

Protective Factors



Protective factors are things that contribute to mental health and allow a person to be resilient in the face of challenges. Someone with a lot of protective factors—such as strong relationships and healthy coping skills—will be better equipped to overcome life’s obstacles.

Many factors are out of our control. However, the way we care for ourselves and our health is within our control. By focusing on what you can control, and building upon those protective factors, you will improve your ability to cope with many of life’s challenges.

My Protective Factors

Instructions: Review each of the following protective factors, and mark the scales to indicate how well you are performing in each area.

Social Support

- ability to talk about problems
- people to ask for practical help
- feelings of love, intimacy, or friendship
- faith community support

Weak Moderate Strong

Emotional Processing Skills

- ability to manage uncomfortable emotions in a healthy way
- awareness of one’s own emotions, and recognition of how they influence behavior

Weak Moderate Strong

Physical Health

- adequate exercise or physical activity
- a balanced and healthy nutrition
- adequate sleep and rest

Weak Moderate Strong

Sense of Purpose

- meaningful involvement in work, education, or other roles
- understanding of personal values, and living in accordance with those values
- focuses on how to support and care for others

Weak Moderate Strong

Self-Esteem

- belief that one’s self has value
- acceptance of personal flaws, weaknesses, and mistakes
- belief in ability to overcome challenges

Weak Moderate Strong

Healthy Thinking

- does *not* ruminate on mistakes, personal flaws, or problems
- ability to consider personal strengths and weaknesses rationally
- manages irrational beliefs or thinking and worst-case scenario thinking

Weak Moderate Strong

Protective Factors

Spirituality/Faith	Manages Worry
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• regular meditation on Scripture• regular prayer• regular connection to faith community• seeks to grow in faith and know Christ more deeply• practices gratitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• recognizes my control over self only• owns my response to external stimuli (eg. A person or situation does not control me or my response)• sorts through what I can control and cannot control – focusing only on what I can control
	

Instructions: Refer to the protective factors on the previous page to answer the following questions.

Which protective factor(s) has been the most valuable to you during difficult times?

1
2
3

What are two protective factors that you would like to improve?

1	2
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List *specific steps or actions* that might help to make these goals a reality.

1
2