



OSHER CENTER FOR INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE AT UCSF
1701 DIVISADERO STREET, SUITE 100
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94115

TEL: 415 353 7719
FAX: 415 353 7554
E-MAIL: FOLKMAN@OCIM.UCSF.EDU

SUSAN FOLKMAN, PH.D.
PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE AND
DIRECTOR

Dear Colleague:

The Ways of Coping that was revised in 1985 is in the public domain and you do not need special permission to use it. In 1988 the Consulting Psychologists Press made minor modifications to a few items. Their version is copyrighted, and has since been purchased by Mind Garden. If you wish to use their version and/or their scoring service, you'll need permission from Mind Garden. You can reach them at <http://www.mindgarden.com/> or Mind Garden, Inc., 1690 Woodside Road, Suite 202, Redwood City, CA 94061, USA, (650-261-3500). You might also want the manual for the Ways of Coping. It is available through the same publisher.

Sincerely,

Susan Folkman, Ph.D.
Professor of Medicine
Director, Osher Center for Integrative Medicine at UCSF

WAYS OF COPING (Revised)*

Background

The Ways of Coping (Revised) is a 66-item questionnaire containing a wide range of thoughts and acts that people use to deal with the internal and/or external demands of specific stressful encounters. Usually the encounter is described by the subject in an interview or in a brief written description saying who was involved, where it took place and what happened. Sometimes a particular encounter, such as a medical treatment or an academic examination, is selected by the investigator as the focus of the questionnaire.

Many investigators have asked if the Ways of Coping can be used to assess coping styles or traits. The measure is not designed for this purpose; it is designed as a process measure. It is possible though to look for consistency (style) across occasions by administering the measure repeatedly and then doing intraindividual analyses. Each administration, however, is focused on coping processes in a particular stressful encounter and not on coping styles or traits.

The revised Ways of Coping (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985) differs from the original Ways of Coping Checklist (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980) in several ways. The response format in the original version was Yes/No; on the revised version the subject responds on a 4-point Likert scale (0 = does not apply and/or not used; 3 = used a great deal). Redundant and unclear items were deleted or reworded, and several items, such as prayer, were added.

Below we represent (a) two sets of scales derived from factor analysis of separate data sets and (b) a copy of the Ways of Coping Questionnaire (see p. 9). The first set of scales is from a study of a wide range of stressful encounters reported by a community sample of middle-aged married couples (Folkman et al., 1986), and the second is from a study of the ways students coped with a college examination (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). In general we suggest that investigators use the scales from the study of middle-aged married couples, because the factor analysis was based on a broader sampling of subjects and stressful encounters. However, for investigations that involve college examinations or college students, the scales from the study of examination stress may be more appropriate.

* SEE PAGE 9 FOR COMPLETE WAYS OF COPING QUESTIONNAIRE.

WAYS OF COPING SCALES SET #1 (Community Sample)

From: Folkman, S., Lazarus, R. S., Dunkel-Schetter, C., DeLongis, A., & Gruen, R. (1986). The dynamics of a stressful encounter: Cognitive appraisal, coping and encounter outcomes. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 50, 992-1003.

Seventy-five married couples were interviewed in their homes once a month for five months. Husbands and wives were interviewed separately by different interviewers. Subjects were asked to describe the most stressful encounter they had experienced in the previous week and then fill out the revised Ways of Coping. The instructions were: "Please read each item below and indicate, by circling the appropriate category, to what extent you used it in the situation you have just described."

Observations from the five interviews were pooled. The Ways of Coping items were analyzed using alpha and principal factoring with oblique rotation. Oblique rotation was chosen because, from a theoretical perspective, we expect people to choose from a vast array of coping strategies rather than to use one set of strategies to the exclusion of others. Past research on coping supports this model (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980). Three separate factor analyses were completed using different strategies for combining person-occasions, or observations. First, analyses were conducted on the entire 750 observations, 5 from each 150 subjects, where each of the five concerned a different stressful encounter. Second, 150 stressful encounters (one per subject) were randomly selected from the 750, equally representing each of the 5 occasions. An additional sample of 150 stressful encounters was also randomly selected from the 750 total encounters without replacement of the prior 150 encounters, again, equally representing each of the five occasions.

