

OVERCOMING DISTRESSING VOICES

You may find it useful to use the questions below to help you think about your current coping strategies. Can any of them be used differently to help you cope better with voices and give you a greater sense of control?

How do you respond to voices when they start talking (e.g. distracting, ignoring, talking back, relaxing)?	
When do you use the coping strategies (e.g. times, places, situations)?	
How helpful are these coping strategies? Do they work better (i.e. leave you feeling better) at particular times?	
Do any of these coping strategies make voices worse (e.g. shouting back can sometimes lead to voices getting louder) or make you feel worse?	

COPING WITH VOICES

Do any of these coping strategies help in the short term, but make things worse in the longer term?	
Is there a coping strategy that you could use more often/differently? What will you do and when?	

These questions are available in a worksheet for you to complete at the end of this chapter.

Spending time with other people can be a useful strategy for coping with voices. The next section offers some advice on how to use socialising to help you to cope with voices.

Socialising

Being with other people can keep our minds occupied and voices can seem quieter and more distant, or we can feel less preoccupied by voices. The company of other people can also give us the opportunity to engage in positive activities that can build our self-esteem (we will learn more about the importance of positive self-esteem beliefs in Chapter 6), such as going for a walk, going to the shops or to the cinema or even to the pub (but don't drink too much!). However,