



# Finding Your Footing After Trauma or Disaster: Support for You and Your Family

When disaster strikes—a hurricane, fire, act of violence, accident, or sudden loss—it shakes more than just the world around us. It can stir up emotions, disrupt sleep and focus, and even affect our physical health. Some people carry on with daily routines while quietly struggling; others feel waves of sadness, fear, or anxiety. Children, too, show stress in their own ways. All of these reactions are normal responses to overwhelming events, and recovery takes time, patience, and support.

“Healing isn’t about being strong alone. It’s about being supported.”

## How Trauma and Disaster Can Affect You

- **Emotional signs:** irritability, mood swings, sadness, anxiety, or grief
- **Mental effects:** vivid memories, replaying events, trouble concentrating or making decisions
- **Physical responses:** headaches, nausea, chest tightness, changes in sleep or appetite
- **Behavioral changes:** withdrawing from friends and activities, conflict in relationships
- **Anniversaries & reminders:** sights, sounds, or dates can retrigger emotions

These effects may last for weeks or even months, but with care and support, most people gradually find balance again.

## Gentle Steps for Your Own Recovery

- **Accept your reactions.** Remind yourself that these symptoms are normal after trauma.
- **Stick to routine.** Familiar schedules bring stability and comfort.
- **Resolve small conflicts.** Lessening everyday stress makes room for healing.
- **Face reminders slowly.** Avoiding them may prolong fear—go at your own pace.
- **Practice calm.** Deep breathing, movement, or quiet time help the body reset.
- **Lean on connections.** Share feelings with trusted family, friends, or faith leaders.

- **Make space for joy.** Play, hobbies, and recreation restore energy.
- **Release control.** Focus on what you can manage.
- **Seek help when needed.** Professional support is a strength, not a weakness.

## Helping Children Cope After Trauma or Disaster

Children may not have the words to explain what they're feeling. Instead, they may show stress through clinginess, tantrums, aggression, regression (like bedwetting), stomachaches, or a desire to avoid school and friends. Your calm presence and reassurance matter most.

### For preschoolers:

- Keep routines steady
- Offer extra comfort and reassurance
- Limit separations when possible
- Encourage expression through play, drawing, or storytelling
- Limit media exposure
- Create a family safety plan

### For elementary-age children:

- Provide extra attention and gentle structure
- Listen patiently to repeated retellings of their experience
- Offer manageable chores and activities
- Rehearse safety steps for the future
- Point out kindness and examples of community helping each other

### For preteens and teens:

- Stay available but don't force conversations
- Encourage peer discussions and community involvement



- Promote physical activity and social routines
- Review family safety measures together

You don't have to "fix" your child's feelings. Focus instead on listening, reassuring, and modeling healthy ways to cope.

## If You're Struggling from Afar

Even if you weren't directly impacted, witnessing traumatic events through media or supporting loved ones from a distance can leave you feeling unsettled.

- Take breaks from news and social media to avoid overwhelm
- Acknowledge mixed feelings—relief, guilt, sadness, or gratitude can all coexist
- Notice what's steady in your day-to-day life for grounding
- Channel care into action—volunteering or donating can restore a sense of control

## When Extra Support Helps

If emotional distress, sleep problems, or relationship struggles keep getting in the way—or if your child continues to show signs of distress—it's time to reach out for extra support. Early help is often the best help.

## We're Here To Help

**AllOne Health** offers confidential, practical support for both adults and children:

- In-the-moment support when feelings get too heavy
- Short-term counseling to process trauma and regain steadiness
- Coaching for sleep, stress, and daily routines
- Parenting support for guiding children through tough times
- On-demand courses and articles on resilience, stress, and recovery
- Virtual support to help you stay connected and resilient
- Work-life resources (childcare, eldercare, financial, housing, legal) to ease practical burdens



Recovery takes time, compassion, and support. You don't have to walk this path alone. With the right care and resources, you and your family can find steady ground again.

To get started, visit [allonehealth.com/member-support](https://allonehealth.com/member-support).