



Navigating Recovery

What is recovery?

Recovery is the process of coming to terms with the impacts of a disaster and managing the disruptions and changes caused, which can result, for some people, in a new way of living. Being 'recovered' is being able to lead a life that individuals and communities value living, even if it is different to the life they were leading before the disaster event.

Typical reactions to disaster

"Strong reactions and feelings are common, understandable reactions and we can overcome them"

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 from usual
- Emotional numbness, depression or continuing anxiety
- Difficulty feeling connected
- Difficulty managing emotions

How you can support others

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

Looking after yourself

Following a disaster, it's important to find ways to regain a sense of safety and control. People often need to have access to a safe and secure environment, to find out what happened to family members and friends and to have access to relevant services. There are steps you can take to make the situation more manageable for you and your loved ones.

Tips to improve wellbeing

- Spend time with family and friends
- Try to get back to a routine
- Take time out
- Limit the amount of media coverage you watch, listen to, or read
- Express your feelings
- Write down your worries
- Don't expect to have the answers
- Realise you are not alone
- Accept help when it's offered

Helpful resources

Dealing with the stress of an emergency: [Audio](#)

Coping with a major personal crisis: [Booklet](#) - [Audio](#) - [Easy English](#) - [Large Print](#)

Cleaning up after an emergency (Dealing with wind and water damage): [Booklet](#) - [Easy English](#)

Looking after yourself and your family after disasters - [Booklet](#)

After the emergency (A book to help kids cope with emergencies) - [Booklet](#)

Talking with children after an emergency - [Factsheet](#)

Helping children and young people cope with crisis - [Booklet](#)

Parenting: Coping with crisis - [Booklet](#)

After the Disaster - [Podcast](#)

Understanding worry and rumination (Phoenix Australia) - [Factsheet](#)

Understanding the fight-flight response (Phoenix Australia) - [Factsheet](#)

Mental health support

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800