

**10 COPING STRATEGIES  
FOR DEALING WITH MAJOR  
DISAPPOINTMENTS IN LIFE  
Checklist**

# 10 Coping Strategies For Disappointment

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## Acknowledge Your Feelings

You cannot escape your feelings. While it might be tempting to launch a full-on avoidance-focused coping mechanism the only thing you achieve by doing this is a delay.

- ✓ You have to acknowledge your feelings and deal with the issue head-on.
- ✓ What's important here is how you feel about what's going on and focusing on *that* rather than casting blame or hurting other people because you're upset. You can articulate those emotions without attacking people. There's a balance to be struck by letting people know how you feel while being respectful.
- ✓ There isn't a right way or a wrong way to feel. When you experience disappointment, it's important to vocalize your feelings and thoughts, otherwise, you will stress yourself out harboring resentment and hate will foment within you.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to be honest with yourself and with others about how you're feeling about the situation at hand.

## Get Perspective

Once you have a chance to express your anger, frustration, and hurt and you have the emotional bandwidth to take a step back you can see the big picture. The big picture will help you get to grips with how small the disappointment actually is. You need perspective.

- ✓ Take a deep breath, comport yourself, and go for a walk to clear your head. Take the time and space you need to work through your disappointment and get perspective on the situation.
- ✓ While perspective may seem like it's an emotion-focused approach, it's actually a combination of emotion and problem-focused strategies. Taking time and space to get perspective requires a conscious decision.
- ✓ Even if disappointment feels like a failure, know that it isn't. And even if it was a failure, that's okay, too. Failure comes with plenty of positives and it's only temporary.

- ✓ We will all experience disappointment at one time or another. So, don't beat yourself up and worry about what you could have done differently. Take the lesson and move forward.

## **Adjust**

You can't always get what you want. However, that doesn't mean there's not a second option available or another path forward.

- ✓ Take time to reassess and if necessary, make adjustments. It might be a tiny change or it could be a massive one, that will all depend on the degree of disappointment you're faced with.
- ✓ Be flexible. Be prepared to make adjustments, refocus your attention, and work through any disappointment you might face.

## **Social Support**

Your network of friends and family will play an important role in overcoming the emotions and stress that come from major disappointments. Not only will your social support network offer you a shoulder to cry on and a listening ear, but they can also offer you objective advice.

- ✓ Talk to others. Express your feelings. Brainstorm what happened. They may have a different perspective that you can use or they may not. Either way when you listen to and bounce things off others, you learn, even if it just through your own out loud expression of the problem.

## **Managing Your Social Interactions**

It's important to set boundaries and choose your people selectively. When you're dealing with your own disappointment, the last thing you want is to turn to someone who is not supportive.

- ✓ Choose positive people.
- ✓ Choose caring people.
- ✓ Choose people who listen without judgement.
- ✓ Choose people you feel are your role models.

## **Journal**

- ✓ Disappointment breeds distress and one of the best ways to get it all out of your system is writing it out.

- ✓ There's something cathartic about keeping a journal and it might not seem much, but it's a good place to start.
- ✓ It's a safe space for you to start expressing emotions and concerns in a non-threatening way. The journal will not judge you and it will listen to whatever you have to say.

## **Stress Management**

- ✓ Stress and anxiety exacerbate disappointment, to counter this make sure to manage your stress. Use stress management tools.
  - Music
  - Long walks
  - Bubble baths
  - Meditation
  - Yoga
  - Exercise
  - Journaling
  - Rest
  - Relaxation
  - Distractions
  - Progressive muscle relaxation

## **Address Your Mindset**

The more you practice being a positive person the easier it becomes. Your brain is wired to hone in on all of the negativity. Negativity is a non self-supportive entity. It brings us down. Conversely, positivity empowers you in every way, including your ability to cope with life challenges and disappointments.

- ✓ Make a gratitude list. Update it often.
- ✓ Start each day reading your gratitude list. Gratitude will help you rewire your brain to seek out positivity and focus on that.

## **Relaxation Techniques**

- ✓ Deep breathing can help you regain control of your emotional center.
- ✓ Yoga
- ✓ Guided imagery
- ✓ Meditation
- ✓ Mindfulness
- ✓ Massage
- ✓ Hot baths
- ✓ Reading
- ✓ Playing games
- ✓ Listening to music
- ✓ Any activity you find relaxing

## **Know Your Heart**

Disappointment can ripple through you and strike you to your core. If you aren't aligned with your core values (or you don't even know what they are), then there's a good chance you don't have the framework of support that you need to manage the emotions that disappointment will bring.

- ✓ Know your values, know your heart, and when you do, you will be better positioned to cope with any disappointment life can throw your way.