

Recovering from a Disaster



Disasters are upsetting experiences for everyone involved. But everyone, even the people that others look up to for guidance and assistance, is entitled to their feelings and deserves support throughout the recovery process.

EMOTIONAL RESPONSES

When we experience a disaster, we can have a variety of reactions, all of which can be common responses to any difficult situation:

- Feeling physically and mentally drained
- Having difficulty making decisions or staying focused on topics
- Becoming easily frustrated on a more frequent basis
- Arguing more with family and friends
- Feeling tired, sad, numb, lonely or worried
- Experiencing changes in appetite or sleep patterns

Most of these reactions are temporary and will go away over time. Look for ways to take one step at a time and focus on taking care of our disaster-related needs and those of our family.

RECOVERY TAKES TIME

Getting ourselves and our lives back in a routine that is comfortable for us takes time.

- ✓ **Take care of our safety.** Find a safe place to stay and make sure our physical health needs and those of our family are addressed. Seek medical attention if necessary.
- ✓ **Limit our exposure** to the sights and sounds of disaster, especially on television, the radio and in the newspapers.
- ✓ **Eat healthy.** During times of stress, it is important that we maintain a balanced diet and drink plenty of water.
- ✓ **Get some rest.** With so much to do, it may be difficult to have enough time to rest or get adequate sleep. Giving our body and mind a break can boost our ability to cope with the stress we may be experiencing.
- ✓ **Stay connected with family and friends.** Giving and getting support is one of the most important things we can do. Try to do something as a family that we have all enjoyed in the past.
- ✓ **Be patient** with ourselves and with those around us. Recognize that everyone is stressed and may need some time to put their feelings and thoughts in order. That includes us!
- ✓ **Set priorities.** Tackle tasks in small steps.
- ✓ **Gather information** about assistance and resources that will help us and our family members meet our disaster-related needs.
- ✓ **Stay positive.** Remind ourselves of how we've successfully gotten through challenging times in the past.
- ✓ **Reach out** when we need support, and help others when they need it.

WHEN THE CHALLENGES ARE ONGOING

Many of us have experienced coping with stressful life events and typically feel better after a few days. Others find that our stress does not go away as quickly as we would like and it influences our relationships with our family, friends and others.

If we find ourselves or a loved one experiencing some of the feelings and reactions listed below for two weeks or longer, this may be a sign that we need to reach out to **MyEAP** for support.

- Crying spells or bursts of anger
- Difficulty eating
- Difficulty sleeping
- Losing interest in things
- Increased physical symptoms such as headaches or stomachaches
- Fatigue
- Feeling guilty, helpless or hopeless
- Avoiding family and friends

Remember that MyEAP is here to help. For support or more information on disaster recovery, remember that MyEAP is here to help. Contact us at eap@familiesinaction.net