

Training in Psychological First Aid

For Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



MODULE 1

An introduction to PFA

Psychosocial Centre



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support

Blegdamsvej 27

DK-2100 Copenhagen

Denmark

Phone: +45 35 25 92 00

E-mail: psychosocial.centre@ifrc.org

Web: www.pscentre.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Psychosocial.Center

Twitter: [@IFRC_PS_Centre](https://twitter.com/IFRC_PS_Centre)

Psychological First Aid for Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies was developed by the IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support.

It comprises:

- *A Guide to Psychological First Aid for Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies*
 - *A Short Introduction to Psychological First Aid for Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies*
 - *Training in Psychological First Aid for Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies:*
 - *Module 1. An introduction to PFA (4 to 5 hours)*
 - *Module 2. Basic PFA (8 to 9 hours)*
 - *Module 3. PFA for Children (8 to 9 hours)*
 - *Module 4: PFA in Groups – Support to teams (21 hours – three days)*
-

Editors-in-chief: Louise Vinther-Larsen and Nana Wiedemann

Author: Pernille Hansen

Additional support: Wendy Ager, Louise Juul Hansen, Mette Munk

Reviewers: Wendy Ager, Ea Suzanne Akasha, Cecilie Alessandri, Eliza Cheung, Ziga Friberg, Ferdinand Garoff, Louise Juul Hansen, Sarah Harrison, Sara Hedrenius, Elfa Dögg S. Leifsdóttir, Maureen Mooney, Stephen Regel, Gurvinder Singh.

We are grateful to the Hong Kong Red Cross Branch of the Red Cross Society of China for their generous support in organizing the pilot trainings and for their input and feedback on the trainings and on the written materials. We would also like to thank the participants of the pilot training of *Module 4: PFA in Groups – Support to teams* in Copenhagen, October 2018.

We would like to thank Icelandic Red Cross and DANIDA for their funding and support in developing these materials.

Look, Listen and Link principles referred to in this guide derive from: World Health Organization, War Trauma Foundation and World Vision International (2011). Psychological first aid: Guide for field workers. WHO: Geneva.

Production: Pernille Hansen

Design: Michael Mossefin/Paramedia/12007

Front page photo: Hector Emanuel/American Red Cross

ISBN: 978-87-92490-55-1

Please contact the IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support if you wish to translate or adapt any part of Psychological First Aid for the Red Cross Red Crescent Societies. We welcome your comments, suggestions and feedback at: psychosocial.centre@ifrc.org

The IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support is hosted and supported by Danish Red Cross

© International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support 2018

Psychosocial Centre



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF DENMARK
Danida

Contents

Introduction	4
Introduction.....	5
How to use this manual.....	6
Preparing for the training.....	6
Venue.....	6
Setting up the room.....	6
Materials.....	7
Other	7
The training programme.....	7

The training programme	8
The training programme	9
Training sessions	10
1. Introduction	10
2. Helpful behaviour	13
3. Reactions to distressing events	14
4. What is PFA?	15
5. Look, Listen, and Link	17
6. PFA role play.....	25
7. Self-care	26
8. Workshop close	27

Appendices	28
Appendix A: Icebreakers and energizers	29
Appendix B: Sample training schedule	30
Appendix C: Training resources	31
1. A timeline of common reactions to distressing events.....	31
2. Reactions to distressing events.....	32
3. PFA statements	33
4. Case studies	34
5. Role play feedback form	35
Appendix D: Training evaluation form	36

Introduction



Introduction

This half-day training module introduces participants to basic skills in psychological first aid (PFA). It is suitable for all Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers working in any sector. It aims to enable participants to:

- know what psychological first aid is and what it is not
- understand the three action principles of ‘Look, Listen and Link’
- practise providing PFA to someone in distress
- be aware of the importance of self-care when helping others.

This training module is one of four on psychological first aid, which accompany a set of materials on PFA. These include an introductory booklet called *A Guide to Psychological First Aid for Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies* and a small booklet, *A Short Introduction to Psychological First Aid for Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies*.

The four training modules are as follows:

TRAINING MODULES				
	1: Introduction to PFA	2: Basic PFA	3: PFA for children	4: PFA in groups – support to teams
How long does it take?	4-5 hours	8.5 hours	8.5 hours	21 hours (three days)
Who is the training for?	All Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement staff and volunteers	Staff and volunteers with some prior knowledge and experience of providing psychosocial support	Staff and volunteers whose work involves interaction with children and their caregivers	Managers or others who provide care and support to staff and volunteers
What is it about?	It introduces participants to basic psychological first aid skills	It introduces basic psychological first aid skills and presents a range of situations faced by adults, their reactions to crises, and how helpers may respond appropriately	It focuses on children’s reactions to stress, and communicating with children and their parents and caregivers	It is on providing psychological first aid to groups of people who have experienced a distressing event together such as teams of Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers







Each training module is independent of each other, except *Module 4: PFA in Groups - Support to teams* training which requires prior participation in *Module 2: Basic PFA*.

How to use this manual

This module presents a training programme on basic psychological first aid skills, which can be delivered in 4.5 hours. It uses a wide range of training methods, including presentations, active discussions, role play, and group and individual activities.

Use your judgment as the facilitator in adapting the training to meet the needs of the participants you are working with. This might mean, for example, tailoring the training programme (the 'when') or some of the suggested training methods for different activities (the 'how'). However, we recommend you keep a variety of methods to cater to all types of learners and to keep the training active and interesting. We particularly recommend you use more active forms of training, such as role play, as these facilitate more effective learning.

The following icons are used in the manual:

Icon	Meaning of icon
	Time needed for activity
	Aim of the activity
	Materials needed
	Facilitator's speech
	Facilitator note
	PowerPoint slide

Preparing for the training

It is important to be well prepared so the training runs smoothly. The following is a checklist of things to consider in preparation.

Venue

- Access to venue, including nearby bus or train stations, parking, washroom facilities, etc.
- Suitable temperature and lighting in training room with opportunity to darken room if using projector or screen.

Setting up the room

- Consider how to set up the room to encourage participation and comfort.
- Make sure there is enough space to conduct multiple role plays at once (for example, small groups of participants), or additional rooms for people to use.
- Place a clock visible to all.

Materials

- Printed copies of training handouts and manuals
- Pens or pencils
- Whiteboard or flip charts with stand
- Markers
- Computer and projector, if using power point slides and videos.

