

10 COPING STRATEGIES
WHEN YOU FEEL LOSS OF
CONTROL OVER YOUR LIFE
Checklist

10 Coping Strategies When You Feel Out of Control Over Your Life

Shift Your Perspective

- ✓ Very rarely are we actually in a situation that is 100% out of our control. What is more likely to be the case is that our heavy focus on the negatives and challenges of the situation causes us to panic and become convinced that we lack little or any control in the matter.
- ✓ Shift your perspective from a focus on those things we cannot control so you put emphasis on those you can and develop a more positive mindset and perspective.
- ✓ While the circumstances themselves may be out of our control, we can always control our thoughts, behaviors, and actions. This then puts us back in a position of control and authority.
- ✓ This process is referred to by existentialists as confronting angst. It's about accepting responsibility for those things within our power and releasing responsibility for those things we have no power to influence or change.

Embrace Uncertainty

- ✓ An essential part of learning to cope when you feel out of control is learning to embrace uncertainty. It is the hyper-focus on the uncertainty that leads to fear and anxiety which feeds feelings of loss of control.
- ✓ Learning to see uncertainty as an unavoidable and inherent part of life helps to release the hold of fear, leading to a more reasonable response.
- ✓ Embrace the fact that you can't control the outcome so you are not tasked with the responsibility of doing so.

Practice Mindfulness

- ✓ Mindfulness is the practice of intentionally focusing attention on the current moment and embracing that moment free from judgment. It involves paying attention to what is happening in the mind, body, and the surrounding environment, and approaching those things with both curiosity and compassion.
- ✓ Practice of mindfulness to bolsters awareness of thoughts, sensations, and feelings while also improving your ability to cope.
- ✓ Mindfulness leads to enhanced mental clarity, a greater sense of well-being, and better ability to care for self. This strategy is so useful when you feel out of control because it acts as a grounding force.
- ✓ Slow, pause, and focus on the current state of things mentally, physically, and environmentally, so you can calm the chaos in your mind and refocus attention away from stressors towards those things that can facilitate peace.

Seek Support

- ✓ The fact is, very few of us can go it alone. We all need support from others from time to time and this can be especially true when we feel out of control.
- ✓ Seek support from people who listen and allow you to vent.
- ✓ Releasing your thoughts and feelings can help you to rationalize the events and situations that cause you to feel a lack of control and help you process and respond to them better.
- ✓ The support of others can also help you navigate these seasons of feeling out of control by actually offering us tools and resources to assist us in coping with the stressor(s).
- ✓ Get support from others puts you in a better position to deal with your situations and feel more prepared and in control as a result.

Explore Possible Outcomes

- ✓ Often, feeling out of control of life can be connected to not knowing what to expect. The fear of the unknown can drive you to worry, become anxious, and even lead to panic.
- ✓ Brainstorm potential outcomes of the current situation. Doing so helps you to explore all the possibilities. At best, you can then plan and prepare for these possibilities so you don't feel caught off guard or out of control if one of them arises. At the least, you have an idea of what to expect and can reduce stress and anxiety levels.

Establish a Routine

- ✓ When there are things going on outside of your control establishing a routine can be a vital asset. Routines operate as a grounding force by giving us a set of activities or processes that we know will remain consistent.
- ✓ Establish something that is very reliable and consistent to help combat the anxiety and regulate the mind back to a state of calm.

Stress Reduction Measures

- ✓ Practice stress reducing methods to reduce anxiety, fear, and worry that accompanies the feeling of being out of control.
- ✓ Meditation
- ✓ Yoga
- ✓ Listening to music
- ✓ Relaxation
- ✓ Aromatherapy
- ✓ Hot baths

- ✓ Massage
- ✓ Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- ✓ Choose those methods that work for you

Workout

- ✓ Exercise to release feel good chemicals in the brains such as dopamine and serotonin that actively work to reduce stress levels, boost mood, decrease anxiety, and improve one's overall sense of wellness.
- ✓ Establishing a regular workout schedule/routine allows you to get an added layer of regularity and predictability that can help ease stress and anxiety as well.

Eat Healthy

- ✓ Healthy eating is a foundational element of staying well when you feel like you are out of control of your life.
- ✓ Eat a well-rounded diet that consists of the proper vitamins and nutrients can fuel your physical bodies and your mind to deal with challenging and unpredictable situations.
- ✓ Eat chocolate in moderation and drink chamomile tea, both of which are packed with antioxidants ingredients that boost mood and induce calm.

Sleep Well

- ✓ Getting adequate amounts of rest is crucial to coping when you feel life is out of control. A lack of sleep can exacerbate feelings of stress and anxiety by robbing our minds of critical time to repair and renew. As a result, we can become more reactive, see impairments to our judgment, and experience heightened levels of stress and anxiety.

- ✓ Get good sleep so your mind can properly repair and therefore allow you to reason and manage when you are awake, as this puts you in a better position to deal with stressors and cope with difficult situations.