

Recognize: When you feel upset, write down a brief description of the situation or problem that is bothering you.

2

Review: List out the thoughts (e.g. "I'm no good. No one really likes me."), associated feelings (e.g., sadness, anger) and physical symptoms (e.g., rapid heartbeat, sweating) you are having related to the situation or problem.

3

Realize: Looking over the Common Thinking Traps list, identify the traps you are presently falling into in relation to this situation.

Renewing Your Thoughts

4

Renew step 1: When you recognize that your thoughts are not accurate, challenge them in the following way:

- a. Examine the Evidence – Try to find evidence against your thoughts. Because we feel bad, we often believe that things are bad without checking the facts. One way to do this would be to conduct an experiment. For example, if the thought is “people hate me,” then you could call a close friend to discuss this and see it’s not true.
- b. Double Standard -- If your thoughts are self-critical ask yourself, “Would I say this to a close friend who had a similar problem? Am I being harder on myself than I am on other people?”

Renew step 2: Develop comforting thoughts in relation to the present situation in the following ways:

- a. What does God say? – What do you think God would say to you personally? What scriptures come to mind? Are your thoughts true from His perspective? Do your thoughts bring God’s comfort or rather cause you to work more for God’s acceptance? These new thoughts from truth should result in coming into His rest, not more works.
- b. What would you say to a child? – If a child came to you with the same situation or problem what would you say to them about the way they are thinking/feeling? How would you comfort and encourage them?
- c. Use Relaxation techniques and Responses – When using this process using the muscle relaxation and breathing responses to calm your brain and body and regain clarity of mind.

5

Rethink: Now that you have identified your thinking traps and challenged your initial wrong thoughts, write down your new healthy thoughts, feelings, and physical symptoms related to the situation or problem.

Renewing Your Thoughts

1

RECOGNIZE: *What happened? What was the trigger?*

2

REVIEW: *Thoughts, feelings, and physical symptoms*

1. *Thoughts* (What am I thinking?):
2. *Feelings* (How do I feel?):
3. *Physical* (What am I experiencing?)

3

REALIZE: *Thinking traps*

4

RENEW: *Challenge your thinking*

1. Examine the evidence
2. Double standard

Develop comforting thoughts

3. What would God say?
4. What would you say to a child?

5

RETHINK: *New thoughts, feelings, and physical symptoms*

1. *New Thoughts* (What am I thinking now?):
2. *New Feelings* (How do I feel now?):
3. *New Physical* (What am I experiencing now?)

Renewing Your Thoughts Practice

1

RECOGNIZE: *What happened? What was the trigger?*

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2

REVIEW: *Emotions, thoughts, and physical sensations?*

What emotions did you have? (fear, anger, worry, sadness, offense / hurt, etc.)

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What thoughts did you have about yourself?

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What physical sensations did you have? (Sweating, heart / breathing racing, warm, etc.)

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Renewing Your Thoughts Practice

3

REALIZE: *What are the three main thinking traps that match your thoughts and emotions?*

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4

RENEW 1: *Challenge your thinking?*

Examine the evidence. Would a trusted friend judge or think of you according to those thoughts? Why?

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Double standard. Would you judge or think about someone else according to those thoughts? Why?

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Renewing Your Thoughts Practice



RENEW 2: *Developing comforting thoughts.*

What do you think God would say to comfort you in regards to your negative thoughts?

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If there is a young child you know well and they were struggling with the exact same thoughts concerning themselves, what would you do and what you say to them?

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Note: *Your expression to a child is the same Father heart of God that He has toward you. Thus, be transformed by the renewing of your mind is about knowing God's perfect and loving will toward you. You are always safe in Him.*

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will."

Romans 12:2

Renewing Your Thoughts Practice



RETHINK: *A new experience?*

What are your new thoughts about yourself now?

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What are your new emotions you are having now?

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What are the new physical sensations now?

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Managing Stressors

"LORD, my strength and my fortress, my refuge in time of distress ..."
Jeremiah 16:19

Purpose

Coping strategies are ways we deal with problems and stress. Some strategies are positive and healing, while others are negative and adversely affect the person trying to recover. The purpose of the present study is to help you identify and adopt positive coping strategies during times of stress.

Goals

1. Evaluate the ways in which you presently cope with problems and stress.
2. Learn healthy strategies for coping.
3. Develop a plan for how you will positively cope with future difficulties.

Facts to Consider

- Coping mechanisms are **learned patterns** of behavior used to cope. We learn from others as well as from our own experiences how to deal with stress.
- **Positive coping choices**, when done in a balanced way, diminish stress and enhance the quality of one's life.
- When individuals struggling with mental health difficulties take **direct positive action** to cope with their disorder, they put themselves in a position of power. Active positive coping is empowering and takes away feelings of helplessness.
- One can **actively confront** a problem by gathering information, cultivating skills or changing a situation in order to adapt. A more **passive coping** strategy is to regulate one's emotional response to a challenge by suppressing negative thinking, distracting one's thoughts, or learning to accept a negative situation.
- **Negative coping choices** will reduce your feelings of stress at the time you are experiencing the stressful event(s). However, with time, they usually create their own problems and are best avoided.