Other

- Plan snacks, water, tea and coffee and meals, if provided.
- Consider if you need a co-facilitator or someone to support you with time management, organization of meal times, or to write down key points from discussion groups on the board or flip chart.
- Facilitation skills plus good communication between facilitator and co-facilitator benefit participants in the learning they achieve.

The training programme

The training programme provided lists the activities in this module, together with the materials needed and indicates timings for all the activities. It does not include breaks and mealtimes, or energizers, etc. Make your own schedule and plan to suit local needs. See Appendix A for examples of energizers and Appendix B for a sample training schedule.



Conducting role play

There are two types of role play. The first is 'demonstration role play' where facilitators themselves act as PFA helpers providing PFA to someone in distress. The second is 'active role play' where participants practise providing PFA to someone in distress. Try to use both types of role play.

Demonstration role plays: It can be helpful to demonstrate a role play twice using the same case example. The first time, you can role play weaker use of PFA skills and common helper errors and the second time you can role play better use of PFA skills. This can help participants learn what to do and what to avoid when providing PFA.

Case examples are included in Appendix C for use in active role play. They give background information on the person/s in distress, but are not prescriptive, meaning they do not give specific details on how the participant reacts or responds. Adapt case examples to suit the cultural and social context in which you are working.

Instructions for active role play: Encourage participants to imagine they are experiencing the situation and reactions described in the case examples, so that they can respond to the helper's questions and act realistically. Instruct those playing the role of the person in distress that they should try and pretend to forget what they know about PFA. They should also not make it too difficult for the helpers. This can be frustrating and interfere with learning.

The training programme



The training programme

Module 1: An introduction to PFA

Activity	Time (mins)	Materials
1. Introduction	40	Flipchart paper and markers
1.1 Introduction to PFA	10	Prepared flipchart of your training schedule
1.2 Introduction game	20	
1.3 Training programme	5	
1.4 Ground rules	5	
2. Helpful behaviour	15	Flipchart paper and markers
3. Reactions to distressing events	30	Copies of Appendix C 1. A timeline of common reactions to distressing events, copies of Appendix C. 2. Reactions to distressing events Glue, flipchart paper and markers
4. What is PFA?	20	Copies of Appendix C. 3. PFA statements
5. Look, Listen, Link	90	
5.1 Introducing the action principles	5	LOOK: Flipchart with actions for LOOK plus copies of Appendix C. 4. Case studies
5.2 LOOK	15	
5.3 LISTEN	15	LISTEN: Prepared flipchart with actions for LISTEN
A. Active listening	25	
B. Calming someone in distress	5	
C. Asking about needs and concerns and helping to address immediate needs and problems	10	LINK: Prepared flipchart with actions for LINK plus copies of Appendix C. 4. Case studies Flipchart paper, markers, pens, and paper
5.4 LINK	15	
6. PFA role play	45	Copies of Appendix C: 5. PFA action principles Appendix C: 6. Role play feedback forms
7. Self-care	15	Flipchart paper, markers, contact details of team leaders, volunteer managers, etc.
8. Workshop close	5	Appendix D: Training evaluation forms

Training sessions

1. Introduction

PP SLIDE 1



1.1 Introduction to PFA




To introduce PFA to participants.




None

1. Welcome the participants and introduce the facilitators. Explain participants will have a chance to introduce themselves in the next activity.
2. Ask participants to pair up and to discuss for two minutes what they know about psychological first aid (PFA).
3. After two minutes, ask them to share what they know about PFA. If none of the participants are familiar with PFA, you can start by asking them what they know about physical first aid, and then what they think PFA is.
4. Summarise their responses and explain:

 *Psychological first aid is a set of skills and attitudes for helping people in distress who need support to manage their situation and cope with immediate challenges. Once you have learnt these skills, you can use them both in your personal and working life when responding to a crisis.*
5. Now give the pairs two minutes to discuss what kinds of situations might lead someone to need psychological first aid.
6. Ask them to share some of their suggested situations with the large group.

Examples could be when someone:

 - finds out they have a serious illness
 - is in a car accident
 - is assaulted or experiences other forms of violence
 - witnesses something frightening or traumatic
 - experiences a disaster, like an earthquake or a flood
 - loses a loved one.
7. Highlight that distressing events can be individual and personal, for example when someone is going through a divorce or has lost a loved one. They can also be public and affect many people together, for example due to a natural or human-related disaster.
8. Continue by explaining:

 *When we experience frightening or distressing events like the ones you have mentioned, we react with our bodies, thoughts, and our feelings. This is normal. It is important to understand this. Everyone reacts when they go through something stressful and difficult. Most people recover from difficult experiences by themselves or with the help of friends, family, or others. Psychological first aid involves knowing common reactions to distressing events and how to help people cope with these reactions.*

Psychological first aid can help people in distress cope better emotionally and practically, and in this way helps to reduce negative impacts of distressing events. Part of psychological first aid is helping the affected person access social support, which can help to reduce stress and improve recovery.

Today you will learn about the three action principles, 'Look, Listen and Link.' They are easy to remember and are useful prompts in providing PFA to someone in distress.

Some people may need more help than can be provided by psychological first aid. Part of learning psychological first aid skills is learning how to recognize when someone needs other types of help, and knowing who to contact to refer the person in distress. We will talk more about this later in the training

1.2 Introduction game



To introduce the participants to each other and promote a friendly and comfortable atmosphere.
To introduce the three action principles of PFA, Look, Listen and Link.




None

1. Start by asking the participants to stand in a circle. Explain that you will now play a game for the participants to learn a little more about each other.
2. Ask everyone to walk around the room and to LOOK for a partner they have something in common with. It must be something they can see. For example, they could be wearing the same colour t-shirt, or they have the same coloured hair, or eyes, etc.
3. When everyone has found a partner, tell them to ask the other person's name and prepare to introduce the other person to the larger group.
4. Call everyone back to the circle and invite each person in turn to introduce their partner to the entire group.
5. Now ask everyone to repeat the activity and find a partner, but this time they need to find someone by LISTENING. Give participants a few minutes to talk with one another. The aim is to LISTEN to find someone they have something in common with, for example, the same number of children, or they live in the same area, or they like the same music etc.
6. When everyone has found a partner, ask them to come back to the circle and share with the group what they have in common.
7. Now ask everyone to walk around for the last time and again find a new person to talk to. The last task is for the entire group to create a human chain where they all LINK together through things they have in common. This means once a pair has found something they have in common, they stick together, and go and look for another pair they can link to who they have something in common with. When the entire group links at the end, it will be about something they all have in common – for example, that they are all at the training.
8. For example: Tomas links to Jessie because they both like reading. Ezra and Maha link together because they both like classical music. Tomas, Jess, Ezra and Maha link together because they all like to eat pizza. And so on.
9. When they have formed a human chain, ask them to link it into a circle. End the activity by explaining that they have now practised the three core action principles of psychological first aid of 'LOOK, LISTEN and LINK.'

