

## Coping

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You might say that times are stressful right now, and so coping mechanisms are in the spotlight whether we like it or not. And in the world of coping mechanisms, there are many. They all work in some sense, but some aren't healthy. Take displacement, for example. It might feel good for a few moments to blow off steam by yelling obscenities at the family dog. But if you have a conscience, you'll feel lousy later, your family will be rather unhappy with you, and you may wind up overcompensating and giving the dog your cheeseburger. There are better ways to cope.

## Humor

If it's not apparent yet, one of my favorite healthy coping mechanisms is humor. Some favor irony and situational humor while others tend toward slapstick or physical comedy. Satire and witty wordplay work for others. Whatever the form, humor provides us emotional release and perspective. It allows us to laugh in the face of fear and regain some measure of control. So I would encourage you to try to see the humorous side of life.

## Sublimation

Of all the healthy coping mechanisms, this is the one that intrigues me the most. The simplest way to describe sublimation is the old adage that when life gives you lemons, make lemonade. Sublimation means a direct transformation from one state to another. On a personal level, I am navigating the task of trying to homeschool my son as my wife and I both work full time. I was initially frustrated and indignant and overwhelmed at "having" to teach all these subjects to my son. But with some time, acclimation and an iota of sublimation, I am actually quite fortunate to be able to spend this time with my son. I'm exhausted, but I also get to experience the joy of helping my son learn new concepts and watch him grin as he gains new understanding. So when life gives out lemons, we make lemonade. Now, life is giving you COVID-19. What will you make of it?