

Typical reactions to disaster

May 2018

Being affected by an unexpected and traumatic event can be extremely distressing. It is normal for people to feel upset, anxious and distressed. It can take time for these feelings to resolve.

Normal reactions include:

- Finding it hard to think, concentrate and remember details
- Restlessness, unable to relax
- Problems sleeping
- Muscle tension, aches and pains
- Headaches, nausea
- Feel angry, upset, sad, moody

Signs people may need further support:

- They don't seem to be coping
- They have no one to talk to
- Relationships are strained
- Changed behaviour to usual
- Emotional numbness, depression or continuing anxiety
- Difficulty feeling connected
- Difficulty managing emotions

How you can support others

- Offer support and listen
- Help with practical tasks and chores
- Give people the time, space and patience they need
- Don't try to talk people out of their reactions



For more information or support:

Australian Red Cross
www.redcross.org.au

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Beyondblue: 1300 224 636

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800
