3 Coping strategies

Calming Coping Strategies

It’s helpful to calm your physiology so you reverse your stress response. When your stress response is triggered, you process information differently, you can feel physically and emotionally taxed, and if you don’t reverse your stress response, after a while you become susceptible to the effects of chronic stress. Try these strategies to calm down quickly, or these 5 minute stress relief strategies for some quick coping strategies.

Emotion-Focused Coping Strategies

There are two main types of coping strategies: emotion-focused coping strategies and solution-focused coping strategies. The calming coping strategies I mentioned above are a quick version of the former type—emotion-focused coping strategies—but there are more in-depth emotion-focused strategies that can help with many of the major stressors that people face. These include coping strategies like maintaining a sense of humour and cultivating optimism, where the situation doesn’t change, but your perception of it does. These strategies are great to use in many of the situations you’ve mentioned where you have little ability to control what happens, and you need to see your stressors as a challenge instead of a threat, or change the way you respond to your circumstances in order to diffuse some of the stress involved. See this article on coping with stress for more on emotion-focused coping strategies as well as the next category I’ll discuss.

Solution-Focused Coping Strategies

Sometimes there’s nothing you can do to change a situation, but often you’ll find an opportunity to take action and actually change the circumstances you face. These types of solution-focused coping strategies can be very effective for stress relief; often a small change is all that’s required to make a huge shift in how you feel. For one thing, one change can lead to other changes, so that a chain reaction of positive change is created, opportunities are opened up, and life changes significantly. Also, once action is taken, the sense of being trapped with no options—a recipe for stress—can dissipate quickly. It’s important to be thoughtful about which actions to take, as each situation may call for a unique solution, but a less-stressed mind (see coping strategies in the calming category) can more easily choose the most beneficial course of action.