

what is it like to be a carer? guidance

learning outcome

Your staff will gain a greater insight into the impact of the caring role on the whole family including young carers.

learning method

Group exercise.

time required

Approximately 30 minutes.

facilitator notes

1. Ask participants to break into small groups to consider a variety of different caring situations. For example one group might be asked to consider an adult caring for their partner with a degenerative condition who is approaching end of life, another could talk about a teenager caring for their parent with a mental health condition.
2. You may wish to encourage participants to explore a caring situation with which they are least familiar.
3. Ask each group to discuss the following three aspects of the caring role:
 - a. Difficulties relating to the caring role
 - b. Satisfactions for the carer of their caring role
 - c. Coping strategies that the carer might need to develop.
4. Invite a volunteer from each group to feedback. Put comments onto flipchart and draw out any issues common to all carer groups.

activity five - level 2

group exercise

5. Draw out key learning points. These might include:
- The need to explore with carers all three aspects of caring role
 - not just focusing on difficulties
 - The importance of the carer feeling valued and an expert in their own right
 - Identifying common issues for all carers, but also the differences depending on the age, relationship with the cared for person, the caring situation and different cultural expectations
 - The fact that we all cope in very different ways to problems and challenges in our lives and that this will be reflected in the different coping strategies carers we adopt. We cannot stereotype or make assumptions about the type of support a person needs in order to cope.

what other approaches might I consider?

- Can I encourage participants to put themselves into the shoes of being a carer in a different way, e.g. encouraging participants to think about their usual morning routine and how it might differ if they also had a caring responsibility? What coping strategies might they have to put into place in order to manage their routine?

Common core principles covered by this activity: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7.