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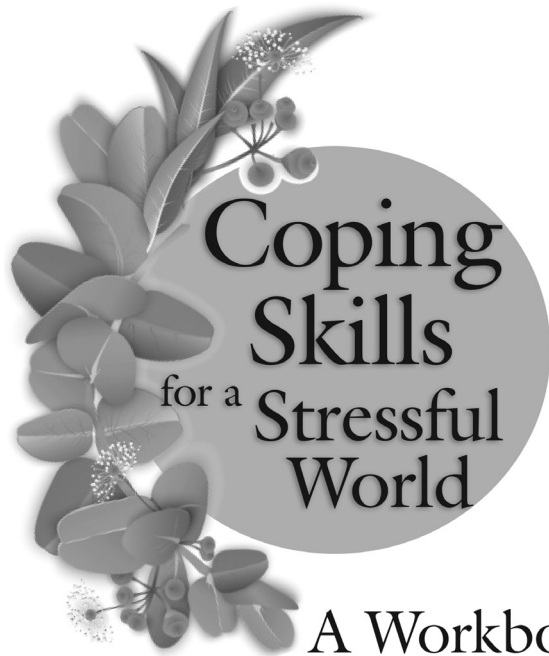
Coping  
Skills  
for a  
Stressful  
World

A Workbook for  
Counselors and Clients



AMERICAN COUNSELING  
ASSOCIATION

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## A Workbook for Counselors and Clients

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To clients who are struggling to navigate and make sense of these troubled times,  
and to their counselors who are braving the journey with them.

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## Foreword

Emerging crises have ruptured our nation along lines of ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, social class, culture, religion, values, partisanship, and more. Those seeking counseling report an increase in the stress and anxiety associated with these crises. Coauthors Michelle Muratori and Bob Haynes have written a workbook unlike any other in the field, providing a comprehensive toolkit to assist counselors as they work with clients coping with both traditional and emerging crises and stressors. This uniquely focused workbook provides narrative material for counselors and clients along with a comprehensive assortment of exercises and activities for out-of-session work to further enhance and facilitate a client's counseling experience.

This workbook addresses these topics and many others in a user-friendly and practical way for both counselors and clients. Here are some key features:

- Practical exercises and activities for clients to reflect on, to explore, and to practice outside the counseling session are a basic part of most chapters.
- Each topical chapter contains a *narrative overview for the counselor*. The authors share what they have learned about working therapeutically with themes in the lives of clients.
- Chapters contain practical *narrative information for clients* to explain the concepts they are working on in counseling (such as depression or coping with crisis) and to provide the basis for the exercises.
- The client sections in the workbook may be freely photocopied and given to clients for their work outside of the counseling session.
- A separate chapter addresses counselor compassion fatigue, burnout, and vicarious trauma, which can result from working with trauma victims, and focuses on self-care exercises and activities to enhance counselors' wellness.

This is a practical toolbox for counselors. Counselors are free to adapt the exercises and activities to meet the needs of their clients, which affords increased flexibility and creativity. Clients have the opportunity to carefully consider their pressing concerns, and the exercises and activities will actively engage clients in self-reflection and guide them in practicing new skills beyond the counseling session. Many of the common reasons clients seek counseling are addressed in this workbook, and the importance of developing resilience and focusing on wellness are emphasized.

Counselors providing brief therapy can use the out-of-session activities to enable clients to extend their work into daily life. In addition, client feedback from these activities will provide significant material for counselors to explore with their clients at the next session. This can only make the counseling endeavor more effective and efficient for both client and counselor.

We have not seen a workbook that offers narrative for counselors, narrative for clients, and exercises and activities for clients for such a large range of counseling topics. In addition, the authors address the newly emerging topics facing our country, our culture, and our clients. The exercises and activities tie nicely into the narrative discussions, and they reflect a variety of theoretical perspectives.

A unique feature is the contributions by experts in the counseling and psychology fields, who share their experience with exercises and activities they have found effective in their work with clients. These experts describe a variety of exercises and activities pertinent to reality therapy, pain management, trauma recovery, and activities for hospice clients, just to name a few.

Michelle and Bob bring their varied clinical backgrounds to the development of this workbook. They are deeply concerned about the human cost of recent divisive trends across American society and around the world today, which are making clients' lives increasingly more stressful. They have written a timely book that provides counselors with tools to help their clients navigate these stressful times. This team has combined their abilities and years of professional experience to produce a top-quality practical guide for counselors and their clients.

—Marianne Schneider Corey, MA

—Gerald Corey, EdD





## Preface

We are writing this workbook to aid counseling clients living in a world in distress. People are experiencing “global anxiety” at levels rarely, if ever, seen before. Our world is increasingly plagued by political upheaval, divisiveness and tribalism, interpersonal violence, hate crimes, terrorism, social injustice, the omnipresence of social media, cybercrimes, and speed-of-light news cycles bombarding our televisions, computers, and smartphones. In addition, the tangible effects of climate change are increasing the size and severity of natural disasters. The 2018 Camp Fire, the most destructive wildfire in California history, caused 86 deaths, led to the evacuation of 52,000 people, destroyed more than 18,000 structures, and left an estimated 100,000 people traumatized by the event, the losses, and the aftermath. In 2019, California experienced the two largest earthquakes in 20 years (of magnitudes 6.4 and 7.1, respectively) within the span of 2 days that set off nearly constant aftershocks for weeks and caused widespread damage. Although lives were spared, these massive quakes left people terrified, anxious, and afraid to sleep in their homes. In recent years, catastrophic storms and hurricanes have caused widespread devastation from Maine to Florida and throughout the states along the Gulf of Mexico. Hurricanes Harvey, Maria, and Dorian damaged the environment in addition to destroying homes and businesses. The loss of life from these and other natural disasters are painful reminders of our vulnerability and our limits as human beings.

