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COPING STRATEGIES



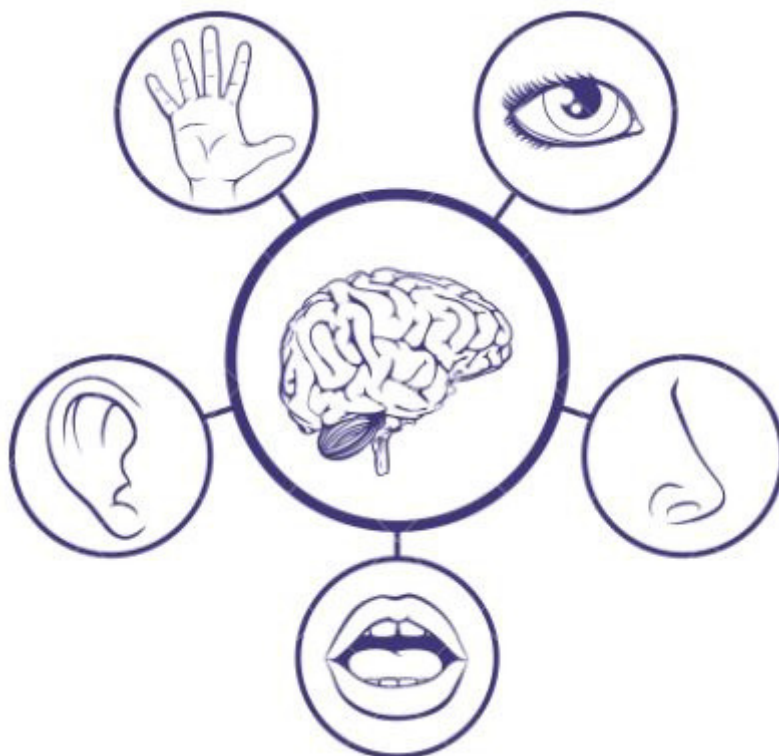
PAPYRUS
PREVENTION OF YOUNG SUICIDE

SUGGESTIONS FOR COPING STRATEGIES

When trying to cope with overwhelming feelings and emotions, we can develop coping strategies that may not always be healthy and can potentially be harmful.

We might do this to express emotional pain, to numb emotional pain, to feel something different or to regain a sense of control.

Think about what you do to help you cope and how that coping strategy works for you. Considering this will make it easier to think of alternatives that may be safer and offer the same relief.



TO REGAIN FEELING

Eat something sour or bitter - try lemons, limes or fizzy sour sweets

Try the '5,4,3,2,1 technique' to regain some focus - think of 5 things you can see, 4 you can touch, 3 you can hear, 2 you can smell and 1 you can taste

Hold something cold or warm and focus on the feeling of the sensation on your skin

Focus on your breathing - think about the cool air entering your nostrils and the sensation of your chest rising and falling

Slap a hard surface

Play with putty, blue tack or modelling clay

Cover your hands in glue, wait for it to dry then peel it off

Give yourself a hand and foot massage

Spend time with your pet - stroke them or groom them

Give someone a compliment - see if you can make someone smile.



TO FEEL IN CONTROL

Make a to-do list and break your day into small manageable chunks

Look around the room and find something to touch or smell. If there's someone at home, call out to them and listen for their response

Do a task where you usually feel in control. This can help you gain a sense of achievement - try cleaning, researching your favourite music artist or someone you admire, word searches or computer games

Reflect on the last 7 days and write down things you have achieved, people you have seen and moments you feel happy

Say the alphabet out loud or count out loud to 100

Build something using Lego if you have any or build a fort/den using things around you.



EMOTIONAL RELEASE

Shout or scream, out loud if there's no one around or into a pillow to muffle the sound

Punch a punchbag or pillow if you don't have one

Join a combat style exercise class or martial arts class

Throw eggs or ice cubes at an outside wall and watch them smash

Keep your recycling to one side and spend time flattening cartons, containers and boxes

Watch something you know will make you laugh

Buy a roll of bubble wrap and pop it or stamp on it

Ball up a newspaper or magazine, sheet by sheet.



TO EXPRESS OR COMMUNICATE

Write down how you are feeling - arrange the emotions into lyrics or poetry or write a story about yourself in the 3rd person

Write a letter with the aim to help others understand how you are feeling - give it to someone if you feel confident enough to share it

Put a blindfold on and draw whatever comes into your mind

Make yourself a mood chart or a mood diary to keep track of how you are feeling. Keep it on your bedroom door to let those close to you understand how you are

Write down negative feelings and thoughts and challenge them - what makes them seem true? Why might they be false? - If one of your friends or family members had these thoughts, what advice would you give them? What would you say to cheer them up.



When trying out new coping strategies make sure you are safe. For example, ensure you have no allergies to any foods/materials suggested and that you clean and tidy up to prevent any hazardous accidents, for yourself and others.

These coping strategies are a starting point to help you consider what may be helpful to try short-term.

If you would like to learn more about getting help long-term, speak to your GP, family and friends or a Suicide Prevention Adviser at HOPELINEUK.

HOPELINEUK

Call: 0800 068 4141

Text: 07786209697

Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

Opening hours:

10am - 10pm weekdays

2pm - 10pm weekends

2pm - 10pm bank holidays

www.papyrus-uk.org