



## Helpful Strategies For Trauma Victims/Survivors

- It is very important to your recovery to get enough rest, especially the first 4 - 6 weeks following the trauma.
  - If you cannot sleep at night, take “cat” naps of 15 minutes - 1/2 hour during the day.
  - If waking up during the night because of traumatic dreams know they will pass in time. Do what comforts you. Read a good book until you become sleepy again. Snack, watch television, listen to music, write, do some housework. Remember, this will be a temporary change.
- Exercise of some kind is important to help relieve you of the tension that traumatic experiences create. Even if you have not been exercising, go for a short walk. Walk the dog an extra time. Do housework or add a few minutes to your usual exercise routine.
- Avoid too much caffeine, alcohol, as they can stimulate your already over aroused brain or can intensify your emotions. Do not self medicate. **NOTE:** If you are having difficulties with relaxing or sleeping following the trauma, then call for a temporary prescription to help you sleep but if this persists beyond 4-6 weeks consult with a trauma specialist immediately.
- Pull back on making a commitment to additional responsibilities for the first four weeks. The tendency for some is to take on additional responsibilities thinking it will help them forget. In reality, it frequently drains them of energy, delays the healing process and intensifies future reactions when they finally emerge.
- Be protective and nurturing of yourself. It’s okay to want to be by yourself, or just stay around home with the family. Eat whatever your comfort foods are, as frequently as you need. Let family, friends know that they can best help by taking care of themselves over the next several days while you do what helps you feel a bit better.
- Expect during the 4 - 6 weeks following the event that new memories of and reactions to your experience are likely to emerge. This does not mean things are getting worse. It takes time to heal.