



**The first priority is to ensure the safety and providing for their essential to making important first step is even as be the same."**

- Fear
- Difficulty relaxing
- Difficulty making decisions
- Irritability, being startled easily
- Guilt
- Feeling that "no one can understand what I've been through"
- Need to cling to others
- Confusion
- Excessive alcohol or drug use
- Feeling detached from others and emotionally numb

### Common Responses to Disasters



### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Being victim to a calamity or disaster can be traumatic. This primer was prepared to provide information for those whose friends, family, students, colleague or employers have experienced disasters. It provides suggests on what you can do to help survivors.



**basic needs! Food, shelter, clothing, medicine are them recover.** However, beyond physical needs, an to restore a semblance of normalcy to their lives, paradoxically, we acknowledge that "things cannot

- Difficulty believing what has happened
- Avoiding activities, places, thoughts, or feelings that remind you of the trauma
- Inability to remember important aspects of the trauma
- Loss of interest in activities and life in general
- Sense of a limited future

## SUPPORTING OUR SURVIVORS

- **Assist them to ensure their safety and attend to their basic needs and help them normal routine**
- **Be available and listen with empathy**
  - Listen to the basic feeling message.
  - Observe other subtle messages that the student uses, whether through body language, gestures, or facial expression.
  - Let the speaker know that you understand what he or she is saying by restating his or her feeling simply and concisely  
*"You lost your home, you are extremely sad about that."*  
*"You are uncomfortable being a "refugee" in your grandparents' house"*
- **Assure them that their feelings are normal**  
*"It's not abnormal right now to feel panicky every time it rains"*
- **Draw out their current coping strategies**  
*"So how are you doing to cope? (Anong ginagawa mo ngayon para malagpasa ito?)"*
- **Recognize their adaptive coping behaviors, strengths or resources**  
*"Napansin ko sa kwento mo na marami pala ang tumutulong sa 'yo, sa pamilya mo, mga kamag-anak, kapitbahay at kaibigan."*
- **Ask them what other support they may need and help them find resources or help they need**
- **Look out for people at risk and encourage them to talk to a professional**
  - Prolonged of stress beyond say a month or two
  - Inability to function/decrease in performance
  - Those who lost loved ones



### WHAT NOT TO DO

**Probe or ask too much.** Don't force people to talk if they don't want to. they forget details, this might be better for them.

**Evaluate, judge or moralize.** The last thing survivors need is to be scolded or blamed.  
*"Sinabihan naman kayo na umalis na kasi mataas na ang tubig..."*  
*"Baka pinaparuasahan ka ni Lord"*

**Minimize the person’s situation.** Everyone has the right to grieve for a loss regardless of its magnitude. *“Si Jun nga nasira ang buong bahay, ikaw nawalan ka lang ng laptop.”*

**Try soothing the person.** What people went through was not not easy nor okay. It does not help for you to dismiss it *“Okay lang yan!”*

**Take their behavior personally.** People who go through trauma may change or not respond to help. Don’t resent this – they are not themselves. *“Ikaw nga nga tinutulungan... ayaw mo pa.”*

**Rush their grieving process.** Grief is different for everyone and cannot be rushed. *“Get over it.”*



**WHEN TO SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP (National Center for PTSD:)**

Stress reactions are normal immediately following a disaster.

However, a person may be suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress if they are experiencing the following symptoms a month after the event:

- Nightmares or flashbacks
- Avoiding situations or people that remind them of the event
- Intense feelings of fear, guilt, shame
- Lack of interest in activities that used to be enjoyable
- Feelings of hopelessness and despair
- Depression or anxiety
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Physical symptoms or chronic pain
- Unable to function at work
- Relationship problems, conflicts with individuals

**Check for risk signs:**

- Suicidal thoughts
- Thoughts of hurting someone else
- Hallucinations
- Distorted beliefs
- Extreme emotions
- Overt and explosive anger/Hostility
- Frequent crying spells
- Blunted affect
- Lack motivation
- Disorganized thinking
- Poor attention span/concentration
- Memory problems
- Decision-making problems
- Poor judgment
- Extreme emotional pain
- Restless
- Unkempt, Poor hygiene
- Lethargic

- Low frustration tolerance
- Hopeless/despair
- Poor eye contact
- Refusal or forgetting to eat
- Glazed/vacant look
- Taking to self/imaginary person
- Poor impulse control
- Inability to/disturbed sleep
- Inappropriate speech
- Illogical speech
- Tense body posture
- Hunched body posture
- Denies need for people
- Denies help from people
- Continually seeks out others
- Uncommunicative
- Withdrawn from others, Alone
- No source of support

**LIST OF CLINICS AND CENTERS WILING TO WAIVE PROFESSIONAL FEES FOR SURVIVORS**

CENTER/CLINIC	CONTACT NUMBER
AFP Medical Center, V. Luna Hospital, V. Luna Road, Quezon City	Dr. Mitch Maruhomadil 09178098948
Bulatao Center for Psychological Services Ateneo de Manila University	426 6001 loc. 5268 / 426 5982 / 0915 8867912
ILAW Center, Miriam College	5805400 to 29 extn 1134
MLAC Institute #30 Riverview, Blueridge B	+63 2 569-9726 ; +63 916-6821437
The Medical City, Ortigas Avenue, Pasig (Outpatient care)	6898278 or 09175773362
UP Center for Women Studies Ylanan St. UP Diliman	920-6880; 9206950; 09177953274
UST Graduate School Psychotrauma Clinic	4061611 local 8325
Makati Medical Center	8888-999 local 20 – 21 Dr. Christine Leomo 09176023271
<b>BAGUIO CITY</b> SLU-Sunflower Children's Center	09177072496 or 07444465664
<b>DAVAO CITY</b> New Day Recovery Center Beach Club Road, Lanang Davao City Downtown office: NDRC Psychological Services Beltran Bldg Palma Gil St.	(082) 2331719/23411002/ 3009435/3009455

*This primer was initially prepared by the Ateneo Department of Psychology and adopted by the Psychological Association of the Philippines.*