



# Coping with traumatic events

People often experience shock and disbelief after a traumatic event, and may find it difficult to accept the reality of what is happening. Examples of traumatic events include any kind of violence whether communal, domestic, partnership, political or military, natural or industrial disaster, terrorism, serious illness, violent assault and other crimes, or the unexpected death of a loved one.

Tragic events can cause a range of intense physical, emotional and psychological symptoms.

## Emotional reactions

When the initial shock subsides, normal emotional responses in the following hours and days may include:

- Fear and anxiety. These emotions can come in waves, at unpredictable times.
- Sadness and depression.
- Guilt, shame or despair.
- Anger and irritability.
- Emotional numbness and feelings of separation from others.

## Physical reactions

Physical reactions are the result of stress hormones flooding the nervous system. Common physical symptoms include:

- Difficulty falling asleep.
- Fatigue.
- Headache, abdominal pain or other physical pain.
- Heart racing.
- Dizziness or fainting.
- Change of appetite.

## How you can help yourself

- Take care of yourself first. Eat healthy foods, get enough rest and exercise regularly. Physical activity can reduce anxiety and promote well-being.
- Talk to people you trust about your concerns. A supportive network is important for emotional health.
- Take time for hobbies and fun activities or find interesting volunteer activities. This can be a healthy distraction from everyday stress.
- Limit your exposure to disruptive TV, radio and social media coverage.
- Practice mindfulness and relaxation techniques such as deep breathing and meditation.



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# How your program can help

Your program can help you recover from many different problems, get back on your feet and find new ways to enrich your life.

## Call your program

If you or a household member need help, contact your program anytime and we will connect you with the right resource or professional. We can help with anxiety, stress, depression, grief, alcohol or drug misuse, relationship problems, parenting issues, financial or legal concerns, strengthen resilience and whatever life puts your way.

## Visit your member website



Learn more about all of the free, confidential services available to you and your household members, as well as resources for resilience, connecting with your community, learning events and more.



Click on Work-Life Services for information on child and elder care, educational resources for children, tips on distance work, budgeting, health, fitness and more.



The Learning Center features articles, videos and webinars on a variety of mental health, emotional and physical well-being topics.



Access self-care programs and apps including:

- BetterHelp—Confidential, virtual therapy available by text message, live chat, phone or video conference.
- LifeMart—Savings on groceries, electronics, home improvement, travel and more.
- myStrength—Self-care programs to help you reduce stress, manage depression, control anxiety, be more mindful and more.