



Stages of Disaster Responses

Long Term Effects of a Disaster on Mental Health

It is important to note that the reactions one experiences as a result of a disaster may come in stages. The difficult reactions one may experience may come many months following the initial disaster. Individuals that appear unaffected initially may become overwhelmed and unable to effectively cope during later stages.

Family and friends play an important role in helping to monitor and identify warning signs in survivors of a disaster. Family and friends can help by starting with creating a safe environment for a survivor to talk. The use of active listening and validation is a good way to help survivors better cope with what they have experienced.

If you or someone you know is in need of additional support, please contact California HOPE at: (805) 833-9495

Supportive Resources

Ventura County Behavioral Health
Crisis, Intake and Referral Line: (866) 998-2243
www.wellnesseveryday.org

211 Referral Line
Phone: 211 or (800) 339-9597
www.211ventura.org

National Disaster Distress Helpline
Phone: (800) 985-5990
or Text: TalkWithUs to 66746

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
Phone: (800) 273-8255

Alcohol & Drug Prevention
Phone: (805) 981-9200

Ventura County Fire Recovery Information
www.venturacountyrecovers.org

Ventura County Emergency Information
Phone: (805) 465-6650
www.vcemergency.com

California HOPE Counseling of Ventura County
(805) 833-9495
hopeventura@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/hopeofvc/



Providing Thomas Fire Survivors with Free Confidential Counseling and Self Care Support

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hopeventura@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/hopeofvc/



Our Mission

California HOPE is a federally funded and trained community-based counseling program created to support the community following the Thomas Fire. The team provides specific services aimed at addressing the ongoing behavioral health needs of the community in collaboration with Ventura County Behavioral Health. California HOPE provides FREE confidential community-based counseling, wellness education and referrals to appropriate supportive services.

California HOPE services include:

- Individual and group counseling for survivors, family and friends
- Assessment and referrals
- Distribution of helpful educational materials

California HOPE counseling goals:

- Helping disaster survivors understand their current situation and reactions
- Reducing stress and providing emotional support
- Assisting survivors in creating a wellness & recovery plan
- Promoting the use or development of coping strategies and personal resilience.
- Providing friends and family members with education to support those affected
- Connecting survivors to resources

Reactions to a Disaster

Emotional

- Feeling anxious & fearful
- Overcome with sadness
- Feeling guilty
- Disconnected, not caring about anything or anyone
- Loss of interest, numb, unable to feel either joy or sadness

Behavioral

- Irritable & becomes angry easily
- Having difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep, sleeping too much or trouble relaxing
- Increase or decrease in energy
- Increase in substance/alcohol use
- Social isolation
- Change in normal patterns of daily activity

Cognitive

- Trouble remembering, thinking clearly & concentrating
- Difficulty making decisions
- Difficulty talking about what happened or listening to others
- Intrusive thoughts about the fire
- Disorientation

Physiological

- Stomachaches or diarrhea
- Increased fatigue
- Headaches or other physical pains
- Eating too much or too little
- Sweating or having chills
- Easily startled
- Muscle tension

Effective Coping Skills

- Accept that reactions are normal but reactions that continue may require professional support
- Talk with others
- Identify your support group
- Exercise
- Eat healthy
- Healthy rest & sleep routine
- Relax with music & focused breathing
- Identify what helped you cope in the past
- Scheduling pleasant activities
- Keep a journal
- Try to maintain a structured healthy routine

“Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it.”

Helen Keller

- Avoid violence & conflict
- Avoid blaming others
- Avoid excessive use of alcohol & drugs
- Avoid withdrawal from family & friends
- Avoid negative self-talk
- Avoid engaging in risky behaviors

Disaster Distress Helpline

PHONE: 1-800-985-5990 TEXT: "TalkWithUs" to 66746