

**TRANSITIONAL
LIFE SKILLS
FOR TEENS**

**TEENS ~
OUT-OF-THE-BOX
COPING SKILLS ▶**

**Facilitator Reproducible
Activities for Groups
and Individuals**

**Ester R. A. Leutenberg
Carol Butler, MS Ed, RN, C**

**Illustrated by
Amy L. Brodsky, LISW-S**

TEENS ~
OUT = OF = THE = BOX
COPING SKILLS

**Facilitator Reproducible
Activities for Groups
and Individuals**

**Ester R.A. Leutenberg
Carol Butler, MS Ed, RN, C**

Illustrated by
Amy L. Brodsky, LISW-S



101 W. 2nd St., Suite 203
Duluth, MN 55802

800-247-6789

books@wholeperson.com
www.wholeperson.com

Teens – Out-of-the-Box Coping Skills

Facilitator Reproducible Activities for Groups and Individuals

Copyright ©2015 by Ester R.A. Leutenberg and Carol Butler.
All rights reserved. Except for short excerpts for review purposes and materials in the activities and handouts sections, no part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical without permission in writing from the publisher. Activities and handouts are meant to be photocopied.

All efforts have been made to ensure accuracy of the information contained in this book as of the date published. The author(s) and the publisher expressly disclaim responsibility for any adverse effects arising from the use or application of the information contained herein.

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Editorial Director: Carlene Sippola
Art Director: Joy Morgan Dey
Assistant Art Director: Mathew Pa
wlak

Library of Congress Control Number: 2014957798
ISBN: 978-157025-325-6

Why this Book is Entitled “*Teens ~ Out-of-the-Box Coping Skills*”

To introduce the activities in an exciting way, at the start of every session, a teen takes an item from a brightly decorated box and learns the skill of thinking outside-of-the-box in creative ways. This hands-on action and the visual aids foster anticipation, participation and revelation.

Out-of-the-Box Modalities

- Acrostics, cutout puzzles
- Analogies, parables
- Brainstorming
- Bumper stickers, tee shirt slogans
- Cartoons, collages, doodles, drawings, mazes, squiggles, captions
- Charades, dance, pantomime, improvisational theater
- Demonstrations, discussions, guess-the-skill scenarios, presentations
- Flash cards
- Games
- Hidden pictures
- Impersonations
- Interviews
- Media message simulations: ads, blogs, commercials, documentaries, magazine spreads, movie clips, online profiles, overwrites, posts, reality show clips, skits, social media, song lyrics, sports events, replays, texts, videos, voice-overs, websites
- Mind maps
- News broadcasts
- Pass-the-paper
- Posters
- Quotations
- Situation prompts
- Speech balloons, thought bubbles
- Surveys
- Traditional techniques: sentence completion, matching, fill in the blanks
- Writing: poetry, prose, tongue twisters, new word creations, story in six words, storyboard

***Students “are more like oysters than sausages.
The job of teaching is not to stuff them and then seal them up,
but to help them open and reveal the riches within.”***

~Sydney J. Harris

Format of the Book

Introduction for Teen Participants

This motivates the teens to think outside of the box and engage in activities in creative ways. Suggestion - present the handout as an overview before the first session (page vii).

Cover page for each chapter

The cover page of each chapter describes each of the sessions and provides a pertinent quotation to help facilitators in the following ways:

- Topic selection
- Preparation of group
- Discussion stimulation

This will prompt a creative, out-of-the-box experience for the teens. After the first activity in each chapter, the cover page can be photocopied and distributed to teens to vote on which activity they would like to do next.

The back of each cover page lists the coping skills in each activity.

- Teens can preview the skills they will work on.
- Facilitators may use these as behavioral goals and lists of competencies.

Seven Chapters

1. De-Stress
2. Build Emotional Empowerment
3. Develop Healthy Habits
4. Manage Social Media
5. Stand Up for Self and Others
6. Overcome Obstacles
7. Advance Beyond Coping – Thrive

Information about Chapters

Sessions may stand alone based on specific needs.

Facilitators may skip around; pick and choose among different activities.

A chapter may serve as an entire workshop.

Most handouts adapt to individual or group use.

Components in each session

Reproducible handouts - Facilitators may photocopy and distribute as is or white out and/or add text as desired and then photocopy.

