

Trauma Card

What is a traumatic incident?

A traumatic incident is an event that is totally unexpected and overwhelming in intensity. The coping ability of those directly connected to the incident can be seriously disrupted. People not directly connected to the event can also be affected.

For some, the increased stress may interfere with their normal day to day life and getting back to normal can take time and may be difficult. People seemingly unaffected may experience reactions some time following the incident. There are a number of reactions that are common amongst people involved in a traumatic event. Some of these reactions can be very difficult to manage.

Reactions following a traumatic incident:

Past experience and individual perceptions can also contribute to differing reactions. Not everyone reacts the same way or at exactly the same time. As uncomfortable as these reactions may be, they are part of the process of returning to normal. Reactions following trauma can include:

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| ✓ Shock and numbness | ✓ Physical reactions |
| ✓ Avoiding behaviours | ✓ Disbelief and denial |
| ✓ Disturbed sleep/dreams | ✓ Intrusive memories |

Reactions are normal and usually only last for a short period and for most people gradually diminish in the days and weeks following the incident. Different reactions may be dominant as time goes by. The reactions outlined may also be accompanied by a range of feelings and emotions including:

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| ✓ Fear | ✓ Sadness |
| ✓ Helplessness | ✓ Shame |
| ✓ Anger | |

The effects can occur in different ways and in various combinations and may happen in an obvious or subtle manner.

We are here to support and help

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|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Grief and trauma | • Anxiety and depression |
| • Personal relationships | • Personal development and coaching |
| • Workplace issues | • Substance abuse and addictions |
| • Children and family support | • Family violence |
| • Budgeting and financial management | • Personal legal advice |
| • Career planning | |
| • Stress and pressure | |
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Self help strategies

- ✓ Taking time to rest
- ✓ Contacting a friend – having someone stay with you for at least a few hours or a short period following the incident
- ✓ Not 'bottling up' feelings and emotions, a friendly 'ear' is a good form of emotional healing
- ✓ Using simple relaxation strategies and distraction techniques to help turn your body's 'alarm system' off
- ✓ Seeking EAP Assistance when you have recurring thoughts, dreams or flashbacks
- ✓ Maintaining pre-incident routine wherever possible
- ✓ Eating well-balanced and regular meals
- ✓ Trying to keep a reasonable level of activity

Friends and family can help by:

- ✓ Listening carefully
- ✓ Spending time with the affected person
- ✓ Offering assistance even if it is not asked for
- ✓ Helping with everyday tasks like cleaning, cooking, caring for the family and minding children
- ✓ Allowing the expression of feelings without criticism or judgment
- ✓ Not saying things such as "lucky it wasn't worse"
- ✓ Expressing concerns that such an event occurred and providing understanding and assistance

How can habithealth eap help?

Professional support is aimed to assist organisations and individuals to understand common reactions and explore the ways to lessen the impact. Habit Health EAP have experienced trauma support professionals available globally to assist should individuals or groups require support following their involvement in a traumatic event.

How can I access EAP?

EAP appointments can be made by simply contacting Habit Health EAP anytime 24 hours 365 days by:

NZ 0800 327 669 | **AU** 1800 726 474 | **Intl** +64 9 353 0906

We care, we listen, we support

Make a confidential appointment telephone, face-to-face, video or WEB e-counselling. Scan the QR code, call the numbers below or visit eapservices.co.nz/booking



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