



Build Mastery and Cope Ahead

Build Mastery

1. Plan on doing at least one thing each day to build a sense of accomplishment.

Example: _____

2. Plan for success, not failure.

- Do something difficult, but possible.

3. Gradually increase the difficulty over time.

- If the first task is too difficult, do something a little easier next time.

4. Look for a challenge.

- If the task is too *easy*, try something a little harder next time.

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.**