

Coping skills for difficult feelings



It is unrealistic to think you will never experience difficult feelings. Your mind and body have adjusted to certain patterns of feeling that may be uncomfortable to cope with.

When you have feelings of fear or anxiety, when your stomach begins to feel tight or your mind begins to race, you may fall back to old behaviors.

At other times, your mind may become preoccupied on how great it would feel to escape into a problem behavior. For example, you might use alcohol or drugs as a way to avoid certain feelings such as boredom or frustration.

For each skill:

- Rate yourself on the scale based on how well you do each skill today.
- Describe how you can practice those skills that need work – ask supportive people for feedback and comments.
- Decide how long you plan to work on strengthening the skill. Then record your reevaluation date.
- After practicing, give yourself a new rating for that skill.

Skill: Recognize and avoid or manage uncomfortable feelings that cause trouble.

This is how I rate myself today.



I can practice recognizing and avoiding or managing my uncomfortable feelings by...

Date I plan to reevaluate myself in this skill:

After practicing, this is my latest rating.



Skill: Find healthy, alternative activities to reduce troubling feelings or behavior.

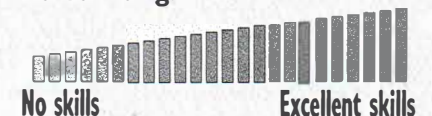
This is how I rate myself today.



I can practice finding healthy, alternative activities to reduce troubling feelings or behavior by...

Date I plan to reevaluate myself in this skill:

After practicing, this is my latest rating.



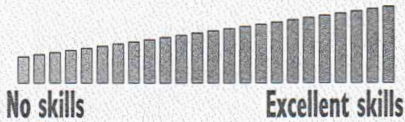
Troubling feelings are quite normal in the change process and at times can cause you considerable discomfort. Keep in mind, the intensity of these feelings will decrease over time, especially as you develop and practice skills to manage them effectively and quickly.

Recognizing the triggers that cause your troubling feelings can help you make good choices to reduce their return.

You also can learn to challenge your thinking by repeating a brief, positive statement to yourself until the episode passes, such as, "I'm strong enough to handle this."

Skill: Use positive statements (self-talk) to ride out an uncomfortable feeling.

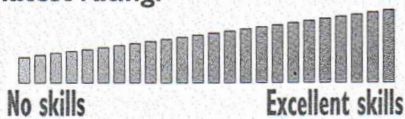
This is how I rate myself today.



I can practice using self-talk to ride out uncomfortable feelings by...

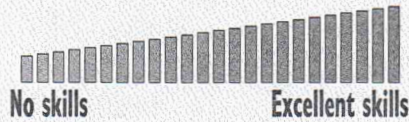
Date I plan to reevaluate myself in this skill:

After practicing, this is my latest rating.



Skill: Use supportive people to help me ride out an uncomfortable feeling.

This is how I rate myself today.



I can practice using supportive people to help me ride out an uncomfortable feeling by...

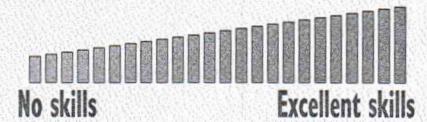
Date I plan to reevaluate myself in this skill:

After practicing, this is my latest rating.



Skill: Discuss my feelings with my counselor or other supportive people.

This is how I rate myself today.



I can practice discussing my feelings with my counselor or other supportive people by...

Date I plan to reevaluate myself in this skill:

After practicing, this is my latest rating.

