Coping Skills

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1. Ask for help - Reach out to someone safe ***2. INSPIRE yourself*** - Carry something positive (e.g., poem), or negative (photo of friend who overdosed) ***3. Leave a bad scene*** - When things go wrong, get out ***4. PERSIST***– Never, never, never, never, never, never, never, never, never give up ***5. Honesty*** - Secrets and lying are at the core of PTSD and substance abuse; honesty heals them ***6. Cry*** - Let yourself cry; it will not last forever ***7. Choose self-respect*** - Choose whatever will make you like yourself tomorrow ***8. Take good care of your body*** - Eat right, exercise, sleep, safe sex ***9. List your options*** - In any situation, you have choices ***10. Create meaning*** - Remind yourself what you are living for: your children? Love? Truth? Justice? God? ***11. Do the best you can with what you have*** - Make the most of available opportunities ***12. Set a boundary*** - Say "no" to protect yourself ***13. COMPASSION*** - Listen to yourself with respect and care ***14. When in doubt, do what's hardest*** - The most difficult path is invariably the right one ***15. Talk yourself through it*** - Self-talk helps in difficult times ***16. IMAGINE*** - Create a mental picture that helps you feel different (e.g., remember a safe place) ***17. Notice the choice point*** - In slow motion, notice the exact moment when you chose a substance ***18. Pace yourself*** - If overwhelmed, go slower; if stagnant, go faster ***19. STAY SAFE*** - Do whatever you need to do to put your safety above all ***20. Seek understanding, not blame*** - Listen to your behavior; blaming prevents growth ***21. If one way doesn't work, try another*** - As if in a maze, turn a corner and try a new path ***22. Link PTSD and substance abuse*** - Recognize substances as an attempt to self-medicate ***23. Alone is better than a bad relationship*** - If only treaters are safe for now, that's okay ***24. Create a new story*** - You are the author of your life: be the hero who overcomes adversity ***25. Avoid avoidable suffering*** - Prevent bad situations in advance ***26. Ask others*** - Ask others if your belief is accurate ***27. Get organized*** - You'll feel more in control with lists, "to do's" and a clean house ***28. Watch for danger signs*** - Face a problem before it becomes huge; notice red flags ***29. Healing above all*** - Focus on what matters ***30. Try something, anything*** - A good plan today is better than a perfect one tomorrow ***31. DISCOVERY*** - Find out whether your assumption is true rather than staying "in your head" ***32. Attend treatment*** - AA, self-help, therapy, medications, groups-anything that keeps you going ***33. Create a buffer*** - Put something between you and danger (e.g., time, distance) ***34. Say what you really think*** - You'll feel closer to others (but only do this with safe people) ***35. Listen to your needs*** - No more neglect - really hear what you need ***36. Move toward your opposite*** - E.g., if you are too dependent, try being more independent ***37. Replay the scene*** - Review a negative event: what can you do differently next time? ***38. Notice the cost*** - What is the price of substance abuse in your life? ***39. Structure your day*** - A productive schedule keeps you on track and connected to the world ***40. Set an action plan*** - Be specific, set a deadline, and let others know about it ***41. Protect yourself*** - Put up a shield against destructive people, bad environments, and substances ***42. Soothing talk*** - Talk to yourself very gently (as if to a friend or small child) ***43. Think of the consequences*** - Really see the impact for tomorrow, next week, next year ***44. TRUST the process*** - Just keep moving forward; the only way out is through ***45. Work the material*** - The more you practice and participate, the quicker the healing ***46. Integrate the split self*** - Accept all sides of yourself, they are there for a reason ***47. Expect GROWTH to feel uncomfortable*** - If it feels awkward or difficult you're doing it right ***48. Replace destructive activities*** - Eat candy instead of getting high ***49. Pretend you LIKE yourself*** - See how different the day feels ***50. Focus on now*** - Do what you can to make today better; don't get overwhelmed by the past or future ***51. PRAISE yourself*** - Notice what you did right; this is the most powerful method of growth ***52. Observe repeating patterns*** - Try to notice and understand your re-enactments ***53. Self-nurture*** - Do something that you enjoy (e.g., take a walk, see a movie) ***54. Practice delay*** - If you can't totally prevent a self-destructive act, at least delay it as long as possible ***55. Let go of destructive relationships*** - If it can't be fixed, detach ***56. Take responsibility*** - Take an active, not a passive approach ***57.Set a deadline*** - Make it happen by setting a date ***58. Make a commitment*** - Promise yourself to do what's right to help your recovery. ***59. Rethink*** - Think in a way that helps you feel better ***60. Detach from emotional pain (grounding)*** - Distract, walk away, change the channel ***61. LEARN from experience*** - Seek wisdom that can help you next time ***62. Solve the problem*** - Don't take it personally when things go wrong- try to just seek a solution ***63. Use kinder language*** - Make your language less harsh ***64. Examine the evidence*** - Evaluate both sides of the picture ***65. Plan it out*** - Take the time to think ahead-it's the opposite of impulsivity ***66. Identify the belief*** - For example, shoulds, deprivation reasoning ***67. REWARD yourself*** - Find a healthy way to celebrate anything you do right ***68. Create new "tapes"*** - Literally! Take a tape recorder and record a new way of thinking to play back ***69. Find rules to live by*** - Remember a phrase that works for you (e.g., "Stay real") ***70. Setbacks are not failures*** - A setback is just a setback, nothing more ***71. Tolerate the feeling*** - "No feeling is final", just get through it safely ***72. Actions first and FEELINGS will follow*** - Don't wait until you feel motivated; just start now ***73. Create POSITIVE addictions*** - Sports, hobbies, AA... ***74. When in doubt, don't*** - If you suspect danger, stay away ***75. Fight the trigger*** - Take an active approach to protect yourself ***76. Notice the source*** - Before you accept criticism or advice, notice who's telling it to you ***77. Make a decision*** - If you're stuck, try choosing the best solution you can right now; don't wait ***78. Do the right thing*** - Do what you know will help you, even if you don't feel like it ***79. Go to a meeting*** - Feet first; just get there and let the rest happen ***80. Protect your body from HIV*** - This is truly a life-or-death issue ***81. Prioritize HEALING*** - Make healing your most urgent and important goal, above all else ***82. Reach for community resources*** - Lean on them! They can be a source of great support ***83. Get others to support your RECOVERY*** - Tell people what you need ***84. Notice what you can control*** - List the aspects of your life you do control (e.g., job, friends ...)

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California Mental Health Services Authority
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MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT · PROPOSITION 63 · CALIFORNIA
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Thriving in 2013

"Compassion. Action. Change." express the organization's belief that our programs and services embrace and nurture mental wellness in all Californians, that our processes are collaborative and community-oriented, and that we are accountable for results.

Funded by the voter approval Mental Health Services Act (Prop. 63). The California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) is an organization of county governments working to improve mental health outcomes for individuals, families and communities. Prevention and Early Intervention programs implemented by CalMHSA are funded through the voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (Prop 63). Prop 63 provides the funding and framework needed to expand mental health services to previously underserved populations and all of California's diverse communities.