

Major Trauma Wellbeing Group

Session Summary: Coping and Support

Understanding Coping Strategies

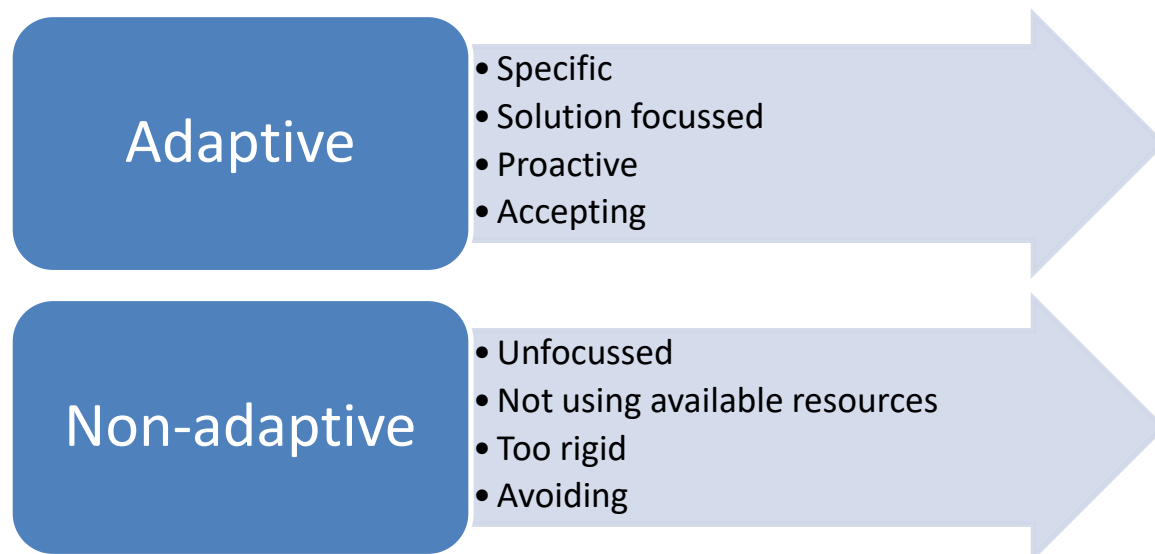
Coping is the way we manage a difficult or stressful events/situations. Whether aware or not, each person has methods they use to help them in challenging times. We call these 'coping strategies'.

Everyone copes in different ways after experiencing a major trauma. Different coping strategies can be more or less helpful in different situations. When discussing ways of coping, it can be helpful to take an approach which is:

- **Mindful** – meaning to pay attention in a way which is curious, non-judgemental, and open to considering different possibilities.
- **Person-centred** – understanding that everyone is different, has a story and a history, and will respond in their own individual way.
- **Compassionate** – don't be too hard on yourself, allow for mistakes, give yourself credit for small successes, and try to be as understanding of yourself as you would be to a friend or relative.

Adaptive versus non-adaptive

One way to think about your coping strategies, is to ask whether they are helping you to adapt (that is, work constructively) within your current challenges and situation. Here are some points which might help you decide whether your approach is adaptive or non-adaptive:



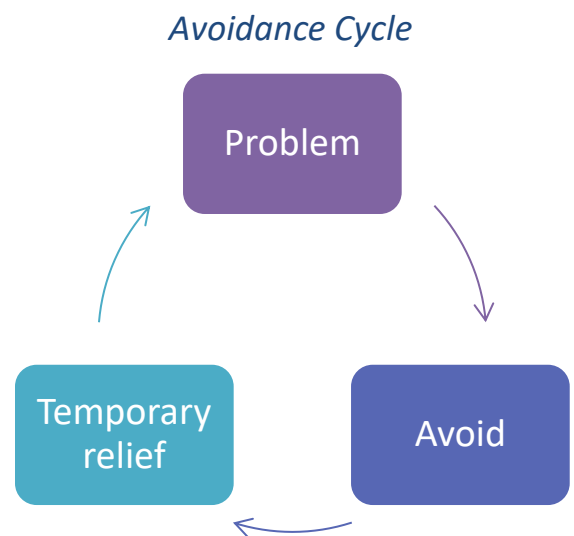
Coping strategies can also sometimes be separated into these 3 types:

1. **Active Coping** is when we proactively use prioritising, problem solving, social support, finding information, and seeking help.
2. **Passive Coping** is when we rely on others by to solve the issue. This type of coping can sometimes lead to feeling helpless or stuck, and wishful-thinking/hoping.
3. **Avoidance Coping** can take the form of Denial, Ignoring difficulties, Procrastinating or Delaying, Escapism behaviours (for example: Alcohol).

Reducing Avoidance Coping

Avoidance coping can sometimes be useful in the short term, this is because it gives us temporary relief from whatever problem we aren't able to face. However this means that the problem remains and sometimes we feel even more anxious about facing it in future.

Persistent use of avoidance causes more problems has been linked to poorer outcomes like increased anxiety and low mood. Having a strategy to recognise and reduce avoidance by planning how to face these problems can be helpful (see over the page)



Understanding Support

It is important to note that everyone needs support following a major injury, to a greater or lesser extent. Support can come in different forms or types and can come from various places such as:

- NHS Professionals e.g. Your GP, Rehab co-ordinators, Psychology, OT, Physio
- Care/Social work/council support
- 3rd Sector/charity organisations
- Your employer
- Family/Friends



Support with finances

Who	Type of Support	Contact
Benefits and Money Advice Team	Finances/Benefits for Aberdeen City Residents	benefits@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Aberdeen Illness and Disability Service (AIADS)	Finances/Benefits for Aberdeen City and Shire	01224 379767 07778 047631
Citizens Advice Scotland	Rights & Finance Advice	https://www.cas.org.uk/

Community and peer support groups

Who	Type of Support	Contact
Men's Shed	Wellbeing& Mental Health for Men	https://scottishmsa.org.uk
Headway Groups	Wellbeing for individuals with Acquired Brain Injuries	brain-injury-grampian.weebly.com
ALISS	Local Activities/Support	www.aliss.org/search/

Mental Health Support

Who	Type of Support	Contact
NHS Primary Care Psychology services	Psychological therapy or wellbeing support	Your GP
Beating the Blues	Guided self-help for low mood	Your GP
Silvercloud	Online self-help for anxiety	Your GP
NHS 24	24 hour medical and mental health advice	www.nhs24.scot or phone 111
Living Life	Free appointment-based telephone support	breathingspace.scot/living-life/
Breathing Space	Free, confidential phone and web based service to talk with someone if you are experiencing distress.	https://breathingspace.scot/
Samaritans	Nationwide charity helpline to give emotional support when needed	Phone 116 123
Alcohol and Drugs Action	Support for addiction and substance misuse	Phone 01224 594700 or visit www.alcoholanddrugsaction.org.uk

If you have any questions about the Major Trauma Wellbeing Group please contact:

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