

Module 1:

Welcome to the coping skills course



This module will:

- explain how developing coping skills will help you with distressing experiences
- outline how this coping skills course works
- give you the opportunity to think about what you want from this course

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Plan for today's session

How was your week?

What would you like to talk about today?

Evaluating today's session

Summary of what we talked about today

What will I do during the week?

How was today for me?

Name: _____ Date: _____



What is this workbook about?

This workbook was created to help you develop ways to deal with experiences like voices, hallucinations or distressing beliefs. You and your coping skills therapist can use this workbook together.

This workbook will help you:

- discuss your experiences and the stressful events that might have affected you
- think about the ways you already cope
- develop new ways to cope well
- understand how your thoughts affect your emotions, actions and body and use this information to make changes for the better

As you work through this workbook, you should be able to:

- identify and achieve goals
- reduce your stress levels
- prevent a relapse
- move toward recovery

How will this workbook help me?

This workbook will help you learn coping skills to avoid a relapse.

Some people manage their fear by trying to forget about it or denying that they had a distressing experience.

A more positive way to manage this fear is to learn coping skills. These will help you manage your experiences and reduce the chance of becoming unwell again.

You may already be using some coping skills. Use the worksheet **What helps me now?** to think about how you already help yourself.

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What helps me now?

Think of things you do now to help yourself cope. List them here.

 **Worksheet**

These are the things I do to help myself cope.

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Name: _____ Date: _____

What will I do with my coping skills therapist?

You have already met your coping skills therapist. They introduced themselves and asked you some questions to get to know you. You have filled out the worksheet called **Plan for today's session**.


You will meet with your coping skills therapist for about 12 weeks. This is what you will do in each session.

- **See** how your week has been. You'll also talk about any tasks you agreed to do in between sessions.
- **Target** your work for this week. If you have set goals, you'll identify what you want to work on this week. Then you can work on the module that helps you meet your goal.
- Take **Action**. Work together with your therapist to think about what will help you and what you can do.
- **Review** what you've done. What worked today? What didn't? What did you learn?
- **Take home tasks** to work on between your coping skills sessions.

You might have noticed that the first letters of each item spell the word **START**. Congratulations on getting started!

How will the worksheets help me?

There are worksheets in each module of this course. You've already done some of them.

You may notice that all the worksheets are introduced with this icon: 

Worksheet

They will help you learn about yourself, your situation and how to cope.

How long do worksheets take?

Worksheets shouldn't take too long to fill out. But, if you want to take your time, that is fine too. Remember, the worksheets are here to help you think about things.

When you are answering the questions, it is best to put down the first answer that you think of.

What if I can't read or write?

If you need help with reading or writing, your coping skills therapist will help you. They can read the workbook to you and write down your answers.

Why should I use the worksheets?

The worksheets are here to help you think about things.

- They help you remember how your experiences affect you.
- At the end of your coping skills sessions, you will be able to look over your worksheets. You will be able to see if you can cope better with your experiences.
- You will be able to see if you have new ways to cope with your experiences.

Worksheets also help your therapist remember what to ask you.

And the information on your worksheets will help mental health services understand what is helpful to you. This information will help the mental health services improve and expand the coping skills course.

Think about what you would like to work on with your coping skills therapist. Use the worksheet **What I Want from Coping Skills** to write down what you would like.

What I want from coping skills

Worksheet

This worksheet will help you tell your coping skills therapist what you want and need from this course. Answer the questions as best you can, and talk about your answers with your coping skills therapist.

What is difficult for me?

What are my main problems?

Why do these difficult experiences bother me?

What have I tried so far to deal with my experiences and difficulties?

What do I want to get from developing coping skills?

What can my coping skills therapist help me with?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Experiences of developing coping skills: An example¹

“more like me again”

“My care coordinator helped me evaluate the things I was doing in life that were more unhelpful than helpful, and I started making small changes for the better. Looking at my experiences closely helped me to identify when things were getting worse or better. This is important when you have to ask for help. For me, I felt medication was a good route to try in tandem with talking therapies, but everybody finds different things useful. Slowly the fog started lifting and I began to feel more like me again. I was able to make good use of CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy) sessions with my care coordinator and sessions with the team Psychologist. This helped me understand the way I was feeling when I developed psychosis and looked at new ways of coping in future situations.

... with the continued support of the EIP (the Early Intervention in Psychosis service) across three years I feel like “me” again. I have recently been discharged from the service and am no longer on any medication. I am very ambitious in my career working full time for the last 2.5 years and am enjoying being a first time mum to my 10 month old baby”.



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¹ Understanding Psychosis and Schizophrenia (BPS, 2014, pg. 77). Reproduced with permission of the licensor through PLS clear.

The advantages and disadvantages of developing coping skills

As part of the coping skills course, a worksheet listing the advantages and disadvantages of developing coping skills was filled out. Here is what was written.

Advantages	Disadvantages
I could learn to understand what happened to me – why I became unwell.	I'll have to reduce or give up drinking
I could learn new ways of dealing with what has happened to me.	I'll have to cut down on smoking weed
I would have regular support – someone to talk about how I am feeling and what is happening to me.	I will need to practise new skills
If I learn to understand this illness and develop skills I need to cope with it, maybe I could learn how to prevent it happening again.	I'm afraid I will not be able to do the skills

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Developing My Coping Skills: Advantages and Disadvantages

Worksheet

What are the advantages and disadvantages of developing coping skills for you? List them in the worksheet.

Advantages

Disadvantages

Name: _____ Date: _____