

The Crisis Reaction

People often experience emotions that are unexpected after they have experienced a crisis. Unexpected feelings may feel abnormal, but are normal reactions to abnormal situations. Reactions are very different, and not everyone will experience the same symptoms and feelings. Some symptoms may last longer than others, some may not start until much later. Many people will find that some intervention is helpful when dealing with a crisis.

Reactions

Normal reactions can include **physical reactions** such as fatigue, insomnia, hypersomnia, startle reactions, changes in appetite, nightmares, or flashbacks. **Cognitive reactions** may include forgetfulness, difficulty concentrating, difficulty with decisions, short attention span, loss of control, and confusion and/or frustration. **Emotional reactions** may include anger/rage, fear/terror, grief/sorrow, guilt/self-blame, helplessness, anxiety, depression/lack of joy, and oversensitivity.

Things to Try

There may not be anything that can be done to stop feelings from happening, there are things that can be done to feel better: Structure your time, try to keep busy, get exercise, remember that you are normal and having normal reactions, spend time with others, reach out to other people; talking will help you heal, do things that feel good to you, avoid numbing your pain or distress with alcohol or drugs, keep life as normal as possible; don't make any big life changes.

Survivor Tips: What to Expect in Your Personal, Family, Work, and Financial Life

Things to Remember When Trying to Understand Disaster Events:

- ◇ No one who sees a disaster is untouched by it
- ◇ It is normal to feel anxious about you and your family's safety
- ◇ Acknowledging feelings help recovery
- ◇ Focusing on strengths and abilities will help the healing process
- ◇ Accepting help from community programs and resources is healthy

Signs that Adults Need Stress Management Assistance:

- ◇ Difficulty communicating thoughts
- ◇ Difficulty sleeping
- ◇ Difficulty maintaining balance
- ◇ Easily frustrated
- ◇ Increased use of drugs/alcohol
- ◇ Limited attention span
- ◇ Poor work performance
- ◇ Headaches/stomach problems

- ◇ Tunnel vision/muffled hearing
- ◇ Colds or flu-like symptoms
- ◇ Disorientation or confusion
- ◇ Difficulty concentrating
- ◇ Reluctance to leave home
- ◇ Depression/sadness/feeling of hopelessness
- ◇ Mood swings/crying easily
- ◇ Overwhelming guilt and self-doubt
- ◇ Fear of crowds/strangers/being alone

Ways to Ease Stress:

There are many ways you can find to ease stress and everyone has to find their own way. Some possible ways include talking with someone about your feelings, don't hold yourself responsible for the disastrous event, take steps to promote your own physical and emotional healing, maintain a normal household and daily routine, limit demanding responsibilities on yourself and family, spend time with family and friends, participate in memorials, rituals, and use of symbols as a way to express your feelings, use existing support groups, and establish a family emergency plan for future use.

For Services, Please Call:

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