1.3 The training schedule


 SLIDE 1


 To orient participants to the training programme.

 Flipchart with the training programme written on it or copies for each participant

1. Go through the training schedule on the flipchart or powerpoint slide and briefly explain each activity.
2. Provide participants with any practical information, such as start and finish times, meal breaks, where to find washrooms, etc.
3. Explain that this is a short training in basic PFA skills, which means it does not cover topics such as how to handle complicated situations, or how to provide psychological first aid to children or groups of staff or volunteers. These topics are covered in other training modules that can be arranged at another time.

1.4 Ground rules

 To agree ground rules to create a safe environment for the group.

 Flipchart paper and markers

1. Explain that it is important that the group agrees ground rules for the workshop to create a safe environment where everyone can feel comfortable participating and sharing.
2. Ask participants to make groups of three, and give them one minute to discuss what rules they think are important for this group.
3. Invite the groups to contribute the rules they have chosen, and write these on a flipchart. Ask the groups not to repeat rules that other groups have already mentioned.

Examples of good ground rules are:

 - Turn mobile phones off during training.
 - Respect punctuality. Start and end on time, return promptly from breaks.
 - No interrupting.
 - Respect each other, including personal boundaries.
 - Everybody is invited to share his or her point of view but nobody is pressured to speak.
 - Listen with full attention.
 - When others share experiences, show a non-judgmental attitude.
 - Let facilitators know of any difficulties.
 - Questions are encouraged.
 - Keep everything that is disclosed in the group confidential.
4. Highlight the importance of confidentiality and keeping personal information shared in the training within the group. This will encourage an open atmosphere of trust and make participants feel comfortable and safe to share personal stories and feelings.
5. Tell participants they do not have to participate in all activities. If they feel uncomfortable about participating in an activity, they can step back and observe.
6. Display the sheet with the agreed ground rules where everyone can see it clearly during the workshop.

2. Helpful behaviour



To encourage participants to think of what helps a person in distress.



Flipchart paper and markers



If you have a co-facilitator or volunteer from the group, ask them to write things on flipcharts so you can focus on what is being said.

1. Ask the participants to individually think of a time in their life when they experienced something unexpected that was more difficult than usual to handle and led to distress.
2. Now ask them to think about whether they received help from one or more people when they had this experience. Ask them to think about what this person, or persons, did to help them and what it was that was helpful or unhelpful.
3. Invite participants to share some of their reflections on what was helpful and what was not helpful. Make sure they do not go into detail about the difficult experiences that led to them receiving help, but to keep focus on the help they received.
4. Ask your co-facilitator or volunteer to write down on the flipchart some key words from what participants say. Organise the responses into two columns headed 'Helpful' and 'Not helpful.'

The box on the right shows examples of what participants might say:

5. Use these responses to show that different things are helpful in different situations and for different people. Someone who is in a state of shock may find it helpful that a friend takes control of the situation and takes care of practical matters. However, another person might find the same action unhelpful because it makes them feel powerless and unable to cope.

HELPFUL	NOT HELPFUL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listened calmly • Called my family • Brought me a glass of water • Took control of the situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Started panicking herself • Took control of the situation • Interrupted all the time • Talked about themselves

3. Reactions to distressing events



To discuss common reactions to distressing events.

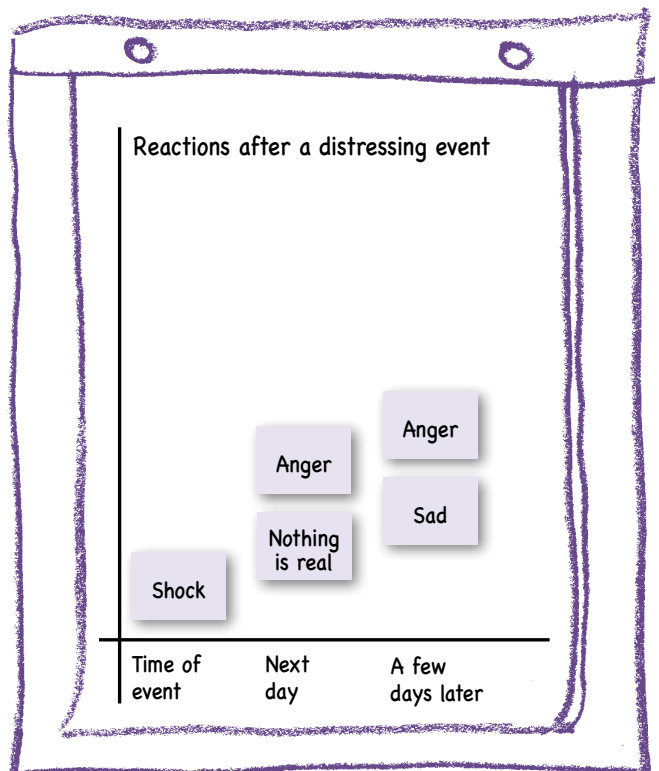


Reference to Appendix C: 1. Timeline of common reactions to distressing events (for an example of a timeline with reactions),
Copies of Appendix C: 2. Reactions to distressing events,
scissors, glue, flipcharts and markers.




Read *Reactions to crises* in the introductory book *A Guide to Psychological First Aid for Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies*.

