

Resource 6 (Activity 3)

Trying To Cope

For each of the following case studies:

- Consider how the person is presently coping.
- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of their ways of coping (both short term and long term).
- Suggest alternative, healthier ways of coping that the person could try.
- Discuss what you think may stop the person from doing this.
- Explain what you think the person can do to help cope with/overcome these obstacles.

Michelle

Michelle and her sister live with their mum. Her parents split up five years ago and her mum now has a new partner, John, who Michelle finds difficult to accept. John is okay, but he upsets her because she wants her parents to get back together again. Her sister keeps rowing with her mum and getting into trouble at school. Things have even worse since Michelle's mum got pregnant. Michelle stays in her room all the time to avoid having to listen to the rows or seeing her mum and John so happy about the new baby. She doesn't talk about it and pretends nothing is wrong, especially when at school with her friends.

David

David is worried about the exams coming up. He thought he could do all his revision just before the exams, but now they're nearly here and he doesn't know where to begin. His mum kept telling him he should study more, which just made him more determined not to (he hates it when she does that). He thinks it's her fault for being such a nag and if she'd just leave him alone he would work more in school.

Jane

Jane used to love going to her Drama class and taking part in productions. However, when spots started to appear on her face, everything changed. At first, she did what she could to keep her acne under control, but when someone made a nasty comment about it in school, she decided that it really was as awful as she feared. She thought that no one would ever want to talk to her or like her because she looked so awful. She stopped going to Drama because she felt too self-conscious and was snappy with people at home and school. People were fed up with her and stopped talking to her as often, which just reassured her that she was right in the first place.

Michael

Michael didn't get on with his parents. Whenever a row would start, he'd just go and hang out with his mates in the street. It could be boring at times but he just couldn't face going home to rows, or even worse, being ignored. He started drinking vodka to relieve the boredom of hanging about with nothing to do. It helped him to forget the loneliness and sadness he felt. After a while, that didn't seem to work, so he tried cannabis one night when it was offered to him. Something different in his boring, lonely world! It felt great to escape in any way he could. He knew what he was doing was dangerous and only provided temporary relief, but he was so unhappy he didn't care.

Resource 7 (Activity 3)

How I Cope?

Think about the following questions to help you reflect on how you cope with difficult situations in your life.

What difficult situation do you have to cope with in your life?

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What do you do to cope?

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What are the advantages of this way of coping?

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What are the disadvantages of this way of coping?

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**What alternative could be better for you, if any?
You may be using appropriate strategies already.**

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**What stops you trying these alternatives?
What might happen if you did try them?**

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Is there anything you could do to move towards more helpful/positive ways of coping – maybe even something small?

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