

Thomas Barwick/Icónica/Getty Images



TABLE 13.1 ● Types of Challenges That Require Adjustment and Coping

| Type | Range |
|--------------|--|
| Occurrence | Sudden, unexpected to expected, planned |
| Duration | Fast emerging, quick to slowly developing, prolonged |
| Origin | Avoidable to inevitable |
| Significance | Major, significant to minor, insignificant |



© iStockphoto.com/Dieter Meyrl

Photo 13.1
Hibernation is a state of inactivity and metabolic depression as a response to cold temperatures or when sufficient food is unavailable. Do some humans have a somewhat similar response of inactivity to harsh conditions? Suggest examples.

TABLE 13.2 ● Areas of Change That May Require Adjustment and Coping

| Area of Change | Types of Challenges |
|----------------------|--|
| Aging | Physical decline, cognitive decline, stigma of aging |
| Physical illness | Physical decline, uncertainty of the outcome |
| Disability | Physical decline, stigma of disability |
| Family changes | Marriage, divorce, moving in or out, new or lost members |
| Professional changes | Getting a new job or promotion, losing a job, retirement |
| Relationships | Breakup, loss of an attachment figure, chronic or acute conflicts |
| Social changes | War and violence, hardship, migration and immigration |
| Other | What other challenges not mentioned here could an individual face? |

CHECK AND APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Describe the similarities and differences between adjustment and coping.
2. Name three features of disability.
3. How many significant breakups does an average person expect to have by age 30?
4. What is acculturation? Why does it require coping?

FIGURE 13.1 ● Approaching and Avoiding Behavior

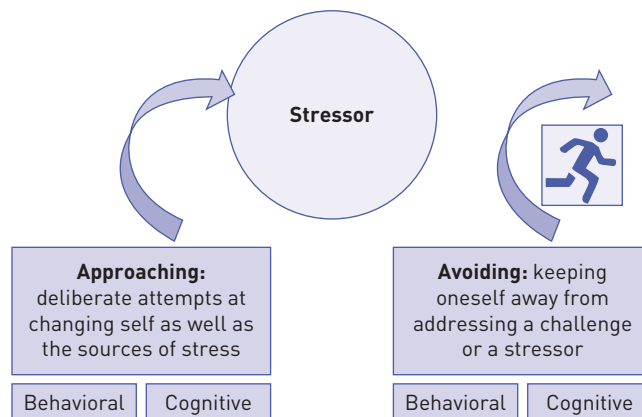
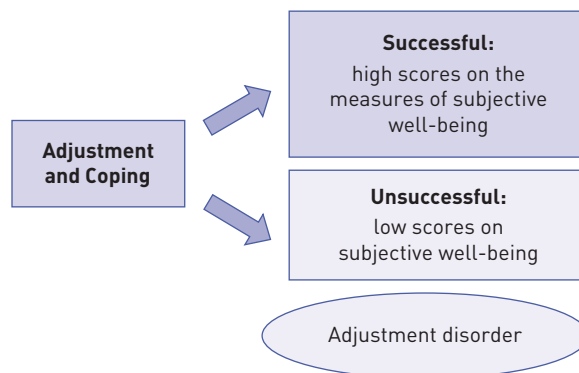


Photo 13.2

Approaching is about changing self as well as the sources of stress. Avoiding is about keeping oneself away from the challenge or stressor. Are you mostly an approaching or avoiding person? Think of some examples.



FIGURE 13.2 ● General Coping Outcomes



CHECK AND APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Define and explain *flexibility*.
2. Explain proactive approaching.
3. Ferrari (2010), in *Still Procrastinating? The No Regrets Guide to Getting It Done*, would like to see a general cultural shift from punishing procrastination to rewarding the “early bird.” The author proposed, among other things, that the federal government and other agencies give financial incentives to those who do things (such as paying taxes) early, long before the deadlines. Discuss whether this strategy could reduce procrastination or would just reward the people who are too anxious and do everything very early.
4. In one of the most famous plays by Shakespeare, the main character Hamlet posed probably the most frequently quoted question: “To be or not to be?” In the monologue that followed, he complained about life’s pains and unfairness yet was also afraid that the alternative, which is suicide, might be worse. What kind of coping was Hamlet choosing from?
5. Define *adjustment disorder*.
6. Explain burnout.
7. Have you ever experienced burnout? How did you cope with it?

TABLE 13.3 ● Adaptive and Maladaptive Coping Strategies: A Comparison

| Adaptive Strategies | Maladaptive Strategies |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem-focused strategies center on eliminating the stressor. • Appraisal-focused strategies usually refer to internal, stable, and global causes of the individual’s problems. • Emotion-focused strategies center on the emotional meaning of the stressor and on reducing anxiety. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denial is a belief that something is untrue. It may appear as ignoring a problem. • Ruminative strategies refer to behaviors and thoughts that focus on the individual’s negative experiences, failing strategies, and distressful psychological symptoms. • Learned helplessness is the belief that there is no connection between actions and their outcomes. |

TABLE 13.4 ● Examples of Learned Helplessness Statements and Consecutive Plans

| Statement | Pattern of Inaction |
|--|--|
| "I have tried two times, and still my LSAT (or MCAT or GRE) score is too low." | "There is no reason to study for the tests; I will never improve." |
| "I have tried several medications, but my illness does not go away." | "There is no reason to continue treatment; I am hopeless." |
| "I have tried to ask for help many times; nobody helped me." | "People are just selfish; the whole world is unhelpful." |

CHECK AND APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Describe the Type D personality.
2. What are latent vulnerability traits?
3. Some say, "Optimism is costly if it is unrealistic." Give examples of unrealistic and realistic optimism.
4. Describe and give an example of a problem-focused strategy.
5. Describe and give an example of an emotion-focused strategy.
6. Denial involves several interconnected strategies. Describe them.
7. Explain ruminative strategies and give an example. Do you use these strategies and how often?
8. Have you experienced learned helplessness? How did it affect your life? What is your advice on how to overcome learned helplessness?



© iStockphoto.com / FangXiaoLuo

Photo 13.3
Sensitization is a protective coping effort to prevent negative emotions and despair. Have you ever used sensitization to help yourself and others?

TABLE 13.5 ● Symptoms of Acculturative Stress (Culture Shock)

| Symptoms | Description |
|---|--|
| Nostalgic feelings | Longing for relatives, friends, familiar scenes, foods, and other precious experiences |
| Disorientation and loss of control | Inability to solve simple problems, lack of power, anxiety, and depressive symptoms |
| Dissatisfaction over communication barriers | Lack of spoken and written language skills create frustration and affective symptoms |
| Loss of habits and lifestyle | Inability to do many previously enjoyed activities, which causes negative affective symptoms |
| Dissatisfaction over perceived differences | Differences between the new and “old” cultures are exaggerated and seem difficult to accept |
| Dissatisfaction over perceived value gap | Differences in values typically exaggerated, new values seem difficult to accept |

Source: Shiraev and Boyd, 2008.

Visual Review

