FACTS TO CONSIDER:

- Pain is a part of life and can't always be avoided
- Learning to manage pain helps decrease impulsive behavior
- Acting impusively can hurt you and be a road block to achieving life goals

You may notice that certain situations bring up feelings that are difficult to handle. For example, you and your partner break up: it can be sad for a relationship to end, even if you made the decision to end it.

In the past, when you were sad, you felt better when you spoke to a friend, exercised, ate and slept adequately, and found a new hobby. These are “go to” coping skills that you will probably use often if they help you feel better when you are sad in the future. They become HABIT behaviors.

Alternatively, if you have not found healthy ways to cope with sadness, and instead engage in self-destructive behaviors, these behaviors will become your “go to” – your HABIT behavior – each time sadness or similar feelings come up.

HABITS CAN BE BROKEN BY ENGAGING IN NEW BEHAVIORS OVER AND OVER AGAIN UNTIL THE NEW CHOICES FEEL NATURAL. YOU CAN DO IT!
SKILLS FOR COPING:

**Distract Yourself:** Call or visit a friend, exercise, go to a movie. Do something nice for yourself, compare yourself with someone less fortunate, do something that creates different emotions (watch a funny video), push away the painful situation out of your mind for the moment, read, do homework, hold ice in your hand, take a shower.

**Self-Soothe:** Use your five senses to soothe yourself

- **Vision:** watch a sunset, look at a magazine you like
- **Hearing:** listen to soothing music
- **Smell:** light a scented candle, put on your favorite scent
- **Taste:** eat your favorite food, enjoy a soothing cup of tea or cocoa
- **Touch:** pet your dog or cat, brush your hair, massage lotion into skin

Imagine everything going well and hurtful emotions draining out of you. Tell yourself, “This pain is temporary. I can stand it. It won’t last forever.”

**Pros and Cons:** See what the advantages and disadvantages are in trying new behaviors

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros to Continuing Habits (same unhealthy behaviors to cope)</th>
<th>Cons to Continuing Habits (same unhealthy behaviors to cope)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pros to Resisting Habits (doing new behaviors to cope)</td>
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Choose new, healthier ways of dealing with distress. It can become easier over time. Just keep practicing!