

4-STEP GUIDE TO HEALING CONVERSATION FOLLOWING DISASTERS

FACTS

non-intrusive inquiry into specifics

THOUGHTS

encourage linking of facts

FEELINGS

support and encourage

REASSURANCE

normalization and education

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COMMON REACTIONS TO TRAUMATIC EVENTS

A NORMAL RESPONSE TO AN ABNORMAL SITUATION

The feelings and reactions below are normal and natural, even though they may seem unusual and different. As individuals, we all respond in our own way, differently. The memory will always be a part of your life--the incident cannot be erased. Everyone moves at their own pace through the stages of crisis and of healing --everyone has their own clock. For some people, there may be on going problems.

POSSIBLE REACTIONS:

**Confusion	**Guilt
**Crying	**Concentration Problems
**Fatigue	**Memory Problems
**Sleep Disturbances	**Religious confusion
**Change in appetite/weight	**Loss of trust
**Low resistance to illness	**Flashbacks
**Frustration	**Anniversary difficulties
**Helplessness	**Regression
**Depression	**Alcohol & drug abuse
**Despair	**Excessive use of sick leave
**Grief	**Work-school-family problems
**Anger	**Withdrawal
**Outrage	**Suicidal thoughts
**Insecurity	**Difficulty returning to normal activity level
**Fear	**Feeling overwhelmed
**Anxiety	**Irritability
**Numbness	**Gallows humor
**Feeling inadequate	

SUGGESTIONS:

- Talk about what happened.
- Talk about your feelings.
- Don't Monday morning quarterback--we can always think of what we or others could have done differently.
- Take care of yourself physically--balanced diet, rest, exercise maintain a routine.
- Avoid use of drugs and alcohol--medication should be taken sparingly and only under the supervision of a physician--substances may be addictive and interfere with the healing process.
- If symptoms persist seek a consultation from mental health professional.

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