

ANTICIPATING OBSTACLES: Plan for Coping

People have many challenging situations in their lives and it is expected that certain obstacles will arise. A difficult day may involve life stressors and increased pain symptoms. The best time to plan for how you will best cope with and manage your pain during one of these days is now.

Below, identify the *specific* things in your life that may be triggers for pain flare-ups, as well as how you may cope with challenges using the skills that you have learned.

Potential Obstacles/Triggers/Stressors: *(Example: Kids fighting, Cold weather)*

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 6. _____ |

Ways to Cope: *(Example: Walking, Deep breathing, Pleasant activity)*

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|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 6. _____ |

Remember:

- BE PREPARED! The best defense is a good offense
- Consider all the tools you have learned and do not undersell yourself or let automatic negative thoughts (ANTs) sabotage you
- Contact friends, family, and VA providers who are there to provide support as needed
- Use humor and remember: Tomorrow is a new day!