



PECOLA COUNSELING SERVICES

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Coping At Home

I have created this handout to help people figure out how to best cope while having so much time at home (in possible isolation). I understand that everyone has different resources, this list is not meant as a size fits all but hopefully, some may fit!

Self-Care is what we do to maintain our mental health. Coping Skills are what we use in response to something difficult.

Consider how you will manage your self care while at home:

- *Maintain a schedule, just because you're in the house does not mean you can't benefit from structure
- *Plan meals
- *If you live with others, talk to them about what they need in order to maintain their mental health and be assertive in asking for what you need.
- *Maintain healthy space. Is there a room you can go to when you need to be alone? Are you able to go on a walk?
- *How can you change the self care that you normally participate in outside of the home and do this in the home? Can you find exercise videos in the home? Can you order meals in? Can you create online groups?
- *Writing, reading, tv, and social media are great tools to relax, but I suggest you consider the emotional capacity you have for exposure to certain topics/information. Follow or unfollow accordingly. Consider taking the app off your phone and going on your computer at specific times.
- *Print out/bookmark a website that lists distorted thinking patterns. Check in with yourself about this.
- *Attend therapy. If you need video therapy and your therapist doesn't offer it, reach out to them and ask about seeing another provider in the short term.

Consider how you will manage your coping skills at home:

Write down your coping skills. Remember that a coping skill is anything you do to calm distress (it does not have to be perfect and it can be anything, what matters is the intent and outcome). Some coping ideas for home:

- *Engage in mindfulness
- *Meditate
- *Write out affirmations
- *Blog
- *Read
- *Write poetry
- *Start your memoir
- *Water and prune plants
- *Go on social media
- *Walk around in the house
- *Clean
- *Paint
- *Color
- *Doodle
- *Cook an elaborate meal (doesn't have to be rich)
- *Take photos on your phone

- *Call/text/email someone you haven't spoken to in forever
- *Go to an online 12 step meeting/emotional support meeting
- *Write out what you want to talk about at your next therapy appointment
- *Do something for someone else
- *Write a gratitude list
- *Watch a Ted Talk
- *Watch good television
- *Board games or online games (or solitaire)
- *Exercise
- *Plan your next trip
- *Create a dance
- *Organize something

- *Have a fashion shoot
- *Put on a full face of makeup
- *Do your hair
- *Take thirst traps
- *Give special attention to pets
- *Listen to music
- *Create a playlist and share it with a friend
- *Clean out your kitchen cabinets (have food that you don't want, could give it away!)
- *Come up with your own coping list and share it with everyone!
- *Find a way to help someone else

Any of these things can be placed on your schedule!

Things to Remember

- *Just because you want to do something/want something doesn't mean you should. Sometimes we must say no to ourselves in different ways. Try to make decisions that take in account your needs and what maintains your mental health, not necessarily what feels good in the moment.
- *Who is the person/people you contact when you are struggling? Make a list of them and put the list somewhere you will see.
- *If you must go outside, make leaving the house safe. Go somewhere no one will be (maybe taking a walk around the block). Please see cdc.gov more instructions on safety.
- *Contact emergency mental health numbers such as 1-800-273-8255 or your local mobile crisis unit/emergency mental health center. In Akron, Ohio it is PPES 330-762-6110
- *Contact/research resources for food, goods, etc. if you need financial assistance.
- *Please go to the hospital if you are not feeling safe!

And another thing...

Let's remove shame from the equation. If you are a parent, its okay to get tired of your children. If you are a partner, it's okay to be tired of your partner. It's okay for things to be a little bit out of the norm. It's okay if your plan for taking care of yourself is not perfect. It's okay if you need to ask for help. It's okay to experience all your emotions. Find a way to prevent problematic behaviors but avoid shaming yourself for emotional experiences!