

Your Personal Survival Toolbox



What coping strategy tools do you have in your toolbox?

Just like a builder, variety of tools are required to build and repair different things.

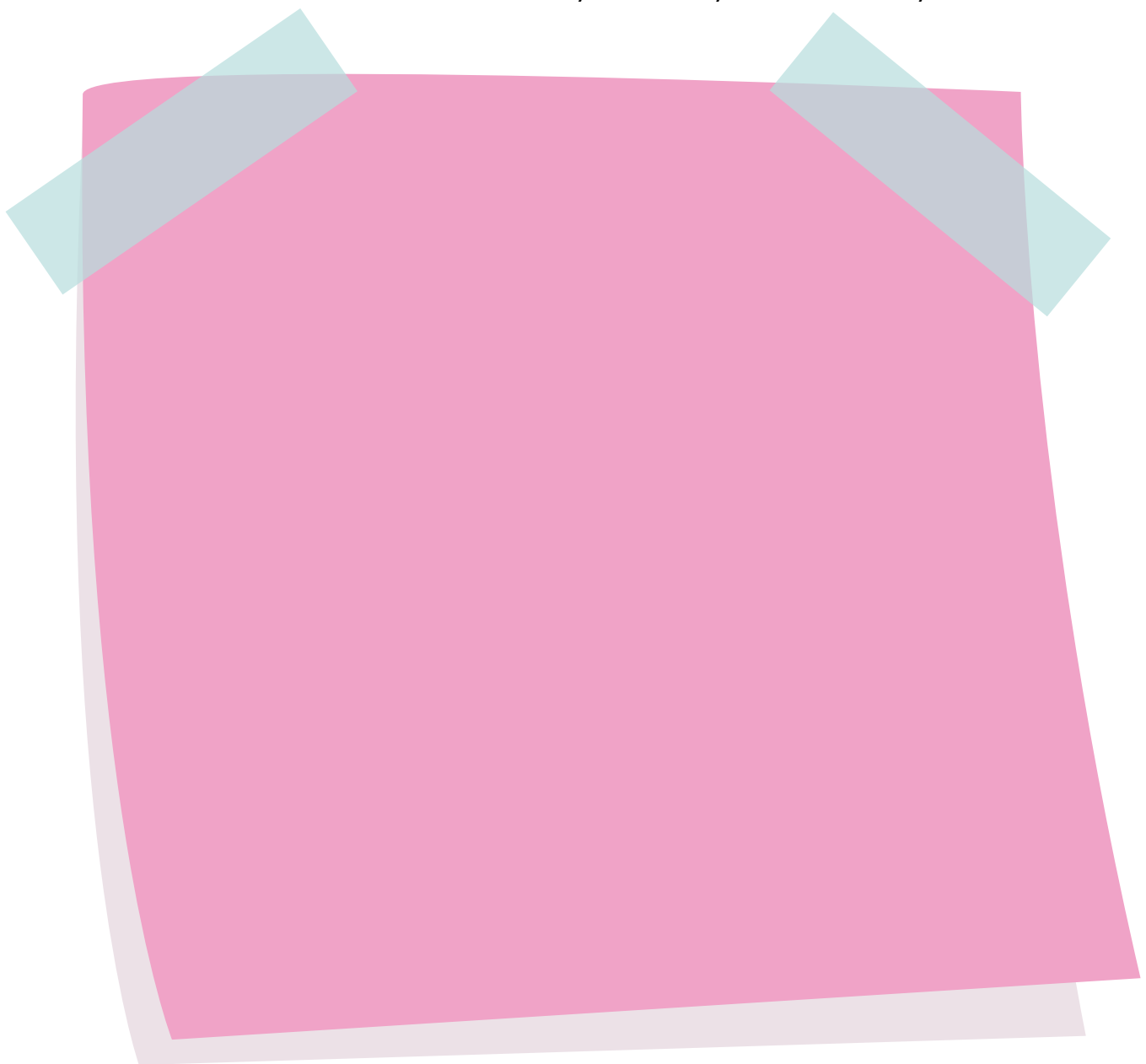
As humans we have an incredible mind capable of so much but at times, we need a little bit of extra help and support when faced with a variety of challenges in life. Just like a builder why not have a variety of tool in your personal toolbox to help you overcome obstacles and challenges.

