CREATIVE SELF-CARE

Creative Self-Care

POSTED ON **29 JUN 14** COMMENTS **1** BY **PETREA**



> **Has fortune dealt you some bad cards? Then let wisdom make you a good gamester.**
>
> **Francis Quarles**

Recently at my work, a group of us came together to make coping cards. It was an exercise in exploring imagery that supports healthy ways of coping which my art therapy student, Tiffany Merrit had shared with our team. We have monthly clinical sharing meetings and my colleagues thought this would be a good activity to do together to become familiar with it to use with clients as well to support our own self-care given the often very emotional work we do.



The idea behind coping cards is to create reminders of things that help you through difficult days or situations using images and words that help you tap into that inner strength. You may choose to use quotes that inspire, against a background of a calming image, or words or images that gently nudge you to remember that you can make it through.

> **Life is like a game of cards. The hand you are dealt is determinism; the way you play it is free will.**
>
> **Jawaharlal Nehru**

Imagery can be purposely chosen by seeking out imagery of things that help you cope when times are tough (things that have helped in the past). Or you may want to focus on the *intention of coping* and your inner strength then flip through magazines or online imagery which you can print up. Choose what jumps out at you with a big "Yes!" You can also draw these images your self as symbols, or pick from your own photographs. With digital imagery you could make collages of the imagery that compliments each other representing a particularly helpful way of coping and print them up in the card size you are using.



The idea is that it is a fit for you, not what you think you *should* choose but what **feels** like it will inspire you to approach a situation differently with confidence.

> **Life consists not in holding good cards but in playing those you hold well.**
>
> **Josh Billings**

You can make these cards using old playing cards, pick up a deck of cards from the dollar store, or as in my case I chose some old Tarot cards (which I never learned to use) and found these to be a good size. Simply glue your images on one or both sides and add words (optional) cut out of magazines, hand printed or typed and printed up from your computer.



To me the key part is the imagery, because it usually has so many different and rich layers of inspiration and meaning. There is no one right way to do this however, trust your intuition and place the imagery in ways that feel right for you. It does not have to be complicated, it could simply be one image or a combination of two or more that go together for the same coping reminder.

Once you are done creating your coping cards you can punch a hole in the top corner of each and clip them together with a metal ring. Remember, ***life is not about the cards that you are dealt, its' how you play your hand!*** You can also use this quote or any similar one shared here to put on the back of each card if you like. Have fun!



> **Life's too short not to laugh about yourself and the cards you're dealt.**
>
> **Mark Zupan**

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