Things to Think About and How to Care for Yourself During Times of Disaster/High Stress

Initial and later reactions to disaster/stressful events:
Many people have a range of reactions. A crisis can bring out strengths and the best in people. People come together to help one another, and you may see in yourself and others strengths that bring great pride.

Similarly, stressful situations may bring a range of other reactions, including:
• Fear
• Disbelief
• Disorientation and numbing
• Difficulty making decisions
• Need for information
• Seeking help for you and your family
• Helpfulness to others
• Change in appetite and digestive problems
• Difficulty in sleeping — sleeping too much or too little
• Headaches
• Anger and suspicion
• Apathy and depression

• Crying
• Frustration and feelings of loss of control
• Feeling overwhelmed
• Moodiness and irritability
• Anxiety about the future
• Disappointment with and rejection of outside help
• Isolating oneself from family, friends, or social activities
• Guilt over not being able to prevent the disaster
• Domestic violence
• Change in daily activities

Recognize your own feelings:
• Talk to others about your feelings and reactions. This will help relieve your stress and help you to realize that your feelings are shared by others.
• Accept help from others in the spirit in which it is given. Wouldn’t you help them?
• Whenever possible, take time off and do something you enjoy
• Get enough rest
• Get as much physical activity as possible, such as running or walking
• Give someone a hug — touching is very important

Help for your community:
• Listen when you can to those who are having problems, and share your own feelings
• Be tolerant of the irritability and short tempers others show — everyone is stressed

24 Hour Crisis Response Line: Call 888-851-2451
and ask to speak to a Trauma Center Manager