

Traumatic Event Care Tips

Understanding Disaster Events

- No one who sees or experiences a traumatic event is untouched by it.
- It is normal to feel anxious about your and your family's safety and future.
- Profound sadness, grief and anger are normal reactions to an abnormal event.
- Acknowledging your feelings can help you recover.
- Focusing on your strengths and abilities can help you heal.
- Accepting help from community programs and resources, as well as the EAP, is healthy.
- We each have different needs and different ways of coping.
- It is common to want to strike back at people who have caused great pain. However, nothing good is accomplished by hateful language or actions.

Warning Signs of Stress

- Difficulty communicating thoughts
- Difficulty sleeping
- Difficulty maintaining emotional balance
- Increased use of drugs/alcohol
- Limited attention span, difficulty concentrating
- Poor work performance, easily frustrated
- Headaches/stomach problems
- Tunnel vision/muffled hearing
- Colds or flu-like symptoms
- Disorientation or confusion
- Reluctance to leave home

- Depression, sadness, feelings of hopelessness
- Mood swings, crying easily
- Overwhelming guilt and self-doubt
- Fear of crowds, strangers or being alone
- Constantly focusing on the event

Ways to Ease the Stress

- Consider talking to a professional.
- Don't hold yourself responsible.
- Take steps to promote your own physical and emotional healing (i.e., healthy eating, rest, exercise, relaxation, meditation).
- Maintain a normal daily routine, limiting demanding responsibilities of yourself and your family.
- Spend time with family and friends.
- Participate in memorials and rituals.
- Use existing support groups: family, friends and religious.

When to Seek Help

If self-help strategies are not helping or you find that you are using drugs/alcohol in order to cope, you may wish to seek outside or professional assistance with your stress symptoms.

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