



Monthly Newsletter

Tri-County Strong Crisis Counseling Team

July 18, 2022

Anniversary Reactions to Natural Disasters

According to Knight & Liu (n.d.), the anniversary of a traumatic event, such as a major flood or a tornado, can lead to a resurgence of distressing thoughts, memories, and emotions related to the initial event. It is common for survivors to report the return or increase of feelings like fear, restlessness, sadness, and irritability (Knight & Liu, n.d.). The anniversary reaction may also include several days or weeks of nightmares, flashbacks, anxiety, anger or depression (Knight & Liu, n.d.). If you or a loved one is experiencing an anniversary reaction, it is important to maintain your routine, talk about it, use coping strategies, and limit media viewing of the anniversary (Knight & Liu, n.d.).

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Fight

*Angry Outburst
Controlling
Aggressive
Bullying*

Flight

*Panic/Anxiety
Workaholic
Perfectionist
Overthinking
Restless*

Freeze

*Depression
Isolation
Dissociation
Indecisiveness
Numb*

Fawn

*People-pleasing
Co-dependency
Avoids Conflict
Lack of Identity
Lack of Boundaries*

TRAUMA RESPONSES TO DISASTERS

image referenced from <https://www.etsy.com/hk-en/listing/1165779618/trauma-responses-fight-flight-freeze>

Common Reactions after Natural Disasters

Natural disasters such as tornadoes and flash floods are usually sudden and overwhelming (APA, 2013). Many people may escape these events without visible signs of physical injury, but may still experience mild to strong emotional reactions in the wake of the event (APA, 2013). According to the APA (2013), some common responses to disaster events include changes to thoughts or behavior patterns, unpredictable or intense feelings, increased conflict with loved ones, new or increased sensitivity to sights, sounds, or smells, and stress-related headaches or chest pain.

Additionally, it is common for affected

individuals to experience a variety of emotional reactions during and after the event like mood swings, depression, anxiety, and irritability (Babbel, 2010). Affected individuals may also experience flashbacks and nightmares related to the event as well as difficulties with eating and sleeping too much or too little (Babbel, 2010).

For more information, please visit:
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/somatic-psychology/201004/the-trauma-arises-natural-disasters>

OR

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/somatic-psychology/201004/the-trauma-arises-natural-disasters>

TCS Support Group Series: Coming Soon!

The Tri-County Strong Team will provide a meeting space for a Natural Disaster Support Group beginning in September. This support group will focus on educating residents about natural disaster safety & preparedness as well as provide a warm and accepting environment for affected residents to discuss their reactions to these events. Additionally, the support group will provide information about various ways to cope and/or develop coping skills in the aftermath of a natural disaster.

For more information and updates on this support group, please visit:

<https://www.easterseals.com/michigan/our-programs/easterseals-michigan-partners.html>



Coping with Trauma after a Natural Disaster

A variety of ways to manage your feelings of anger, sadness & distress in the wake of a disaster.

According to the APA (2013), most people are resilient and are able to recover from a disaster within a few months. It is very common for people to experience emotional distress in the wake of a disaster. The APA (2013), recommends a number of coping skills to help people recover from the stress and loss of a natural disaster. Some of these coping skills include discussing your experiences with loved ones or community members, establishing/maintaining routines, and locating a support group to help discuss your emotions and thoughts surrounding the disaster (APA, 2013).

Additionally, the infographic to the right details a handful of coping techniques that may be beneficial to people experiencing stress and loss in relation to a disaster event. This list is not exhaustive and is meant to help give you ideas on ways to cope in the present as well as during future overwhelming events.

For more information about the benefit of coping skills, please visit:

<https://www.fullerlifecounseling.org/post/indispensable-list-of-coping-skills>

9 WAYS TO MANAGE STRESS



Upcoming Events

July 20, 2022 7-8p

*Impact of Natural Disasters Presentation @
Hazel Park Public Library*

August 22, 2022 6-7p

*Impact of Natural Disasters Presentation @
Oak Park Public Library*

September 19, 2022 6-7p

*Impact of Natural Disasters Presentation @
Oak Park Public Library*

Crisis Hotlines

Tri- County Strong Crisis Line

Call/Text: 1 (888) 874-1819

Crisis Text Line

Text: "HOME" to 741741

Common Ground Crisis Line

Call: 1(800) 231-1127

To view past issues of our newsletter series or to view a recording of our Natural Disaster presentation, please visit <https://www.easterseals.com/michigan/our-programs/easterseals-michigan-partners.html>



Image retrieved from
https://www.investmentexecutive.com/newspaper_/building-your-business-newspaper/your-clients-and-mental-health/

Revealing A Resource

Are you struggling emotionally or experiencing a crisis? It is always important to know that help is available and you are not alone. Common Ground, located in Pontiac, MI, is a 24-hour crisis service agency dedicated to helping youths, adults and families in crisis. If you are experiencing severe emotional distress and need someone to talk to, please call Common Ground at (800) 231-1127

For more information, please visit:

<https://commongroundhelps.org>

If you are not experiencing a crisis but need someone to talk to, the Michigan warm line is an alternative for non-crisis callers living with persistent mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression. The warm line connects callers with certified peer support specialists for support and assistance. The Michigan warm line operates seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 2 a.m. and can be reached by calling (888) 733-7753

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/keep-mi-healthy/mentalhealth>

References

APA. (2013). Recovering emotionally from disaster. *American Psychological Association*. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/topics/disasters-responses/recovering>

Babbel, S. (2010). The trauma that arises from natural disasters. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/somatic-psychology/201004/the-trauma-arises-natural-disasters>

Knight, A., & Liu, J. (n.d.). Disaster anniversaries. *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration*. Retrieved from https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/dtac/webcast_disaster_anniversaries.pdf

When Should You Seek Mental Health Services?

It can be difficult for people to admit that they may need help coping with traumatic events such as a natural disaster. It is important to acknowledge that sometimes, professional help may be needed to help recover from an overwhelming event/situation. If you are currently experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Intense grief or sadness lasting more than a month
- Lack of feelings
- Feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness, or guilt
- Overuse of drugs or alcohols
- inability to carry out normal activities
- Extreme aggressive/destructive behaviors toward yourself or others

Please reach out to us (Tri-County Strong Team). We will be able to refer you to mental health providers in your area.



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