

Coping Skills After Trauma

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What is Trauma?

A trauma is an intense event that involves serious injury or death, or the chance of serious injury or death. This can include medical events, such as a heart attack, surgery, or treatment in a hospital's intensive care unit (ICU).

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) can happen in any age. PTSD can cause nightmares, upsetting memories, flashback, feeling numb, fear, worry, anxiety, and other symptoms.



What Follows Immediately?

- Shock:
Stunned, dazed, numb, cut off from feelings, or from what is going on in their surroundings
- Denial:
Inability to accept that it has happened, and behaving as though it hasn't. Other people may think that the person is being strong or that they don't care about what has happened. Denial of stress may include drug or alcohol abuse, sleeping disorders or over working



What Should I do?

- Give yourself time
- Find out what happened
- Be involved with other survivors (Group Support)
- Ask for support and discuss with those around
- Gradually let yourself think about the trauma and talk about it with others. Don't worry if you cry when you talk, it's natural and usually helpful. Get into a comfortable pace and routine.
- Even if you don't feel much like eating, try to have regular meals and to eat a balanced diet. Taking some exercise can help - but start gently.
- Do some 'normal' things with other people
- Sometimes you will want to be with other people, but not to talk about what has happened. This can also be part of the healing process.
- Take extra care; as those in trauma are more prone to accidents.



Different Coping Techniques

1. Role Playing: a method of instruction or psychotherapy aimed at changing attitudes and behavior, in which participants act out designated roles relevant to real-life situations.
2. Assertiveness training: Demonstrating **Assertiveness** is **defined** as the ability to express one's feelings, opinions, beliefs, and needs directly, openly and honestly, while not violating the personal rights of others (Ellis & Hartley, 2005).
3. Stress management :**Stress management** refers to the wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person's levels of **stress**, especially chronic **stress**, usually for the purpose of improving everyday functioning.
4. Meditation The term *meditation* refers to a broad variety of practices that includes techniques designed to promote relaxation, build internal energy or life force
5. Exercise There's a lot of evidence that exercise affects your sleep. But the exact effect seems to depend on what exercises you do and when you do them. For instance, a brisk walk after work can help you doze off faster at night and sleep more soundly. But if you postpone your walk until the late evening, you might find yourself tossing and turning in bed.
6. Biofeedback is a process that enables an individual to learn how to change physiological activity for the purposes of improving health and performance. Precise instruments measure physiological activity such as brainwaves, heart function, breathing, muscle activity, and skin temperature. These instruments rapidly and accurately 'feed back' information to the user. The presentation of this information—often in conjunction with changes in thinking, emotions, and behavior—supports desired physiological changes. Over time, these changes can endure without continued use of an instrument
7. How to sleep with mindfulness: Mindfulness meditation involves focusing on your breathing and then bringing your mind's attention to the present without drifting into concerns about the past or future. It helps you break the train of your everyday thoughts to evoke the relaxation response, using whatever technique feels right to you.

What is a Traumatic Event?

- Serious accidents
- Bereavement
- Military combat
- Natural disasters
- Terrorist attack
- Being taken hostage
- Being a prisoner of war
- Being told you have a life-threatening disease
- Violent personal assault, such as a physical attack, sexual assault, robbery, or mugging

Different Reactions to Trauma

People react differently and take different amounts of time to come to terms with what has happened. They may feel:

- Frightened
- Helpless
- Angry
- Guilty
- Sad
- Ashamed
- Embarrassed
- Relieved
- Hopeful ... that your life will return to normal. People can start to feel more positive about things quite soon after a trauma.

Strategies to Cope

Three basic steps:

- Understanding that stress can have negative effect on your behavior and performance
- Identify those stressors
- Taking constrictive measures to help them cope with stress

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WHAT IS A TRAUMATIC EVENT?

OUT OF A 100% POPULATION, 70% SUFFER FROM PTSD AFTER A TRAUMATIC EVENT

