

Cope Ahead of Time with Difficult Situations

1. **Describe** the situation that is likely to prompt problem behavior.
 - Check the facts. Be specific in describing the situation.
 - Name the emotions and actions likely to interfere with using your skills.
2. **Decide** what coping or problem-solving skills you want to use in the situation.
 - Be specific. Write out in detail how you will cope with the situation and with your emotions and action urges.
3. **Imagine the situation** in your mind as vividly as possible.
 - Imagine yourself **IN** the situation **NOW**, not watching the situation.
4. **Rehearse in your mind coping effectively.**
 - Rehearse in your mind exactly what you can do to cope effectively.
 - Rehearse your actions, your thoughts, what you say, and how to say it.
 - Rehearse coping effectively with new problems that come up.
 - Rehearse coping effectively with your most feared catastrophe.
5. **Practice relaxation *after* rehearsing.**

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