



10 Strategies for  
Coping and  
**RELAPSE  
PREVENTION**

We've identified ten of the most popular  
and effective coping strategies





## *The Journey to Recovery* CAN BE CHALLENGING AND COMPLICATED

...but there are many healthy coping mechanisms you can learn and use to continue working towards the best version of you.

When you find unique coping skills and relapse prevention strategies that work for you, you can continue your journey of recovery and help yourself thrive.

***We've identified ten of the most popular and effective coping strategies.***

RELAPSE PREVENTION STRATEGIES

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# 1

## JOIN A SUPPORT GROUP

When it comes to recovery, the path ahead can seem more than intimidating, especially if you're worried about going through the process alone. Joining a support group of other individuals dealing with similar obstacles is a wonderful way to find support during your journey.

This gives each participant the opportunity to discuss which coping mechanisms have been helpful, learn new coping methods, and build lasting relationships along the way.



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# 2

## REGULARLY PRACTICE SELF-CARE

Self-care is essential. Getting enough sleep, eating healthy meals, engaging in physical activity, and taking time for yourself to unwind are all crucial when trying to help yourself feel your best.

If you're not taking care of yourself, it can be easy to feel overwhelmed or triggered and resort back to harmful coping mechanisms.



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# 3

## PLAY THE TAPE FORWARD

Whether you're facing a vital decision in your recovery journey or experiencing a craving, it can be helpful to take yourself through the steps of what could result from your choices. "Play the tape" all the way forward and relive memories of the last time you used the substance.

Your use quickly spiraled out of control and likely endanger your health, mental health, relationships, career, and more. Then, play the tape forward to consider the positive benefits of other forms of stress relief, like physical activity or meditation.



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# 4

## USE GROUNDING TECHNIQUES

Grounding techniques are methods to help people refocus their attention from anxiety triggers to their immediate surroundings.

This brings them fully into the present moment and allows them to calm themselves in a variety of situations.

Some of these techniques work by making a person acknowledge and identify all five of their senses. One of the most common grounding techniques for anxiety is called the 5-4-3-2-1 method.

Identify five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste. Moving through all five senses usually disconnects your focus from the source of the anxiety and back to a centered and relaxed state of mind.



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# 5 HALT

HALT is a prevention strategy that can be used when you might be feeling a craving. HALT is an acronym that prompts you to consider if you are Hungry, Angry, Lonely, or Tired.

These feelings can often feel like or promote cravings, but they can be identified and addressed to prevent the urge to relapse. Practicing HALT can help you to take care of yourself and address your needs in a healthy way.



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# 6

## MEDITATION



Many people think that the goal of meditation is to clear your mind of all thoughts. However, meditation can take a variety of forms. To meditate simply means to observe your thoughts and feelings without judging them. This can help you sort through those thoughts and emotions and reach a more relaxed state.



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# 7

## LIST YOUR TRIGGERS

Being self-aware can help you in a variety of ways but is especially beneficial in new surroundings or situations. When you know what triggers you, you are better prepared to utilize your coping methods effectively and successfully. Listing your triggers can help you avoid high-risk situations that may prompt a relapse.



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# 8

## SET HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

As you continue to grow, you'll find that some people or hobbies aren't beneficial to your life anymore—and that's okay.

Don't be afraid to set healthy boundaries, even with the people you love. Setting boundaries can take the form of declining an event or gathering that you're uncomfortable attending. It could also include distancing yourself from friends or family members who either aren't supportive or hinder your recovery process.

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# 9 EXPLORE NEW HOBBIES AND ACTIVITIES

Going on walks, taking photos, practicing yoga, and gardening are just a few examples of new activities to dive into when you're feeling bored, unmotivated, or overwhelmed.

Hobbies are a great way to keep yourself busy and focused on something you care about while avoiding falling into old habits or unhealthy thought cycles. Replacing negative or destructive habits with healthy and creative habits is another form of self-care, too.



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# 10

## KEEP A JOURNAL



Journaling allows you to express your feelings, organize your thoughts, and reflect on them.

Healing is not linear, which means you're not always going to have upward momentum. Putting those thoughts and feelings on paper, whether in words or artwork, can help you analyze and process them.

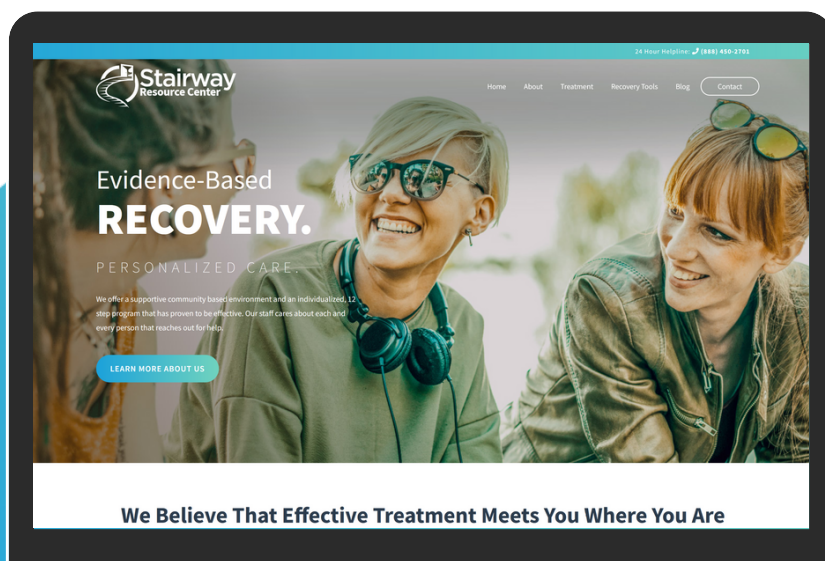
Gratitude journals are also popular among those in recovery.

Listing positive moments or events throughout your day and recognizing the things that you're thankful for can help nurture a more optimistic attitude.

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