What will this Toolbox give you?

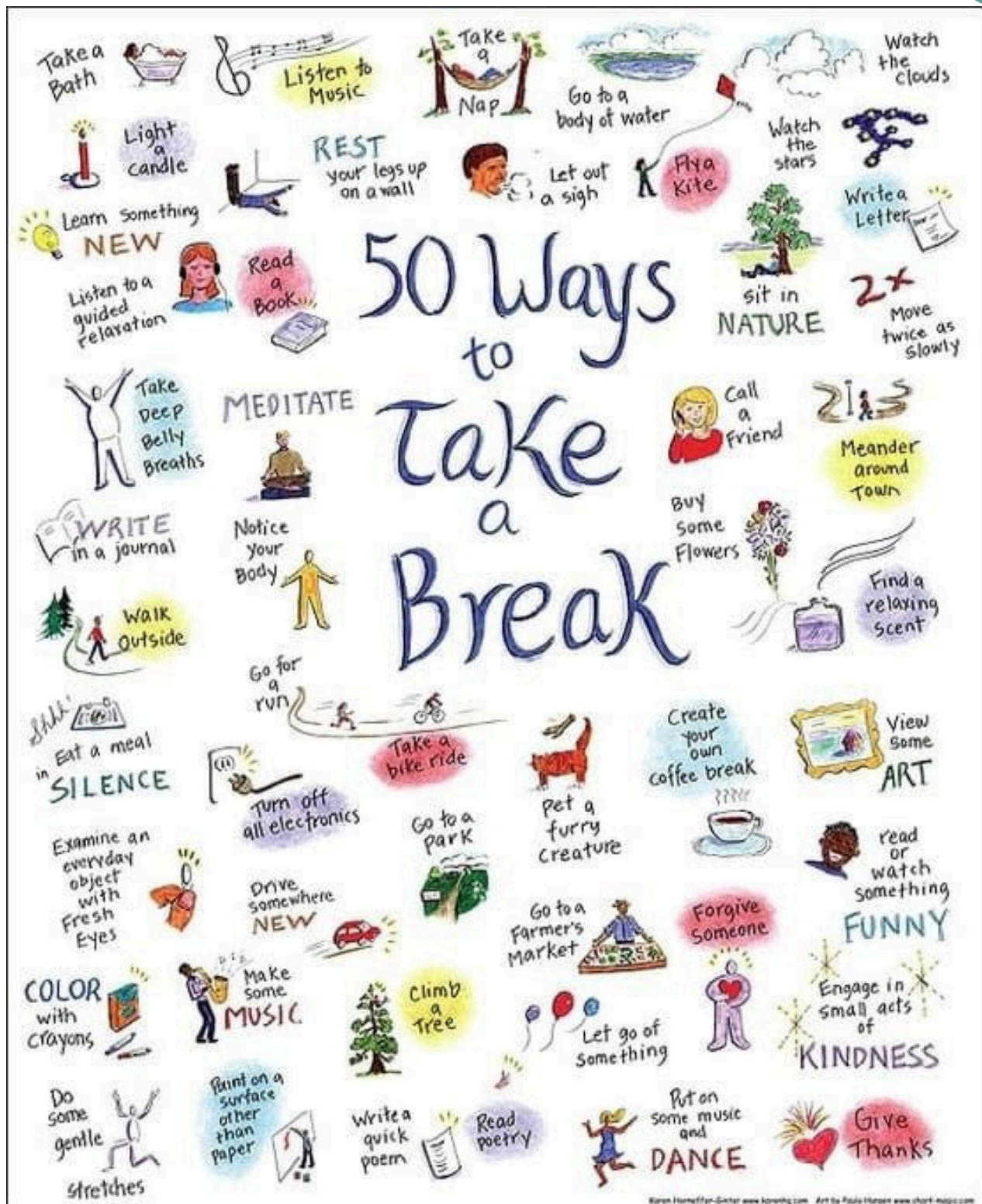
This toolbox is a coping strategy toolbox that will give you a range of tools to support you when you may feel anxious, overwhelmed, panicky or distressed. There are an infinite number of ways to cope with unwanted stress, anxiety, negative thoughts, and feelings. It is not necessarily important whether you cope like everyone else. What ultimately matters is that you find an effective coping mechanism that helps you to build resilience, confidence, and so that you can thrive pushing forward with greater ease, confidence and empowerment.