1. Ask participants to reflect for a few minutes on the difficult experience they just thought about and how they reacted to this event.
2. Now ask them to form groups of four and to sit together where they can work comfortably on a flipchart together. Give each group a flipchart and marker but tell them to wait for instructions on what to use them for.
3. Start by asking the groups to discuss how people usually react when they experience distressing events. Give them a few minutes to do this, and then ask them to also reflect on how reactions change with time.
4. Draw a blank timeline on a flipchart (see the example in Appendix C: 1. Timeline of common reactions to distressing events). Ask each group to draw this timeline on their flipchart paper.
5. Now give each group copies of the handout (Appendix C: 2. Reactions to distressing events.) Explain this is a list of common reactions to distressing events, but they may know of others that are not on this list.
6. Ask the groups to plot the reactions on the list onto their timeline. Encourage them to add any others that may not be listed, if they think these reactions are common. Tell participants they can plot a reaction multiple times on the timeline if needed.
7. Give the participants about five minutes to work on this.
8. When the groups have completed their timelines, ask them to display all the flipcharts next to each other. This can be on a wall or on the floor. Give participants a few minutes to look at the different flipcharts.



9. Ask participants what similarities or differences they see in each other's timelines.
10. After all groups have contributed, summarise the discussion and highlight that:
 - **Reactions differ:** There is not one standard reaction to distressing experiences. People react in different ways.
 - **Timing of reactions differs:** Reactions change over time. Some people react calmly during or immediately after an event. However, they may become distressed days, weeks or even months after the event, whilst others react very strongly at the time of the event.
11. Explain that how someone reacts depends on many factors. Ask the participants what they think influences people's reactions to stressful events. List the different factors mentioned. Make sure the following are all included:
 - the nature of the event – what happened and how have people been affected
 - the severity of the event – how severe the consequences were, especially in terms of loss and life changes
 - how long the event took
 - whether they experienced something similar before
 - what kind of support they have
 - their physical health
 - their pre-existing state of mental health
 - their cultural background and traditions, which impacts their behaviour, expression and communication
 - their age (for example, children of different ages react differently than adults).
12. Conclude this session by saying:

 *Most people who experience distressing or traumatic events have common reactions and recover well, especially if they can restore their basic needs and receive support from people around them. Others may have very strong reactions and need more specialised help. We will discuss this in more detail later.*

4. What is PFA?



SLIDE 2-3



To learn more about what PFA is and what it is not.
To stimulate discussion on who can provide PFA, when it is given and where it can be provided.




Copies of Appendix C: 3. PFA statements



Using the set of PFA statements, prepare enough cards for all participants. It is OK if two participants have the same statements.

1. Start by summarising the information the participants have already received about PFA. You can say:

 *Psychological first aid is a set of skills that you can use to cope with distressing situations and events. You can use psychological first aid skills to deal with your own experiences and to support others who are in distress, so that they can understand and cope better.*

Psychological first aid aims to reduce the initial distress someone feels after a difficult event or experience. It provides for a person's practical and basic needs, such as helping someone find somewhere to stay if they have had to leave their home or helping them contact family or other help.

It involves assisting someone in distress to manage their situation and be able to make informed decisions, so they can adjust and cope with the challenges they are facing. Psychological first aid skills involve recognising when someone is in distress, and taking action to help them. What action you take depends on the situation and what help the person needs, and is likely to differ every time you help someone.

2. Now give each participant a card with one of the PFA statements. Explain there are two types of statement – one that describes what PFA is, and one that describes what it is not. Tell participants to walk around and find out what others have on their cards, and to make two groups corresponding with the two types of statement. Depending on the number of participants, there may be two people with the same statements. They should be in the same group.

The two lists are:




PFA is... (TRUE)

- comforting someone who is in distress and helping them feel safe and calm
- assessing needs and concerns
- protecting people from further harm
- providing emotional support
- helping to address immediate basic needs, such as food and water, a blanket or a temporary place to stay
- helping people access information, services and social support.


PFA is not... (FALSE)

- something only professionals do
- professional counselling or therapy
- encouraging a detailed discussion of the event that has caused the distress
- asking someone to analyze what has happened to them
- pressing someone for details on what happened
- pressuring people to share their feelings and reactions to an event.


3. When the groups have formed, give them about five minutes to discuss the different statements and what they mean.
4. Invite the groups to present their different statements to the other group.
5. Address any questions on these statements.
6. Now ask the participants who they think can provide PFA.
7. After they have responded, you can summarise by saying:

 *Psychological first aid does not have to be provided by a mental health specialist or professional, but can be provided by volunteers, first responders, or members of the general public. Training in PFA is a bonus, but many responders already know how to provide PFA as it is part of their helping behaviour.*

8. Now ask the participants when they think PFA should be provided. After their responses, summarise by saying:

 Put simply, PFA is for when someone is in acute distress and needs help. It is an approach that can help during or in the immediate aftermath of a stressful event. However, PFA can also be helpful days, weeks, months or even years after an event has taken place, when the situation develops further or memories of what happened triggers reactions.

9. End this session by asking participants where they think it is appropriate to provide PFA. You can summarise by saying:

 Psychological first aid can be provided in any setting where it is safe and comfortable for the helper and person(s) in distress. It can be in a home, community centre, shopping centre, school, train station, airport, evacuation centre, hospital, clinic, or even at the location of a crisis. It is best to provide psychological first aid in a quiet and calm environment where everyone feels safe and secure. If someone has experienced something very sensitive, such as sexual violence, privacy is essential for confidentiality and to respect the person's dignity.

5. Look, Listen, and Link



SLIDE 4-6



To introduce and explore the three action principles of PFA: Look, Listen and Link.




Separate flipcharts with actions for LOOK, LISTEN and LINK
Appendix C. 4. Case studies
Flipchart paper, markers, pens and paper

5.1 Introducing Look, Listen and Link



1. Start the activity by saying:

 PFA is becoming increasingly popular and recognised more and more as an effective way of helping people in distress all over the world. Different models are used by different organizations, but the aim of PFA is the same, to empower you with the knowledge and skills to be able to provide PFA to people in distress. The same basic principles are used in approaching someone in distress, assessing what help the person needs together with him or her, and helping them access this help.

In this training, we follow the three action principles, 'Look, Listen and Link.'

2. Explain that you will go through each of these action principles in some detail.

Make a point of explaining that although it may initially look like it makes sense to follow the presented order of the action principles, Look, then Listen, and then Link, in reality the order of actions may be mixed up and take place in different ways and sequences, depending on the situation. At times some actions will take place simultaneously.

5.2 LOOK


 Prepare a flipchart with information on LOOK or show the powerpoint slide provided.

LOOK for



- information on what has happened and is happening
- who needs help
- safety and security risks
- physical injuries
- immediate basic and practical needs
- emotional reactions.