For the Facilitator - Information on the back of each handout (*For the Facilitator page*):

- I. **Purpose**
The goals for the teens in each session.
- II. **General Comments**
Brief background information.
- III. **Possible Activities**
Ways to present topics and responses to elicit.
- IV. **Enrichment Activities**
Additional learning experiences; ways to conclude and follow up.

Coping Skills that Teens will Practice in these Chapters

Chapter Cover Pages

Front: Skills are defined for teens.

Back: Competencies for the facilitators to evaluate.

Throughout all of the chapters, teens will be encouraged to do the following:

Demonstrate oral, written and creative expression skills.

Practice giving and receiving feedback.

1. De-Stress

- Diversions
- Emotional identification, acceptance, empowerment, endurance
- Impulse control
- Perspective, visual and emotional
- Self protection
- Social awareness
- Stress management and stress as a motivator
- Thought changing

2. Build Emotional Empowerment

- Altruism
- Anger management
- Compassion
- Facing fears
- Handling hurt feelings
- Handling temptation
- Humor
- Perseverance
- Self-control
- Selflessness and healthy selfishness
- Positive self-talk
- Reversing apathy

3. Develop Healthy Habits

- Decision making
- Healthy habits
- Positive reinforcement
- Self-change

4. Manage Social Media

- Analysis and interpretation
- Authenticity
- Body image awareness and acceptance
- Handle envy
- Role modeling
- Self-disclosure (as appropriate)
- Social Skills

5. Stand Up for Self and Others

- Advocacy
- Assertiveness
- Courageousness
- Empathy
- Non-judgmental attitude
- Resiliency
- Respect

6. Overcome Obstacles

- Goal setting
- Gratitude
- Inner strength development
- Overcome obstacles
- Possibility thinking
- Problem solving
- Spirituality
- Visualization

7. Advance Beyond Coping – Thrive

- Bravery
- Faith and hope
- Healthy risk taking
- Humanitarianism
- Kindness
- Purposeful life
- Self-challenge, discovery, improvement
- Social consciousness
- Volunteerism

Ideas to Facilitate Innovative Coping Skills

*Tell me and I forget.
Teach me and I remember.
Involve me and I learn.*
~Benjamin Franklin

Teens ~ Out-of-the-Box Coping Skills activities are creative out of the box ways to develop coping skills.

Obtain a box large enough for a magazine or a page printed from the computer. Encourage volunteers to decorate the box to make the sessions even more unusual and fun.

A volunteer takes an item or a picture from the box at the start of each session and shows it to the group to introduce the topic. Tell the teens that the activities pertaining to the box are creative, out-of-the-box ways to learn coping skills.

Tip – keep magazines on hand for illustrations and plan a quick computer search for “a picture of ____.”

Items suggested for the box are easily accessible. Pictures may be substituted.

Before any session

- Glance at chapter cover pages which summarize each activity.
- Select the handout and review the facilitator information on the back.
- Place the suggested item or picture into the box.
- Decide on the format; often individual, team, board activity or other variations are suggested.
- Photocopy the handouts.
- Select a volunteer to take the item out of the box and show the group.

Teens learn through involvement:

- Put their own spin on quotes or poems.
- Create drawings or symbolizations.
- Portray concepts through charades or improvisations.
- Compose bumper stickers or tee shirt slogans.
- Write texts, poetry and prose.
- Become a game show host or a team player.
- Develop a simulated online *real deal* profile.
- Use other methods of introspective and interactive expression.

Some ground rules to review with teens:

Keep confidentiality – what is said in the sessions stays in the sessions.

Use code names for the privacy of people they write about and themselves.

Example: “MBS” for “My buddy Steve.”

Talk with a teacher, counselor or other trusted adult if overwhelming feelings surface in the session.

Facilitators remain vigilant for signs that a teen could endanger self or others, has severe conflict at home, needs to address serious issues, or suffers from emotional or addiction problems, etc.

Refer troubled teens to a school counselor, mental health or medical professional; if danger is imminent, call 911 or the local emergency services number or arrange for teens to go to the nearest hospital emergency department.

Introduction for Teen Participants

If you already *think outside the box*
or
If you want to tap into your creative side
or
If you'd like to learn skills to handle your issues ...