How many ways can you think of to Take a Break?

That special time out for you...Take a moment to jot down all the ways that you can take a break. Then circle the ones that you actually do consistently.



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99 Coping Skills

1. Exercise (running, walking, etc.).
2. Put on fake tattoos.
3. Write (poetry, stories, journal).
4. Scribble/doodle on paper.
5. Be with other people.
6. Watch a favorite TV show.
7. Post on web boards, and answer others' posts.
8. Go see a movie.
9. Do a wordsearch or crossword.
10. Do schoolwork.
11. Play a musical instrument.
12. Paint your nails, do your make-up or hair.
13. Sing.
14. Study the sky.
15. Punch a punching bag.
16. Cover yourself with Band-Aids where you want to cut.
17. Let yourself cry.
18. Take a nap (only if you are tired).
19. Take a hot shower or relaxing bath.
20. Play with a pet.
21. Go shopping.
22. Clean something.
23. Knit or sew.
24. Read a good book.
25. Listen to music.
26. Try some aromatherapy (candle, lotion, room spray).
27. Meditate.
28. Go somewhere very public.
29. Bake cookies.
30. Alphabetize your CDs/DVDs/books.
31. Paint or draw.
32. Rip paper into itty-bitty pieces.
33. Shoot hoops, kick a ball.
34. Write a letter or send an email.
35. Plan your dream room (colors/furniture).
36. Hug a pillow or stuffed animal.
37. Hyperfocus on something like a rock, hand, etc.
38. Dance.
39. Make hot chocolate, milkshake or smoothie.
40. Play with modeling clay or Play-Dough.
41. Build a pillow fort.
42. Go for a nice, long drive.
43. Complete something you've been putting off.
44. Draw on yourself with a marker.
45. Take up a new hobby.
46. Look up recipes, cook a meal.
47. Look at pretty things, like flowers or art.
48. Create or build something.
49. Pray.
50. Make a list of blessings in your life.
51. Read the Bible.
52. Go to a friend's house.
53. Jump on a trampoline.
54. Watch an old, happy movie.
55. Contact a hotline/ your therapist.
56. Talk to someone close to you.
57. Ride a bicycle.
58. Feed the ducks, birds, or squirrels.
59. Color with Crayons.
60. Memorize a poem, play, or song.
61. Stretch.
62. Search for ridiculous things on the internet.
63. "Shop" on-line (without buying anything).
64. Color-coordinate your wardrobe.
65. Watch fish.
66. Make a CD/playlist of your favorite songs.
67. Play the "15 minute game." (Avoid something for 15 minutes, when time is up start again.)
68. Plan your wedding/prom/other event.
69. Plant some seeds.
70. Hunt for your perfect home or car on-line.
71. Try to make as many words out of your full name as possible.
72. Sort through your photographs.
73. Play with a balloon.
74. Give yourself a facial.
75. Find yourself some toys and play.
76. Start collecting something.
77. Play video/computer games.
78. Clean up trash at your local park.
79. Perform a random act of kindness for someone.
80. Text or call an old friend.
81. Write yourself an "I love you because..." letter.
82. Look up new words and use them.
83. Rearrange furniture.
84. Write a letter to someone that you may never send.
85. Smile at least five people.
86. Play with little kids.
87. Go for a walk (with or without a friend).
88. Put a puzzle together.
89. Clean your room / closet.
90. Try to do handstands, cartwheels, or backbends.
91. Yoga.
92. Teach your pet a new trick.
93. Learn a new language.
94. Move EVERYTHING in your room to a new spot.
95. Get together with friends and play Frisbee, soccer or basketball.
96. Hug a friend or family member.
97. Search on-line for new songs/artists.
98. Make a list of goals for the week/month/year/5 years.
99. Face paint.