1. Start by showing the flipchart or powerpoint slide with information on LOOK and explain:

 *The first action principle is LOOK, which is about gathering information on what has happened and assessing the situation to help you decide who to offer help to and how to help them. It also involves assessing safety and security risks and making sure you and the person(s) in distress are not in harm's way. LOOK refers to finding out what has happened, and is happening; assessing if there are physical injuries that need tending to; finding out if the person(s) have immediate basic and practical needs; and assessing what emotional reactions the person is experiencing and what kind of help will be caring and supportive.*
2. Divide the participants into groups of three, and give each group a case study. Ask the participants to read the case study and ask them to apply the action principle of LOOK to their case study.
3. After a few minutes, ask them to join with another group and invite each group to share the story in their case study in turn. Ask each group to explain how they would apply the actions relating to LOOK to their case study. After a few minutes, in plenary ask for volunteers to share examples of actions they would apply and to explain how they would do this.
4. Use their examples to explain the actions of LOOK in more detail. You can use the notes below to help you.

LOOK for:

information on what has happened and is still happening

- who needs help – are there many people in distress? If so, who should you help first?
- safety – are you or the affected person(s) in any danger? Do you need to go somewhere else to be safe and out of harm's way?
- physical injuries – is anyone physically hurt and needs immediate medical attention?
- immediate basic and practical needs – does anyone need a warm blanket or some water to drink?
- emotional reactions – what emotional reactions is the person having and what is the most caring and helpful way to support them? Does anyone need referral for immediate professional mental health support?


5.3 LISTEN – Introduction 10

 Prepare a flipchart with information on LISTEN or show the powerpoint slide provided.


LISTEN refers to how you

- approach someone
- introduce oneself
- pay attention and listen actively
- accept others' feelings
- calm the person in distress
- ask about needs and concerns
- help the person(s) in distress find solutions to their immediate needs and problems.


1. Display the flipchart or powerpoint slide with the heading LISTEN and the action points listed below.
2. Start the activity by explaining:

 *The action principle LISTEN refers to the way you communicate with someone from the very first moment you approach and interact with the person in distress.*

3. Ask the participants why it is important to be aware of how you approach someone. Ask them if they would approach different people in their culture and context differently. For example, would they greet men or women, older people or children, in different ways? Invite volunteers to demonstrate this for everyone.
4. Now ask them to give examples of how they think you should introduce yourself to someone in distress. What information do they think is important for them to have about the PFA helper?
5. Invite a volunteer to demonstrate how she or he would introduce himself or herself and ask the rest of the participants to give feedback.
6. Move on to the next action point on paying attention and active listening. Start by explaining:

 *Listening is not something you do only with your ears. That is hearing. Listening involves all the senses and is also about your behaviour. Listening is being present, paying attention and trying to understand what has happened to the person in distress, what they are feeling, and what they need. It is being open, curious, and sensitive to what the distressed person is experiencing. It is also recognising when someone does not want to talk and allowing silence.*

We will now explore a psychological first aid skill today called 'active listening'. This is a powerful skill, as being a good listener is something that benefits you in all aspects of your life, not only as a psychological first aid helper. It is a life skill that can improve your relationships with others both at home and at work.

 **The three activities that follow – active listening, calming someone in distress, and asking about and addressing needs and concerns – give participants an opportunity to discuss or practise these skills which are all related to the action principle LISTEN.**

A: Active listening



To learn about and practise active listening and accepting others' feelings.



None



The aim of this activity is to learn about and practise active listening and accepting others' feelings. The aim of the first role play is to demonstrate poor listening skills. The aim of the second one is to demonstrate good listening skills. Make the differences between these two role plays very obvious. Ask for a volunteer to be the person in distress. Quietly tell the volunteer before you begin that you will be demonstrating poor active listening skills, but don't let the rest of the group know what they are observing.

1. Conduct a short demonstration role play where a person in distress approaches you for help, and you use poor listening skills.

You can do any of the following:

- interrupt
- be distracted by your phone
- look away from the person
- be dismissive
- be disinterested
- be judgmental or intrusive.

2. After a few minutes of demonstrating poor active listening skills, stop and ask the group what they have observed.
3. Ask them how it would make them feel if someone behaved in this way when they were in distress and needed help.

Here are some possible answers:

It could make the person in distress feel:

- ignored
- foolish
- desperate
- afraid
- hopeless.

4. Explain that active listening is an attitude and a set of skills that can help someone in distress. It is more than sitting passively while someone speaks to you. Active listening is both verbal and nonverbal.
5. Divide the group into two and give each group a flipchart and markers. Ask one group to discuss non-verbal active listening skills and to list them on their flipchart. Ask the other group to discuss verbal active listening skills and to list them on their flipchart. Give them three minutes to do this.
6. After a few minutes ask them to present their lists in turn.

Add the following if they have not been listed:

Non-verbal

- Using body language, such as eye contact, facial expressions, gestures (with head, arms and hands, touching the person gently on their arm or holding their hand - if appropriate)
- Being aware of space, such as how you distance, position, and orient yourself in relation to the other person
- Taking the time needed understand what the other person is going through.

Verbal

- Asking questions to improve understanding
 - Restating and summarising what the person has said in your own words to ensure understanding
 - Being encouraging and positive.
7. Explain that being encouraging and positive also involves accepting others' feelings and trying to avoid letting your own moral values or beliefs influence your helping behaviour or judgment of someone else's reactions.
 8. Ask the participants to give examples where their own moral values or beliefs might influence the way they interact with someone else.
 9. Before going on to the next step where participants get an opportunity to practise active listening themselves, do another role-play where you demonstrate good active listening skills. Ask for a volunteer to help you so you can demonstrate active listening to the participants.
 10. Ask participants to form pairs and explain they will now practise active listening.
 11. Ask them to think of a problem they feel comfortable talking about. It should not be a big or complicated problem, or one that refers to a traumatic experience, as they will only have a few minutes each to talk about it. If they prefer, they can make something up.

