



B.C. SEARCH & RESCUE ASSOCIATION

CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

You are not alone! (Following a disaster or tragic experience)

by the American Red Cross

There are some normal emotions we all experience caused by tragedy. Others who have had similar experiences have found these feelings frequently to be temporary. Such normal negative feelings as we may suffer come in different stages.

- Initially, we may go into a state of shock. We feel numb and dazed. It helps to cope in this stage by keeping busy.
- We may become anxious and panicky. Some common signs are: nervousness, trembling, dizziness, inability to slow down or relax, pounding heart, inability to concentrate, trouble breathing, inability to sleep properly...
- It helps to admit that we have these feelings and to talk to someone about them. It is very important to re-establish routine activities, such as: regular meals, regular rest breaks, brushing teeth, bathing, shaving, etc.
- Often times we may become angry. We are often bitter about everything and irate at everyone. It helps to express this resentment properly. We can channel this energy by keeping busy and focusing on day-by-day plans.
- We may become sad and blue. Most common signs of this are: loss of appetite, fatigue, restlessness, hopelessness, worthlessness, withdrawal, etc. It would help to keep in touch with other people and remind ourselves that we are not alone.
- We may become fearful for our own safety and future. Many of these fears will go away with time once our lives have become more normal and routine with the help of the community.
- We may feel guilty about what has happened . . . wonder if we are responsible, feel awkward in receiving help, and believe we have not helped our neighbours enough.
- The courage demonstrated by our community is definite indication that we will emerge from this crisis. Certainly things will not be the same - in many ways the experience may make us stronger though our: HOPE, FAITH, AND COMBINED COMMUNITY EFFORTS...

For more information: www.bcsara.com/cism