

Stay Positive While Managing COPD

Does managing your COPD sometimes get you down? Patients with COPD may fall into patterns of negative thinking that can cause them to feel stressed or anxious.

Do any of these thoughts sound familiar?

I feel terrible and there is nothing I can do.

No one understands what I am going through.

I'll never be able to do the things I like to again because of my COPD.

However, many of these thoughts may not be true.

You do not have to let them get you down. You can take action, such as changing your outlook and getting support to help you cope with your emotions.

Changing your outlook



Robert felt hopeless about his COPD. He thought that there was nothing he could do to get better control. He felt like giving up. Talking with his healthcare provider, Robert worked on challenging these negative thoughts and changing his outlook.

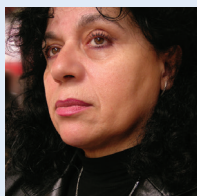
Now think about a challenge that you have been dealing with. As Robert did, answer the following questions to help you think about it in a different way:

Questions	Robert's Answers	My Answers
What is getting you down? How does it make you feel?	<i>My COPD is overwhelming. There is nothing I can do. I feel hopeless.</i>	
What are some reasons you may feel this way?	<i>COPD doesn't go away, so I will always have to deal with it.</i>	
Why should you NOT feel this way?	<i>My provider showed me things I can do to help myself, like breathing exercises and taking my medicines.</i>	
What is another way to think about your problem?	<i>While I know COPD will never go away, I can do things to feel better each day.</i>	

If you have thoughts of dying or harming yourself, you should call 911 or your healthcare provider immediately.

Even if you aren't used to asking for help, everyone may need support at times. Sometimes daily tasks can become too difficult to do on your own, or you may just need someone to talk to about your COPD. You may want to have people you trust around to help with different situations.

Getting the support you need



As Marie's COPD became more severe, she had to ask her daughter for help more often than she was used to. Marie was worried about becoming a burden on her daughter.

Marie thought about the other people in her life she could turn to.

As Marie did, take a minute to identify whom you will go to for help with the following situations:

When I need...	I go to...	Marie's answers
Help understanding my COPD		<i>Dr. Smith</i>
Help taking my medicines		<i>My son or my nurse</i>
A laugh		<i>My brother</i>
Help with my daily chores		<i>My daughter or husband</i>
A ride somewhere		<i>My sister</i>
To get my mind off of my COPD		<i>My best friend</i>
To talk to someone who understands what I am going through		<i>My friend who has COPD</i>
Advice about coping with COPD		<i>My patient support group</i>
Other: _____		
Other: _____		

It is OK if you find yourself unable to manage your feelings of sadness or hopelessness on your own. Talk with your healthcare provider, and get the help you need.



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