



Fort Hays State University – Health and Wellness Services

Fischli-Wills Center for Student Success – Third Floor, Room 301 – 700 College Drive, Hays, KS 67601
(785) 628-4401

Coping Skills

Stress and unpleasant emotions, such as anxiety or sadness, can be normal parts of the human experience. Practicing healthy coping skills is a helpful way to get through these difficult times. When stress levels and unpleasant emotions are well managed, your ability to perform your best academically and have positive relationships is strengthened.

Wise Mind

The wise mind notices when your thoughts and behaviors are driven by your emotional mind or rational/logical mind. Access your wise mind to consider both the facts of the situation and how you feel.

Acceptance

Acceptance means opening up and making room for painful feelings, sensations, and urges. Rather than battling these emotions, practice giving them space to just be. Acceptance can allow you to act on your values rather than your feelings.

Urge Surfing

Urges feel like they will last forever and that we need to listen to them in order to experience relief. Try this instead. Acknowledge the urge, and use it as a signal for self-reflection. Ask yourself, “What else am I feeling right now? Sadness? Anxiety?” Address any need the urge is communicating, (for example, the need for social support) and then channel your energy into something value-guided.

Drop the Anchor

Push your feet hard into the floor, and feel the ground beneath you. Now, sit up in your chair, and notice how you’re sitting. Look around the room, and notice what you can see and hear. Now take three deep breaths, and see if you can send them down into your feet. Keep your feet firmly pressed into the floor. Notice how your mind keeps trying to pull you somewhere else, and see if you can stay present. Let the thoughts go, and stay anchored here in the moment.

Building a Willingness to Feel

It is natural and normal to want to get away from painful feelings. However, when we try to avoid pain that is part of the human experience, we only increase our suffering. If you are trying to distract or get away from painful feelings (such as anxiety, fear, worry, or grief) take a moment and ask yourself, “Can I allow this feeling to be here and move toward what matters most to me?”

Unhook

Sometimes we can get hooked by a thought or a feeling. It grabs us by the gut and starts to pull us around, just like a fish on a hook. If you have taken the bait, see if you can unhook and get back to your values.

Give it Space

Take a moment to notice the feeling you are having. See if you can create a little more space for the feeling to be there. You don't have to want it or like it, but can you make space for it? Making space for the feeling can allow you to approach or stick to things that are hard.

Dig Where the Ground is Soft

You may not notice right way, but making one small change to your daily routine can have big results in the long term. Instead of picking your trickiest area, pick the issues that you can most easily visualize improving on.