

# EFFECTIVE COPING STRATEGIES

*~ ways to deal with overwhelming emotions effectively ~*

## Distract

With **activities, contributing, or intensifying other sensations.**

Examples: Engage in exercise or hobbies.  
Do cleaning, walking, gardening, or play a game.  
Do volunteer work or a surprising, thoughtful thing for another.  
Compare yourself to those less fortunate than you.  
Push the situation away by leaving it for a while, mentally.  
Hold ice in your hand, squeeze a rubber ball very hard, or take a hot or cold shower.

## Self-Soothe

Using your **five senses: Sight, Sound, Smell, Taste, Touch.**

Examples: Look at nature around you – watch the stars, trees, clouds, etc.  
Listen to beautiful, soothing, or exciting music.  
Pay attention to the sounds of nature.  
Light a scented candle, or use your favorite perfume or lotions.  
Bake cookies or boil cinnamon.  
Make hot tea, or eat something sweet or spicy.  
Take a bath, have a massage, or soak your feet.  
Hug someone or pet your dog or cat.  
Sink into a really comfortable chair or sofa where you live.

## Improve the Moment

With **imagery, prayer, meaning, relaxation, encouragement, a brief vacation, or doing one thing in the moment.**

Examples: Imagine very relaxing scenes.  
Find or create some purpose, meaning, or value in the pain.  
Ask for strength to bear the pain in this moment.  
Massage your neck and scalp, your calves and feet.  
Encourage yourself – tell yourself “I will make it out of this!”  
or “I can stand it.”  
Take a blanket to the park and sit on it for a few hours.  
Focus your entire attention on physical sensations – walking,

eating, washing dishes, etc.