

# COPING WITH DISASTER

## A GUIDE FOR EMOTIONAL RECOVERY

### UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONAL RESPONSES



- Disasters take an emotional toll on all involved.
- People have different needs and ways of coping
- Everyone is entitled to their feelings and deserves support throughout the recovery process.
- Try to accept whatever reaction you may have-those feelings are normal.
- Do not blame yourself for the disastrous event. You ARE NOT responsible.

### COMMON RESPONSES

- Feeling physically and mentally drained
- Fearing for you and your family's safety
- Profound sadness, anger and grief
- Difficulty making decisions or staying focused
- Feeling numb
- Changes in appetite and/or sleep patterns
- Becoming easily frustrated more frequently



\*These responses are temporary  
and should go away over time

### RECOVERY AND EASING STRESS



- Talk with someone about how you are feeling
- Accept help from community programs and resources
- Tackle tasks in small steps
- Limit your exposure to media that details the disaster
- Take care of yourself by getting rest, eating healthy and drinking lots of water
- Stay connected to family and friends or a support group
- Be patient with yourself and those around you
- Participate in memorials
- Try to get back to and maintain a family routine

Recovery takes time

Reach out when you need support

### ONGOING DISASTER-RELATED STRESS

When the feelings or reactions listed below last for a prolonged period of time or influence relationships with family, friends, or others, crisis counseling or additional assistance may be needed.

- Crying spells or bursts of anger
- Continued difficulty eating and/or sleeping
- Increased drug or alcohol use
- Losing interest in things
- Physical symptoms like headaches/stomachaches
- Overwhelming feelings of guilt, helplessness or hopelessness
- Poor work performance
- Avoiding family and/or friends



### RESOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT



**Shasta County  
Health & Human  
Services Agency**  
  
24-hr mental health:  
530-225-5252 or  
888-385-5201



PLEASE CONTACT OUR SCHOOL COUNSELOR FOR MORE  
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