The three factor analyses yielded very similar factor patterns. Thirty-seven items consistently loaded high on the same factor across all 3 analyses. Twenty-two items loaded on the same factor fairly consistently; 9 of these were eliminated on the basis of marginal factor loadings or lack of conceptual coherence with their scale. Seven items did not consistently load on any factor and were therefore eliminated. Because multiple factorings had been conducted, we had several estimates of each item's factor loading. A final principle factor analysis, calling for eight factors, was therefore performed on the 750 observations with the final 50 items in order to get an estimate of each item's factor loading.

The coping scales derived from the factor analytic procedures described above, their alphas, and factor loadings for the items are shown in Table 1. The eight scales accounted for 46.2% of the variance.

Table 1

Empirically constructed Scales from the WAYS OF COPING (Revised)
(Community Sample)

<u>To score the scales, sum ratings for each scale.</u>	Factor Loading
<u>Scale 1: Confrontive coping (alpha = .70)</u>	
46. Stood my ground and fought for what I wanted.	.70
7. Tried to get the person responsible to change his or her mind.	.62
17. I expressed anger to the person(s) who caused the problem	.61
28. I let my feelings out somehow.	.58
34. Took a big chance or did something very risky.	.32
6. I did something which I didn't think would work, but at least I was doing something	.30
<u>Scale 2: Distancing (alpha = .61)</u>	
44. Made light of the situation; refused to get too serious about it.	.55
13. Went on as if nothing had happened.	.54
41. Didn't let it get to me; refused to think too much about it.	.50
21. Tried to forget the whole thing.	.49
15. Looked for the silver lining, so to speak; tried to look on the bright side of things.	.34
12. Went along with fate; sometimes I just have bad luck.	.25
<u>Scale 3: Self-controlling (alpha = .70)</u>	
14. I tried to keep my feelings to myself.	.55
43. Kept others from knowing how bad things were.	.46
10. Tried not to burn my bridges, but leave things open somewhat.	.40
35. I tried not to act too hastily or follow my first hunch.	.40
54. I tried to keep my feelings from interfering with other things too much.	.37
63. I thought about how a person I admire would handle this situation and used that as a model.	.37
64. I tried to see things from the other person's point of view.	.28
<u>Scale 4: Seeking social support (alpha = .76)</u>	
8. Talked to someone to find out more about the situation.	.73
31. Talked to someone who could do something concrete about the problem.	.68
42. I asked a relative or friend I respected for advice.	.58
45. Talked to someone about how I was feeling.	.57
18. Accepted sympathy and understanding from someone.	.56
22. I got professional help.	.45

Scale 5: Accepting responsibility (alpha = .66)

9. Criticized or lectured myself.	.71
29. Realized I brought the problem on myself.	.68
51. I made a promise to myself that things would be different next time.	.49
25. I apologized or did something to make up.	.39

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

58. Wished that the situation would go away or somehow be over with.	.66
11. Hoped a miracle would happen.	.55
59. Had fantasies or wishes about how things might turn out.	.54
33. Tried to make myself feel better by eating, drinking, smoking, using drugs or medication, etc.	.49
40. Avoided being with people in general.	.46
50. Refused to believe that it had happened.	.42
47. Took it out on other people.	.40
16. Slept more than usual.	.36

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

49. I knew what had to be done, so I doubled my efforts to make things work.	.71
26. I made a plan of action and followed it.	.61
1. Just concentrated on what I had to do next – the next step.	.45
39. Changed something so things would turn out all right.	.44
48. Drew on my past experiences; I was in a similar situation before.	.40
52. Came up with a couple of different solutions to the problem.	.38

Scale 8: Positive reappraisal (alpha = .79)

23. Changed or grew as a person in a good way.	.79
30. I came out of the experience better than when I went in.	.67
36. Found new faith.	.64
38. Rediscovered what is important in life.	.64
60. I prayed.	.56
56. I changed something about myself.	.55
20. I was inspired to do something creative.	.43

The intercorrelations among the coping scales averaged over 5 occasions are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Eight Coping Scales:
Intercorrelations Averaged Over Five Occasions

	Scale 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Confrontive coping		.01	.36	.27	.26	.27	.28	.26
2. Distancing			.36	-.04	.27	.32	.09	.13
3. Self-controlling				.24	.30	.36	.37	.39
4. Seeking social support					.09	.23	.30	.32
5. Accepting responsibility						.39	.13	.18
6. Escape-Avoidance							.10	.23
7. Planful problem-solving								.39
8. Positive reappraisal								---

WAYS OF COPING SCALES
SET #2 (Student Sample)

From: Folkman, S. & Lazarus, R. S. (1985). If it changes it must be a process: Study of emotion and coping during three stages of a college examination. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 48, 150-170.

