



Hearing Voices Network

HEARING VOICES NETWORK AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Coping Strategies – 1

THINGS THAT HELP VOICE HEARERS TO COPE

- Meditation
- Listening to music
- Keeping physically active and healthy
- Keeping occupied e.g. cooking, house chores
- Distraction e.g. reading, and computer games
- Religion/Deliverance and Healing
- Sex
- Chanting or singing
- Holidays
- Money
- Massage
- Acupuncture
- Taking medication dampens them and can make them go (not if bad side effects)
- Some medication is better than others.
- Avoiding street drugs
- Smoking cigarettes
- Isolating self
- Humour
- Sleeping
- Shouting at the voices
- Ignoring voices
- Having good support around you – good CPN, psychiatrist, psychologist, counsellor
- Positive attitudes
- Talking
- Staff listening to you
- Praying /speaking to God
- Keeping a diary about them
- Identifying when you are most likely to hear the voices
- Going to voices groups
- Focusing on the voices

WHAT DOES NOT HELP

- Being over-medicated
- Being under- medicated
- Professionals thinking they know more about your voices than you do
- Dreams and trying to get to sleep
- Lack of sleep
- Side effects of the medication
- Not having information
- Other people denying the existence of voices
- Being told not to talk about voices
- Other people denying your explanation of your voices
- Labelling
- Thinking negatively
- Professionals asking too many questions



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Coping Strategies – 2

DISTRACTION TECHNIQUES

- Cleaning
- Tidying
- Washing
- Playing games/cards/computer
- Sports
- Exercise – walking/running/dance/beach
- Shallow water walking
- Gardening / striking pot plants
- Visiting a friend
- Telephoning a friend
- Paint or draw pictures / posters / cards
- Write letters
- Puzzles
- Watch TV / video
- Listening to music / walkman
- Cinema
- Shopping
- Hobbies / sewing /knitting / collecting
- Dance

POSITIVE EMOTIONAL TECHNIQUES

- Read books, love letters, love poems
- Look at photo albums
- Listen to emotional music
- Watch films – comedy or inspirational
- Read joke books / emails
- Say positive statements to self
- Make an emergency bundle
- Make a list of assets or strengths
- Read your list of assets or strengths
- Self voice tape
- Look at good things achieved
- Look at the list of good things others have said about you
- Go for a picnic

EMOTIONAL FOCUSING

- List emotional triggers
- Write poetry / prose regarding feelings
- Paint / draw emotions
- Write a diary
- Discuss feelings with another person
- Rainy day letter

COMFORTING TECHNIQUES

- Hold a safe object
- Cuddle up to a teddy
- Sit in a safe place
- Listen to soothing music / favourite soft music
- Sing favourite songs
- Use perfume / hand cream
- Spray room fragrance
- Use pot pouri / essential oils
- Buy / pick fresh flowers
- Eat a favourite food
- Have a soothing drink
- Have a bubble bath
- Soak your feet / Radox bath
- Change the sheets on your bed
- Stroke / brush your pet or someone else's
- Wear comfortable clothes
- Hug someone
- Put lights / radio on (to sleep)
- Zen seeing (with a friend)
- Prayer / meditation / creative visualization



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Coping Strategies – 3

RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

- Guided fantasy dreamtime
- Focus solely on breathing / breath deeply
- Learn (figure 8) Yoga breath
- Count your breaths
- Focus on the position of your body
- Relax each muscle individually
- Listen to relaxing music
- Listen to guided relaxation on tape
- Meditation
- Yoga
- Massage hands, feet, head, etc
- Swimming / floating

POINTS TO REMEMBER TO ENABLE ME TO LOOK AFTER MYSELF

- Thinking about how I am feeling and be realistic about what I can achieve
- Planning my day, ensuring I do not have long periods of time with nothing to do.
- Do something for me each day
- Paint
- Take medication as prescribed (in consultation)
- Keep regular appointments with support network even if I am feeling OK
- Eat a healthy diet
- Try to see the grey areas

THINGS THAT WORK FOR ME IN A CRISIS

- To let someone know how I am feeling
- To ask for help sooner than later
- To hand in my medication / blades
- To plan safety
- To have PRN medication
- To cry
- To try to identify how I am feeling
- To shout into my pillow
- To kick boxes around outside
- To rest on my bed
- To find a safe place
- To let people know where I am