Examples of problems participants could talk about are:

- an argument with a colleague
 - finding it difficult to balance responsibilities at work and at home
 - living far from work and having to travel long distances every day.
12. Tell them to take turns to tell the other person about their problem. Each person will have about three minutes to talk about his or her problem. The person listening should practise active listening and towards the end restate and summarise the main points the other person has shared. They should also note if there was anything in the conversation that was different to how they would react themselves and challenged their own beliefs or morals.
 13. When both participants have had a chance to be the speaker and the listener, ask everyone to reflect on the activity. You can use the following questions to guide the reflection:

Questions to the listener:

 - How easy or difficult was it to listen? Why?
 - What did you do to show active listening?

Questions to the speaker:

- Did the listener pay attention to you?
- How could you see that?
- How did the listener make you feel with his or her attitude?

B. Calming someone in distress




To discuss how to calm someone in distress.



None

1. An important part of the action principle LISTEN is to know how to calm someone in distress. You can say:

 *People in distress often feel confused or overwhelmed, and may have physical reactions like shaking or trembling, difficulty breathing or increased heart rate. A key skill in PFA is to know how to help someone feel calm if they are having a reaction like this.*
2. Ask participants to talk with the person next to them about how you can make someone in distress feel calmer.
3. After a few minutes ask them to share their ideas. Write these on a flipchart. You can add the examples below if needed:
 - keeping your tone of voice calm and soft
 - if culturally appropriate, trying to maintain eye contact with the person as you talk with them
 - reminding the person you are there to help them and that they are safe, if it is true
 - encouraging the person to focus on their breathing and to breathe slowly.

Optional activity – breathing exercise

Ask participants to sit quietly and be aware of their breathing, but without changing it. Ask them to do this for about a minute, reminding them to breathe in the way they normally do.

Now ask them to notice their breath carefully, as they breathe in slowly, feeling the air flowing deep into their belly and then slowly breathe out. Breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth. Breathe gently and regularly.

Ask them to practise this for about a minute.

C. Asking about needs and concerns and helping to address immediate needs and problems



To discuss how to ask about needs and concerns and what to focus on when helping someone address immediate needs and problems.



None

1. Explain that the last two action points for LISTEN are about asking about needs and concerns and helping to identify immediate needs and problems. Highlight the following points on asking about needs and concerns:

It is important to remember:

- If someone does not want help, do not impose it.
- Focus on what help is needed and what the priorities are.
- Do not focus so much on details of what happened or how the person in distress feels about the situation.
- Gather as much information as you can to help clarify what help they need but without probing or pressuring them to talk.

2. Ask the participants to think back to the beginning of the training, when you asked them to think of a time when they were in distress and someone helped them. Now ask them to think about what immediate needs and problems they had in that situation.
3. Ask them to share what kinds of immediate needs and problems they think PFA can help with.

Examples are:


- basic needs, such as food, water, a blanket, a place to sit quietly
- someone to comfort you and help you feel calm
- someone to hold your hand or give you a hug
- someone to help you to be able make decisions about the next steps
- help to call the emergency response services
- help to call your family.

4. End this activity by saying:



It is often simple gestures of caring that people need when they are in distress, so that they can feel calm, and gather their energy to make decisions on what to do next. Listening effectively can help you identify what the person needs, and assess what you can do in the immediate situation, and also what you need to do to link them to more help from elsewhere.

5.4 LINK


 Prepare a flipchart with information on LINK or show the powerpoint slide provided.

LINK refers to how you




- access information
- connect with loved ones and social support
- tackle practical problems
- access services and other help.

1. Start by saying:

 *The third action principle is LINK. This is a practical action where you give information and help people attend to their basic needs and access the resources they need to cope with their situation. Connect people with loved ones and social support and help them access services and other help. Remember that providing psychological first aid is often a one-time intervention and you may only be there to help for a short time. Your role is to help the person help themselves and to regain control of their situation.*

2. Ask the participants to refer back to their case studies. Ask them to brainstorm and then list the different kinds of practical help, sources of social support, or other services that may be relevant for the people in the case studies. These can include the police, legal help, child protection services, Restoring Family Links services, etc.
3. After a few minutes ask them to review the lists and indicate an order of priority for these different sources of help.
4. Give the participants another minute or so to do this, and then ask them to share the top three actions they have chosen with the whole group.
5. Ask the groups how easy or difficult this task was.
6. Highlight that it is not always easy to decide which kind of help is the most important, and stress this is why it is important to involve the distressed person(s) themselves as much as possible in making these decisions. You can say:

 *It is impossible to know all the details of another person's life, including what they need, what their strengths are, and what their main sources of support are. This is why it is very important to try and assist the person in distress to identify what they need, and to help prioritize what is most important to them. Remember they may have sources of social support that you do not know about.*

7. Continue by explaining that there are some situations where it is important to refer a person for professional mental health or other health-related support as soon as possible. Ask the participants if they know what behaviours or signs and symptoms might indicate the need for such a referral. Write their suggestions on a flipchart.

Make sure participants are aware that the following are causes for concern:

If someone

- shares they have been harmed or abused and thus may need protection and medical care
- has not been able to sleep for the last week and is confused and disorientated
- has no food, water or a place to sleep

- is so distressed that they are unable to function normally and care for themselves by, for example, not eating or keeping clean despite food and washrooms available
 - loses control over their behaviour and behaves in an unpredictable or destructive manner
 - has a pre-existing mental health disorder
 - threatens to harm themselves or others
 - starts excessive use of drugs or alcohol.
8. Ask the participants to discuss referral protocols in their context and who they should contact for support.
- Some guiding points include:
- Contact your team leader or someone else who can provide help immediately.
 - Do not leave a person who is at risk unattended until help has arrived or you have reached a place where you can get more help.
9. Explain to the participants that when they work as a psychological first aid provider in their capacity as a Red Cross or Red Crescent staff member or volunteer, it is the responsibility of their manager or volunteer leader to have information on the local referral system. If they need to link a distressed person to a service or support system that they do not have the contact details for, they should contact their manager or volunteer manager for help and support.
10. If someone provides PFA in another capacity other than as a Red Cross or Red Crescent staff member or volunteer, for example in their own private time, it is still important to refer elsewhere for help as needed, and to avoid trying to provide support that is beyond their own expertise.

6. PFA role play




For participants to practise PFA.



Appendix C. 4. Case studies, Copies of Appendix C: 5. Role play feedback form and 6: Role play feedback forms

! This activity is a role play for groups of three. Each participant will take turns in being the person in distress, helper and observer in a situation based on the case studies used earlier. Make some groups of four, if it is not possible to have everyone in groups of three. (Timings for the role play will have to be slightly shorter in groups of four to give everyone a chance of acting out each role).

