



New York University Child Study Center

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• clinical care • advanced training • scientific research • educational outreach • prevention •

How to Cope with the Stress of Traumatic Loss

Take care of yourself

- Get enough sleep, eat nutritiously.
- Pay attention to your own feeling states (keep a journal or make notes to yourself).
- Avoid making life decisions, taking on major new projects.
- Simplify your life (cancel some activities, make sandwiches for dinner).
- Pace yourself, take a long-term approach.
- Use your strengths, coping skills (talk to friends and family, exercise).

Hold on to the familiar

- Make use of routines; they can help normalize your sense of self and calm your anxiety.
- Stay connected to the human community rather than withdrawing or becoming isolated.
- Talk about your feelings, not just the facts and issues.

Maintain contact and connection

- Be in touch with your family and friends.
- Stay connected to the human community rather than withdrawing or becoming isolated.
- Talk about your feelings, not just the facts and issues.

Take action

- Address safety concerns: get information and facts about what is relevant to you (e.g., local safety procedures, housing codes, the status of individuals involved).
- Volunteer at your church or temple, local school, or Red Cross chapter to help others.

Help your children cope

- Talk to your children about the disaster and their feelings and fears. Don't guess, identify their specific concerns.
- Invite them to ask questions at any time on an ongoing basis.
- Reassure your children of their safety.