

## What's Normal?

Traumatic stress can shatter your sense of security, leaving you feeling helpless and vulnerable in a dangerous world. You may feel physically and emotionally drained, overcome with grief, or find it difficult to focus, sleep, or control your temper. These are all normal responses to abnormal events.

It is natural to feel afraid during and after a traumatic situation. Fear is a part of the body's "fight-or-flight" response, which helps us avoid or respond to potential danger. People may experience a range of reactions after trauma, including:

Feeling anxious, sad, or angry

Trouble concentrating & sleeping

Continually thinking about what happened

### PHYSICAL RESPONSES TO TRAUMA:

Headaches • Stomach Pain / Digestive Issues • Difficulty Falling / Staying Asleep • Racing Heart & Sweating • Being Very Jumpy / Easily Startled



**INTENTIONAL WARM LINE: 1-866-771-9276**  
Our 24/7 mental health peer-to-peer phone support line for adults 18 and older offers free mutual conversations with a trained peer specialist with experience with mental health recovery.

**TEEN TEXT SUPPORT LINE: 207-515-8398**  
Available from NAMI Maine every day from 12 pm - 10 pm for youth 13 - 24 years old.

[NAMIMaine.org](https://www.namimaine.org)



**(800) 464-5767**  
[info@namimaine.org](mailto:info@namimaine.org)

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[@NAMIMaine](https://www.instagram.com/namimaine)



## HOPE & COPING AFTER TRAUMATIC EVENTS

*Resources &*

*Support*





## STAY HEALTHY

Healthy ways of coping can help reduce stress & improve well-being. **Here are some things you can do to help:**

- Avoid the use of alcohol or drugs
- Spend time with trusted friends and relatives who are supportive
- Try to maintain routines for meals, exercise, and sleep
- Engage in mindfulness
- Set realistic goals and focus on what you can manage

## TIPS TO HELP

**1: Minimize Media:** While some survivors or witnesses of a traumatic event can regain a sense of control by watching media coverage of the event or by observing the recovery effort, others find that the reminders are further traumatizing. At least set the limit of not checking media before bed.

**2: Accept Your Feelings:** Allow yourself to feel. Your feelings are necessary for healing. Be gentle and respectful of others' emotions & reactions even if you don't understand them. Also, do not judge yourself for how you are feeling or reacting. Participate in things that bring you happiness, pleasure, and a sense of normalcy.

**3: Challenge Your Sense of Helplessness:** Overcoming traumatic stress is often about taking action. Positive action can help you overcome feelings of fear, helplessness, and hopelessness—and even small actions can make a big difference. Volunteer your time, give blood, donate to a favorite charity, or comfort others. If formal volunteering sounds like too much of a commitment, remember that simply being helpful and friendly to others can deliver stress-reducing pleasure and challenge your sense of helplessness.

**4: Get Moving:** It may be the last thing you feel like doing when you're experiencing traumatic stress, but exercising can burn off adrenaline and release feel-good endorphins to boost your mood. Add a mindful element by focusing on your body and how it feels as you move. Notice the sensation of your feet hitting the ground, for example, or the rhythm of your breathing, or the feeling of wind on your skin.

**5: Reach Out:** Comfort comes from feeling connected and involved with others you trust. Talk about and do "normal" things with friends and loved ones, things that have nothing to do with the event that triggered your traumatic stress.



You are  
**NOT** Alone

