

**Week 6: Handout A**  
**COPING STATEMENTS**

Using any of the following positive statements (or ones you create for yourself) can help you to cultivate attitudes of acceptance. You may find it helpful to repeat the same statement for one to two minutes when you begin to feel anxious. Deep breathing as you say each statement also helps to relieve anxiety.

- This feeling isn't comfortable or pleasant, but I can accept it.
- I can be anxious and still deal with this situation.
- This isn't an emergency – it's okay to think slowly about what I need to do.
- This isn't the worst thing that could happen.
- I deserve to feel okay right now.
- There's no need to push myself—small steps are good, too.
- I can take all the time I need to let go and relax.
- I can breathe and this will pass.
- Nothing serious is going to happen to me.
- These are just thoughts—not reality.
- I don't need these thoughts—I can think differently.
- I am okay just the way I am.
- I'm right here, right now, and I will be fine.
- Don't worry—be happy (lightness and humor can be used, too!)
- This, too, shall pass.

Create some of your own coping statements.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Week 6: Handout B</b> <b>COPING SKILLS LIST</b></p>
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Here is a list of several different coping skills people use when things become difficult. Feel free to look for new ideas and add to the list. Make it personal.

- Ask for help from friends, family, professionals
- Attend treatment
- Be accountable
- Be honest
- Be persistent
- Be gentle with yourself
- Breathe ... three deep-breaths, then return to normal breathing
- Change the "tapes" you play in your mind
- Choose self-respect
- Create a buffer
- Create a new story
- Create meaning
- Cry
- Discover
- Do the best you can with what you have
- Do the right thing
- Examine the evidence
- Expect growth to feel uncomfortable
- Fight the trigger
- Find rules to live by
- Focus on a hobby
- Focus on healing
- Focus on the here and now
- Follow your intuition (e.g. gut feeling)
- Get organized
- Go to a meeting
- Identify the belief
- Inspire yourself
- Leave a bad scene
- Let go of destructive relationships
- List your options
- Listen to your needs
- Make a commitment
- Make a decision

- Notice the cost
- Notice the source
- Notice what you can control
- Notice your choice moments
- Observe repeating patterns
- Pace yourself
- Practice a grounding exercise
- Practice being self-nurturing
- Practice compassion toward yourself and others
- Practice delay of response
- Practice soothing talk
- Praise yourself
- Pretend you like yourself
- Prioritize your healing
- Protect yourself
- Reach for community resources
- Recognize that the setback is not a failure
- Replace destructive activities
- Replay the scene
- Reward yourself
- Say what you really think
- Seek to understand, not blame
- Set a boundary
- Set an action plan
- Stay safe
- Structure your day
- Take care of your body
- Take responsibility
- Talk yourself through it
- Think of consequences
- Tolerate the feeling
- Trust the process
- Try other option
- Use kinder language
- Use your imagination
- Walk away
- When in doubt, do what's hardest

## **Week 6: Handout C**

### **MINDFUL LIVING**

From Davis, Eshelman and McKay: The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook (New Harbinger Press, 2000)

Much of our stress comes from thinking about the past or worrying about the future. When you live in the present moment and your attention is focused on what you are doing right now, there is no room for anything else to enter—including fears, desires, or anything that could be stressful. ...

Mindfulness meditation is a form of meditation that offers both deep relaxation and insight. It cultivates a way of being in a harmonious relationship with what is, whether that's nagging or obsessive thoughts, uncomfortable feelings, external stressors, or physical discomfort. Through fully opening to what is present in your internal experience and not resisting or pushing it away, a deep acceptance and ability to rest more fully in the present moment can be cultivated. In the beginning stages of mindfulness practice, present-moment awareness is usually cultivated by focusing on the breath. Beginning practices can also include focusing on sounds, feelings, or body sensations. ...

Whatever your focus of attention, a gentle, nonjudgmental, and embracing attitude should be used to encounter what arises ....The stories you tell yourself about what you notice and the reactions to what is creates your suffering or pain.... When you encounter stressors, catch yourself ...breathe, pause, and make new choices about how you will respond. Make choices that bring you healthier thinking, relaxation, insight, health, connection with others, and more love. (p. 44)

- 1) What are some thoughts that become stressors for you?
- 2) What helps you to interrupt or change those thoughts?

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Week 6: Handout D</b> <b>DEEP BREATHING EXERCISE</b></p>
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- 1) This exercise can be practiced in a variety of poses, either lying down on a blanket or rug with your knees bent and your feet about eight inches apart, or sitting in a chair with both feet on the floor and your spine straight.
- 2) Scan your body for tension...check your face, your neck, your shoulders, your belly, your gluts, your thighs, your calves, your ankle, your feet...relax as you check each part of your body.
- 3) Place one hand on your abdomen and one hand on your chest.
- 4) Inhale slowly and deeply through your nose into your abdomen to push out your hand as much as feels comfortable. Your chest should only move a little and only with your abdomen.
- 5) Once you are comfortable with step 4, smile slightly and inhale through your nose then exhale through your mouth, making a quiet, relaxing, whooshing sound like the wind as you blow gently out. Keep your mouth, tongue and jaw relaxed. Take long, slow, deep breaths that raise and lower your abdomen. Focus on the feeling and the sound of breath as you relax.
- 6) Continue deep breathing for about five or ten minutes at a time, once or twice a day. Then, if you like, gradually extend this period to twenty minutes.
- 7) At the end of each deep breathing session, take a moment to scan your body once again for tension.
- 8) When you are comfortable with this breathing exercise, it can be practiced any time of the day when you feel like it, focusing on moving your abdomen up and down, feeling the air moving in and out of your lungs, and feeling the muscle relaxation this deep breathing gives your body.
- 9) Practice deep breathing whenever you feel yourself getting tense.

Adapted from Davis, Eshelman, & McKay. The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (2000)