

# Managing Trauma and Stress

Every person processes traumatic events differently.

The ability to recover from trauma or a critical incident involves many factors:

- Social support network
- Faith
- Healthy eating, exercise, and sleep habits

Many emotional and physical symptoms can appear after a traumatic or stressful event. These are a normal response to the event. However, if any of the following occurs **persistently**, additional support may be needed.

Please seek help from a licensed counselor or psychologist if following symptoms persist:

## Negative emotional responses:

- |             |               |               |             |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| • Shock     | • Sorrow      | • Guilt       | • Paranoia  |
| • Denial    | • Grief       | • Grief       | • Phobia    |
| • Anger     | • Depression  | • Frustration | • Suicidal  |
| • Rage      | • Confusion   | • Fear        | ideation    |
| • Anxiety   | • Blame       | • Terror      | • Homicidal |
| • Moodiness | • Shame       | • Hyper-      | ideation    |
| • Sadness   | • Humiliation | vigilance     |             |

## Negative physical symptoms:

- |                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| • Restlessness        | • Flashbacks         |
| • Fatigue             | • Profuse sweating   |
| • Sleep disturbances  | • Heart palpitations |
| • Eating disturbances | • Vomiting           |
| • Muscle tremors      | • Diarrhea           |
| • Nightmares          |                      |

## Support healthy lifestyle choices to build resilience and better manage stress and crisis.

- Eat healthy foods
- Get some exercise
- Talk to a trusted friend
- Sing, pray, read Bible, and worship
- Do things that bring you joy
- Take a ***calming*** breath
- Do not drink alcohol or use nicotine
- Do not isolate

Oxygen stimulates emotional and physical health. Breathing exercises help de-stress. Here are three breathing exercises:

### Take a calming breath.

1. Inhale slowly.
2. Exhale and quietly say the word **CALM** with your breath.



Take a deep breath in through your nose. When you breathe out, hum quietly.

Deep breathing using your hand.



### For intense anxiety, try this grounding exercise:

1. Name five things you see – then describe one (out loud to yourself or someone else).
2. Name four things you can touch – then describe one.
3. Name three things you can hear – then describe one.
4. Name two things you can smell – describe one.
5. Name one thing you can taste – describe it.