These activities are for you!

Through the activities in *Teens ~ Out-of-the-Box Coping Skills* you'll figure out ways to
grow:

Cope with stress
Empower yourself
Develop Healthy Habits
Manage Social Media
Stand Up for Your Self and Others
Overcome Obstacles
Go Beyond Coping – to Thrive!

**Would you rather be a sausage, crammed full of facts about skills?
Or an oyster, discovering your inner pearls of insight?**

To discover YOUR insights ...

Express your ideas, concerns, hopes and dreams.
Invent new ways to think, feel, react and act.
Keep your discoveries private or choose to share.

Above all, be an oyster!

Reflect, ask questions, give opinions and receive feedback; draw, write, act, play games;
be a leader or a team member; create posters, bumper stickers or tee shirt slogans;
and participate in many opportunities.

You may decide, as did Maya Angelou ...

*My mission in life is not to merely survive, but to thrive;
and to do so with some passion,
some compassion, some humor, and some style.*

Teens ~ Out-of-the-Box Coping Skills

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. De-Stress | 11 |
| De-Stress Behavioral Coping Skills | 12 |
| Step Back for the Whole Picture | 13 |
| Step Back for the Whole Picture for the facilitator | 14 |
| Waves of Emotions | 15 |
| Waves of Emotions for the facilitator | 16 |
| Do the Opposite | 17 |
| Do the Opposite for the facilitator | 18 |
| Choose Your Distress or Eustress Train | 19 |
| Choose Your Distress or Eustress Train for the facilitator | 20 |
| Put on Protective Gear | 21 |
| Put on Protective Gear for the facilitator | 22 |
| Develop Diversions | 23 |
| Develop Diversions for the facilitator | 24 |
| A Stress-Less Kit: Quick Fixes that are Quacks | 25 |
| A Stress-Less Kit: What Works? Posters | 26 |
| A Stress-Less Kit: Stress-Less Slogans | 27 |
| A Stress-Less Kit: Ace an Acrostic | 28 |
| A Stress-Less Kit: Quotations | 29 |
| A Stress-Less Kit for the facilitator | 30 |
| | |
| 2. Build Emotional Empowerment | 31 |
| Build Emotional Empowerment Behavioral Coping Skills | 32 |
| Anger Flash Cards | 33 |
| Anger Flash Cards for the facilitator | 34 |
| Human-i-text-tarian | 35 |
| Human-i-text-tarian for the facilitator | 36 |
| Outwit Your Fears | 37 |
| Outwit Your Fears for the facilitator | 38 |
| Got Grit? | 39 |
| Got Grit? for the facilitator | 40 |
| Self-ish-less | 41 |
| Self-ish-less for the facilitator | 42 |
| Hurt Feelings – What Helps and What Hurts? - YES | 43 |
| Hurt Feelings – What Helps and What Hurts? - NO | 44 |
| Hurt Feelings – What Helps and What Hurts? GAME INSTRUCTIONS | 45 |
| Hurt Feelings – What Helps and What Hurts? for the facilitator | 46 |
| Improv - Are You Tempted? | 47 |
| Improv - Are You Tempted? for the facilitator | 48 |
| Self Talk Tech - Delete and Replace | 49 |
| Self Talk Tech - Voiceover | 50 |
| Self Talk Tech - Dormitory of Distress | 51 |
| Self-Talk Tech for the facilitator | 52 |
| Apathy’s Masks | 53 |
| Apathy’s Masks for the facilitator | 54 |

(Continued on the next page)

