

Living our Values

Mental Health & Coping Strategies

Do Now Activity

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Coping strategies are things that we do to manage situations and emotions.

Imagine someone is experiencing **stress** whilst revising for an upcoming **exam**.

- Sort the following coping strategies into categories: **healthy** and **unhealthy**.

a. Exercise	b. Creating a revision plan	c. Not eating	d. Mindfulness activities like yoga
e. Alcohol	f. Talking to friends or family	g. Planning a revision schedule	h. Staying up late to cram
i. Giving up with revision	j. Regular breaks	k. Comparing yourself to a friend who hasn't revised	

Can you **add** any other examples of **healthy** or **unhealthy** coping strategies?

What are coping strategies?

Some coping strategies are **healthy** because they boost our **mood** and promote **wellbeing!**

a. Exercise

a. Creating a revision plan

d. Mindfulness activities like yoga

f. Talking to friends or family

g. Planning a revision schedule

j. Regular breaks

But other coping strategies are **unhealthy** because they end up having a **negative** impact on our **mental** or **physical** health.

c. Not eating

e. Alcohol

h. Staying up late to cram

i. Giving up with revision

k. Comparing yourself to a friend who hasn't revised



Why are coping strategies important?

- **Stress** is a normal emotion that we all experience from time to time.
- Our stress levels can **vary** depending on what else is going on in our lives.
- **High levels of stress** can have serious consequences on our health, so it's important we develop healthy ways to **manage** stress and recognise situations where we might need **support**.



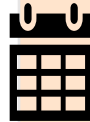
Coping with stress at school

For each scenario, suggest at least one way they could **manage** their stress levels.

1. Lana has been given a task to complete in a lesson and she doesn't understand it at all. When she looks around the room, everyone else is writing.



2. Mischa has been set a homework project lasting six weeks and she is feeling stressed about the lack of structure. She prefers doing lots of shorter tasks.



3. AJ has been feeling like their interests are a lot different to their friends' interests. They feel like 'the odd one out' which is making them anxious.



Healthy or Unhealthy?

Trigger

A **trigger** is something that causes someone to feel intense emotion.

E.g. a break-up, an argument, a failure, or a stressful situation.

Intense feeling

Intense feelings are emotions provoked by the trigger.

E.g. anger, fear, grief, stress, worry, rage, frustration, or sadness.

Coping strategy

A **coping strategy** is **the way we deal with** these intense feelings.

It can be either helpful and effective or harmful and ineffective.

Healthy or Unhealthy?



For each scenario, discuss and write down:

1. What is the **trigger**?
2. What is the **coping** strategy and is it **healthy** or **unhealthy**?
3. What could they do **instead** or **as well** to manage their **feelings**?



Healthy or Unhealthy?



1. What is the **trigger**?

2. What is the **coping** strategy and is it **healthy** or **unhealthy**?

3. What could they do **instead** or **as well** to manage their **feelings**?

Ana often feels angry. It makes her frustrated to think that some people have such an easy life compared to her.

Boxing helps her to blow off steam. She feels like she can let all her frustration out and lose herself in the sport.

Healthy or Unhealthy?





1. What is the **trigger**?
2. What is the **coping** strategy and is it **healthy** or **unhealthy**?
3. What could they do **instead** or **as well** to manage their **feelings**?

Daniel has low self-esteem.
He thinks that his friends secretly don't like him and exclude him from plans.

He responds to this by working hard to make sure he pleases everyone all the time. If he feels low, he pretends that he's okay, to try to be a fun person to be around.

Accessing support

 **New message** 

I haven't been coping well after we moved house. I don't know anyone nearby and it's getting me down.

I'm sorry to hear you're finding things tough at the moment. Have you considered...

Imagine you've just received this message from a friend about a **trigger** and **feeling**.

Draft a reply to the friend, explaining:

- At least one **healthy coping strategy** they could try
- At least one **source of further support** they could access

Family – Teacher/counselor – Doctor – Counsellor/therapist – Mental health organisation