Managing Ta. ma ic Se.: Tips for recovering from disasters and other traumatic events

Disasters are often unexpected, sudden, and overwhelming. In some cases, there are no outwardly visible signs of physical injury, but there is nonetheless a serious emotional toll. It is common for people who have experienced traumatic situations to have very strong emotional reactions. Understanding normal responses to these abnormal events can aid you in coping effectively with your feelings, thoughts, and behaviors, and help you along the path to recovery.

Wha ha en o en le af e a di a e n n he a ma icle en?

- Shock and denial are typical responses to traumatic events and disasters, especially shortly after the event.
 Both shock and denial are normal protective reactions.
- Shock is a sudden and often intense disturbance of your emotional state that may leave you feeling stunned or dazed. Denial involves your not acknowledging that something very stressful has happened, or not experiencing fully the intensity of the event. You may temporarily feel numb or disconnected from life.
- As the initial shock subsides, reactions vary from one person to another. The following, however, are normal responses to a traumatic event:
- Feelings become in ense and sometimes are unpredictable. You may become more irritable than usual, and your mood may change back and forth dramatically.
 You might be especially anxious or nervous, or even become depressed.
- Thoughts and behavior patterns are affected by the trauma. You might have repeated and vivid memories of the event. These flacthbacks may occur for no apparent reason and may lead to physical reactions such as rapid

- heartbeat or sweating. You may find it difficult to concentrate or make decisions, or become more easily confused. Sleep and eating patterns also may be disrupted.
- Recurring emotional reactions are common. Anniversaries
 of the event, such as at one month or one year, can trigger
 upsetting memories of the traumatic experience. These
 triggers may be accompanied by fears that the stressful
 event will be repeated.
- Interpersonal relationships often become strained. Greater conflict, such as more frequent arguments with family members and coworkers, is common. On the other hand, you might become withdrawn and isolated and avoid your usual activities.
- Physical symptoms may accompany the extreme stress.
 For example, headaches, nausea, and chest pain may result and may require medical attention. Preexisting medical conditions may worsen due to the stress.

Handa en le le le and diffe en la na e lime?

It is important for you to realize that there is not one standard pattern of reaction to the extreme stress of traumatic experiences. Some people respond immediately, while others have delayed reactions sometimes months or even years later. Some have adverse effects for a long period of time, while others recover rather quickly.

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And reactions can change over time. Some who have suffered from trauma are energized initially by the

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