

Doctoral dissertation in 2022 (abstract)

Proactive coping to promote future-oriented health behaviors:
support measures using health coaching

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Abstract

Chapter 1: Future oriented perspectives in coping and positive thinking

Previous stress research, including models on stress, resilience, and posttraumatic growth, mainly focused on coping strategies after facing stressors. Recently, researchers have focused on proactive coping theory (Schwarzer, 1999; Schwarzer & Taubert, 2002), which is coping with positive and time perspectives. Proactive coping perceives latent stressors as “challenges” and recognizes them as opportunities for self-development. Therefore, proactive coping is considered goal management.

Chapter 2: Objectives and significance of this study

This study conducted a detailed literature review on proactive coping research trends, organized these concepts, and developed a valid and reliable assessment method to examine its correlation with health. We focused on “coaching,” one positive psychology approach, as a health support measure that uses proactive coping and conducted a literature review. This study, which aims to improve the utility of proactive coping to facilitate health behaviors, focused on exercise frequency to assess health behaviors to be enhanced or facilitated.

Basic proactive coping research that we expect to contribute to future research development includes developing scales and examining correlations with health. Moreover, effective health promotion behaviors are facilitated by examining support measures suitable for the characteristics of proactive coping.

Chapter 3: Proactive coping research trends

This chapter describes a literature review to investigate trends and problems in proactive coping research from three perspectives; definitions, scales, and previous studies, and suggests the limitations, issues, and possibilities of research on proactive coping based on these perspectives.

Chapter 4: Health coaching research trends

This chapter reviewed the literature on coaching, a practical approach in positive psychology, examined health support measures and summarized the history of coaching psychology and health coaching, the definition of health coaching, and research trends.

Chapter 5: Developing scales to assess proactive coping: PCHB and PCC-J

We developed two scales to assess proactive coping beliefs and behaviors. A scale specializing in health behaviors was developed using the Proactive Coping Inventory (Greenglass, Schwarzer, Jakubiec, Fiksenbaum, & Taubert, 1999) to evaluate beliefs. We also developed the Japanese version items of the Utrecht Proactive Coping Competence Scale (Bode, Thoolen, & de Ridder, 2008) to assess behaviors.

Chapter 6: A longitudinal study on proactive coping and health

This chapter examined the causal relationships among proactive coping, well-being, and exercise frequency, including time-series changes, using PCHB and PCC-J. We conducted a three-wave longitudinal study using a cross-lagged model, which indicated that an increase in proactive coping increased well-being and exercise quantity.

Chapter 7: Health coaching intervention designs

This chapter describes a systematic review of conducting randomized controlled trials and follow-up studies to examine characteristics of practical health coaching skills. The review identified theories, skills, and intervention settings essential for health coaching interventions.

Chapter 8: Effects of health coaching to increase exercise frequency

We conducted a small-scale intervention trial using health coaching as a framework for proactive coping. The intervention was conducted with four adult women with low exercise frequency. They received a two-weekly intervention four times over two months. The intervention's baseline was the five-stage model (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997) of proactive coping. The study used the motivational intervention technique.

Chapter 9: Developing an intervention plan using health coaching to increase exercise quantity

We developed an intervention plan to increase exercise quantity using health coaching based on proactive coping theories by referring to the results of Studies 1~4. The program indicated the efficacy of using health coaching interventions based on the five-stage model of proactive coping and the possible utility of this model. We have suggested the need for future verification of the intervention and its methods for implementing the intervention.

Chapter 10: General discussion

This chapter describes the summary, general discussion, limitations, and future perspectives of this study. The study indicated the correlation between proactive coping and health and suggested intervention plans. Concretely, we identified the following; (1) proactive coping affects health, (2) health coaching techniques are similar to the five-stage model of proactive coping, and (3) health coaching could be utilized for research on proactive coping interventions.

This study focused on proactive coping as a positive coping behavior for managing future health risks. The study focused on exercise frequency as a health behavior. We can recognize exercise positively by using proactive coping. Moreover, the intervention could change “what a person must do” to “what a person wants to do” by increasing motivation through health coaching. We could apply similar intervention plans for exercise and other health behaviors, including diet and sleep, in the future.