

# Coping Strategies Challenge

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Coping Strategies Challenge

Coping strategies (or coping skills) are the activities we do to help us handle strong emotions, like feeling angry, frustrated, sad, or worried. Everyone goes through those emotions from time to time! It's completely normal. You might feel angry or frustrated when something doesn't go your way. You could feel sad when you miss a friend or family member. You might even feel worried when you have a big game or activity coming up. In order to manage those feelings, we use coping strategies.

You probably use many coping strategies already, whether you know it or not! Examples of healthy coping strategies might be listening to music, taking a quick walk, thinking positive thoughts, deep breathing, or coloring. These are activities that can help you bring your emotions back to a calmer and happier state.

It's extremely important to note that every person has their own coping strategies that work best for them. One person might need to take a walk or move when they are feeling frustrated, while someone else does better when they are reading or coloring. We're all unique individuals, so it makes sense we have different strategies that work for each of us.

Another important point is that you have to practice new strategies when you are calm in order to use them effectively when you're upset. Again, it's all about finding what works best for YOU and practicing it until it's second nature. That way, when you are feeling angry, worried, sad, or any other strong emotion, you'll be able to use your coping strategies and get yourself back on track.

This brings us to our Coping Strategies Challenge! For 30 days, we're going to be practicing a new strategy every single day. This will help us learn new coping strategies. Remember to be open-minded about trying new strategies. Not every strategy will work well for you, and that's okay! What's important is that you give it a try and notice how it makes you feel. You might be surprised at the strategies you end up loving the most!

Each day you will:

- Choose a new coping strategy from the list.
- Try the coping strategy! Some activities might need more time than others.
- Write your coping strategy on your calendar.
- Rate how effective that strategy was for you from 1-5 (with 1 being not at all effective and 5 being very effective).



## Coping Strategies Challenge

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Day 1 Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	Day 2 Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	Day 3 Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	Day 4 Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5
Day 6 Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	Day 7 Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	Day 8 Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	Day 9 Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5
Day 11 Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	Day 12 Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	Day 13 Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	Day 14 Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5
Day 16 Strategy: _____ Rating: _____	Day 17 Strategy: _____ Rating: _____	Day 18 Strategy: _____ Rating: _____	Day 19 Strategy: _____ Rating: _____

