

# For Faculty: How to Help Yourself and Your Students Cope with a Traumatic Event



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BELOW ARE SOME TIPS FOR HELPING YOURSELF AND YOUR students cope with the aftermath of this traumatic event. Also remember that your employee assistance program (EAP) is here to help you and your family members deal with the emotional impact of this tragedy.

## Anticipate the following potential reactions to trauma that you or others may experience:

- fatigue
- difficulty concentrating
- irritability
- anxiety
- avoidance of that which seems related to the incident
- mood changes
- stomach upset
- sleep disturbance
- intrusive recollections
- other physical, cognitive and emotional reactions common to a traumatic event

## Helping Yourself Cope

### What to do:

- Allow more time to do things. Don't put unnecessary pressure on yourself to accomplish tasks quickly.
- Maintain regular eating and sleeping routines.
- Choose healthy foods.
- Utilize community support.
- Exercise.
- Do things that have helped you heal in the past.
- Return to daily work and life activities as soon as possible.

## Helping Students Cope

### What to do:

- Be visible; go around and communicate with students, employees and staff.
- Acknowledge that things will return to a new definition of "normal."
- Communicate that help is available.
- Demonstrate concern, e.g., ask "How are you doing?"
- Encourage others to talk about this tragedy if they want. Respect their need to not speak about events if that is most comfortable for them. Letting them know that you are concerned is what is most important.
- Recognize and communicate, where appropriate, that people will grieve and heal in different ways and at their own pace.
- If you are not sure what the person needs, ask him or her. People won't always initiate telling you what they need; it's important to reach out to them. Also, do not assume that you know what each person needs.
- Emphasize that people need to take care of themselves.
- Be open and honest.

[Faculty/Staff](#)



[Students](#)

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