



Coping Skills Toolbox

Healthy ways to get through hard moments — and build resilience over time.

Coping skills are the things we do to manage stress and difficult emotions. Some bring quick relief in the moment; others build steadiness over the long run. There's no single “right” skill — the goal is to know several, so you have options when one isn't enough. Notice the difference between coping that genuinely helps and habits that soothe now but cost you later.

A menu to draw from

Calm the body

- Slow breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, a warm shower, gentle stretching.

Move

- A brisk walk, a run, dancing to one song, any movement that shifts your energy.

Distract and shift

- An engrossing show or game, a puzzle, a creative task, time in nature, music.

Connect

- Text a friend, call someone you trust, sit with a pet, join others even quietly.

Process and reflect

- Journaling, a thought record, naming the feeling, a few minutes of mindfulness.

Solve the problem

- Break it into one small step, list options, ask for help, set a boundary.

Worth noticing: relief that comes from avoiding, numbing, or overusing food, alcohol, or screens tends to make hard feelings stronger later. If those are your main tools, that's worth talking through with someone.

Build my toolbox

Write in the skills that actually work for you, so they're ready before you need them.

In-the-moment calmers

For when distress is high right now

Daily resilience habits

Small things that keep me steady

People & places I can turn to

My support network

Bring this worksheet to your next appointment.