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In order to be able to address the unwanted thoughts, you must come to understand that our Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviours do not work in isolation. All 3 elements are influenced by our external experiences and environment which have formed into beliefs. Therefore, then ingraining a behavioural emotional pattern. This pattern can be both negative and positive. In this toolbox I shall be sharing with you how you can turn around negative into positive.

Remember!!!

There is no magic wand. It takes dedication and desire to want to make positive changes. And it is an ongoing journey where you will encounter ups and downs. But what you will have with practice and dedication is the tools to manage difficult situations with more ease and resilience.



Positive Self Talk is Key

What is positive self-talk?

Positive self-talk is a strategy that we can use to help us get through anxiety-provoking situations. It helps us to break stress up and involves focusing on positive rather than negative statements. It is not easy but with practice, positive self-talk can truly be 💪 POWERFUL 🤝 and 🦊 EMPOWERING 🦊

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- 👉 When it comes to thoughts, you have a lot of mind control. Your body listens and responds to your thoughts.

Your mental self-talk can be **Positive** or **Negative**.

- 👉 Sports Psychology is a great example of the power of mind control. An athlete is taught how to stay positive; to stay calm; to be focused; to be confident; to visualise 'seeing yourself as a winner,' and to picture the ball in the hole. Many athletes find success with this positive thinking and imagery.
- 👉 Another way of positive thinking and imagery is used in relaxation and relieving stress. You can imagine a scene, a place, or an event that you remember as peaceful, restful beautiful, and happy. It acts as a retreat from places of stress and pressure; consequently, the body actually responds with a lower blood pressure and lower pulse rate to calm down and relax.

Just as making positive statements to yourself helps you to build confidence, improve performance, and improve mental skills, to eliminate negative thinking which damages these things.

Our subconscious mind can't tell the difference between what is real and what is imagined. It takes any pictures and any thoughts that you send to it as reality. Once you direct an image or visualisation to your subconscious brain, it will work 24 hours a day to make it a reality, coming up with a plan to make those thoughts true for your life. So, choose your self-talk very carefully because your subconscious brain will take whatever you send it, as real!

Examples:

If you were taught as a child that all dogs will be you, your mind will automatically raise fear every time you see a dog. Although your friend tells you that her dog is friendly, your mind believes and sends the messages. You have to retrain your brain to change this negative thought pattern.

If you are continually saying to yourself: *'I'm really bad at math,'* then your brain will send those thought messages (Self-talk) reminders to you like, *'I can't do this,' 'This is too hard for me,' 'I'll never get this because I am bad at math.'*

Start now! And change your negative self-talk. Start to retrain your brain because it can be done!

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👉 Note: You can retain and change your thinking by having more empowering self-talk. It is not easy at first but with practice and consistency it will happen and it will change your life!!!

Preparation, Coping, and Review

There are three key stages: preparation, coping, and review, that I would like you to do when faced with negative thoughts.

Preparation

As you are about to enter a situation or face something that you find daunting, you can help yourselves to prepare with positive statements such as:

"It's not going to be as bad as I think."

"It won't last long and I can cope."

"I am getting better and need to re-build my confidence."

"If I do get bad feelings, I know they won't last long, and I can cope with them." "It's better to go than not to go. Worry doesn't help."

"I might enjoy it if I go."

Coping

To help you cope and stay in the situation, you can use positive statements such as:

"Concentrate on what is going on... not how I feel."

"This is just anxiety; it is an unpleasant feeling, but I've never been ill."

"Concentrate on what I have to do."

"I know I am going to be OK."

"The feelings always pass."

"Relax and think positively."

"One step at a time."

"Anxious feelings are unpleasant, but not harmful or dangerous."

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Review

Comments to help you review your achievement and give yourself praise:

"I coped with that."

"I achieved that; I am getting better."

"I handled that; it should be easier next time."

"I can be pleased with the progress I'm making."

"I did that well."