Data were gathered from 108 undergraduates who completed the Ways of Coping (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985) three times as part of a study of examination stress. Observations from the three occasions were pooled. Nine items were eliminated from analysis because they showed high skewness and restricted variance. The remaining 57 items were submitted to common factor analysis with oblique rotation. A six factor solution yielded the most conceptually interpretable set of factors. Fifteen items that did not load clearly on any one factor were deleted. One of the six factors contained three distinguishable groups of items. The three groups were rationally assigned to three factors to provide greater theoretical clarity. The procedure produced eight scales, including one problem-focused and six emotion focused scales, and an eighth scale containing both problem and emotion focused items. The scales and the factor loadings for the five empirically constructed scales, and alphas for all eight scales, are shown in Table 3. The intercorrelations among the scales averaged over three occasions are shown in Table 4.

Table 3

Empirically and Rationally Constructed Scales from the WAYS OF COPING (Revised)*
(Student Sample)

Empirically Constructed Scales

<u>To score the scales, sum ratings for each scale.</u>	Factor Loading
<u>Scale 1: Problem-focused coping (alpha = .88)</u>	
62. I go over in my mind what I will say or do.	.72
46. Stand my ground and fight for what I want.	.62
49. I know what has to be done, so I am doubling my efforts to make things work.	.67
52. Come up with a couple of different solutions to the problem.	.67
35. I try not to act too hastily or follow my first hunch.	.66
26. I'm making a plan of action and following it.	.64
64. I try to see things from the other person's point of view.	.61
54. I try to keep my feelings from interfering with other things too much.	.60
39. Change something so things will turn out all right.	.59
2. I try to analyze the problem in order to understand it better.	.54
48. Draw on my past experiences; I was in a similar situation before.	.52

* NOTE: IN THIS STUDY ITEMS WERE DELIBERATELY PUT IN THE PRESENT TENSE.

Scale 2: Wishful thinking (alpha = .86)

55. Wish that I can change what is happening or how I feel.	.78
58. Wish that the situation would go away or somehow be over with.	.70
57. I daydream or imagine a better time or place than the one I am in.	.67
59. Have fantasies or wishes about how things might turn out.	.65
11. Hope a miracle will happen.	.61

Scale 3: Detachment (alpha = .74)

21. Try to forget the whole thing.	.61
13. Go on as if nothing is happening.	.58
24. I'm waiting to see what will happen before doing anything.	.54
12. Go along with fate; sometimes I just have bad luck.	.52
4. I feel that time will make a difference – the only thing to do is to wait.	.51
53. Accept it, since nothing can be done.	.51

Scale 4: Seeking social support (alpha = .82)

45. Talk to someone about how I'm feeling.	.71
18. Accept sympathy and understanding from someone.	.67
28. I let my feelings out somehow.	.62
31. Talk to someone who can do something concrete about the problem.	.58
8. Talk to someone to find out more about the situation.	.54
42. Ask a relative or friend I respect for advice.	.53
60. I pray.	.49

Scale 5: Focusing on the positive (alpha = .70)

23. I'm changing or growing as a person in a good way.	.72
38. Rediscover what is important in life.	.59
20. I am inspired to do something creative.	.48
15. Look for the silver lining, so to speak; try to look on the bright side of things.	.47

Rationally Created Scales

Scale 6: Self blame ($\alpha = .76$)

- 9. Criticize or lecture myself.
- 29. Realize I brought the problem on myself.
- 51. Make a promise to myself that things will be different next time.

Scale 7: Tension reduction ($\alpha = .59$)

- 32. Got away from it for a while; tried to rest or take a vacation.
- 33. Try to make myself feel better by eating, drinking, smoking, using drugs or medication, etc.
- 66. I jog or exercise.

Scale 8: Keep to self ($\alpha = .65$)

- 14. I try to keep my feelings to myself.
- 40. Avoid being with people in general.
- 43. Keep others from knowing how bad things are.

Table 4

Eight Coping Scales:
Intercorrelations Averaged Over Three Occasions

	Scale 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Problem focused coping		.41	.20	.64	.58	.46	.38	.31
2. Wishful thinking			.51	.42	.29	.63	.50	.54
3. Distancing				.24	.13	.34	.34	.41
4. Seeking social support					.54	.39	.42	.18
5. Emphasizing the positive						.42	.36	.23
6. Self blame							.31	.53
7. Tension reduction								.37
8. Self isolation								---

WAYS OF COPING (Revised)

Please read each item below and indicate, by using the following rating scale, to what extent you used it in the situation you have just described.

