Response to Trauma

After a trauma both children and adults can have some or many of the below listed responses, and these symptoms will improve on their own. However, if someone is experiencing symptoms that are severe, persistent or interfering with your day-to-day life, professional assistance can be very beneficial. If you or someone you know needs assistance, CSN – Mojave Counseling can provide treatment or referrals.

Physical
- Sleep problems
- Eating disturbance
- Aches and pains
- Lack of energy

Behavioral
- Agitation, restlessness, aggression
- Alcohol/drug use
- Distrust, suspiciousness
- Avoiding certain places, people or other reminders of the trauma
- Relationship problems

Emotional
- Changes in mood, such as depression, apathy or irritability
- Outbursts of anger or crying; fear, sadness or anxiety
- Detachment from emotions
- Dissociation-checking out
- Excessive reaction to minor stress

Cognitive
- Difficulty focusing
- Memory problems
- Slowed thinking

Informational Resources

National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
https://www.ptsd.va.gov/

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Alliance
http://www.ptsdalliance.org

Vegas Strong Resiliency Center
http://vegasstrongrc.org

National Suicide Prevention Helpline
https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org
1-800-273-8255

Disaster Distress Helpline
http://samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline
1-800-985-5990
Or text TALKWITHUS to 66746

Helpful Tips

Talk with others who understand and respect how you feel.

Stress can be reduced with proper rest, exercise and eating healthy.

Take deep breaths often throughout your day. Make time for relaxing activities.

Write in a journal, listen to relaxing music, practice yoga and mindfulness.

Know that having an ongoing response to trauma is normal. Healing does not mean forgetting traumatic events.

Avoid negative coping skills, such as using alcohol and drugs to cope with difficult feelings.

Talk with a professional.
“DO’S AND DON’TS”

For the **Survivor** of a Traumatic Incident

These examples of coping skills may assist recovery

**DO:**

**TALK ABOUT THE INCIDENT**

- Expect the incident to bother you
- Maintain a good diet and exercise, alternating with rest
- Take time for leisure activities, and get plenty of rest
- Remind yourself that post-traumatic reactions are normal
- Learn as much as possible about Critical Incident Stress
- Spend time with family, friends, and co-workers

**Get extra help, if necessary**

- Structure your time – keep busy
- Reach out- people do care
- Give yourself permission to feel rotten
- Keep a journal-write your way through those sleepless hours
- Help co-workers by sharing your feelings, and checking to see how they are doing

**DON’T:**

- Drink alcohol to numb yourself
- Use legal or illegal substance to numb
- Withdraw from family, friends, and co-workers
- Automatically stay away from work or other obligations
- Use off-duty time for training immediately after the incident
- Look for easy answers to explain the reason for the incident
- Think you are “crazy”
- Have unrealistic expectations for recovery
- Make big life changes
- Fight any reoccurring thoughts, dreams or flashbacks- they will decrease over time and become less painful.