

# DEALING WITH TRAUMATIC EVENTS

Emergency events, such as severe storms or acts of terrorism, may cause severe anxiety, stress, and trauma. The following tips could help in dealing with the effects of these traumatic events.

## WHEN TRAUMATIC EVENTS OCCUR...

- A survivor of a disaster or act of violence may feel dazed or numb. You may feel sad, helpless, or anxious. Some people just feel happy to be alive.
- It is not unusual to have bad memories or dreams. You may avoid places or people that remind you of the disaster. You may have trouble sleeping, eating, or focusing. You may have a short temper and anger easily.
- These are all normal reactions to stress.

## IT TAKES TIME...

- You may have strong feelings immediately, or you may not notice a change until much later.
- Stress can change how you act with friends and family. It will take time to feel better and for your life to return to "normal."
- Give yourself time to heal.

## THESE STEPS MAY HELP...

There is no simple fix to make things better right away. These actions may help you, your family, and your community begin to heal. Try to:

- Follow a normal routine as much as possible.
- Eat healthy meals. Do not skip meals or overeat
- Exercise and stay active
- Help other people in your community as a volunteer. Stay busy
- Accept help from family, friends, co-workers, or clergy
- Talk about your feelings with family, friends, co-workers, or clergy. Limit your time around the sights and sounds of what happened. Don't dwell on TV, radio, or newspaper reports of the tragedy

## IF IT FEELS LIKE TOO MUCH...

Ask for help if you:

- Are not able to take care of yourself or your children
- Are not able to do your job
- Use alcohol or drugs to escape from your problems
- Feel sad or depressed for more than two weeks
- Think about suicide

If you or someone you know is having trouble dealing with the tragedy, ask for help. Talk to a counselor, your doctor, or call the National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988.

## MORE INFORMATION

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