

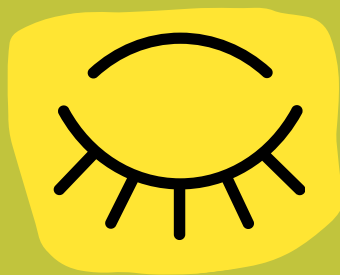
Skill Spotlight 3 - Coping

There are many ways to cope

Life sometimes involves difficult situations and problems, especially when you are a fire and emergency service volunteer. During these times your coping skills can help.

To start with, we need to understand the two broad ways people cope. There are all kinds of ways to cope, some healthier than others, but they fall under two broad categories.

Engaged coping is actively responding to the problem, along with your thoughts and feelings



Disengaged coping is about avoiding the problem and your emotions

Research shows that engaged coping is linked to higher levels of wellbeing.

Today was tough, I'm going to call my friend and tell them about it

Feelings? What feelings? I'm fine and I don't want to talk about it



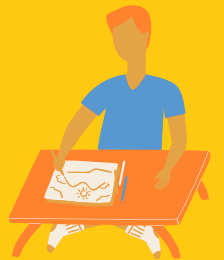
Help Alex choose: engage or disengage?

Engaged coping strategies can sometimes involve **confronting** the problem head-on and working towards finding solutions.



Another engaged way to cope is through seeking social support, such as **connecting** with your friends and family.

You can even cope in an engaged way through expressing or **communicating** your emotions, which might involve journaling or peer debriefing.



Disengaged coping involves – you guessed it – avoiding the problem, and sometimes your feelings about it too. Some difficult situations and problems can't be resolved, and negative feelings may arise, this is a normal reaction to a stressful situation. But practicing engaged coping strategies can help you connect with support, express your emotions, and seek solutions when possible.

Here's how I stay engaged

Fill these boxes out with your own engaging coping strategies.

Confront

Connect

Communicate