



FORT GARRY WOMEN'S
RESOURCE CENTRE

Coping: Fact Sheet

What is Coping?

Coping is how we deal with stress, pain, conflict, change, loss or trauma in our lives. Sometimes we cope with stress and pain in positive ways. Sometimes we cope in negative ways that can have a long lasting impact on our well being, our relationships and our health.

How Do We Cope?

How we cope is learned from our family and society. Sometimes we pick a coping method as a personal preference. Coping is needed for self preservation. What we are coping with impacts how we cope. Having to cope with extreme trauma, pain or abuse may lead to extreme ways of coping. All ways of coping serve a purpose by helping us survive, but extreme ways of coping can also negatively affect our lives. There are benefits and costs to all the ways we cope.

What are Some Examples of Coping?

- talking to someone
- sharing
- sleep
- exercise
- shopping
- alcohol
- prescription drugs
- over eating/under eating
- going away
- having a bath
- ignoring or denying feelings

- cutting
- self blame
- negative thinking
- depression
- anxiety
- gambling
- street drugs
- dissociating
- crying
- stuffing your feelings

Important Points to Remember About Coping

- Evaluate what works and doesn't work without judging yourself for how you're coping
- Honor ways you have coped
- Remember, if you didn't cope, you may not have survived
- All forms of coping are done to meet some kind of need
- Negative ways of coping can be replaced with more positive ways

When Do We Cope?

We cope with stress everyday of our lives. Negative coping can be a symptom of unresolved painful issues. (Any healthy coping method can become unhealthy if done to excess.) Here are a few of the stresses women may have to deal with.

- Parenting
- Loss—job, relationship, death, health, home, dreams, hopes
- Change & transitions
- Responsibilities—too much to do in too little time
- Finances & debt
- Responsibility for other people—keeping everyone happy
- Lack of support
- Isolation
- Body Image
- Jobs

Often a present day stress will trigger memories of past stress so we end up feeling overwhelmed. Some of the past issues can include:

- Childhood abuse
- Partner abuse
- Loss and grief

Where Do I Go For Help with Coping?

Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre www.fgwrc.ca	477-1123
Addictions Foundation of Manitoba www.afm.mb.ca	944-6200 1-866-638-2561 (Toll Free)
Women's Health Clinic www.womenshealthclinic.org	947-1517
Klinik/Counselling www.klinik.mb.ca	784-4067
Immigrant Women's Counselling www.norwesthealth.ca	940-2172
Anxiety Disorders Assoc. of Man. www.adam.mb.ca	925-0600
Eating Disorders Self-Help Program www.manitoba.cmha.ca	953-2358
Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba www.depression.mb.ca	786-0987
Canadian Mental Health Association www.cmha.ca	953-2350
Manitoba Schizophrenia Society www.mss.mb.ca/	786-1616
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder www.ocdmanitoba.ca/	942-3331
Suicide Prevention Awareness Knowledge (SPEAK) www.speak-out.ca/	831-3610

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