

How Do People Deal With Stress?

Nobody can avoid all stress, but you can learn ways to deal with it. When you are stressed, it is normal to want to feel better. Anything that makes you feel better is called a *coping strategy*. Negative strategies can be quick fixes, but they're harmful because they can be dangerous and make stress worse in the long run. Think about some of the ways people cope with stress that can really hurt them:

- Cigarettes
- Alcohol
- Bullying
- Fighting
- Sex
- Cutting/self-mutilation
- Skipping school
- Eating disorders
- Running away
- Isolating themselves or withdrawal
- Gangs

Dealing With Stress

These harmful choices may help you feel good for a little while, but some can be really dangerous. They also end up making people worried about you or angry with you. This messes up your life, and you become a lot more stressed. They're especially worrisome if they are a major way you deal with stress because you may turn to these behaviors more often during hard times. This is one of the ways addiction starts. If you are doing some of these things, ask yourself, "Why?" If it is to deal with problems, consider other ways of dealing with the same problems.

There are many healthy ways of coping. Healthy coping strategies are safe and can help you feel better without messing up your life.

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