

# Young people Affected By Crisis



**A guide for  
young adults**



## Introduction

**This information will help you know how you have reacted when faced with a crisis.**

**There is no right or wrong way to feel. It will show you how you can help normal healing to occur and avoid some pitfalls.**

## Normal Responses

### Shock and disbelief

The event seems to be unreal, like a film or a dream.

### Numbness

Your emotions can be cut off.

### Concentration

You might find difficulty concentrating, organising yourself and remembering things.

### Fear

- ▶ of being left alone, or having to leave loved ones.
- ▶ of 'breaking down' or 'losing control'.
- ▶ of a similar event happening again.
- ▶ of others learning what has happened.

### Helplessness

Feeling powerless or not in control.





## **Guilt**

Regret for things not done or actions taken.

## **Shame**

For not having felt and reacted as you would have wished. For having been helpless, 'emotional' and needing others.

About what has happened.

## **Sadness**

About your trust having been broken.

## **Anger and Frustration**

At what happened, whoever caused it or allowed it to happen. At the injustice and senselessness of it all.

Events and feelings may return to you in your thoughts, daydreams, images, flashbacks, night dreams and nightmares. You may remember past crises. These are normal ways to process the event and make meaning of it.

**Do remember that these responses are NORMAL to an ABNORMAL situation.**

## Physical reactions

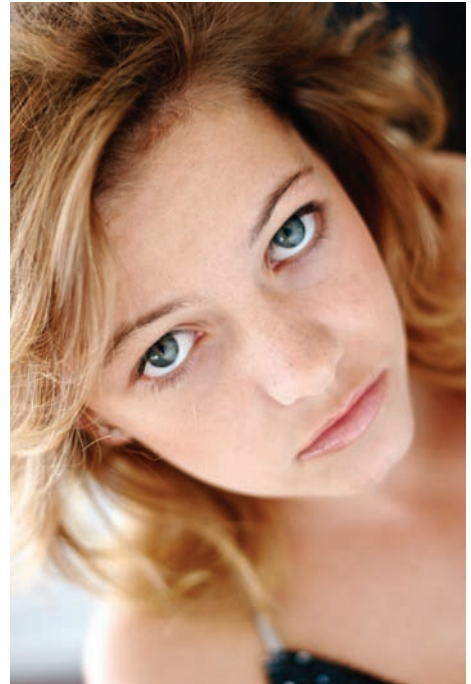
Your body as well as your mind may be affected immediately or even many months later.

### **Common reactions include:**

- ▶ tiredness, shakes, dizziness, palpitations.
- ▶ difficulty in breathing, choking in the throat and chest pains.
- ▶ nausea diarrhoea, and vomiting.
- ▶ infections frequently occur when you are run down.
- ▶ alcohol, coffee and drug intake may increase due to extra tension.
- ▶ accidents are more frequent after severe stress.

## Family and Social Relationships

Changes may occur in the way families, friends and the community relate to and need each other following a crisis. You may form new friendships and groups. Strains in relationships may also appear. You may feel that too little or the wrong things are offered, or that you cannot give as much as expected.



## Making the events and the feelings about them easier to bear

### Doing Things

To be active and useful may provide relief and a sense of control. However, over activity may be harmful if it is a means of avoiding your feelings.

### Talking

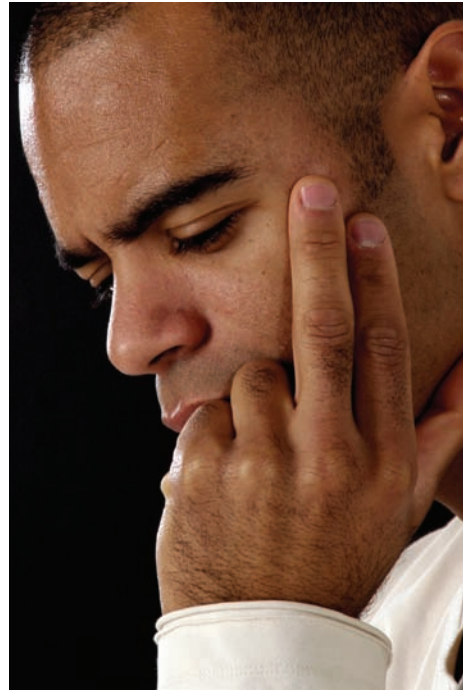
Talking about your experiences and how you feel about them will help. It also helps to listen to others who have been affected.

**DO** allow yourself time to talk, be angry, cry and laugh to your needs.

**DO** recognise that everyone expresses things in their own way. Men generally find it harder to express emotion and weep.

### Support

Be open to receiving support and comfort and give them when you can. Allow yourself to be with people who care about you.



### Privacy

Make time and space for yourself to be alone with your own thoughts and feeling

### Exercise, rest and recreation

are important to maintain your physical and mental health. Be careful with coffee, cigarettes, alcohol.

Do drive more carefully.



## Reaction May Be More Intense And Troubling For Some People

### **Especially**

When the crisis is on top of other painful experiences.

When you are thrown back to the pain of a previous crisis.

Where the crisis has been life threatening either to yourself or someone close to you

### **Seek Professional Help If:**

- ▶ your emotions or physical symptoms are too intense or persistent.
- ▶ you feel too numb or cut off from your feelings.
- ▶ you continue to have nightmares, poor sleep or 'flashbacks'.
- ▶ you have no-one to talk to about your experience.
- ▶ you have lost faith in yourself or the world.



## Seeking support is a positive step

Deep reaching experiences may lead you to have a sense of being different from before. The inside as well as the outside changes. In time you may develop deeper understanding of yourself and what it means to be a human being.

If you are worried you might like to talk to someone, such as:

- ▶ a Teacher
- ▶ a General Practitioner
- ▶ a Social Worker

or a psychologist from this service.

You can contact them on:

01259 226000

e-mail:

[psychological@clacks.gov.uk](mailto:psychological@clacks.gov.uk)



Psychological Services

Kilncraigs

Greenside Street

Alloa FK10 1EB

Tel 01259 226000

Email: [psychological@clacks.gov.uk](mailto:psychological@clacks.gov.uk)

The name of the Psychologist in your area is:

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This leaflet is also available in other formats and other languages on request.



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