

Emotional Coping

STRESS AND WORRIES ARE NORMAL AFTER A CANCER DIAGNOSIS

3 strategies to help you cope



NAME WHAT YOU ARE FEELING?

Get in the habit of naming your feelings.

This simple practice can be powerful. By putting words to what you're feeling, you can "name it to tame it", helping to regulate overwhelming emotions. It also creates a deeper connection to your inner world—allowing you to respond with grace, self-love, and compassion.

Naming your emotions gives you the space to embrace them without judgment. It invites acceptance, understanding, and the freedom to move through whatever you're experiencing, rather than getting stuck in it.



Your feelings are valid. Start by acknowledging them.



CONNECT WITH OTHERS

Whether it's friends, family, a therapist, or a support group, those connections act like a safety net keeping you grounded and reminding you you're not alone.

Emotional Validation:



When you talk to someone who listens and empathizes, it can help you feel seen and understood. That validation can reduce feelings of loneliness, self-doubt, or shame.

Perspective and Clarity:



Sometimes, just talking through your thoughts out loud can help you make sense of them. Others can also offer different perspectives or help you recognize patterns you might not see on your own.

Stress Relief:



Human connection naturally helps reduce stress. Sharing burdens lightens them—and laughter, support, or even a simple distraction from someone you trust can make tough days easier to handle.

Accountability and Encouragement:



When you're going through a hard time, it's easy to isolate or avoid what you're feeling. A good support system encourages you to check in with yourself and seek help if needed.

Better Coping Skills:



Being around others helps you learn how different people manage emotions, conflict, and tough times. That social learning can give you tools to navigate your own struggles more effectively.

Reduced Risk of Mental Health Struggles:



Strong social support is associated with lower risks of anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues. It also contributes to higher overall life satisfaction.

MINDFULNESS OR RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

Mindfulness meditation, breathing, and relaxation techniques can offer our minds and bodies an opportunity to pause and tune into the present moment. When our minds keep jumping to worries about the future, these practices can help us gently come back to the here and now with a sense of calm.

Inova Peterson Life with Cancer offers several virtual group programs that can help you cope, including *Mind Over Matter*, a five-week program delivering concrete coping strategies, and *Mindfulness-Based Cancer Recovery*, an eight-week program that explores mindfulness. We also offer an educational *Fear of Recurrence* program that can help you understand the unique worries that can arise after treatment.

Go to the events section of the website to [learn more](#).

