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Coping with Disasters

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After any type of disaster, people feel relieved to be alive. But then they often feel [stress](#), fear and anger. Most people will also find that they can't stop thinking about what happened. These feelings and memories aren't a sign of personal weakness. Most trauma survivors have stress reactions for days or weeks. But some people have long-term problems, including

- [Post-traumatic stress disorder](#)
- [Depression](#)
- Self-blame
- Suicidal thoughts
- Alcohol or drug abuse



If you've survived a disaster, talk to your family and friends when you are ready. Most people recover from trauma naturally over time. If your emotional reactions are getting in the way of your relationships, work, or other important activities, you might want to talk to a counselor or your doctor. Treatments are available.

Related Topics

- [Disaster Preparation and Recovery](#)
- [Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder](#)
- [Mental Health and Behavior](#)
- [Safety Issues](#)

Start Here

- [Common Reactions After Trauma](#) (National Center for PTSD, Dept. of Veterans Affairs)
- [Coping with a Traumatic Event](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
Also available in [Spanish](#)
- [Coping with Traumatic Events](#) [NIH](#) (National Institute of Mental Health)

Go Local

Services and providers for **Coping with Disasters** in the U.S.

Select Location
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National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Coping with Disasters* is the [National Institute of Mental Health](#)

Basics

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For You

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Overviews

- [Are You Ready? Recovering from Disaster](#) (Federal Emergency Management Agency)
- [Coping with Disaster](#) (Federal Emergency Management Agency)
- [Mass Disasters, Trauma, and Loss](#) (International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies)
- [Survivors of Natural Disasters and Mass Violence](#) (National Center for PTSD, Dept. of Veterans Affairs)
- [When Disaster Strikes...](#) (American Psychiatric Association)

Latest News

- [9/11 Exposure Linked to Behavior Trouble in Kids](#) (02/05/2008, HealthDay)
- [High Levels of Stress After 9/11 Raised Heart Disease Risk](#) (01/07/2008, HealthDay)

Related Issues

- [Anniversary Reactions](#) (National Center for PTSD)
- [Bridge Collapse Resources](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- [Disasters: Mental Health Recommendations for Students and Colleges](#) (American Psychiatric Association)
- [Handbook for Coping after Terrorism](#) (Dept. of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime)
Also available in [Spanish](#)
- [Managing Your Mental Health Condition during a Disaster](#) (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
- [Mental Health Resources for Coping with Natural Disasters](#) (American Psychiatric Association)
- [Tips for Managing and Preventing Stress: A Guide for Emergency Response and Public Safety Workers](#) (Center for Mental Health Services)
- Links to PDF
- [Tips for Parents and Caregivers on Media Coverage of Traumatic Events](#) (National Child Traumatic Stress Network) - Links to PDF
- [Tips for People Living with Mental Illness in Uncertain Times](#) (Mental Health America)
Also available in [Spanish](#)
- [Tips for Survivors of a Traumatic Event: Managing Your Stress](#) (Center for Mental Health Services) - Links to PDF

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- [Article: Psychosocial determinants of relocation in survivors of the 1999 earthquake...](#)
- [Article: Post traumatic stress disorder in children after tsunami disaster in...](#)
- [Article: Elders at risk during disasters.](#)
- [Coping with Disasters -- see more articles](#)
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Organizations

- [Center for Mental Health Services](#)
- [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#)
Also available in [Spanish](#)
- [Mental Health America](#)
- [National Institute of Mental Health](#) **NIH**
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Children

- [Coping with Disaster: Suggestions for Helping Children with Cognitive Disabilities](#) (Administration for Children and Families)
- [FEMA for Kids](#) (Federal Emergency Management Agency)
- [Helping Children and Adolescents Cope with Violence and Disasters: What Parents Can Do](#) **NIH** (National Institute of Mental Health)
- [Helping Children Cope with Crisis: Activity Book](#) **NIH** (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development)
- [Helping Children Cope with Crisis: Just for Parents](#) **NIH** (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development)
- [Parent Guidelines for Helping Children After a Hurricane](#) (National Child Traumatic Stress Network) - Links to PDF

- [Resources for Helping Children Cope with Trauma and Death](#) (NYU Child Study Center) - Large PDF file
 - [Terrorist Attacks and Children](#) (National Center for PTSD, Dept. of Veterans Affairs)
 - [Tips for Talking to Children in Trauma: Interventions at Home for Preschoolers to Adolescents](#) (Center for Mental Health Services) - Links to PDF
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Teenagers

- [After Disaster: What Teens Can Do](#) (Center for Mental Health Services)
 - [Parent Guidelines for Talking with Teenagers about War and Terrorism](#) (Center for Mental Health Services)
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Seniors

- [Coping with War and Terrorism: Tips for Older Adults](#) (Mental Health America)
Also available in [Spanish](#)
 - [Guide for Older Adults](#) (Center for Mental Health Services)
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