

24 Positive Coping Strategies for Stress

Physical and Lifestyle Strategies

(see chapters 4 and 5)

1. Abdominal breathing and relaxation
2. Low-stress diet
3. Regular exercise
4. Downtime
(including "mental health days")
5. Mini-breaks (5–10-minute periods to relax during the day)
6. Time management
(appropriate pacing)
7. Sleep hygiene (see chapter 16)
8. Choosing a nontoxic environment
9. Material security

Emotional Strategies

(see chapters 12, 13, and 14)

10. Social support and relatedness
11. Self-nurturing
12. Good communication
13. Assertiveness
14. Recreational activities ("playtime")
15. Emotional release
16. Sense of humor—ability to see things in perspective

Cognitive Strategies

(see chapters 8 and 9)

17. Constructive thinking—ability to counter negative thinking
18. Distraction—ability to distract yourself from negative preoccupations (see appendix 4)
19. Task-oriented (vs. reactive) approach to problems
20. Acceptance (ability to accept/cope with setbacks)
21. Tolerance for ambiguity—ability to see shades of gray

Philosophical/Spiritual Strategies

(see chapter 19)

22. Consistent goals or purposes to work toward
23. Positive philosophy of life
24. Religious/spiritual life and commitment