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Coping Skills—Part 2

As you direct your thoughts and actions towards healing, it can be helpful to identify which coping strategies you'd like to continue and which coping strategies you may want to adjust or move away from.



Each Saprea Support Group meeting begins with 'Group Leader A' reading the script while participants follow along. The script will be the same for every group meeting. **To find the script, visit supportgroups.saprea.org.** Below are the additional meeting materials for this course.



To watch the intro video for this lesson, scan the QR code or go to <https://vimeo.com/showcase/10293739>.

Group Activity

REFLECTING ON YOUR COPING STRATEGIES

An important step in healing from trauma is looking at the ways we cope with day-to-day challenges and asking ourselves if those coping strategies are more helpful or more harmful to our well-being in the long run. This activity provides you with more time to consider some of your current coping strategies by answering the questions presented in the video.

As you reflect on these questions, try to view your answers through a lens of compassion, curiosity, and non-judgment, reminding yourself that you are doing the best you can with the tools, experiences, and support you have. Remember that you are not judging or criticizing yourself for whatever coping strategies you've employed during times of distress. Rather, you are applying Acknowledgement by compassionately recognizing the coping strategies in your life that are beneficial to your healing as well as the coping strategies in your life that may no longer be needed (and are perhaps even creating further stress and disruption).

ACTIVITY STEPS

01

Write down a go-to habit or activity that you use during times when you feel pushed toward the edge or outside of your window of tolerance.

02 Next, take a few minutes to reflect on this habit or activity by answering the following questions:

- Does this cause me additional stress?
- Do I feel better after engaging in this activity?
- Does it help in the short-term but not in the long-term?
- Is it disruptive to my daily activities?
- Do I base decisions around being able to do this activity?
- Does it affect my relationships in a negative way?



Note: Some of your answers to these questions might be more mixed or neutral, and that's okay.

03 After answering these questions, review your responses as you consider the overall question: Is this a coping strategy that is more helpful or more harmful to my long-term healing? Or, put another way: Is this coping strategy helping me to progress in my healing or is it getting in the way?

04 Finally, if the coping strategy you just reviewed is one that you may want to adjust or replace, brainstorm some ideas of a coping strategy that may be more helpful to you in the long-term. If you can't think of anything right now, that's okay. The important thing is that you reflected on a current coping strategy with honesty and compassion. You'll have more opportunities in upcoming meetings to think about what tools and strategies you'd like to incorporate into your life.

05 If time allows, repeat these steps to reflect on another coping strategy that you're wondering about.

Grounding Exercise

SELF-KINDNESS MEDITATION

This exercise can help us not only ground to the present but offer ourselves warmth, comfort, and compassion.

Activity Steps

- 01 Place both hands over your heart and take a moment to feel the warmth of your touch.**
Notice your breathing as it is. There is no need to change or deepen it.
- 02 As you breathe in, imagine a sense of calm and gratitude flowing through your body and towards your heart.**
As you breathe out, imagine any tension or stress leaving your body. It may also be helpful to focus on the image of a breathing heart.
- 03 Next, envision a moment when you were with someone who made you feel loved and safe.**
This moment may be an actual memory with a loved one, trusted friend, neighbor, therapist, or mentor. You could also think of a moment spent with a beloved pet. Or, rather than drawing from a memory, you can envision a hypothetical scenario with an older, wiser version of yourself, or a well-known figure you admire and whose work has brought you inspiration and comfort.
- 04 Think about the feelings of acceptance, safety, and love you experience when focusing on that person.**
Take a moment to allow these feelings to spread throughout your body.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

If you are interested in learning more, we invite you to explore the following articles in the Online Healing Resources section of our website at saprea.org.

- **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ITS ROLE IN HEALING FROM CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**
- **SELF-COMPASSION**
- **CREATING INTENTIONAL BEHAVIORS**

NEXT TOPIC:

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PRACTICING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The essence of Acknowledgement is being honest with yourself about where you have been and where you are today, and doing so in a way that is nonjudgmental and compassionate.