

Alphabet of Stress Management and Coping Skills

A

Ask for help
Aromatherapy
Art
Attend an event of interest
Athletics
Ask to talk to a friend
Allow time to think
Apologize
Add numbers
Aerobics
Act out favorite actor/actress
Artistically express feelings
Act out feelings
Address the real issue

B

Bounce a stress ball
Breathe slowly
Baking
Basketball
Be attentive

C

Count to ten
Color a picture
Catch a ball
Call crisis line
Call a friend
Cookie decorating
Collect thoughts
Chat with friends
Calming techniques

D

Deep breathing
Drawing emotions/feelings
Dancing
Do push ups
Driving
Drink water
Dress up (play)
Discuss feelings
Demonstrate self-control

E

Eat a snack
Exercise
Escape the situation

F

Find a safe place
Finish house work
Fishing
Free weight
Find a book to read
Filter emotions
Find a puzzle to play
Find a friend
Free write feelings
Following directions
Fly a kite
Focus attention elsewhere

G

Go talk to an adult
Go to happy place
Golfing
Games
Going to a friends
Get help from teacher
Go outside
Go running
Go swimming
Going to the gym
Gather thoughts
Go to a different place
Grow a garden
Get help from others

H

Help someone else with a problem
Hiking
Have a party
Hug a friend
High jumps
Hang out with friends
Have someone listen to your problem

I

"I" statements
Identify triggers
Instagram pictures
Interact with friends
Initiate conversation
Imagine your safe place
Invite someone to play
Ignore people

J

Logging in place
Jot down good behaviors
Jumping Jacks
Jumping rope
Journaling

K

Kick a soccer ball
Keep a journal
Knitting
Kickboxing
Keep calm by thinking
Kickball
Keep hands to yourself

L

Listen and discuss
Laugh
Long walks
Listen to music
Lay down
Lift weights
Letter writing
Look outside
Learn something new
Lay head down on desk

M

Make a plan
Make silly faces
Make food
Make a craft
Meditate
Make a book
Meet new people

N

Napping
Notes to self
Never give up
Name something positive

O

Offer assistance
Organize item of interest
Obstacle course
Open up
Observe a movie
Observe surroundings

Guide to Holiday Healthy Boundaries

- Ask for what you want or what you need.
- Say “no” without guilt.
- Say “yes” because you want to, not out of obligation to please others.
- Let go of trying to control what other people eat, drink, say, wear, say, or do.
- Be empowered to skip, go late, leave early or drive your own vehicle to holiday parties.
- Express your feelings in an assertive and respectful way; avoid passive-aggressive behavior.
- Take care of your physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.
- Spend time with supportive people.
- Take responsibility for your own happiness and don’t be a martyr.
- Don’t make excuses for yourself or anyone else.
- Act according to your own beliefs and values.

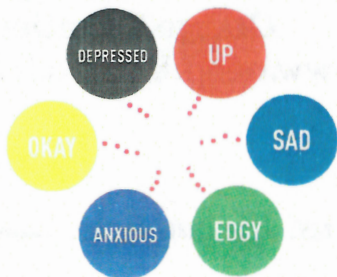
MCAT

MCAT's mental health staff provide help during crises to children and adults in Oneida, Herkimer, Schoharie, Otsego, Delaware and Chenango counties.

MCAT has the ability to respond to crises where they occur, and work with the individual, family and community based agencies to assist with your needs.

Crises include:

- Threats to harm self or others
- Behavioral issues
- Severe depression or anxiety
- Mental health symptoms
- Erratic behavior
- Behaviors that may lead to police intervention
- Any problem that is causing a serious problem in functioning



Our Goals



MCAT seeks to de-escalate a crisis situation, preventing possible harm, keeping the problem outside of the legal system and avoiding hospitalizations when appropriate. Concerns which are causing a person a serious problem in functioning is reason to call.

MCAT's Services include:

- 24-hour, 7-days/week intervention
- Mental health assessment
- Crisis de-escalation
- Linkage to services
- Follow-up services
- Alerts to identify and assist those who are at increased risk
- Crisis debriefing
- Coordination with schools, medical and mental health providers, and other agencies to provide crisis interventions and to help monitor clients who are at risk.

