



## UNC CFAR Social and Behavioral Science Research Core SABI Database

**INSTRUMENT TITLE:** *Ways of Coping Scale*

**SOURCE ARTICLE:** Folkman, S., Lazarus, R. S., Dunkel-Schetter, C., DeLongis, A., & Gruen, R. J. (1986). Dynamics of a stressful encounter: Cognitive appraisal, coping, and encounter outcomes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 50(5), 992-1003.

**RESPONSE OPTIONS:** 4-point Likert scale: 0 = does not apply and/or not used; 1 = used somewhat; 2 = used quite a bit; 3 = used a great deal

### **SURVEY ITEMS:**

Scale 1: Confrontive coping ( $\alpha = .70$ )

- 46. Stood my ground and fought for what I wanted.
- 7. Tried to get the person responsible to change his or her mind.
- 17. I expressed anger to the person(s) who caused the problem.
- 28. I let my feelings out somehow.
- 34. Took a big chance or did something very risky.
- 6. I did something which I didn't think would work, but at least I was doing something.

Scale 2: Distancing ( $\alpha = .61$ )

- 44. Made light of the situation; refused to get too serious about it.
- 13. Went on as if nothing had happened.
- 41. Didn't let it get to me; refused to think about it too much.
- 21. Tried to forget the whole thing.
- 15. Looked for the silver lining, so to speak; tried to look on the bright side of things.
- 12. Went along with fate; sometimes I just have bad luck.

Scale 3: Self-controlling ( $\alpha = .70$ )

- 14. I tried to keep my feelings to myself. .55
- 43. Kept others from knowing how bad things were.
- 10. Tried not to burn my bridges, but leave things open somewhat.

### **TERMS OF USE:**

Individuals may use this information for research or educational purposes only and may not use this information for commercial purposes. When using this instrument, please cite:

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- 35. I tried not to act too hastily or follow my first hunch.
- 54. I tried to keep my feelings from interfering with other things too much.
- 62. I went over in my mind what I would say or do.
- 63. I thought about how a person I would admire would handle the situation and used that as a model.

### Scale 4: Seeking social support ( $\alpha = .76$ )

- 8. Talked to someone to find out more about the situation.
- 31. Talked to someone who could do something concrete about the problem.
- 42. I asked a relative or friend I respected for advice.
- 45. Talked to someone about how I was feeling.
- 18. Accepted sympathy and understanding from someone.
- 22. I got professional help.

### Scale 5: Accepting responsibility ( $\alpha = .66$ )

- 9. Criticized or lectured myself.
- 29. Realized I brought the problem on myself.
- 51. I made a promise to myself that things would be different next time.
- 25. I apologized or did something to make up.

### Scale 6: Escape-Avoidance ( $\alpha = .72$ )

- 58. Wished that the situation would go away or somehow be over with.
- 11. Hoped a miracle would happen.
- 59. Had fantasies about how things might turn out.
- 33. Tried to make myself feel better by eating, drinking, smoking, using drugs or medication, and so forth.
- 40. Avoided being with people in general.
- 50. Refused to believe that it had happened.
- 47. Took it out on other people.
- 16. Slept more than usual.

### Scale 7: Planful problem-solving ( $\alpha = .68$ )

- 49. I knew what had to be done, so I doubled my efforts to make things work.

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26. I made a plan of action and followed it.  
1. Just concentrated on what I had to do next—the next step.  
39. Changed something so things would turn out all right.  
48. Drew on my past experiences; I was in a similar position before.  
52. Came up with a couple of different solutions to the problem.

Scale 8: Positive reappraisal ( $\alpha = .79$ )

23. Changed or grew as a person in a good way.  
30. I came out of the experience better than when I went in.  
36. Found new faith.  
38. Rediscovered what is important in life.  
60. I prayed.  
56. I changed something about myself.  
20. I was inspired to do something creative.

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