1. Explain:
 -  Now you will practise giving PFA to someone in distress. Stay in the same groups created earlier when working on case studies. Use these case studies as a basis for your role plays. Take turns being the helper, a person in distress, and observer. When you are being the observer, use the role play feedback forms to give feedback on the PFA skills being demonstrated.
2. Give participants copies of the PFA action principles so they can refer to this and as a reminder when preparing to provide PFA. Also give them copies of the role play feedback forms to use when evaluating the skills of the PFA helper.

3. Explain that the role plays should last about five minutes in total, with three minutes for role play and two minutes for feedback. This means the whole activity should not take more than 20 minutes, with each participant having a turn at being the person in distress, the helper and the observer.
4. When all the role plays are complete, ask all the participants to share in plenary what they felt went well and what was difficult.
5. Summarize the challenges and difficulties participants shared and ask for ideas on how to overcome these challenges.
6. Thank everyone for their participation. Explain that although it may have felt difficult to provide PFA in this context because they were being observed and evaluated, in a real life setting they may find it easier and more natural.

7. Self-care



To promote understanding and recognition of limits in providing help.



Flipcharts, markers, contact details of team leaders, volunteer managers, etc. (See note below).



Each participant who is going to provide PFA in the future should have a team leader, volunteer manager, or other person they can contact if they need advice or help whilst providing PFA. If at all possible try to ensure that all trained PFA helpers leave the workshop with this information.

1. Ask the participants to form pairs and to spend about five minutes to discuss the questions below. Ask them to make sure they both have time to share.



Share an experience you have had that was very difficult and impacted you negatively. What were the signs and symptoms that you were not doing well during this time? How can others recognise when you are struggling? What did you do to manage the situation? What actions did you take? Did you reach out for help from others? If so, who did you approach for support?

2. After about five minutes, ask the pairs for reflections on what they discussed.
3. Highlight that the action principles, 'Look, Listen and Link,' also apply to self-care. Explain participants have just practised these principles by reflecting on their own signs and symptoms, how they 'listened' to these and what actions they took to manage their situations.
4. Continue by saying:



Providing psychological first aid to people in distress can be difficult, both physically and emotionally for the helper. It is hard meeting and talking to people in distress, and even though you provide the best help you can, you may still be left with a feeling that you did not do enough.

Psychological first aid has limitations, just like physical first aid. It is help that can reduce immediate stressful and life-threatening reactions, but psychological first aid on its own is unlikely to be able to address or 'fix' all of the person's challenges. This is why linking to other sources of help is such an important psychological first aid skill.

It is important to know who your team leader is. You need someone to contact if you are in a situation where you do not know how to help the person in distress, or need referral

information very fast. Carry contact details of your contact person with you at all times. You are not expected to know about all the services available or how to handle any kind of reaction on your own.

5. Now ask the participants what they can do to take care of themselves as PFA helpers. They can talk in the pairs again.
6. After a few minutes ask them to share their thoughts. Make a list of suggestions on a flipchart.
Examples are:
 - sleep well
 - eat healthily
 - exercise regularly
 - make time to be with others
 - make time for yourself – do things you enjoy
 - limit use of alcohol and tobacco
 - recognise your own limits
 - learn to say no.
7. Highlight that an important source of support for all staff and volunteers of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are the peers they work with, as they are likely to understand their experiences and may have had similar ones. Encourage that they ask for help from peers when they need it, and that they also make an effort to support their peers.
8. Thank the participants for their contributions and remind them how important it is for them to take care of themselves, to be able to help others and keep healthy and well.

8. Workshop close



To end the workshop with evaluation of the training and a short reflection on what the participants have learnt.



Copies of Appendix D: Training evaluation form

1. Ask the participants to sit in a circle.
2. Explain that you have now reached the end of the training on *Introduction to PFA* and that you would like some feedback on the training to help improve it for the future.
3. Give participants the training evaluation form and ask them to complete it. When everyone has finished, collect the completed forms.
4. End the training by asking everyone to stand up and share a few words about the most valuable things they feel they have learnt. Add your own comments and thank everyone for their participation.
5. Say goodbye and tell the group about any options for further training in PFA.

Appendices



Appendix A: Icebreakers and energizers

Trick ball

Ask the participants to stand in a circle. Ask for a volunteer to stand in the middle (the leader). Now tell everyone in the circle to put their hands behind their backs. The leader sometimes throws the ball at somebody and sometimes pretends to throw the ball. If someone reaches for the ball, when it has not been thrown, she or he must stand in the middle and be the new leader.

Catch my finger

Ask the participants to stand in one big circle with you. Now explain you are going to do an exercise to stimulate their concentration and fast reactions. Ask everyone to hold up their index finger on their right hand. Now ask everyone to hold up the palm of their left hand – ask them to turn their hand so that the palm is nice and flat and is facing up. Now ask everyone to lay their right index finger gently on the open palm of the left hand of the person standing on the right. Let them stand like this for a few seconds, and check that everyone is doing the right thing. Explain that when you shout “CHEESE!” (or choose any random word), everyone has to try to catch the index finger of their neighbour on the left, whilst also trying to avoid having their own index finger caught by their neighbour on the right. Try it a few times to make sure everyone has got the hang of it. When you have done it a few times, let a volunteer be the one who shouts the chosen word. Do it until you feel everyone is energized.

Train of silly walks

Ask the participants to stand in a circle. Now ask them all to turn to their right. The facilitator breaks the circle so there is a beginning and an end. Now tell the leader of the line to start walking. The train can move anywhere and the leader can change the walk, make noises, wave their arms and so on, and the rest must copy the exact movements and sounds. After about 30 seconds, let someone else be the leader. Continue switching till the time for the activity is over.

Balloons up high

If you have a lot of participants at the workshop, divide them into groups of about five in each group. Explain that you are going to give each group a balloon, and their job is to keep the balloon in the air. The balloon should not touch the ground! Give each group a balloon and tell them to start. After about a minute, give them another balloon and tell them they must keep this one in the air too. Repeat this a few times, until the participants are energized!

Appendix B: Sample training schedules

This is an example of a training schedule for module 1, which includes breaks as indicated. The timing and structure of the day can be adapted to suit facilitators' and participants' needs.