Self-Evaluation: Managing Stressors

1. *When you notice difficult symptoms and negative thoughts, what do you do to stay actively in control? What works or doesn't work for you?*

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2. *Have you ever done something to make yourself feel better that actually made your problems worse?*

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Self-Evaluation: Managing Stressors

3. *What is more important to you, fixing a “problem” or feeling better? How are they related?*

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4. *If you had better management strategies for coping with stress, how would your life be different on a day-to-day basis ... is there any specific thing you would do more in your life?*

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Positive Management and Strategies for Coping with Stress

1. *To develop effective coping skills it is first necessary to identify the most common stressors in your life that cause you problems. List below your three most common stressors*

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2. *Look at the **Coping Strategies sheet**. Circle the strategies you have used in the past to deal with problems and stress. Are your coping strategies mostly positive or negative? Are they mostly active or passive?*

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Coping Strategies

Positive Strategies

Active

- Ask a loved one to help you brainstorm and problem solve ways to relieve stress
- Do a small and simple project: cleaning, garden/plant, painting, build small model
- Set flexible and reasonable goals
- Routine relaxation techniques
- Make a list or journal different things you are thankful for and blessings in your life
- Develop a schedule and routine
- Routine exercise, bike ride, or walk
- Prayer that leads to comfort and hope

Passive

- Spend time with friends
- Get a massage
- Enjoy fresh air and being outdoors
- Watch a funny / light-hearted TV show or movie
- Take a shower or bath
- Play a game, puzzle
- Knitting, sewing
- Art, photography, music, reading, writing

Negative Strategies

Active

- Cutting / Self-harm
- Substance abuse
- Physical / verbal aggression
- Sexual misconduct
- Over spending
- Overeating

Passive

- Isolation
- Not eating
- Sleeping
- Avoidance
- Self-blame
- Denial

How Do You Cope?

On the associated **Personal Coping Strategies** sheet determine the coping strategy you used during the last stressful event in your life. Circle if the strategy was negative and/or passive try and think of an active positive strategy that you might use next time.

Stressful event or problem:

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Coping Strategy:

Positive or Negative (Circle one)

Active or Passive (Circle one)

Outcome:

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Healthy Alternative Coping Strategy:

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Repeat this exercise to identify other stressors you are currently dealing with. Use your journal or extra sheets of paper.

Personal Coping Strategies

Be prepared with different options for times of distress. Fill in this sheet or use the **Coping Strategies** sheet to brainstorm other ideas that you can refer to in difficult times.

a) People who provide comfort:

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b) Specific interests (e.g., sports, enjoyable reading, podcasts, etc.):

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c) Creative outlets (e.g., art – painting, photography, music, dance, writing):

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d) Humor / Joy (movies, videos):

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e) Hobbies:

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Personal Coping Strategies

f) Games (e.g., Sudoku, puzzles, word games):

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g) Physical (e.g., hot bath, exercise, walk):

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h) Outdoors (e.g., park, walk with a dog or a friend, drive):

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i) Small projects (e.g., gardening or yard, knitting, models):

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Managing Distressing Thoughts and Memories

Complete the Coping with **Distressing Thoughts and Memories sheet**. Review and use this during future difficulties.

***Note:** Take your time and do not rush this process. If this becomes uncomfortable, put this aside and have a healthy distraction by doing something relaxing. You can skip this section and return to it when you personally have more emotional energy.*

Or talk to your therapist about using this tool or your therapist's exercises or tools (they will have more advanced healthy thinking tools better suited for you). If working with a Thrive Mental Health Coach or other Mental Health Peer Coach they can help you with this exercise.



Relax: Use a breathing technique to bring physical calm and slow yourself down. In addition, re-orient yourself by going outside or into another setting, drink a glass of water, or even wash your face. What could you do?

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Validate: Acknowledge and validate the thought or memory and the emotion it triggers by acknowledging, not suppressing (fear, pain, hurt, sorrow, etc.). What are the emotions you tend to experience? Tell yourself it is okay to have these emotions.

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Managing Distressing Thoughts and Memories



Affirm Worth: Tell yourself that these are just thoughts / memories and not a reflection of any weakness. Affirm you are safe, God is for you and this has no control over you. What could you say?

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Release the Difficulty: Present it to God and allow Him to care for you (*Psalm 55:22*). You can imagine the thought or memory being on a piece of paper, and motion with your hands, as if handing it to God. What could you say or even do?

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Rest and Move On to Healthy Coping: Use your **Renewing Thoughts** sheet for more comfort. Try not to dwell on it any longer and engage in one of the coping techniques you listed. What are the top three coping tools you could use for distressing thoughts or memories?

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Grace Alliance Resources.

These topics and more are all found in our various workbooks including:

Family Grace Group Workbook (for spouses and families)

Living Grace Group Workbook (for peers with mental illness)

Redefine Grace Group Workbook (for students / high school & college_

For more information, blogs and events visit us on Facebook and our website:

www.MentalHealthGraceAlliance.org