**Safe Coping Skills**

* Ask for help: reach out to someone safe
* Inspire yourself: carry something positive (e.g. quote, poem)
* Persist: don’t give up
* Cry: let yourself cry, it won’t last forever
* Choose self-care: eat right, sleep, exercise, hydrate
* List your options: in any situation, you have choices
* Compassion: listen to yourself with respect and care
* Be gentle: use positive, gentle self-talk
* Pace yourself: go slower, or faster, as needed
* Stay safe: do whatever you need to do to feel and be safe
* Seek understanding, not blame: listen to your behavior to understand yourself
* Create a new story: you are the author of your life, your own hero
* Avoid avoidable suffering: feel what’s real and don’t add to it
* Ask trustworthy others: Is my belief accurate?
* Get organized: you’ll feel more in control with lists, “to-do’s,” and a clean environment
* Healing above all: focus on what matters
* Try something, anything: a good plan today is better than a perfect one tomorrow
* Listen to your needs: don’t neglect yourself
* Structure your day: a schedule keeps you on track and connected to the world
* Set an action plan: be specific, set deadlines, and let others know about it
* Protect yourself: choose to stay away from destructive people and environments
* Trust the process: just keep moving forward
* Praise yourself: notice the things you do well and right
* Self-nurture: do things you enjoy
* Create healthy community: select positive, caring people to be in your life
* Take responsibility: take an active, not a passive approach
* Make a commitment: to yourself, your health, and wellbeing
* Learn from experience: seek wisdom that can help as you move forward
* Plan it out: take time to think ahead
* Identify the belief: release negative mental models, assumptions, or “shoulds”
* Reward yourself: celebrate in healthy ways
* Tolerate uncomfortable feelings: this, too, shall pass
* Notice the source: before accepting advice or criticism, consider the source and its trustworthiness
* Actions first: don’t wait until you feel motivated; just start now and the benefit will follow
* When in doubt, don’t: honor your inner voice
* Make a decision: start with the best solution for now
* Reach for resources: lean on your community; ask, because people like to help
* Notice what is in your control: list the aspects of life that you guide (friends, work, self-care)

Adapted from: Najavits, L. M. (2002). *Seeking safety: A treatment manual for PTSD and substance abuse*. NY: Guliford Press. With thanks to the Walnut Avenue Family & Women’s Center.