"If I keep this up, I'm going to get really good at this."

Remember!!! Even when things don't go according to plan, you should still take time to review the situation and praise yourself for what you have achieved. However small it may be. Each small step is progress, so try to focus on the positives of what you have learnt rather than the negatives.

Here are some additional of self-talk statements for you to use.

Pick a couple at a time to practice.

1. Preparation for Stress

I've succeeded with this before.
What exactly do I have to do?
I know I can do each one of these tasks.
It's easier once I get started.
I'll jump in and be all right.
Tomorrow I'll be through it.
I won't let negative thoughts creep in.

2. Facing a Challenge

I will take it step by step; I won't rush.
I can do this; I'm doing it now.
I can only do my best.
Any tension I feel is a signal to use my coping exercises.
I can get help if I need it.
If I don't think about fear, I won't be afraid.
If I get tense, I'll take a deep breath and relax.
It's OK to make mistakes.

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3. Coping with Fear

Relax now!

Just breathe deeply.

There's an end to it.

Keep my mind on right now—on the task at hand.

I can keep this within limits I can handle.

I can always call _____

I am only afraid because I decided to be. I can decide not to be.

I've survived this and worse before.

Being active will lessen my fear.

4. Self-Congratulations

I did it!

I did all right.

I did well.

Next time, I won't have to worry so much.

I am able to relax away anxiety.

I've got to tell _____ about this.

It's possible not to be scared.

All I have to do is stop thinking I'm scared.

5. Affirmations

Every day in every way I grow stronger and stronger. I enter this day with a peaceful heart.

Positive Affirmations

Affirmations are a great way to replace Negative Thoughts with more Positive Thoughts. I am a real advocate for affirmations, which have really supported my journey and continues to do so...

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These statements have helped many of my clients fight their negative thoughts from as young as 12 years of age through to adults. Affirmations can help when you are thinking negative thoughts or even when you are not thinking negatively. It can also be used to set your intentions for the day and how you would like to feel and be. Affirmations are more effective the more often you say them and have them in your visibility as they subconsciously start to embed.

These are just some samples of Affirmations to get you started but I encourage you to create your own which resonate solely.

I am responsible and in control of my life.

Circumstances are what they are, but I can choose my attitude towards them.

I am becoming prosperous.

I am creating the financial resources I need.

I am setting priorities and making time for what is important.

Life has its challenges and its satisfactions; I enjoy the adventure of life.

Every challenge that comes along is an opportunity for me to learn and to grow.

I accept the natural ups and downs of life.

I love and accept myself the way I am.

I deserve the good things in my life as much as anyone else.

I am open to discovering new meaning in my life.

It's never too late to change.

I am improving one step at a time.

I am innately healthy, strong, and capable of recovering.

I am getting better every day.

I am committed to overcoming my condition.

I am working on recovering from my condition.

I can recover by taking small risks at my own pace.

I am looking forward to the new freedom and opportunities I'll have when I've recovered.

I am learning to love myself.

I am learning to be comfortable by myself.

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*If someone doesn't return my love, I let it go and move on.
I am learning to be at peace with myself when alone.
I am learning how to enjoy when alone.
I respect and believe in myself apart from others' opinions.
I can accept and learn from constructive criticism.
I am learning to be myself around others.
It's important to take care of my own needs.
It's okay to be myself around others.
I appreciate my achievements and I'm much more than all of them put together.
I am learning how to balance work and self-care in my life.
I am learning that there is more to life than success.
The greatest success is living well.
I am a unique and capable person just as I am.
I am proud of doing the best I can.
It's okay to make mistakes.
I am willing to accept my mistakes and to learn from them.
I am willing to allow others to help me.
I acknowledge my need for other people.
I am open to receiving support from others.
I am willing to take the risk of getting close to someone.
I am willing to relax and to let go.
I am learning to accept those things I can't control.*

If you wish you may buy my book of Affirmations that I have used and still practice today...
Available on Amazon '**Begin Each Day with Positive Affirmations and Empowering Questions**'

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Coping with thoughts – Self-talk

Positive statements encourage us and help us cope with distressing times. We can say these encouraging words to ourselves and be our own personal coach. We have all survived some very distressing times, and we can use those experiences to encourage us through current difficulties.

