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## 7 Emotion-Focused Coping Techniques for Uncertain Times

*Emotion-focused coping can help you weather these challenges and build resilience.*

Emotion-focused coping skills help you process and work through unwanted or painful **emotions** and reactions. This approach won't help you solve a problem directly, but it's a great tool to have for dealing with stressful situations you can't change or control. [Research from 2015](#) suggests people who tend to use emotion-focused coping strategies may be more resilient to stress and enjoy greater overall wellness.

### 1. Meditation

Meditation helps you learn to acknowledge and sit with all of your thoughts and experiences, even the difficult ones. The key goal of meditation? Mindfulness: to recognize thoughts as they come up, accept them, and let them go without stewing over them or judging yourself for having them.

You can practice mindfulness anytime, anywhere, and it won't cost you anything. If you stick with it, you'll generally begin seeing some benefits.

### 2. Journaling

Journaling is a great way to sort through and come to terms with challenging emotions.

When something goes wrong, you might experience a lot of complicated, conflicting feelings. They might feel jumbled up inside you, making the thought of sorting them out exhausting. Or, maybe you're not even sure how to name what you're feeling with words.

Exhaustion and confusion are valid feelings and can be a good starting point for putting pen to paper. Sometimes, [writing down your feelings](#), is the first step in working through them.

To get the most out of journaling, try:

- writing every day, even if you have 5 minutes
- writing whatever comes to mind — don't worry about editing or censoring yourself
- keeping track of any mood or emotional changes you experience and any factors that might be contributing to the pattern, whether that's your exercise routine, certain foods, or certain relationships

### 3. Positive thinking

[Optimism](#) can boost your emotional wellness. Optimistic or positive thinking does *not* involve ignoring your problems. It's about giving challenges a positive spin and finding moments of joy to help you get through tough times.

To add more positive thinking to your life, try:

- building yourself up with [positive self-talk](#) instead of [talking down to yourself](#)
- recognizing your successes instead of focusing on "failures"
- laughing off mistakes
- reminding yourself you can try again





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## 4. Forgiveness

It's easy to focus on feelings of injustice or unfairness when someone wrongs you or does something unkind. Most of the time, though, you can't do anything to change the hurt you've sustained, there's nothing to do but [let go](#) and move forward. Forgiveness can help you let go of hurt and begin healing from it. It can take some time to come to terms with your pain before you feel able to forgive.

Practicing forgiveness can benefit your emotional wellness in a number of ways.

You might notice:

- reduced stress and [anger](#)
- increased [compassion](#)
- greater empathy
- stronger [interpersonal relationships](#)

## 5. Reframing

When you reframe a situation, you look at it from another perspective. This can help you consider the bigger picture instead of getting stuck on little details, as difficult or unpleasant as those details sometimes are.

## 6. Talking it out

Burying or pushing away negative emotions doesn't do much to improve them.

You may not notice unwanted emotions if you hide them, but eventually they tend to resurface.

They can manifest in the form of:

- mood changes
- emotional distress
- physical symptoms like muscle tension or headaches

## 7. Working with a therapist

Some serious concerns can cause a lot of distress, especially when you can't do anything to improve your situation.

A trusted mental health professional can help you manage emotional distress by offering guidance on any of the emotion-focused coping strategies above. They can also provide support that's more specifically tailored to your situation.

Emotion-focused coping can help you weather these challenges and build resilience.

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