Tragedies of a different sort—those that are self-inflicted—have also spiked in recent times. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2019), death from alcohol, drugs, and suicide in the United States in 2017 hit the highest level since 1999, the year these statistics were first collected. Counselors are seeing an increase in the number of clients who report living in a state of hypervigilance, suspicion, and distrust (Meyers, 2017). As the frequency and intensity of these forces and events increase, a growing number of clients will need the support and direction of counseling and therapy to deal with these crises and resultant long-term stress.

Our hope is that this workbook will support counselors in working with clients who must navigate these stressful times. The primary focus of this workbook is twofold: (a) to assist counselors and therapists by providing materials to use with clients experiencing this increase in global anxiety and stress; and (b) to assist clients in exploring, understanding, and managing crises and stressors in their lives. We wanted to create a counselor- and client-friendly workbook for use as a clinical tool in counseling sessions and for subsequent client homework. We include material to assist counselors in the counseling process and homework material for the client, such as therapeutic activities and exercises that can be completed in or between sessions. This counseling toolbox can greatly enhance the therapy experience and facilitate the work of counselor and client.

We offer our personal and professional perspectives throughout and include a fair amount of scholarly literature to support our claims. In the narrative sections, we share some of our own stories and discuss

what we have learned about working with clients therapeutically. We also have invited a number of clinicians to share their experiences with the use of therapeutic exercises and activities in counseling to give you multiple perspectives on using this clinical tool.

We recommend that counselors read through the entire workbook to become familiar with the content and the sections you might most want to make use of in counseling. Exercises and activities represent a variety of theoretical and therapeutic approaches and reflect the wide-ranging needs of clients. Some exercises are preceded by narrative to further explain the concepts addressed by the exercises; others are straightforward and can be easily grasped. Counselors have our permission and that of the publisher to copy the client material to give to your client, and you also have permission to adapt any exercises as you see fit to better meet the unique needs of your clients. We discuss the ethical issues applicable to the utilization of such tools with clients in Chapter 1 and offer guidelines for assigning these activities. We hope this workbook will prove to be a practical and valuable clinical resource in your library of professional books and literature.



**Michelle Muratori, PhD**, is a senior counselor at the Center for Talented Youth at Johns Hopkins University, in Baltimore, Maryland, where she works with highly gifted middle school and high school students who participate in the Study of Exceptional Talent and their families. She earned her MA in counseling psychology from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, and her PhD in counselor education from the University of Iowa, where she developed her research and clinical interests in gifted education. Her graduate research on the academic, social, and emotional adjustment of young college entrants earned her recognition from the Iowa Talented and Gifted Association, the National Association for Gifted Children, and the Mensa Education and Research Foundation and Mensa International, Ltd. At the University of Iowa, Michelle also earned the Howard R. Jones Achievement Award, the Albert Hood Promising Scholar Award, and the First in the Nation in Education Scholar Award.

Since 2005, Michelle has been a faculty associate in the Johns Hopkins School of Education and teaches courses in the master of science in counseling program. In 2014, she was honored with the Johns Hopkins University Alumni Association Excellence in Teaching Award. Michelle regularly presents at national conferences in counseling and gifted education and is a member of the American Counseling Association, the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, the Association for Specialists in Group Work, the Maryland Counseling Association, and the National Association for Gifted Children. When not engaged in these professional activities, Michelle enjoys writing, attending concerts, watching late-night comedy shows and movies, and spending time with her family and friends.

Michelle's publications include:

- *Counselor Self-Care* (2018), with Gerald Corey, Jude T. Austin II, and Julius A. Austin, published by the American Counseling Association.
- *I Never Knew I Had a Choice* (11th ed., 2018), with Gerald Corey and Marianne Schneider Corey, published by Cengage Learning.
- *Clinical Supervision in the Helping Professions* (3rd ed., 2021), with Gerald Corey, Robert Haynes, and Patrice Moulton, published by the American Counseling Association.
- *Early Entrance to College: A Guide to Success* (2007), published by Prufrock Press.



**Robert Haynes, PhD**, is a clinical psychologist, author, and producer of psychology video programs for Borderline Productions. Bob received his doctorate in clinical psychology from Fuller Graduate School of Psychology in Pasadena, California, and is a member of the American Counseling Association.

ation and the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision. He has been actively involved in professional psychology through private practice as well as consulting, leading workshops, and writing on a variety of topics. In addition, Bob taught psychology, criminology, and management courses at the University of California at Santa Barbara, California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo, and California State University Sacramento. He also served as Chair of Site Visiting Teams for the Committee on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association. Bob retired after 25 years as training director of the accredited clinical psychology internship program at Atascadero State Hospital in California.

The topic of stress and crisis management has been a focal point in Bob's professional career, and he led stress debriefings and taught stress management classes for more than 20 years. Bob has also provided consultation and training in clinical supervision, criminology, disaster mental health, psychotherapy methods, stress management and burnout, suicide assessment and intervention, and theoretical approaches in counseling.

Bob's publications include:

- *Managing Crisis: Personally and Professionally*. (2021). Chapter 14 in M. S. Corey & G. Corey, *Becoming a Helper* (8th ed.), published by Cengage Learning.
- *Take Control of Life's Crises Today! A Practical Guide*. (2014), published by Aventine Press.
- *Clinical Supervision in the Helping Professions: A Practical Guide* (2nd ed., 2010), with G. Corey, P. Moulton, & M. Muratori, published by American Counseling Association.

Bob has produced a number of psychology training videos in collaboration with Marianne Schneider Corey and Gerald Corey, including *Groups in Action: Evolution and Challenges* (2006); *Ethics in Action, Student Version CD-ROM* (2003); and *The Art of Integrative Counseling* (2001).

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