

# COUNSELING & WELLNESS CENTER

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## *How to Cope During Difficult Times*

Reactions to tragedy, loss and trauma are as unique as each individual. There is no right or wrong way to respond to upsetting events. Here is a description of some common reactions you may experience during difficult times and suggestions for getting through them.

### Common reactions

**Emotional** — Sadness, anger, guilt, shame, feeling nothing

**Cognitive** — Confusion; regret; reasoning; rationalizing; having memories; worry about yourself, others, the future

**Physical** — Difficulty sleeping; muscle tension; tightness in jaw, chest or stomach; loss of appetite; nausea or flu-like feelings; restlessness; fatigue

**Spiritual** — Anger at God, a higher being or the universe; loss of faith; existential emptiness

Be patient with yourself. Acknowledge that each day can feel different. Prioritize self-care.

### Self-Care

**Sleep & Eat** — Stick as closely as possible to a normal sleep routine (7-9 hours a night). If sleep eludes you, rest your body using stretching, yoga, warm showers and baths, massage. Remember to eat and drink water.

**Self-soothe** — Engage all your senses, sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell. For example, listen to music while making yourself a cup of chamomile tea. Or hug a stuffed animal. Go for a walk in nature or visit an art museum.

**Support** — Get support in the best way for you. Talk to friends and family or simply be physically near to them. If you need time to yourself, take it, being careful not to isolate.

**Routines** — As much as you feel you can, stick to normal routines. Go to classes, do homework, go to jobs, internships, and manage other obligations.

**Distractions** — Stay occupied with schoolwork, hobbies, pleasurable activities.

**Spiritual support** — Pray, meditate, read or speak to a spiritual advisor if that fits your beliefs.

**Avoid drugs and alcohol** – Substances intensify emotions and make them feel less manageable.

**Seek professional help** - If you are struggling more than you can manage, seek help.

Contact CWC or another counselor or spiritual advisor.

Carson Hall Room 806 – call to make an appointment 212.774.0700

Walk-in hours Monday-Friday from 3-4pm