

TIPS FOR CRITICAL INCIDENTS

Overwhelmed experiences such as political unrest or witnessing violence are usually not common. Indeed, it happens to many of us living in HK during last couple of months.

It is common for us to feel unwell and to lock into certain mental images which may magnify the adversities of the events and focus on the negative feelings. Instead of drilling into the images and feelings, kindly be reminded that opening up for assistance would be the means to find way out.

Throughout this period, you may feel agitated and experience the so called 'Fight or Flight' response which sometimes happens to our body immediately after a shocking experience, and it may continue for some time after. If so, your heartbeat may become rapid, your tongue may be dry and your words become limited to articulate.



As well as the physical response, you may also become aware of a range of thoughts, feelings and reactions:

Thoughts/ Puzzles

- Is it true?
- I should have done something ... / What should I do?
- What if?
- If only ...
- Why me?
- Who should I tell?
- Can I still believe ...?



Feelings

- Shock
- Denial
- Angry
- Blaming self or others
- Helplessness/ Numbness
- Guilt
- Anxious
- Frustration
- Sadness
- Worry

Reactions

- Flashback
- Emotional instability/ Unusual outburst/ Crying
- Distracted/ Can't concentrate on anything
- Indulging self into work
- Difficulty in sleeping/ Nightmares
- No appetite/ Over-eating
- Drinking/ Smoking/ Taking drugs more than usual
- Wandering from people and situations
- Avoid anything related to the incident

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You may be worried about yourselves of having these reactions. Actually, this is a natural process that our body and mind are figuring out what has happened and what has been changing. Our bodies are doing the regulation, sooner or later, it will return to a normal state.

Hopeful Ideas

Most people do recover. While some of the immediate reactions seem to be irritating, below are some suggestions for you:

- Remind yourself that you are experiencing normal reactions to an abnormal event
- Share your experiences with someone you trust when you feel ready
- Maintain a healthy diet and take good care of your physical self. Doing exercise, eating and sleeping well will help you regain a sense of control
- Ensure a routine schedule that makes life enjoyable and manageable
- Avoid stressful situations e.g. delaying major decisions-making
- Avoid over-use of alcohol or drugs

We easily isolate ourselves because of the upsetting experiences. Kindly be reminded that the best way to cope with them is to be around with people such as family members, friends, colleagues or professionals. Do not underestimate the benefits of returning to work which can help you connect with others as well as stepping out from the discomfort. Talk to the management or the professionals whom they are welcome to offer help in your unique situation.

When to seek further help

The reaction following a traumatic/ overwhelmed event should gradually reduce in its intensity during 4-6 weeks. Some people may need extra help. The reasons for this are varied, but usually one of the following factors is significant:

- A particularly distressing experience
- A previous life experience has been re-awakened by the present one
- A cumulative impact is caused when someone who has experienced more than one traumatic event of a similar nature
- Involving in a highly critical of their own actions, either during or after the event or both
- Experiencing work or personal difficulties such as a bereavement or relationship breakdown
- Feeling run-down, stressed or had difficulties with depression or anxiety before the event

If this the case, you may have to consider receiving further help from the professionals, or to contact our EAP consultants at the 24-hour hotline. For the designated hotline number, please contact your HR for details.

面對重大事故時如何紓緩壓力

專家指出人們因經歷社會動盪或目擊暴力所產生強烈情緒的情況相對罕見，而連月來香港社會發生一連串社會事件，實在牽動人的情緒並帶來壓力。

當我們面對著重大事故時，身心有不安的感覺，又或腦海出現揮不去的有關影像，其實這些都是普遍的反應。要注意的是，不要讓這些影像或負面感受牽制，又或帶進牛角尖，反之，我們可以學習保持開放的心境，去面對事情的發展及尋找出路。

這期間，你身心可能容易變得激動，經歷了專家稱為「戰鬥或逃跑」的反應，意指人們在經歷一些「突發」、「震驚」的事件時，大腦會促使我們作出即時的反應（選擇「戰鬥或逃跑」），當刻，你的心跳可能會加速、口乾舌躁、表達時感到詞窮等。



除了身體反應外，你也有可能經歷以下的反應：

思想上

- 是真的嗎？
- 我應該做一些事情..... / 我應該怎麼辦？
- 若然如果.....？
- 如果只是...
- 為什麼是我？
- 我應該告訴誰？
- 我仍可相信嗎.....？

情感上

- 震驚
- 拒絕接受
- 忿忿不平
- 指責自己或他人
- 無可奈何 / 麻目
- 內疚
- 焦慮
- 沮喪
- 傷心
- 擔憂

行為上

- 觸景生情 / 不停憶述過往（影像不斷「回帶」）
- 情緒不穩 / 哭泣
- 精神散漫 / 不能專注於工作或其他事情
- 埋首工作
- 難以入睡 / 失眠
- 食慾不振 / 過度進食
- 終日酗酒 / 吸煙成癮 / 濫用藥物
- 胡思亂想
- 迴避一切有關事件的事情



面對重大事故時如何紓緩壓力

或許，你會因為自己出現以上的急性壓力反應而有所擔心，事實上，上述所提及的都是一般人面對重大事故時的正常反應，我們的身體可能正努力進行自我調適及修復，反應亦會逐步減退。

正向小貼士

專家指出大部份人於急性壓力反應中會自我康復。在過程中你若感到困擾，可參考以下建議：

- 提醒自己：經歷不尋常事件，身心有不尋常的反應是件正常的事
- 與你信任的人分享你的感受
- 保持健康的生活習慣：持續運動、好好照顧飲食和睡得好，讓你對生活有掌控和愉悅感
- 規劃好時間表，使生活輕鬆愉快和易於管理
- 避免心理出現緊張的情況，暫時不作重大決定
- 避免過度使用酒精或藥物

當我們心情沈重不安時，容易傾向自我孤立。這段時間我們更需要保持與家人、朋友、同事或專業顧問的接觸，以便情緒得到舒緩。不要看輕上班的好處，因為工作間的連繫有助我們踏出不安感，又因應個人的情況和需要，不妨開放地與你的上司或專業人士談談。

假如你發現你的急性壓力反應於四至六星期後，沒有減退，以下是專家提出的一些可能性：

- 個人正處於十分困擾的情境
- 現在的經驗勾起過往的負面經驗
- 經歷著重疊的創傷
- 個人在重大事件中十分投入
- 同時經驗著個人/工作/其他方面的困擾（如哀傷/重要關係改變等）
- 事件發生前，經歷著巨大生活壓力，又或曾患有焦慮症/抑鬱症等

如果你的困擾持續影響你的日常生活，請致電貴公司的僱員支援服務24小時諮詢及輔導熱線，與專業顧問聯絡。請與人力資源部了解24小時諮詢及輔導熱線號碼。