

Healthy Coping: Start at the Beginning

Small changes in behavior can help you take control.

Learning you have diabetes may stir up some unfamiliar feelings. You may find yourself in denial or in disbelief. The diagnosis may be unexpected and not something you wanted to learn. Unexpected and undesired events that upset the usual order of life can cause stress. Unmanaged stress can make managing diabetes harder. It can also cause additional problems.

Coping helps to restore order. It's a natural way to work through the challenges of learning to live with your diabetes. How each person learns to cope is personal. Coping strategies can be used to identify, explore and solve problems that are causing you stress.

Start with a self-evaluation of your problems and inner feelings, as this outline demonstrates. It may then be easier to find a solution that will help ease the stress.

A. Identify the problem.

- What types of stress do I face?

B. Explore the problem.

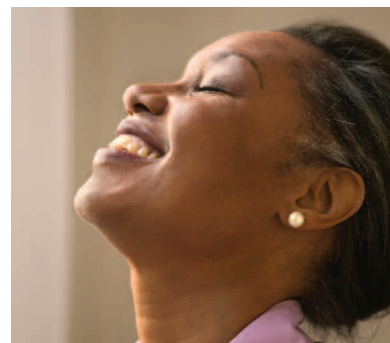
- Have I given myself enough time to consider all aspects of the problem?
- Who owns the problem?
- Do I need more information?
- Can I break the problem into smaller parts/problems?
- Which is most important to address first?
- How do my values affect/influence my thoughts or insights about the problem?

C. Solve the problem.

- What is the real problem?
- Envision possible outcomes.
- Choose realistic goals.
- Generate possible coping strategies.
- Weigh consequences, review advantages and disadvantages.
- Select the best approach to the problem.
- Plan a strategy, set objectives and rehearse the strategy.
- Implement and evaluate a plan.

D. Prevent future problems by understanding your behavior.

- Acknowledge it.
- Take action against it.
- Substitute for it.
- Employ stress management techniques.



Medicare Part B patients: Call 1-877-231-5199 and mention reference code **ED06500** to order your diabetes testing supplies.
Web site: www.RxSolutions.com/diabetes

Source: Adapted from *The Art and Science of Diabetes Self-Management Education*, American Association of Diabetes Educators, 2006.

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