

LOOK AFTER YOURSELF INFORMATION TO HELP

If you or people in your community have been involved in the recent flooding, you may find this leaflet helpful. It explores how you might feel in the days and months after the incident and has information about how you can get help if you need it.

AFTER AN INCIDENT OR EVENT

Often, major events can make us feel life is unfair and unsafe. But despite our feelings and problems at the time, it is clear that looking back afterwards, most people do cope well and recover without long-term problems. Everyone is different and each person has his or her own feelings afterwards. What you have seen and heard is likely to have an effect on you, even if you have not been injured or directly affected. Coping can be difficult. What has happened can cause strong feelings, but, usually, these settle in a short while.

IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS, YOU MIGHT FEEL:

- Stunned, dazed or numb
- Cut off from what is going on around you
- Unable to accept what has happened
- Anger or frustration

Usually, these feelings fade and others may take their place in the hours or days afterwards.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children and young people can also be affected, they may become unsettled, more aggressive or fearful. They may become more clingy and demanding. Also, they may 'replay' the event in their games. These reactions are understandable and, usually, reduce gradually over time. Like adults, children cope surprisingly well in the longer-term.

HOW YOU MIGHT BE AFFECTED

Flooding can be shocking and may feel overwhelming. It is normal to have feelings such as anxiety and shock. These experiences may continue for some weeks. People who are directly involved are the people who are likely to be the most affected. However, witnesses, friends and relatives may have reactions too.

IN THE FOLLOWING WEEKS, YOU MIGHT EXPERIENCE:

- Tears and sadness
- Fear
- Anxiety
- Numbness
- Unpleasant memories about the event
- Problems with your concentration
- Difficulties with your memory
- Sleep problems or nightmares
- Feeling less confident
- Reduced energy
- Feeling angry or irritable
- Reduced appetite
- Guilt about the incident
- Headaches and other aches and pains
- Feelings of reluctance to discuss the event or alternatively wanting to talk about it all the time
- Wanting to avoid people, places or activities that remind you of the event.

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WHAT CAN I DO THAT'S HELPFUL

- Take each day at a time
- Do things that make you feel safe and secure be patient with yourself; it may take weeks or months to feel that you and your life are back to normal
- Try to re-establish your usual routines such as going to work or school spend time with family, friends, and others who may be able to help you through this difficult time
- Give reassurance to children to help them to feel safe and to talk about their fears and worries
- Take good care of yourself physically; eat well, exercise regularly, reduce alcohol and recreational drug use and try to get enough sleep
- Talk it over when you are ready, but, don't worry if you get upset or cry while you think or talk about what happened
- Don't be afraid to ask for help
- Take extra care; after a major incident or event, people are more likely to have accidents.

WHAT ISN'T HELPFUL

- Bottling up your feelings – let yourself talk when you feel ready
- Alcohol and recreational drugs – while they can numb your feelings, they can also stop you from coming to terms with what has happened or cause more problems later and increased anxiety in the long term.

USEFUL NUMBERS

Police – 101

Floodline - 0345 988 1188

Utility failure (gas leak, electricity, water supply) - 0800 111 999

Bristol Water Leakline – 0800 801011

Wessex Water Leakstoppers – 0800 692 0 692

Wessex Water Sewage Floodline on 0345 850 5959

Somerset Council - 0300 123 2224 Email:

flooding@somerset.gov.uk

FARMS AND FARMING

RABI *Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution*: Provides care and support for farmers, farm workers, farm managers and their dependents. **Helpline: 0800 188 4444**

FCN *Farming Community Network*: The volunteers are all farmers or are associated with farming and understand the problems in all areas facing agriculture today. **Helpline: 03000 111 999 Email: fcnsomerset@gmail.com**

WELLBEING

Mindline: Somerset's 24/7 listening and emotional support service. Call local: 01823 276 892
freephone - 0800 138 1692

Samaritans – 116 123

Open Mental Health – Email: support@openmentalhealth.org.uk
www.openmentalhealth.org.uk

OTHER SUPPORT

Citizens Advice Somerset - 0808 223 1133 www.citizensadvice Somerset.org.uk

Community Council for Somerset, Village Agents – www.somersetagents.org

Somerset Carers - 0800 31 68 600