## Coping Strategies List

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

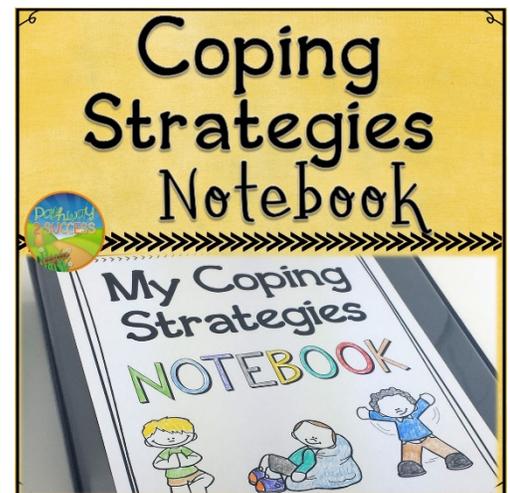
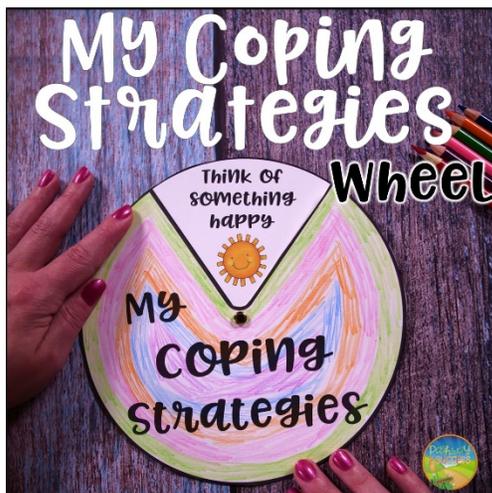
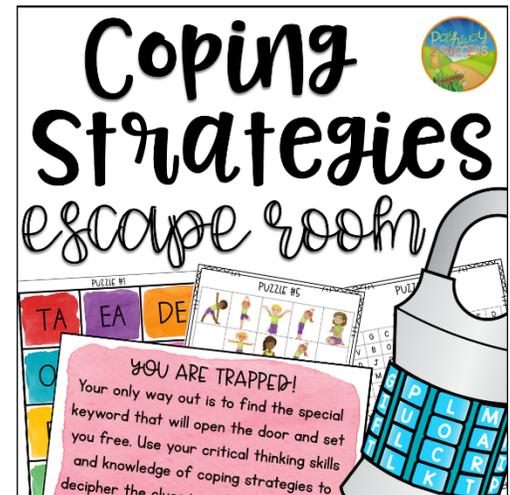
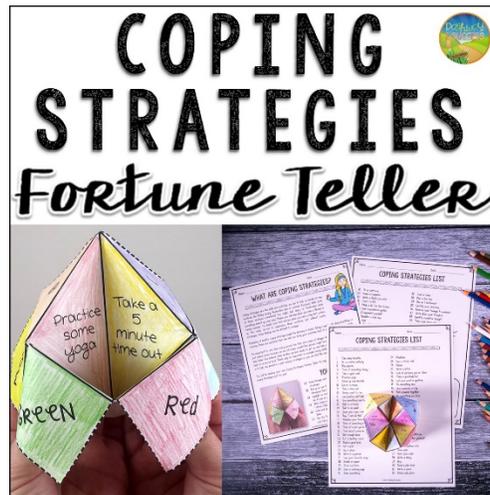
- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take deep breaths              | <input type="checkbox"/> Hum your favorite song        | <input type="checkbox"/> Write a positive note |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do a positive activity         | <input type="checkbox"/> Doodle on paper               | <input type="checkbox"/> Chew gum              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play sports                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Draw a picture                | <input type="checkbox"/> Paint your nails      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Think of something funny       | <input type="checkbox"/> Color a coloring page         | <input type="checkbox"/> Write a story         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a quick walk              | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean something               | <input type="checkbox"/> Blog                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Practice yoga                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Meditate                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Read a joke book      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stand up and stretch           | <input type="checkbox"/> Use a stress ball             | <input type="checkbox"/> Write a poem          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to music                | <input type="checkbox"/> Dance                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Drink cold water      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a time out                | <input type="checkbox"/> Write a letter                | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ actions         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slowly count to ten            | <input type="checkbox"/> Look at pictures you love     | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ magazine        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use positive self-talk         | <input type="checkbox"/> Make a gratitude list         | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ thank you r     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Say something kind to yourself | <input type="checkbox"/> List your positive qualities  | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ for the         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to a friend               | <input type="checkbox"/> Do something kind for someone | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ national qu     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to an adult               | <input type="checkbox"/> Give someone a hug            | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ yourself        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Close your eyes and relax      | <input type="checkbox"/> Put a puzzle together         | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ a stop sign     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Say, "I can do this!"          | <input type="checkbox"/> Do something you love         | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ sign            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visualize your favorite place  | <input type="checkbox"/> Build something               | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Think of something happy       | <input type="checkbox"/> Play with clay                | <input type="checkbox"/> Smile in the mirror   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Hug a stuffed animal          | <input type="checkbox"/> Smile at others       |



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## More Coping Strategies Activities:



# Coping Strategies Challenge

## Educator Guide

Coping strategies are the activities we do to help us manage feelings of stress in the moment. Kids and adults need healthy coping strategies to help them deal with tough emotions, setbacks, and just everyday ups and downs. Some examples of healthy coping strategies include listening to music, coloring, and deep breathing. By engaging in these activities, kids can learn to regulate their own emotions over time instead of acting out in more negative ways when they are upset. It's extremely important that kids and young adults practice these strategies when they are calm, so that they can actually use them when they are upset.

This coping strategies challenge is intended to be an easy introduction to coping strategies for kids and young adults. It is an easy way to help kids learn new strategies for managing their emotions in the form of a monthly challenge.

In this activity, students will get a list of 100 coping strategies and a 30-day calendar. For each day, they will be practicing a new strategy, writing it down, and rating how effective it was for them.

As an educator, you have several options for how to choose the daily strategies:

### OPTION 1: Student Free Choice

Give students 10 minutes each day. They will choose a strategy completely on their own from the list and practice that strategy for a given 10 minutes. The only challenging part with this option is that not all strategies may be easily done in a classroom, and some may require materials. You may need to let students know which strategies they can complete on their own by highlighting them before passing out the calendar.

### OPTION 2: Student Vote

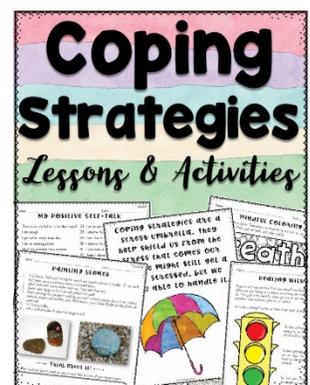
Choose two or three strategies for students to vote on together for the day. Whichever strategy has the greatest number of votes will be the winner. Give 10 minutes to try that strategy as a whole group. This can be an effective strategy because it still gives students some choice in what strategies they are practicing, but gives the educator more control.

### OPTION 3: Educator Choice

You can choose which strategies ahead of time will be done for each day of the challenge. This will give you a high level of control over what students will be doing and will give you extra time to prepare with materials, as needed.

