

# COPING SKILLS

Experiment and see which of these skills helps you feel more calm and in control:

## Active/Expelling Actions

Exercise/Movement: Sports, running, biking, hiking, dancing, swimming

Organizing/Cleaning: Cleaning the house, car, work space, organizing closets, yard work,

Cathartic Actions: Writing, drawing, painting, screaming, singing, punching pillows, talking with someone you trust,

Creative Actions: Journaling, writing, painting, woodworking, metalworking, ceramics, acting

## Soothing Actions

Calming/Controlling the mind: Meditation, visualization

Calming/Controlling the body: Taking a hot/cold bath or hot tub, splashing water on the face, getting a hug from a friend or family member, getting a massage, getting acupuncture/acupuncture;

## **Coping Skills During Work and School Hours:**

These are skills that we can use when we are feeling angry, anxious, or hyper. Some you can do at your desk, and some you might need to take a break and get outside for a few minutes.

- Take a short walk to the water fountain, bathroom, or a colleague's office.
- Write what you are feeling and rate its intensity on a scale of 1 – 10; you can also choose to write a bit about why you feel this way.
- Talk to someone about what is bothering you.
- Journal about what is bothering you.
- As fast as you can, do as many push ups/jumping jacks/run as possible.
- Count to 10 before you say something or make a decision
- Take some deep breaths and focus on air as it comes in through nose and out through mouth- don't try to change it, just keep your mind noticing it.
- Practice remembering the happiest memory you can think about – laughing very hard with a friend, playing catch with you dog, eating your grandma's lasagna, whatever makes you happy. Now think of what you smelled that day, what you heard, what you could feel on your skin, what you tasted, and what you felt. Let the sense memory intensify until you can really hear, smell, taste, feel, or see it again. Notice again how you are feeling. Has it shifted at all?
- Decide to take a "vacation" from the feeling and come back to it later while you distract yourself. Write down what is bothering you and put it in a box or envelope for safe keeping where you can deal with it a bit later.