Not Used	Used Somewhat	Used Quite A Bit	Used A great deal
0	1	2	3

- _____ 1. Just concentrated on what I had to do next – the next step.
- _____ 2. I tried to analyze the problem in order to understand it better.
- _____ 3. Turned to work or substitute activity to take my mind off things.
- _____ 4. I felt that time would make a difference – the only thing to do was to wait.
- _____ 5. Bargained or compromised to get something positive from the situation.
- _____ 6. I did something which I didn't think would work, but at least I was doing something.
- _____ 7. Tried to get the person responsible to change his or her mind.
- _____ 8. Talked to someone to find out more about the situation.
- _____ 9. Criticized or lectured myself.
- _____ 10. Tried not to burn my bridges, but leave things open somewhat.
- _____ 11. Hoped a miracle would happen.
- _____ 12. Went along with fate; sometimes I just have bad luck.
- _____ 13. Went on as if nothing had happened.
- _____ 14. I tried to keep my feelings to myself.
- _____ 15. Looked for the silver lining, so to speak; tried to look on the bright side of things.
- _____ 16. Slept more than usual.
- _____ 17. I expressed anger to the person(s) who caused the problem.
- _____ 18. Accepted sympathy and understanding from someone.

**Not
Used**

**Used
Somewhat**

**Used
Quite A Bit**

**Used
A great deal**

0

1

2

3

- _____ 19. I told myself things that helped me to feel better.
- _____ 20. I was inspired to do something creative.
- _____ 21. Tried to forget the whole thing.
- _____ 22. I got professional help.
- _____ 23. Changed or grew as a person in a good way.
- _____ 24. I waited to see what would happen before doing anything.
- _____ 25. I apologized or did something to make up.
- _____ 26. I made a plan of action and followed it.
- _____ 27. I accepted the next best thing to what I wanted.
- _____ 28. I let my feelings out somehow.
- _____ 29. Realized I brought the problem on myself.
- _____ 30. I came out of the experience better than when I went in.
- _____ 31. Talked to someone who could do something concrete about the problem.
- _____ 32. Got away from it for a while; tried to rest or take a vacation.
- _____ 33. Tried to make myself feel better by eating, drinking, smoking, using drugs or medication, etc.
- _____ 34. Took a big chance or did something very risky.
- _____ 35. I tried not to act too hastily or follow my first hunch.
- _____ 36. Found new faith.
- _____ 37. Maintained my pride and kept a stiff upper lip.
- _____ 38. Rediscovered what is important in life.

**Not
Used**

**Used
Somewhat**

**Used
Quite A Bit**

**Used
A great deal**

0

1

2

3

- _____ 39. Changed something so things would turn out all right.
- _____ 40. Avoided being with people in general.
- _____ 41. Didn't let it get to me; refused to think too much about it.
- _____ 42. I asked a relative or friend I respected for advice.
- _____ 43. Kept others from knowing how bad things were.
- _____ 44. Made light of the situation; refused to get too serious about it.
- _____ 45. Talked to someone about how I was feeling.
- _____ 46. Stood my ground and fought for what I wanted.
- _____ 47. Took it out on other people.
- _____ 48. Drew on my past experiences; I was in a similar situation before.
- _____ 49. I knew what had to be done, so I doubled my efforts to make things work.
- _____ 50. Refused to believe that it had happened.
- _____ 51. I made a promise to myself that things would be different next time.
- _____ 52. Came up with a couple of different solutions to the problem.
- _____ 53. Accepted it, since nothing could be done.
- _____ 54. I tried to keep my feelings from interfering with other things too much.
- _____ 55. Wished that I could change what had happened or how I felt.
- _____ 56. I changed something about myself.
- _____ 57. I daydreamed or imagined a better time or place than the one I was in.
- _____ 58. Wished that the situation would go away or somehow be over with.
- _____ 59. Had fantasies or wishes about how things might turn out.

**Not
Used**

**Used
Somewhat**

**Used
Quite A Bit**

**Used
A great deal**

0

1

2

3

_____ 60. I prayed.

_____ 61. I prepared myself for the worst.

_____ 62. I went over in my mind what I would say or do.

_____ 63. I thought about how a person I admire would handle this situation and used that as a model.

_____ 64. I tried to see things from the other person's point of view.

_____ 65. I reminded myself how much worse things could be.

_____ 66. I jogged or exercised.