Teens ~ Out-of-the-Box Coping Skills

TABLE OF CONTENTS *(continued)*

| | |
|--|----|
| 3. Develop Healthy Habits | 55 |
| Develop Healthy Habits Behavioral Coping Skills | 56 |
| New Habits Don't Just Happen | 57 |
| New Habits Don't Just Happen for the facilitator | 58 |
| It's the "Habits Game Show" | 59 |
| It's the "Habits Game Show" for the facilitator | 60 |
| Launch and Lift Your Habits | 61 |
| Launch and Lift Your Habits for the facilitator | 62 |
| The Milestone Moment | 63 |
| The Milestone Moment for the facilitator | 64 |
| 4. Manage Social Media | 65 |
| Manage Social Media Behavioral Coping Skills | 66 |
| Social Media Roving Reporter | 67 |
| Social Media Roving Reporter for the facilitator | 68 |
| Find the Hidden Picture | 69 |
| Find the Hidden Picture for the facilitator | 70 |
| My Reality Site | 71 |
| My Reality Site for the facilitator | 72 |
| The Power of an Icon | 73 |
| The Power of an Icon for the facilitator | 74 |
| 5. Stand Up for Self and Others | 75 |
| Stand Up for Self and Others Behavioral Coping Skills | 76 |
| I Could Stand Up | 77 |
| I Could Stand Up for the facilitator | 78 |
| Cruelty and Courage Storyboard | 79 |
| Cruelty and Courage Storyboard for the facilitator | 80 |
| Assertiveness Techniques | 81 |
| Assertiveness Techniques for the facilitator | 82 |
| Shake It Off | 83 |
| Shake It Off for the facilitator | 84 |
| What's Going on Here? | 85 |
| What's Going on Here? for the facilitator | 86 |

(Continued on the next page)

Teens ~ Out-of-the-Box Coping Skills

TABLE OF CONTENTS *(continued)*

| | |
|--|-----|
| 6. Overcome Obstacles | 87 |
| Overcome Obstacles Behavioral Coping Skills | 88 |
| Mind Map-ABLE Solutions | 89 |
| Mind Map-ABLE Solutions for the facilitator | 90 |
| I Have Learned | 91 |
| I Have Learned for the facilitator | 92 |
| Jumping Over My Hurdles | 93 |
| Jumping Over My Hurdles for the facilitator | 94 |
| Rainbow of Chaos | 95 |
| Rainbow of Chaos for the facilitator | 96 |
| Tapping into My Inner Strength | 97 |
| Tapping into My Inner Strength for the facilitator | 98 |
| 7. Advance Beyond Coping – Thrive | 99 |
| Advance Beyond Coping – Thrive Behavioral Coping Skills | 100 |
| In the Future, My World | 101 |
| In the Future, My World for the facilitator | 102 |
| My Pearls Within | 103 |
| My Pearls Within for the facilitator | 104 |
| Night Sky Inspirations | 105 |
| Night Sky Inspirations for the facilitator | 106 |
| Daring to Dare | 107 |
| Daring to Dare for the facilitator | 108 |
| The Human Touch | 109 |
| The Human Touch for the facilitator | 110 |
| Coping SKILLionaire – Instructions for Game Show Host, De-Stress | 111 |
| Coping SKILLionaire – Empowerment, Habits, Media | 112 |
| Coping SKILLionaire – Stand Up, Overcome, Thrive | 113 |
| Coping SKILLionaire for the facilitator | 114 |

Deepest Gratitude to ...

our teen reviewer Hannah Lavoie

and the professionals who make us look good ...

Editor and Lifelong Teacher – Eileen Regen, M.Ed., CJE

Illustrator – Amy L. Brodsky, LISW-S

Art Director – Joy Dey

Assistant Art Director – Mathew Pawlak

Editorial Director – Carlene Sippola

Proofreader – Jay Leutenberg

DE=STRESS

1

Stress should be a powerful driving force, not an obstacle.

~ Bill Phillips

Step Back for the Whole Picture page 13 ►

Teens depict a close up and distant view of stressful situations. Teens gain perspective and practice acceptance.

Waves of Emotions page 15 ►

Teens learn to experience emotions and accept challenges rather than suppressing or intensifying unpleasant feelings. Teens adopt a surfer mindset, e.g., to climb back on the board after a wipe out.

DO THE OPPOSITE page 17 ►

Through a game, puzzle or matching exercise, teens learn that in many situations, a better way to cope is to do the opposite of one's first impulse.

Choose Your Distress or Eustress Train page 19 ►

Teens describe their negative and positive thoughts passing by on different trains. Teens envision how thoughts can carry them to destructive or productive destinations.

Put on Protective Gear page 21 ►

Teens learn to protect themselves from the potentially hurtful words of people who bully or from friends or loved ones. Teens learn to cope with non-verbal cruelty and to consider the motivation behind meanness.

