2. Learn coping skills

**Group size**



Pairs

**Suggested timing**

15-20 minutes

**Method**



Discussion

**What you need**

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Pens and paper

Learning objectives

* Learn about coping skills and how they help us cope in a first aid situation
* List some coping skills that can be used to support people in the short term and long term

## Overview

In this activity, learners consider the term ‘coping’ and then in pairs consider what might help them to cope in a challenging situation or when someone needs first aid.

## Preparation

Ensure there are pens and paper for the learners to use.

Ground rules should be in place and referred to throughout the session. Assure learners are provided with opportunities to ask questions and have a space to ask anonymously if they wish to. For more details on making a class agreement and anonymous question boxes look at the guidance on [creating a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment](https://firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk/secondary/guidance-and-support/).

## Delivering the activity

1. Ask learners to think about the word ‘coping’, what do they think it means? Hand out pens and paper and give learners one minute to write down their definition of coping.
2. Once this is complete ask learners to write down one thing someone might do to cope if they were in a situation that worries them of that they find challenging. Ask them to think about something immediate that person could do, for example in a situation where someone needed first aid e.g. taking a deep breath. Then ask them what they might do to cope in the longer term, to cope with long term challenges e.g. listen to music or spend time on their favourite hobby or with friends.
3. Ask learners to pair up and compare answers. Working together, ask the pairs to develop or add to their definitions of coping and think of more coping actions someone could take in an immediate situation and in a longer term one. Ask them to write their ideas down.
4. Once this is done, ask learners to find a different partner, and again, to develop their coping definitions and immediate and longer-term coping actions in their new pair.
5. You can run this as many times as needed to give time for learners to develop their coping definitions and actions.
6. After this is complete ask learners to share some of their definitions. Then share the Oxford English Dictionary definition of coping: “**to deal effectively with something difficult.**” Explain that this is one definition. Ask learners to discuss this definition, you can use the following prompt questions if needed:
* Does it cover what they were thinking?
* Does it have enough detail? Is there anything they would change or add?
* Can it be applied to a range of situations?

## Ask for some learners to share the coping actions someone might use if they were helping someone in need of first aid, what might help them to look after their wellbeing whilst helping others? What were their immediate and longer-term coping ideas? Return to the coping definition ask the group to think through whether or not their coping action helps to “deal effectively with something difficult”.

## Stretch and challenge activities:

1. If learners finish discussing their coping skills earlier than others, they could create a set of coping cards, or a coping poster. Have them split a piece of paper into rectangles and use each one as a card with a coping skills on it. Write the coping skills and draw something to represent each coping skill on it.
2. Encourage them to think about the coping skills and the different kinds of situations someone might need to support themselves to cope, in the short term and long term. They could discuss or write a list of challenging situations where coping skills would be needed.

## Summing up

* Ask learners to personally reflect about how they could use these coping skills in a range of situations. They should do this in their own time and it doesn’t need to be shared with the class. Do they have one or two that they think would work well for them? They could write these down to help them form a coping plan to manage well in a range of situations.
* Now move on to the [Coping skills practise activity](https://firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk/secondary/safety-and-wellbeing/coping-skills/) to continue learning about coping skills.