Note that after practicing each coping strategy, it's important to give students time to reflect about how they feel. Students should rate each strategy from 1 to 5, with 1 being not very effective and 5 being very effective to help them feel calm again. It can be helpful to give class or group discussion on the strategies as well. Another option is to have students fill out their Coping Strategies Journal to help them reflect on the strategy and how it made them feel. This can help students identify which strategies will be best for them in the future.

If you need more structured lessons, consider using these [Coping Strategies Lessons and Activities](#) to teach alongside the Coping Strategies Challenge!



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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Another important point is that you have to practice new strategies when you are calm in order to use them effectively when you're upset. Again, it's all about finding what works best for YOU and practicing it until it's second nature. That way, when you are feeling angry, worried, sad, or any other strong emotion, you'll be able to use your coping strategies and get yourself back on track.

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Each day you will:

- Try a new coping strategy! Some activities might need more time than others.
- Respond and reflect about that coping strategy.
- Check off your coping strategy on your calendar.



# Coping Strategies Challenge

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Day 1</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 2</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 3</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 4</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 5</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5
<b>Day 6</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 7</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 8</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 9</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 10</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5
<b>Day 11</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 12</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 13</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 14</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 15</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5
<b>Day 16</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 17</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 18</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 19</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 20</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5
<b>Day 21</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 22</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 23</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 24</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 25</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5
<b>Day 26</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 27</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 28</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 29</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5	<b>Day 30</b> Strategy: _____ Rating: 1 2 3 4 5

# Coping Strategies List

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- Take deep breaths
- Do a positive activity
- Play sports
- Think of something funny
- Take a quick walk
- Practice yoga
- Stand up and stretch
- Listen to music
- Take a time out
- Slowly count to ten
- Use positive self-talk
- Say something kind to yourself
- Talk to a friend
- Talk to an adult
- Close your eyes and relax
- Say, "I can do this"
- Visualize your favorite place
- Think of something happy
- Think of a pet you love
- Think about someone you love
- Get enough sleep
- Eat a healthy snack
- Read a good book
- Set a goal
- Jog in place
- Write in a journal
- Hum your favorite song
- Doodle on paper
- Draw a picture
- Color a coloring page
- Clean something
- Meditate
- Use a stress ball
- Dance
- Write a letter
- Look at pictures you've taken
- Make a gratitude list
- List your positive qualities
- Do something kind
- Give someone a hug
- Put a puzzle together
- Do something you love
- Build something
- Play with clay
- Hug a stuffed animal
- Rip paper into pieces
- Play an instrument
- Watch a good movie
- Take pictures
- Garden
- Write a list
- Keep a positive attitude
- Schedule time for yourself
- Blow bubbles
- Write a positive note
- Chew gum
- Paint your nails
- Write a story
- Blog
- Read a joke book
- Write a poem
- Drink cold water
- Draw cartoons
- Read a magazine
- Write a thank you note
- Count to 100
- Make a list for the future
- Read inspirational quotes
- Compliment yourself
- Visualize a stop sign
- Laugh
- Smile in the mirror
- Smile at others
- Do schoolwork
- Look at animal pictures
- Hyperfocus on an object
- Notice 5 things you can see
- Paint with water colors
- Use a relaxation app
- Watch a funny video
- Drink some tea
- Cook or bake
- Plan a fun trip
- Use an I-statement
- Identify your emotions
- Express your feelings to someone
- Write down your thoughts
- Identify a positive thought
- Make your day's schedule
- List 10 positives about you
- Ask yourself, "What do I need right now?"
- Tell someone you are thankful for them
- Pet an animal
- Make a list of choices
- Ask an adult for help
- Organize something
- Play a card game
- Listen to nature sounds
- Sit and relax all your muscles
- Ask for a break
- Can you think of more?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# My Coping Strategies Journal

<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Coping strategy:</b>	
<b>Rating 1-5:</b>	
<b>My thoughts and feelings about this coping strategy:</b>	

<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Coping strategy:</b>	
<b>Rating 1-5:</b>	
<b>My thoughts and feelings about this coping strategy:</b>	

# About the Author



Kristina Scully has been a special educator for over 10 years. She has a bachelor's degree in special and elementary education from the University of Hartford, along with a master's degree in special education with a specialization in autism from the University of St. Joseph. She has worked extensively with kids and young adults with behavioral challenges, learning disabilities, autism, ADHD, anxiety, and other needs.

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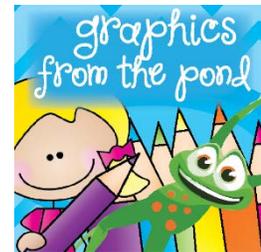
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