

This list suggests ten approaches that help people cope with stressful times. See if you can add to it.

Next, think about how you could teach people about at least one coping method from the list. You may choose to make a poster, a webpage, a skit, a commercial, a painting, a poem, a short story ... the possibilities are endless!

1. Learn more about mental illness. If someone you know has been diagnosed with a mental illness, find out more about what to expect and how you can help.
2. Keep a journal. If you or someone you care about seems to be exhibiting signs of illness, keep track of things that concern you. Write down the date, the event, and why you are concerned.
3. Stay connected. If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, be sure to stay connected to your support team.
4. Practise relaxation techniques. Breathe deeply, go to a “happy place” (even if it’s in your mind’s eye), write down or illustrate your feelings, take a walk.
5. Keep physically active. Research supports the fact that physical activity can reduce stress. Get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day! Also, remember to balance your passive time (such as time spent with computers, TV, video games, etc.) with activity. Consult the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines published by the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology.
6. Feed your body! Nutritious foods are important. Consult *Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating* and make sure that you practise balance, moderation, and variety in your food choices.
7. Find a hobby—dance, sing, draw, paint, play music, or build models! Keep busy and try to explore new challenges.
8. Love your pet (or someone else’s). Pets can truly be your best friend.
9. Get enough sleep. Growing bodies need about 8.5 to 9 hours of sleep a night!
10. Smile! Share your smile with someone else!