Reaching Us

Our staff are available **24 hours a day, seven days a week.**

Contact MCAT at:

1-315-732-6228

or

1-844-732-6228

We take referrals from individuals in crisis, their families, law enforcement, school personnel or the general community.

MCAT services are provided at no cost to the recipient.



Tips to prevent holiday stress and depression

Acknowledge your feelings. If someone close to you has recently died or you can't be with loved ones, realize that it's normal to feel sadness and grief. It's OK to take time to cry or express your feelings. You can't force yourself to be happy just because it's the holiday season.

Reach out. If you feel lonely or isolated, seek out community, religious or other social events. They can offer support and companionship. Volunteering your time to help others also is a good way to lift your spirits and broaden your friendships.

Be realistic. The holidays don't have to be perfect or just like last year. As families change and grow, traditions and rituals often change as well. Choose a few to hold on to, and be open to creating new ones. For example, if your adult children can't come to your house, find new ways to celebrate together, such as sharing pictures, emails or videos.

Set aside differences. Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all of your expectations. Set aside grievances until a more appropriate time for discussion. And be understanding if others get upset or distressed when something goes awry. Chances are they're feeling the effects of holiday stress and depression, too.

Stick to a budget. Before you go gift and food shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend. Then stick to your budget. Don't try to buy happiness with an avalanche of gifts.

Try these alternatives:

- ☐ Donate to a charity in someone's name.
- ☐ Give homemade gifts.
- ☐ Start a family gift exchange.

Plan ahead. Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, visiting friends and other activities. Plan your menus and then make your shopping list. That'll help prevent last-minute scrambling to buy forgotten ingredients. And make sure to line up help for party prep and cleanup.

Learn to say no. Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed. Friends and colleagues will understand if you can't participate in every project or

Coping Skills

Coping skills help us get through difficult times - they can give us an important break from mental and emotional distress, and sometimes they are literally life-saving.

Keep this list of coping skills handy for when you need it... folded up in your wallet or bag or post it up on the wall somewhere handy at home.

Make this list work for you

Use a highlighter pen to mark the skills that work best for you & add your own ideas over the page.

Distraction

Absorb your mind in something else

Conversation, listen to talk radio, read, do puzzles, TV, computer games, jigsaws, solve a problem, make a list, learn something new, cleaning & tidying, gardening, arts & crafts.

Pros

Gives your heart & mind a break.
Great for short term relief.
Great to get through a crisis.

Cons

Can't do it for too long.
Doesn't resolve any underlying issues. Meds can make it hard to concentrate.

Grounding

Get out of your head & into your body & the world

Use body & senses: smell fragrances, slowly taste food, notice the colours around you. Walk on the grass barefoot, squeeze clay or mud, do yoga, meditate, exercise.

Pros

Helps slow or stop 'dissociation' (feeling numb, floaty or disconnected).
Reduces physicality of anxiety.

Cons

Sometimes it's better to stay a bit dissociated (that's how your mind protects you).

Emotional Release

Let it out!

Yell, scream, run! Try a cold shower. Let yourself cry... and sob. Put on a funny DVD and let yourself laugh! Try boxing, popping balloons, or crank up some music & dance crazy!

Pros

Great for anger and fear.
Releases the pressure of overwhelming emotion.

Cons

Hard to do in every situation. Feels odd. Some people might think you're acting 'crazier' (be selective with how & where you do this)

Self Love

Massage hands with nice cream, manicure your nails, cook a special meal, clean your house (or just make your bed), bubble bath or long shower, brush hair, buy a small treat.

Pros

Become your own best friend, your own support worker.
Great for guilt or shame.
You deserve it!

Cons

Sometimes can feel really hard to do, or feel superficial (but it's not).

Thought Challenge

Write down negative thoughts then list all the reasons they may not be true. Imagine someone you love had these thoughts - what advice would you give them?

Pros

Can help to shift long-term, negative thinking habits.
Trying to be more logical can help reduce extreme emotion.

Cons

The more emotional you feel, the harder this is to do. In particular, feelings of shame can make this very hard.

Access your higher self

Help someone else, smile at strangers (see how many smiles you get back), pray, volunteer, do randomly kind things for others, pat dogs at the local park, join a cause

Pros

Reminds us that everyone has value and that purpose can be found in small as well as large things.

Cons

Don't get stuck trying to save everyone else and forget about you!