TRAINING SCHEDULE FOR MODULE 1		
Time	Training programme	Materials
8.30-9.10	1. Introduction	Flipchart paper and markers Flipchart with the training programme written on it or copies for each participant
9.10-9.25	2. Helpful behaviour	Flipchart paper and markers
9.25-9.55	3. Reactions to distressing events	Copies of Appendix C: 1. A timeline of common reactions to distressing events Appendix C: 2. Reactions to distressing events Scissors, glue, flipchart paper and markers
9.55-10.15	BREAK	
10.15-10.35	4. What is PFA?	Copies of Appendix C: 3. PFA statements
10.35-11.55	5. Look, Listen, Link	LOOK: Flipchart with actions for LOOK plus copies of Appendix C: 4. Case studies LISTEN: Prepared flipchart with actions for LISTEN LINK: Prepared flipchart with actions for LINK plus copies of Appendix C: 4. Case studies Flipchart paper, markers, pens, and paper
11.55-12.55	LUNCH	
12.55-1.45	6. PFA role play	Copies of Appendix C: 5. PFA action principles Appendix C: 6. Role play feedback forms
1.45-2.00	7. Self-care	Flipchart paper, markers, contact details of team leaders, volunteer managers, etc.
2.00-2.05	8. Workshop close	Appendix D: Training evaluation forms

Appendix C: Training resources

1. A timeline of common reactions to distressing events

 Draw this timeline on a flipchart for the participants to see an example of what a timeline could look like.

Reactions after a distressing event



2. Reactions to distressing events




Cut out and place these common reactions to distressing events along the timeline you have drawn.

Feel free to add other reactions that are not listed below.

Shock	Nothing is real
Accepting	Tired
Irritable	Start doing normal everyday activities
Sleep problems	Appetite changes
Anger	Guilt
Fear	Aggressive
Physical aches and pains	Hopelessness
Sense of emptiness	Confused
Feelings of nausea and dizziness	Headaches
Sweating and shaking	Sad
Nervous	Overprotective
Disbelief	Unsure of what to do
Withdrawal from others	Unable to get out of bed



3. PFA statements

 Make copies of the following statements and cut them out so that you can give one to each participant in the group. It does not matter if the same statements are used more than once.

PFA is comforting someone who is in distress and helping them feel safe and calm.

PFA is providing emotional support.

PFA is assessing needs and concerns.

PFA is helping to address immediate basic needs such as food, water, a blanket or a temporary place to stay.

PFA is protecting people from further harm.

PFA is listening to people but not pressuring them to talk.

PFA is not something only professionals do.

PFA is helping people access information, services and social supports.

PFA is not encouraging a detailed discussion of the distressing event.

PFA is professional counselling or therapy.

PFA includes pressing someone for details on what happened

PFA is not asking someone to analyse what has happened to them.

PFA is not pressuring people to share their feelings and reactions.



4. Case studies



Print and cut out each case study to give to the groups of 3 in activity 5 and 6. If more case studies are needed, please create your own for use in the training.



CASE STUDY 1

During one of your field trips as a volunteer you are called over to a group of women standing outside of a house. You immediately sense that something is wrong, as everyone seems anxious and concerned. They ask you to go into the house to help. When you enter the house, you find a young woman screaming and crying and holding her baby who has died in her arms. Her older child is sitting in the corner of the room staring at his mother, and not saying anything.



CASE STUDY 2

You are walking to the grocery shop when you see there is a fire a little further down the road in one of the other shops. You rush to see how you can help and find that fire fighters have already arrived and have managed to get everyone out of the shop safely. As you look around, you see a man crouched on the street rocking back and forth and staring straight ahead. He does not seem to be physically injured, but he is clearly in shock.



CASE STUDY 3

You are a volunteer and part of the initial rescue mission during a hurricane. You are walking down what used to be the main street and come across a young woman in distress. She is sobbing uncontrollably, as she stands looking at her house that has been completely destroyed by the storm.



CASE STUDY 4

Walking home from a dinner with some friends, you hear a woman screaming. As you turn the corner, you see a woman kneeling on the ground, crying and picking up the things from her handbag that are lying all over the road. When you reach her, she tells you that two men attacked her and held a knife to her throat while they stole her money and phone. The woman is very distressed and keeps saying she thought she was going to die.



CASE STUDY 5

One of your best friends comes by in tears and tells you she has just received news she has breast cancer. She is sobbing uncontrollably and keeps saying she is not ready to die.

5. Role play feedback form

Name of participant observed: _____

FEEDBACK FORM		
Action principle and action	Level of completion*	Comments and examples What went well? What could be improved?
LOOK refers to whether the helper looked for:		
information on what had happened and was happening		
who needed help		
safety and security risk		
physical injuries		
immediate basic and practical needs		
emotional reactions		
LISTEN refers to how the helper:		
approached the person in distress in an appropriate way		
introduced themselves		
paid attention and listened actively		
accepted the other person's feelings		
calmed the person in distress		
asked about needs and concerns		
helped the person(s) in distress find solutions to their immediate needs and problem		
LINK refers to whether the person in distress was helped to:		
address basic needs		
access information		
find solutions to their immediate needs and problems		
tackle practical problems		
connect with loved ones and social support		
access services and other help		

*) Level of completion: 2: Done well, 1: Done adequately; 0: Not done

Appendix D: Training evaluation form

TRAINING EVALUATION FOR INTRODUCTION TO PFA					
	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
1. Overall, how would you rate the content of the training?					
Comments:					
2. Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	
2.1 The content was interesting and engaging					
2.2 The training met the training objectives					
3. Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements					
3.1 I know what psychological first aid is and what it is not					
3.2 I understand the three action principles of Look, Listen and Link					
3.3 I have practised providing PFA to someone in distress					
3.4 I understand the importance of self-care when helping others					
4. The following helped my understanding					
4.1 Plenary discussions					
4.2 PowerPoint slides					
4.3 Group exercises					
4.4 Role play					
5. The facilitator					
5.1 The facilitator was knowledgeable about the topic					
5.2 The facilitator presented the content clearly and logically					
5.3 The facilitator had good facilitation skills					
6. Thinking about the training overall					
6.1 I have gained a better understanding of psychological first aid					
6.2 The learning environment was safe and inclusive					
6.3 The overall length of the course was appropriate					
7. What went well in the training?					
8. What did not go well in the training?					