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## Caring for Colleagues

Unexpected, frightening events affect people in different ways. Both physical reactions, such as headaches and general achiness, and emotional reactions, such as recurrent, painful thoughts and feelings, may occur. Common responses can include:

- Feeling a sense of loss, sadness, frustration, or helplessness
- Feeling numb, disconnected, or in a fog
- Experiencing troubling memories from the event
- Sleep difficulties (nightmares, difficulty falling or staying asleep, difficulty waking)
- Avoiding things that are reminiscent of the event
- Eating difficulties (overeating, loss of appetite)
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling jumpy, nervous, or on edge
- Increased restlessness or, conversely, feeling more tired than usual
- Feeling irritable or crying easily
- Increased worries about the health of loved ones
- Suddenly developing new fears or worries
- Use of mood-altering substances
- Engaging in risky behaviors

If someone you know shows any of these behaviors after a traumatic event, you can reach out and provide support. Let them know that you are willing to listen to them talk about their feelings. You may also want to share these suggestions with them:

- Maintain a normal routine.
- Stay active (exercise) and involved in ongoing events.
- Learn and practice a stress management technique, such as deep breathing, yoga, or meditation.
- Try to eat a nutritious diet, even if not hungry.
- Try to get an adequate amount of sleep; seek medical advice if sleeplessness continues.
- Share their knowledge. If someone sees a way that policies and procedures can be improved, that knowledge should be passed on.

Keep in mind that for many people returning to their previous level of functioning may take some time. If someone's distress continues or they are engaging in risky behaviors, encourage them to seek help, whether from a mental health or medical professional or a member of the clergy.