

Path to Coping

Each of us has different ways of coping with difficult news and situations. It is impossible to predict how you, your loved ones, and others may react. Remember, there is no right or wrong way to feel.

When you encounter difficult experiences, you may feel such things as:

- ▶ **Shock** when you hear news that doesn't make sense to you.
- ▶ **Disbelief** that what happened is really true.
- ▶ **Helpless** because you may want to "fix" what happened, and are unable to do anything to change the outcome.
- ▶ **Sadness** about the news and compassion for the affected individuals, families, and loved ones.
- ▶ **Anger** over the news and its implications.
- ▶ **Shame** because you feel a sense of responsibility or that you have somehow let down others.
- ▶ **Anxiety** because of all the unanswered questions you may have or that others might ask of you.
- ▶ **Confusion** about the mix of feelings that you may be experiencing, especially when the feelings seem to come in waves.
- ▶ **Grief** because of this news and also because it may trigger memories of other losses.

Steps to take care of yourself include:

- ▶ **Seek out support** from friends, family, and other helpful resources. Let people who care about you know what is helpful and what is not.
- ▶ **Avoid gossip.** Don't listen to or engage in it. Make others aware that engaging in gossip does not help.
- ▶ **Recognize** that there may never be answers to some of the questions you and others may have about the situation.
- ▶ **Reflect** on what has helped you cope with difficult situations in the past and determine if the same strategies can help you now.
- ▶ **Engage** in healthy sleep, diet, and exercise routines.
- ▶ **Avoid** impulsive or destructive behaviors such as excessive drinking, eating, or drug use.
- ▶ **Limit your exposure** to media (including social media) if the event is in the news. Be aware of the potential that more news might unfold.
- ▶ **Engage in meaningful activities.** Replenish your emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual energy.
- ▶ **Be patient.** Give yourself and others space to heal. Remember, rebuilding resiliency takes time.


Call **LifeMatters®** toll-free anytime. **1-800-634-6433**

Assistance with Life, Work, Family, and Wellbeing • 24/7/365

mylifematters.com • Text "Hello" to 61295

Call collect to **262-574-2509** if outside of North America

TDD and language translation services are available

 facebook.com/lifematterseap

