



# Using Ineffective Coping Strategies for Facing With COVID-19



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## Dear Editor,

Methods that people use to overcome problems are called coping strategies. The concept of coping was first introduced by Lazarus in 1966. He believed that stress involves three stages. First, there is the initial assessment, which is to observe a risk. The second stage involves the evaluation, which is the search for an answer in the mind, and the third stage is to find the answer to the problem, which is called a coping strategy.<sup>1,2</sup> Numerous studies have examined the causes of dangerous behaviors such as smoking, alcohol consumption, and self-harming behaviors in individuals; however, many people who are exposed to difficult psychological distress do not tend to engage in such dangerous behaviors. These people have abilities that other people do not.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the differences between people who engage in dangerous behaviors and those who do not show such reactions in facing the problems can be traced to the coping methods used by these individuals when faced with difficult psychological conditions. However, if the coping strategies that a person uses to face with problems are effective, it creates a sense of self-control and therefore the person can finally solve the problem or cope with it, and if the strategies are ineffective, it will eventually lead to the use of ineffective coping strategies and sometimes dangerous behaviors.<sup>4</sup> In a study on COVID-19 in China, researchers found that many people who confronted with COVID-19 pandemic have experienced high levels of psychological distress and that many people have used negative coping strategies for adapting to this crisis.<sup>5</sup> Finally, it can be stated that the occurrence of dangerous behaviors in such critical situations is not a behavior without introduction. Therefore, some of the characteristics of people could be deduced such as their inability to find solutions to the

problems, lack of coping strategies to manage stressors, and inflexibility and limitation of the number of solutions provided by them. To conclude, strengthening effective defense mechanisms by mental health professionals can reduce the incidence of such destructive behaviors in community members.

## Ethical Approval

Not applicable.

## Conflict of Interest Disclosures

None.

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