



TIPS FOR SURVIVORS OF A TRAUMATIC EVENT

Things to Remember When Dealing With Work and Financial Concerns

The effect of a disaster or traumatic event goes far beyond its immediate devastation. Just as it takes time to reconstruct damaged buildings, it takes time to grieve and rebuild our lives. Life may not return to normal for months, or even years, following a disaster or traumatic event. There may be changes in living conditions that cause changes in day to day activities, leading to strains in relationships, changes in expectations, and shifts in responsibilities. These disruptions in relationships, roles, and routines can make life unfamiliar or unpredictable. Some may include:

Work Disruptions

- Fatigue and increased stress from preoccupation with personal issues can lead to poor work performance.
- Conflicts with co-workers may increase, because of the added stress.
- Businesses may be forced to lay off employees, or company work hours and wages may be cut.

Financial Worries

- Those who experience work disruptions may be unable to regain their previous standard of living, leading to financial concerns and unpaid bills.
- Seeking financial assistance to rebuild and repair damages adds to the already high levels of stress caused by the disaster or traumatic event, and the hassles of dealing with a bureaucracy can add to the frustration.
- The loss of a home, business, or income may result in displacement and confusion about the future.
- Unresolved emotional issues or pre-existing problems and previous losses may resurface.
- Anniversaries of the disaster or traumatic event remind us of our losses.

This reaction may be triggered by the event date each month and may be especially strong on the yearly anniversary of the event.

Ways to Ease the Stress

- Talk with someone about your feelings (anger, sorrow, and other emotions) even though it may be difficult.
- Don't hold yourself responsible for things related to the disastrous event or feel frustrated that you were unable to help directly in the rescue work.
- Take steps to promote your own physical and emotional healing by staying active in your daily life patterns or by adjusting them.

A healthy approach to life (e.g., healthy eating, rest, exercise, relaxation, meditation) will help both you and your family.



If you or a member of your family has trouble coping, ask for help. Consult a counselor or mental health professional. **You can also contact the United Way for help by dialing 2-1-1. If 2-1-1 does not work from your phone, you can call 1-877-541-7905.** In the workplace, you may be able to get assistance from your human resources department or your company's Employee Assistance Program. For help with financial matters, contact a financial advisor.

Additional Resources

Mental Health Association for Greater Baton Rouge: www.mhagbr.com

Keep Calm Line - 866-310-7977

Behavioral Health Recovery Outreach Line
833-333-1132

Louisiana Spirit Crisis Counseling Program
<http://lds.la.gov/LouisianaSpirit>
LouisianaSpiritInfo@la.gov

Louisiana 211 - Dial 211

www.louisiana211.org

Mental Health America:
www.mentalhealthamerica.net

National Suicide Prevention Hopeline:
800-784-2433

National Suicide Prevention:
800-273-8255

National de Prevención del Suicidio:
888-628-9454

National Suicide Prevention
Options for Deaf & Hard of Hearing:
800-799-4889

Veterans Crisis Line: 800-273-8255

State Bar of Texas Legal Hotline:
800-504-7030

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): www.fema.gov