

Anxiety and Depression:

Coping and Self-Management Skills



It is essential to look after our mental health, both when we are suffering from depression or anxiety and also when we are caring for someone else who has one or both of these disorders. It's critical to realize that **PROFESSIONAL HELP IS AVAILABLE AND EFFECTIVE** for treating these conditions, but what we can do ourselves to help manage them is also essential.

A general principle that can help with many anxiety-provoking situations is: **“Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can”**. Arthur Ashe, paraphrasing Teddy Roosevelt, said this, reminding us that doing something is better than doing nothing. Taking an active role in managing our emotions only helps. Giving in does not.

Coping Strategies For Anxiety and Depression include:

- Establish regular biologic rhythms: sleep, regular meals, moderate exercise.
- Realize that it's critical to do what you can but that you cannot do everything yourself. In other words, recognize your limits.

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We are here to help

Please call **800-279-1301 (TTY: 711)**
or visit [ssmhealth.com/mental-health](https://www.ssmhealth.com/mental-health)



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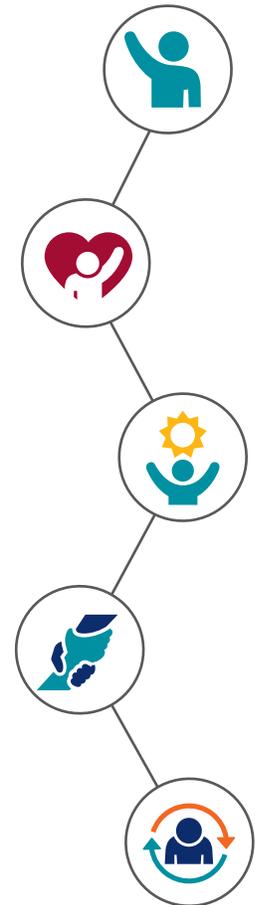
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Coping Strategies For Anxiety and Depression include *(continued)*:

- Limit poor coping mechanisms, especially excessive alcohol and drug abuse.
- Explore something new or exciting, so you have something to pull yourself out of the anxious or depressed state.
- Pay attention to particular triggers: events that precipitate anxiety and/or depression.
- Reach out to friends and loved ones for support. Talk to someone you trust, or establish a therapeutic relationship if you need one.
- If you feel dangerous to yourself, please reach out for professional help. You are not alone, and treatment is effective.
- Set reasonable and “kind” self-goals. Try to avoid being self-punitive.
- Make lists of positives in your life.
- Work to enhance relationships and friendships with others. Do not isolate.
- To relax, learn to focus on your breathing. When we exhale, most of our muscles relax automatically.
- Do your best, but try to avoid “perfection.” Making progress is the goal. Try to set reasonable expectations.
- Do something for someone else.
- Acknowledge that depression is an illness. You are not to blame for having depressive or anxious symptoms.
- Try to identify causes and remediate them.



If you are in emotional crisis, thinking about suicide, or are concerned about someone who might be, please call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. You can also call the National Suicide Hotline at 1-800-273-8255 or contact the Crisis Text Line by texting HOME to 741741.

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