

## Eli's Rehab Report

### Health and Wellness: Quick Test: Are You a Positive or a Negative Coper?

**Reduce stress with these positive coping skills.**

When things get crazy at work, do you melt down or do you try daydreaming for five minutes and then return to your work? Taking a breather may be all the coping you need to get yourself refocused.

According to the **National Mental Health Association** (NMHA), when stress hits the fan, there are two kinds of people: "positive copers" and "negative copers." Read on to find out which one you are.

#### **Negative Copers**

Most negative copers look for short-term stress relievers, according to NMHA. The result is that a lot of these short-term behaviors will create more problems if repeated over a long period of time.

Some short-term stress relievers include:

- denial (pretending nothing's wrong);
- alcohol/drug use;
- fault-finding (complaining, criticizing others);
- passivity (waiting for things to get better but not doing anything to make them better);
- revenge (being petty or mean to others to make yourself feel better);
- stubbornness;
- tantrums;
- withdrawal (avoiding stressful situations, skipping work, etc.);
- tobacco use;
- overeating.

If you engage in any of these stress-busting activities, you may be a negative coper. If you'd like to be a positive coper, read on.

#### **Positive Copers**

If a positive coper gets stressed out, she will most likely deal with it by engaging in life-affirming behaviors that don't have any long-term ramifications. Some short-term stress relievers used by positive copers include:

- taking getaways (This doesn't have to be a two-week vacation; a "getaway" could be as simple as taking a quick walk around the block.);
- learning to accept the good with the bad;
- staying open to change;
- exercise;
- having hobbies (Work and family can be stressful sometimes; when the stress builds, it helps to have some activities outside of work and family that are enjoyable and make you feel good about yourself.);
- asking for support from family and friends;
- identifying what you can't control and not worrying about it;
- looking for the humor in every situation.

