

.....> **When to get professional help:**

Your emotions or physical symptoms are too intense or persistent

You feel numb, cut off from reality or you have to keep active in order not to feel

You continue to have nightmares, poor sleep or flashbacks

Your family, social or work life or relationships suffer

Sexual problems develop

You experience loss of memory and concentration. Your performance suffers at work, school, or at home

You have accidents or illnesses

You increase smoking, drinking or drug-taking

You have lost faith in yourself or the world

.....> **If you are experiencing any of the above symptoms, see someone as soon as possible.**
Prevention is better than cure



CLStaff Support Specialists



1300 132 098
24 HOUR/7 DAY CRISIS ACCESS

Your CLS Counsellor can support you with information or counselling in times of crisis or tragedy.

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CLStaff Support Specialists

**COPING
WITH A CRISIS
OR TRAGEDY**



PHONE 1300 132 098

.....> Coping with a Significant Crisis:

What you have experienced is a unique and personal event. It is important to know about possible reactions to such events, how to look after yourself and how to help others.

The following information may help you to deal effectively with your reactions.

Each person will react differently—there is no right or wrong way. These reactions can be unpleasant but are part of the healing process.

.....> What you could expect:

A tragic event is usually unexpected and may involve loss of life or a threat to life or welfare. Under these circumstances it is NORMAL for most people to have an intense reaction. Some typical reactions/symptoms are listed below:

Physical

- Sleeping Disturbance
- Tiredness
- Neck & Back Pain
- Anger
- Nausea
- Shakes Sick in the Stomach
- Tension
- Loss of Appetite

Thinking

- Confusion, difficulty concentrating
- Inability to stop thinking about the event
- Thoughts of other tragic events in your life.
- Slowed thinking
- Longing for what has gone and will not be.
- Daydreams, images and flashbacks.

These are normal ways to process the event and make meaning of it.

Emotional

- Sadness for deaths, injuries and losses of every kind
- Guilt
- Numbness
- Over sensitivity
- Depression
- Withdrawal from others
- Frustration and anger, at the injustice and senselessness of it all; at the lack of proper understanding by others.
- WHY?! WHY ME?!

Normal reactions to abnormal situations and events.

These feelings are common and normal..

Nature heals through allowing you to express these emotions.

Sometimes you may not be able to express or deal with your feelings immediately, the earlier you are able to deal with these feelings, the sooner your healing begins.

.....> What helps? Do's and Don'ts:

- DO Admit you are human and you have every right to feel what you are feeling.
- DO Try to cut down on stimulants for a few days, i.e. coffee., tea, cigarettes and sugar.
- DO Take time out to sleep, rest, enjoy and do routine things when possible.
- DO Express your needs clearly and honestly to family, friends and officials.
- DO Spend time alone when you need it.
- DO Allow your children to return to school and keep up with their activities as soon as they are ready and to share in your grief and encourage them to express their own.
- DO Allow yourself time to talk, grieve, be angry, cry and laugh according to your needs.

- DO If you choose., keep a journal or diary—write down your feelings and thoughts; it can help you relax your mind and keep things in perspective.
- DO Recognise that every one expresses things in their own way.
- DO Try and get some physical exercise, to work off tension.
- Don't Bottle up feelings.
- Don't Avoid talking and thinking about what has happened.
- Don't Expect the feelings and thoughts to go away overnight— they will take a while to subside in intensity.
- Don't Make any big life changes. Your judgement may not be as good as usual

.....> Looking After others:

Stay with people affected by the tragic event while they are distressed, but don't crowd them.

Listen as long as people want to talk, but don't question. Allowing people to go over the event when they are ready, will help.

Reassure them about safety and security.

Help people with some simple practical tasks. For people deeply affected, these day to day tasks may be difficult to do.

Don't react personally to people's anger or other feelings. Let them express their feelings and get it all out.

Don't try to make light of the situation or talk people out of their reactions. It takes time to recover.

Remind and support them to look after themselves physically - to eat, rest and sleep.