

## CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS INFORMATION SHEET

### THINGS TO TRY:

- WITHIN THE FIRST HOURS and DAYS periods of strenuous exercise, alternated with relaxation will alleviate some of the physical reactions.
- Structure some of your time - keep fairly busy but not too busy.
- You are a normal person who has experienced an abnormal event so don't label yourself as crazy.
- Be aware of the tendency to numb the pain with the overuse of drugs or alcohol, you don't need to complicate this with a substance abuse problem.
- Reach out - most people really do care.
- Maintain as normal a schedule as possible.
- Spend time with others.
- Help your co-workers as much as possible by sharing your own feelings and checking out how they're doing as well.
- Give yourself permission to feel rotten.
- Keep a journal, write your way through those sleepless hours.
- Do things that feel good to you - spend more time in recreation than performing large-scale chores.
- Realize that those around you are probably under stress as well.
- Don't make any big life changes.
- Do make as many daily decisions as possible which will give you a feeling of control over your life, i.e., If someone asks you what you want to eat answer them even if you're not sure.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Recurring thoughts, dreams or flashbacks are normal - don't try to fight them - they'll decrease over time and become less painful.
- Eat well-balanced and regular meals (even if you don't feel like it).

### FOR FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS:

- Listen carefully.
- Spend time with the traumatized person.
- Offer your assistance and a listening ear even if they have not asked for help.
- Reassure them that they are safe.
- Help them with everyday tasks like cleaning, cooking, caring for the family, minding the children.
- Give them some private time.
- Don't take their anger or other feelings personally.
- Don't tell them that they are "lucky it wasn't worse" - traumatized people are not consoled by these statements. Instead, tell them that you are sorry such an event has occurred and that you want to understand and assist them.

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**CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS**

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