Develop Diversions page 23 ►

Teens play charades to portray diversions that distract from stress in these categories: Mind, Body, Social, Place, Spiritual, Creativity and Volunteerism. Teens identify interventions to use for serious issues.

A Stress-Less Kit page 25 ►

The Stress-Less Kits comprise: Quick Fixes that are Quacks, What Works? Stress-Less Slogans, Ace an Acrostic, and Quotations. Teens brainstorm lists, create posters and bumper stickers or tee shirt stress-busters.

Chapter 1 - De-Stress Behavioral Coping Skills

Throughout the chapter, teens will communicate through oral, written and creative expression and give and receive feedback.

Teens: Skills in each activity.

Facilitators: Competencies to evaluate.

Step Back for the Whole Picture

- Illustrate a visual perspective about a situation.
- Describe an emotional perspective about a situation.
- State the main thought about the situation.
- Identify feelings about the situation.
- Explain the difference between what acceptance is and is not.
- Identify relaxation techniques to use to reduce anxiety.

Waves of Emotions

- Express emotions.
- Identify ways to do what one needs to do, despite fear.
- State ways to bravely handle a setback.
- Explain ways challenges can be exciting.

Do the Opposite

- Describe ways to do the opposite of a first impulse in times of stress.
- State in which situations it is better to let instincts be the guide.
- Identify actions to take, despite fear, while expecting calmer feelings to follow.
- Name circumstances in which additional action is needed beyond doing the opposite.

Choose Your Distress or Eustress Train

- State thoughts that lead to destructive stress.
- Share thoughts that use stress as a motivator.
- Practice changing thoughts to identify where *possibility thinking* leads.
- Describe a potential inner bully.
- Identify an inner troublemaker and thoughts that fight against each other.
- Quote positive thoughts that would guide a person.

Put on Protective Gear

- Identify potentially painful words people could use to hurt others.
- Describe non-verbal unkind acts people could direct toward others.
- Demonstrate emotional self-defense techniques against cruelty.
- State the possible motivations of people who mistreat others.

Develop Diversions

- Demonstrate enjoyable diversions that reduce stress.
- Name the pros and cons of diversions.
- Identify sources of help for issues that need more assistance than diversions alone.
- Practice problem-solving skills.

A Stress-Less Kit

- Identify unhelpful quick-fixes for stress.
- State effective techniques to handle stress.
- Compose stress-buster messages.
- Find words of wisdom about converting stress from negative to positive.
- Create quotations to handle stress.

Step Back for the Whole Picture

My stressful situation looks like this close up

Like a camera zooms in for a close-up, you may focus too intensely on one stressful aspect of your situation.

Imagine that you mentally step back, breathe deeply, and see the whole picture.

My stressful situation looks like this from a distance

My main thought is ...

My main feeling is ...

I realize ...

My thought is a stream of words.
My feeling is a passing sensation.
I do not judge or try to change my reaction now.
I accept that "It is what it is."

Step Back for the Whole Picture

FOR THE FACILITATOR

I. Purpose

To cope with a distressing event through perspective, attention to reactions and acceptance.
To express what is seen and felt without becoming angry or overwhelmed, or running or hiding.

II. General Comments

Initially in a crisis, stepping back, breathing and focusing help teens accept a current reality (Ideally, teens will later reframe thoughts with resultant changes in feelings and actions).

III. Possible Activities

- a. Before the session, place a camera or cell phone, or a picture of a camera or cell phone, into the box.
- b. At the start of the session, a volunteer takes the item out of the box and shows it to the group.
- c. Ask the purpose of close-ups (to see details well).
- d. Ask the disadvantages of close-ups (they show only a small segment of a scene).
- e. Ask the advantage of stepping back when taking a photo (to capture the whole picture).
- f. Distribute the *Step Back for the Whole Picture* handout; a volunteer reads text at the top aloud.
- g. Ask how it helps to mentally step back (to see the whole situation); the perceived crisis may really be a small blip; a truly unfortunate circumstance may have hidden blessings.
- h. Direct teens to draw a close-up and a distant view of a current stressful situation and complete the sentences at the bottom of the page.
- i. Allow time for completion.
- j. Ask about the advantage of seeing thoughts as streams of words and feelings as passing sensations.
Elicit that this decreases their intensity and allows teens to express what they see and feel without being overwhelmed, or needing to run or hide.
- k. Encourage teens to share their responses and receive peer feedback.
- l. Ask “Why not judge the situation or your reactions?” (non-productive, self-defeating).
- m. Ask “Why not try to change the situation or your reactions? (accept the moment as it is; change what can be changed later).
- n. Write “What acceptance is NOT” on the board; ask teens to brainstorm.

