

# The Nature of Coping: An Overview

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# Objectives

- Describe the nature of coping
- Describe the difference between “everyday” coping and “life” coping (global life meaning)
- Being Sensitive to the Changing Means and Ends in Coping
- Coping at the End of Life

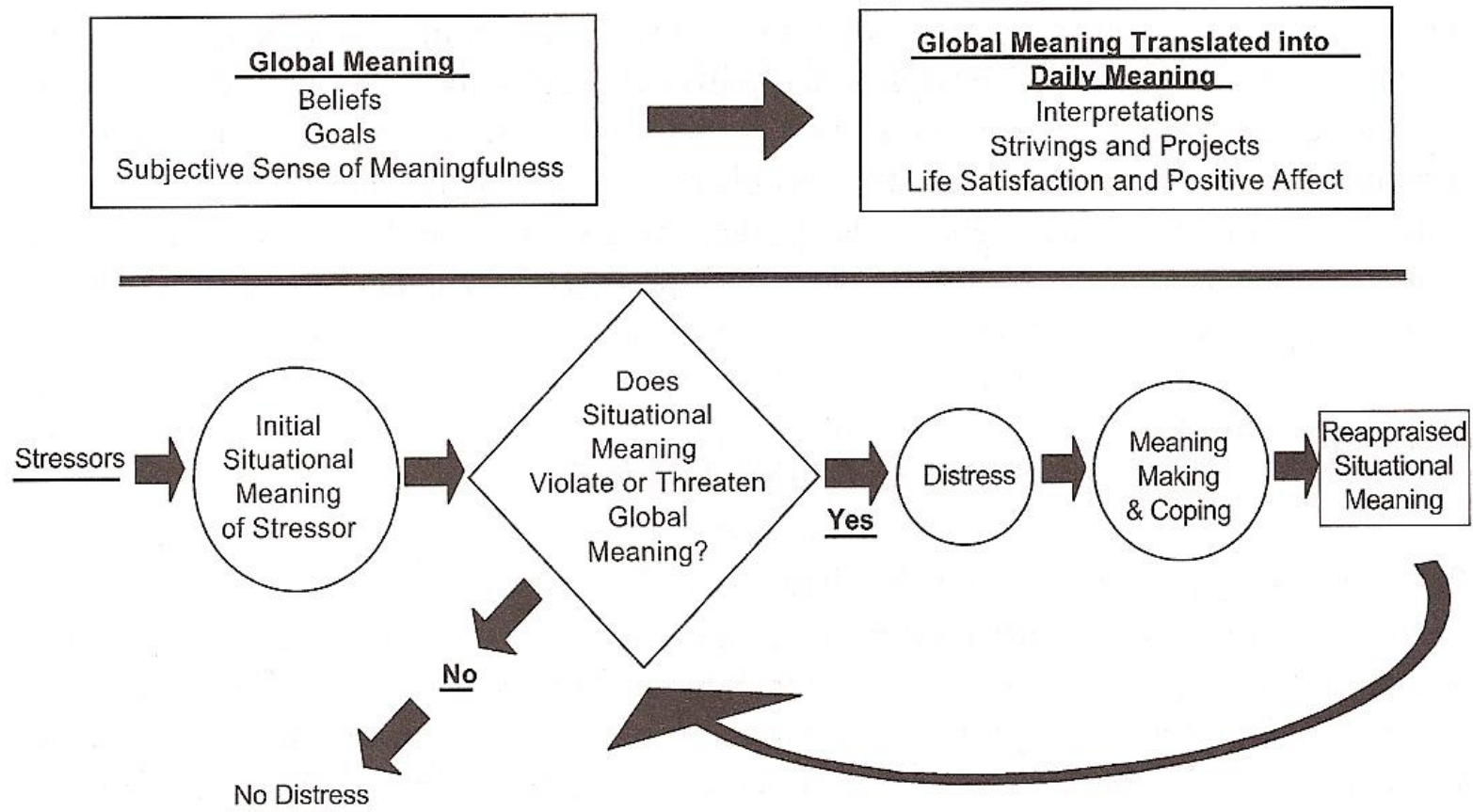
# Lazaus & Folkman



**Primary Appraisals** - evaluations of life events in terms of their implications to the individual's well being.

**Secondary Appraisals** - evaluations of the resources and burdens the individual brings to the life events.

# Global Life Meaning (Park)



Note: Religion is often part of global meaning (beliefs, goals, and subjective sense of meaningfulness).

**FIGURE 16.1.** Model of life meaning.

# Coping, Global Life Meaning: Patient, Family Caregiver and Other Caregivers



- Global Life Meaning (Beliefs+Goals+Subjective Feelings)
- Meaning Making (a *process* of working to restore global life meaning) (Park in Paloutzian & Park, 2005)
- Strains in the System: Patient/Family Member + Family Caregivers + Medical Caregivers

# Reflect of Your Own Experience

- Reflect on everyday experiences of stress . . . Notice that most of these events do not threaten your sense of meaning.
- Reflect for just an instant on a situation in which you really had to cope.
- Notice: the difference between “everyday” coping and “life” coping.

