

October Issue: Week Four

How can we thrive?

"Knowledge is of no value unless you put it into practice!" – Anton Chekhov

What have you learned about yourself this month? What is your go-to coping strategy? *Taking action? Blaming another person or denying the problem exists? Focusing on your breathing? Distracting yourself?* **See the results from October's lead-o-meter on page 3!**

Coping skills are the tools a person has to manage how they interact with their world. Like an athlete or a musician, the better they train or practice, the greater the chance they will perform to their full potential. **Good news: coping skills are teachable skills!** A person can be taught to cope effectively with their life challenges. Through mindful practice, your coping skills will strengthen, as will your mental health.

By strengthening our specific coping skills, we will see an improvement in our coping abilities and more positive health outcomes!

Monthly Breakdown

Week 1

The 'Where': Lead-o-meter

Week 2

The 'What': Self-Assessment Exercise

Week 3

The 'Why': Research, Science and Information

Week 4

The 'How': Building up your skill

Unhealthy Coping Skills to Avoid

Just because a strategy helps you endure emotional pain, it doesn't mean it's a healthy strategy. Some coping skills could create bigger problems in your life.

Here are some examples of unhealthy coping skills:

- **Drinking alcohol or using drugs:** Substances may temporarily numb your pain, but they won't resolve your issues and are likely to introduce new problems into your life.
- **Overeating:** Trying to 'stuff your feelings' with food can lead to an unhealthy relationship with food and weight issues.
- **Sleeping too much:** Sleeping offers a temporary escape from your problems. However, when you wake up, the problem will still be there.
- **Venting to others:** Talking about your problems so that you can gain support, develop a solution, or see

a problem in a different way can be healthy. However, studies show that repeatedly venting to people is more likely to keep you stuck in a place of pain.¹

- **Overspending:** Spending more than you can afford will only backfire in the end and cause more stress.
- **Avoiding things:** If you never resolve your financial issues, your avoidance coping strategies are only masking the problem.

Positive Coping Strategies

On the flip side, positive coping refers to coping styles or mechanisms that result in less stress, increased well-being, and effective handling of one's problems.

Oftentimes, positive coping involves changing one's perspective or reframing the situation as an opportunity instead of a problem. Positive coping generally requires a certain level of maturity and an ability to accept one's own faults without resorting to self-blame.

Through positive coping, we can come out of stressful and difficult situations with a greater ability to deal with stress, and an enhanced capacity for turning the negative into the positive.

Positive coping styles include:

- **Immediate problem-solving:** fixing the immediate cause of the stress
- **Solving the root cause:** fixing the underlying problem for good
- **Benefit-finding:** looking for the good amidst the bad
- **Spiritual growth:** turning the problem into an opportunity to grow spiritually or emotionally

Other positive coping strategies that can help manage stress include:

- **Humour:** pointing out the amusing aspects of the problem at hand, or 'positively reframing' (helpful for smaller failures)
- **Seeking support:** asking for help or finding emotional support from family or friends
- **Relaxation:** engaging in relaxing activities or practicing calming techniques
- **Physical recreation:** regular exercise, such as running or team sports
- **Adjusting expectations:** anticipating various outcomes for scenarios in life
- **Reframing your point of view:** Changing the story in your mind of how you are interpreting the stressful situation
- **Venting in moderation:** an outward expression of emotions, usually in the company of friends or family (too much venting is unhealthy)

Sources:

¹ Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behaviour (UCLA): [How Do You Cope?](#)



WATCH: 7 Coping Strategies Instead of Exploding

This 11-minute video has some great tips that will help improve your coping abilities!



For fun, try this activity: A-Z of Calming Strategies. Try picking a

word, looking up the coping strategies that align with each letter of your word, and then practicing those skills. Maybe try a different word in the following week!



Next month: *Know Your Triggers*

Thanks for joining us for the first month of ReCharge!

October Lead-O-Meter *Results*



View the full lead-o-meter response summary!

In a few words, what helps you cope best? Here's what you said...



How did you like the first month of ReCharge?

We welcome your feedback and suggestions.

Get in touch!



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