Possibilities

Acceptance is NOT:

- Approval of the situation.
 - Permission for the situation to continue.
 - Proof that one’s perception of the event is factual.
 - Avoidance of change in a situation or to a reaction.
- o. Ask teens the value of focusing on one’s thoughts and feelings at the very moment of distress. Elicit that it prevents added worries about the past or future.

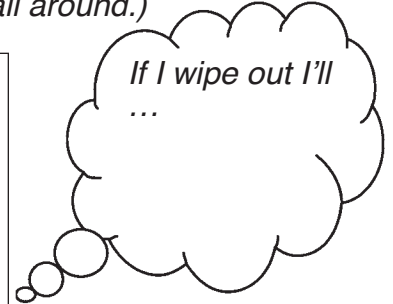
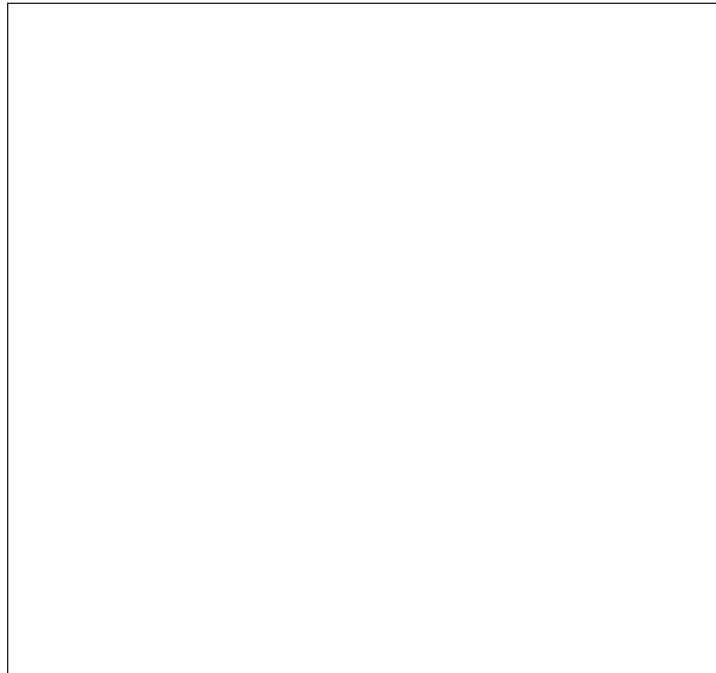
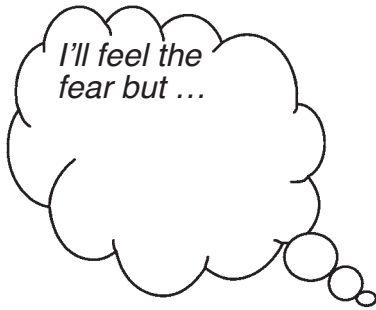
IV. Enrichment Activities

- a. Encourage teens to describe more details about their recent distressing events:
 - Physical sensations
 - Sights
 - Sounds
- b. Ask how it will help teens in the future to stand back, breathe and focus:
 - Stay in the moment.
 - Slow down racing thoughts.
 - Avoid value judgments; labeling events as “terrible” or feelings as “bad” worsens them.

Waves of Emotions

"You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf." ~ Kabat-Zinn

(In the box below, draw a surfer on a surfboard with waves all around.)



Write your responses on the picture.

1. Label the waves with your roughest emotions.
2. Add words to the water to describe how a surfer views the waves.
3. Label the surfer's heart to show how a surfer feels about the sport.
4. Complete each thought bubble.
5. Circle a bold word in each of the two sentences below to describe your particular surfer's mind-set.

A surfer lives in the **past**, the **now**, the **future**.

A surfer enjoys the **ride** or the **destination**.

6. Create a title for the picture. Write it at the top.
7. Write the caption "I will sometimes need to eat some sand" below your picture.
8. How does this caption relate to your life?