Now we'll talk about how we cope . . .

# Assumptions about the Coping Process - Pargament

1. People seek significance.
2. Events are constructed in terms of their significance to people.
3. People bring an orienting system to the coping process.
4. People translate the orienting system into specific methods of coping
5. People seek significance in coping through the mechanisms of conservation and transformation.
6. People cope in ways that are compelling to them.
7. Coping is embedded in the culture.
8. The keys to good coping lie in the outcomes and the process.

# Means & Ends



**Ends** - What is the destination of significance/meaning?

[e.g., What are we praying will happen?]

**Means** - How does one go about obtaining significance/meaning?

[What do we do?]





## Religion and Coping

- Religion gives form to the “ends”
- Religion gives form to the “means”

# Spiritual Coping

## **Illustration: Coping with Terminal Illness**

- Hope: for cure, for healing, for finishing important goals, for a peaceful death
- Sense of control
- Acceptance of situation
- Strength to deal with situation
- Meaning and Purpose: in life in midst of suffering

Christina Puchalski, M.D.

# The Nature of Religious and Spiritual Coping



**Religion** as a system of faith, worship, cumulative traditions, and prescribed rituals.



**Faith** - “to see, to feel, to act in terms of a transcendent dimension . . . An essential human quality [if not] the fundamental human category.”

Cantwell Smith



**Religion** - The search for significance in ways related to the sacred.

**Spirituality** - The search for the sacred.

Kenneth I. Pargament, Ph.D.



The depth of religious commitment has more to do with how Americans think and act than do other key background aspects, such as level of education, age, and political affiliation.

George Gallup, Jr.

# Psychology of Coping

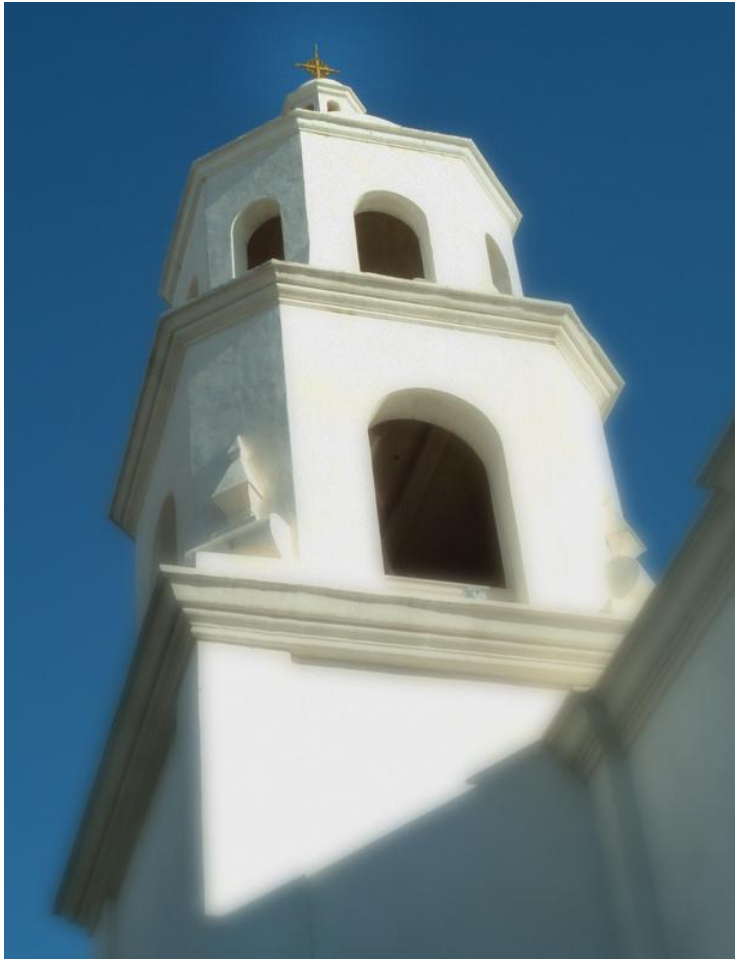


Religion has its greatest relevance to the points of maximum strain and tension in human life.

Talcott Parsons



# Psychology of Coping



Meaning is a tool for adaptation, for controlling the world, for self-regulation, and for belongingness. Indeed it is the best all-purpose tool on the planet.

Baumeister, 1991

# Psychology of Coping



Religion guarantees that whatever happens to the individual, no matter how good or bad, will make sense.

Thus religious beliefs provide a framework for perceiving, understanding and evaluating daily events, experiencing them as part of a broader pattern.

Baumeister, 1991

# Frequency of Prayer

