



OCDE CRISIS RESPONSE NETWORK

THINGS TO TRY:

- WITHIN THE FIRST 24 - 48 HOURS periods of appropriate physical exercise, alternated with relaxation will alleviate some of the physical reactions.
- Structure your time; keep busy.
- You're normal and having normal reactions; don't label yourself crazy.
- Talk to people; talk is the most healing medicine.
- Be aware of numbing the pain with the overuse of drugs or alcohol, you don't need to complicate this with a substance abuse problem.
- Reach out; people do care.
- Maintain as normal a schedule as possible.
- Spend time with others.
- Help your co-workers as much as possible by sharing feelings and checking out how they are doing.
- Give yourself permission to feel rotten and share your feeling with others.
- Keep a journal; write your way through those sleepless hours.
- Do things that feel good to you.
- Realize those around you are under stress.
- Don't make any big life changes.
- Do make as many daily decisions as possible that will give you a feeling of control over your life, i.e. if someone asks you what you want to eat, answer him even if you're not sure.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Don't try to fight reoccurring thoughts, dreams or flashbacks – they are normal and will decrease over time and become less painful.
- Eat well-balanced and regular meals (even if you don't feel like it).

FOR FAMILY MEMBERS & FRIENDS:

- Listen carefully.
- Spend time with the traumatized person.
- Offer your assistance and a listening ear if (s)he has not asked for help.
- Reassure him that he is safe.
- Help him with everyday tasks like cleaning, cooking, caring for the family, minding children.
- Give him some private time.
- Don't take his anger or other feelings personally.
- Don't tell him that he is "lucky it wasn't worse," a traumatized person is not consoled by those statements. Instead, tell him that you are sorry such an event has occurred and you want to understand and assist him.



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WHAT PARENTS CAN DO TO HELP CHILDREN COPE WITH FEELINGS

- Talk with your child, providing simple, accurate information to questions
- Talk with your child about your own feelings
- Listen to what your child says and how your child says it. Is there fear, anxiety or insecurity? Repeating the child's words may be very helpful, such as , "You are afraid that..." or "You wonder if the storm will come again today." This helps both you and the child clarify feelings."
- Reassure your child, "We are together. We care about you. We will take care of you."
- You may need to repeat information and reassurances many times. Do not stop responding just because you told the child once.
- Hold the child. Provide comfort. Appropriate touching is important for children during this period.
- Spend extra time putting your child to bed. Talk and offer reassurance. Leave night light on if necessary.
- Observe your child at play. Listen to what is said and how the child plays. Frequently children express feelings of fear or anger while playing with dolls, trucks, or friends.
- Provide play experiences to relieve tension. Work with play dough, paint, play in water etc. If children show need to hit or kick, give them something safe, like a pillow, ball or balloon.
- If your child lost a meaningful object, allow the child to mourn and grieve (by crying, perhaps). It is a part of helping the young child to cope with feelings about the disaster. In time, it may be helpful to replace the lost object.
- If you need help for your child, contact a community human services agency or a minister or other supportive resource for help.