



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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Coping with Disaster

The emotional toll that disaster brings can sometimes be even more devastating than the financial strains of damage and loss of home, business, or personal property.

Understand Disaster Events

Everyone who sees or experiences a disaster is affected by it in some way. It is normal to feel anxious about your own safety and that of your family and close friends. Profound sadness, grief and anger are normal reactions to an abnormal event.

Acknowledging your feelings helps you recover. Focusing on your strengths and abilities helps you heal. Accepting help from community programs and resources is healthy.

Everyone has different needs and different ways of coping. It is common to want to strike back at people who have caused great pain.

Children and older adults are of special concern in the aftermath of disasters. Even individuals who experience a disaster "second hand" through exposure to extensive media coverage can be affected.

Contact local faith-based organizations, voluntary agencies or professional counselors for counseling.

Additionally, FEMA and state and local governments of the affected area may provide crisis counseling assistance.

Easing Disaster-Related Stress

- Talk with someone about your feelings - anger, sorrow, and other emotions - even though it may be difficult.
- Seek help from professional counselors who deal with post-disaster stress.
- Do not hold yourself responsible for the disastrous event or be frustrated because you feel you cannot help directly in the rescue work.
- Take steps to promote your own physical and emotional healing by healthy eating, rest, exercise, relaxation, and meditation.
- Maintain a normal family and daily routine, limiting demanding responsibilities on yourself and your family.
- Spend time with family and friends.

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