For Example, some coping tools for thoughts may be as follows:

- *Stop and breathe; I can do this.*
- *This, too, will pass.*
- *I can be anxious/angry/sad and still deal with this.*
- *I have done this before, and I can do it again.*
- *This feels bad; however, it's a normal body reaction. It will pass.*
- *This feels bad, but feelings may sometimes be wrong.*
- *These are just feelings; they will go away.*
- *This won't last forever.*
- *Short-term pain for long-term gain.*
- *I can feel bad and still choose to take a new and healthy direction.*
- *I don't need to rush; I can take things slowly.*
- *I have survived before, so I will survive now.*
- *I feel this way because of my past experiences, but I am safe right now.*
- *It's okay to feel this way; it's a normal reaction.*
- *Right now, I am not in danger. Right now, I'm safe.*
- *My mind is not always my friend.*
- *Thoughts are just thoughts—they are not necessarily true or factual.*
- *This is difficult and uncomfortable, but it's only temporary.*
- *I can use my coping skills and get through this.*
- *I can learn from this, and it will be easier next time.*
- *Keep calm and carry on.*

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Task: Write down a coping thought or positive statement for each difficult or distressing situation—something you can tell yourself that will help you get through.

Write them down on a piece of card and carry it in your pocket or handbag to help remind you.

DIFFICULT/ DISTRESSING THOUGHT	POSITIVE STATEMENT/ COPING THOUGHT TOOL
<i>E.G I always feel awkward around new people.</i>	<i>E.G Just because I feel awkward does not mean that others see me that way.</i>

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Evidence Logging

Evidence collecting is key to your thought transformation. However small or insignificant it may seem that evidence will support the alternative Core Belief.

Write down the evidence on the form below as soon as possible after you notice the evidence. Otherwise, you might forget, minimise, or discount the evidence. You can also make a note on your phone or laptop if you do not have the form at hand.

Start by collecting one piece of evidence each day and gradually increase to 2, 3, or 5 pieces of evidence each day to support the new healthy core belief.

Alternative/Healthy Core Belief: E.G: I'm going to fail high school and not get into a good college.

DATE	POSITIVE STATEMENT/ COPING THOUGHT TOOL
<i>E.G 10/01/...</i>	<i>E.G I got a B in my Science Exam</i>

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Acronym GLAD- Learning and Appreciating to be GLAD

Acronyms are great ways to remember and motivate oneself to do things.

G: Something you were grateful for today.

Think of something very basic for which you are grateful. It could be something as simple as the sunlight or the nourishing food you eat. Write it below.

Now think of something truly important in your life like a meaningful relationship, kids, friends, or your health. Write it below.

L: Something you learned today.

Write down something positive you learned about yourself today. It might be something you already knew, but it came into focus today.

Write down something you learned about another person today. Again, it might be something you were already aware of, but you were more aware of this quality today.

Write down a fact you learned today that made you curious or more aware of the world around you.

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Write down how something you learned today changed your perspective of yourself or the world around you positively.

A: One small accomplishment you did today.

Many people feel that accomplishments have to be a big important task, but it's the little things that make a difference in your life. Perhaps you are working on a goal like exercising or eating healthier or finding a new job. Small steps towards your goal are important accomplishments.

Write down something you accomplished today.

D: Something that brought you delight today. What made you laugh or smile?

What small thing of beauty did you see today?

What did you hear today that lifted your spirits? A song? A child's voice? A joke?

Now close your eyes and think of your day and what you wrote. Breathe deeply for a few minutes and visualize a positive image from the day. Write down something important from this exercise that you want to remember.

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I hope that this resource will be give you value and be useful to you in filling up your Toolbox with all the tools that you need to create a stronger and much more calming mind when faced with adversity.

Thank you for downloading this material.

If you would like to find out more, about how I can support your children or yourself in making positive changes in life, then book a call with me and let's talk.

🦋 Warmest wishes,


THE CLARITY COACH

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