

Trauma Recovery Guidelines

You have encountered a stressor outside the realm of usual human experiences. As a victim of this type of stress, you can expect to experience the after-effects to varying degrees. The acknowledgement of these emotional reactions helps to shorten recovery time and prevent complications through the natural healing process.

Expected Emotional Reactions

- ◆ Sense that life is out of balance
- ◆ Disbelief, numbness
- ◆ Flashbacks
- ◆ Heightened response to noise, surprises, jumpiness
- ◆ Uncomfortable being alone
- ◆ Sadness
- ◆ Difficulty sleeping
- ◆ Increase or decrease in appetite
- ◆ Anger, irritability
- ◆ Difficulty making decisions and thinking creatively
- ◆ Forgetfulness
- ◆ Physical discomfort, aches, cold-like symptoms
- ◆ Feeling guilty that others have suffered more than you have
- ◆ Increased use of alcohol and/or drugs
- ◆ Social withdrawal
- ◆ Feelings of being “out of control”
- ◆ Fears of “going crazy”
- ◆ Recall of past trauma and loss
- ◆ Loss of feeling secure in the world
- ◆ Self doubt
- ◆ Magical thinking, superstition and omens

These reactions are generally temporary. They can vary widely from one day to the next. Don't be alarmed by the re-emergence of emotional feelings after days, weeks or months. If you have been busy performing necessary tasks after the crisis, you may have a delay in your reaction until you stop being busy. If your reactions persist or cause you extreme discomfort, you should discuss this with a mental health professional.