

Dealing with the Aftermath of a Natural Disaster

In the period following a natural disaster, work and family routines may be disrupted as people begin to absorb the impact to their lives and their workplace operations. It is normal to experience a variety of emotional reactions that together form the foundation necessary for recovery. The initial shock, confusion, fear, and grief will eventually pass. People will then unite with determination and resolve, courage and faith, and undertake the challenges of helping themselves and their communities to move forward again.

By observing behaviors and recovery patterns common in the aftermath of a natural disaster, we learn that while every person has his or her own reactions and pace of healing, there are some steps that can be taken to assist with the process.

What Helps?

- ◆ Try to get enough rest and nutrition.
- ◆ Talking to another person for support or spending time with others is helpful.
- ◆ Focusing on something practical that you can do right now to manage the situation better is empowering.
- ◆ Try to maintain a routine and resume normal activities when possible.
- ◆ Find ways to relax such as deep breathing, saying calming words or phrases to yourself, listening to soothing music.
- ◆ Take breaks from clean up efforts now and then.
- ◆ Keep a journal about your thoughts, feelings, and experiences.

How Can We Support Each Other?

- ◆ Remember that your colleagues may be anxious, distracted, and concerned; make an extra effort to be patient with each other.
- ◆ Encourage your co-workers to take breaks and take care of themselves.
- ◆ Talk with co-workers to share information, ask questions, or express concerns.
- ◆ Be on the lookout for courage, resilience, and good work and acknowledge it when you see it.

Make the Call!

USPS Employee Assistance Program
1-800-327-4968
(1-800-EAP-4-YOU) TTY: 1-877-492-7341
www.EAP4YOU.com

Remember that the EAP has resources and is there to assist you, your co-workers, and your family in the aftermath of a natural disaster.