

Stress Reducers Post-Disaster

The following tips are to help you in the rebuilding phase of a natural disaster. There are many things a person can do to help themselves and others. The following items are not a complete list, however; a person will benefit greatly in doing the activities throughout the day.

Prior to, during and after a disaster a person may have a strong reaction to the abnormal event. This is quite common.	If you began to feel anxious, sit down and breathe slowly and deeply, inhaling and exhaling 4-6 times. Repeat this throughout the day as often as needed.
Talk to people. Talking is a healing medicine.	Be aware of numbing the pain with overuse of drugs or alcohol. You do not need to complicate this with a substance abuse problem.
Maintain as normal a schedule as possible. Structure your time.	Spend time with others. Reach out; people do care.
Help your co-workers as much as possible by sharing feelings and checking out how they are doing.	Keep a journal; write your way through those sleepless hours.
Realize those around you are under stress.	Show compassion toward yourself and others. This is vital.
Do make as many daily decisions as possible that will give you a feeling of control over your life.	Get plenty of rest and sip water throughout the day. Drinking water relieves stress.
Eat well-balanced and regular meals (even if you don't feel like it).	Don't try to fight reoccurring thoughts, dreams or flashbacks-they are normal and will decrease over time and become less painful.

COPING SKILLS FOR FAMILY MEMBERS & FRIENDS

Listen to them carefully.	Offer your assistance and a listening ear if they have not asked for help.
Reassure them they are safe.	Help them with everyday tasks like cleaning, cooking, caring for the family, minding children.
Give them some private time.	Do a daily chore for them without asking.
Don't take their anger or other feelings personally.	Do not tell them that they are lucky "it wasn't worse".

