



## Vegas Strong Resiliency Center Trauma Coping Tips

Mental health experts stress that people grieve and cope with trauma in different ways. Reminders of 1 October can affect people at different times and in differing circumstances such as anniversaries, hearing a particular song, watching news stories about other violent events, or experiencing crowds or loud noises. The following suggestions are recommended:

- **Stay in your normal routine as much as possible.** Even if you don't feel like it, go back to work, to school and try to carry on with your usual chores. It will help to reduce stress if you continue doing the things you would normally do every day. Anniversaries and special events like holidays or birthdays may be particularly difficult, especially for those who lost a loved one. To cope plan to be with people who care about you and plan an activity together.
- **Reach out for help.** Feelings of sadness, anger, anxiety and depression are common after a traumatic event. When you feel distressed, don't be alone. Talk to someone who is understanding and cares about you including a friend, family member, pastor or therapist. You also can talk to someone at the Vegas Strong Resiliency Center at (702) 455-2433 (AIDE) or toll-free at 1-(833) 229-2433. After hours on weekends or holidays, call the national Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990 to talk with a trained crisis counselor.
- **Seek Counseling.** If you are struggling with memories, flashbacks or reminders of the violent event, counseling can offer some coping strategies. It's not uncommon for survivor of mass violence to seek out counseling months or even years after an event. If you were present at the mass shooting, we encourage you to submit an application with the Nevada Victims of Crime program by **Oct. 1, 2018**, so you will be eligible to recoup out-of-pocket expenses for insurance co-pays. More information about the Nevada Victims of Crime Program is available at [www.voc.nv.gov](http://www.voc.nv.gov) or (702) 486-2740
- **Deal with feelings of survivor's guilt.** It is not unusual for survivors of a traumatic event to feel guilt. One way experts recommend processing this emotion is to find a way to honor those who died or were injured by remembering them in private, as part of your faith community, or by doing an activity that has meaning to you in the community at large.
- **Connecting with other survivors may help.** Many people who have suffered from mass violence say it's helpful over time in dealing with the aftermath of an incident to connect with other survivors. The Vegas Strong Resiliency Center is working to connect survivors with support group resources in Las Vegas and other communities. Contact us for information.

### General Tips for Dealing with Stress and Anxiety

- **Take a time-out.** Practice yoga, listen to music, meditate, get a massage, or learn relaxation techniques. Stepping back from the problem helps clear your head.
- **Limit alcohol and caffeine,** which can aggravate anxiety and trigger panic attacks.
- **Eat well-balanced meals.** Do not skip any meals. Keep healthful, energy-boosting snacks on hand.
- **Get enough sleep.** When stressed, your body needs additional sleep and rest.
- **Exercise daily** to help you feel good and maintain your health.
- **Take deep breaths.** Inhale and exhale slowly.
- **Count to 10 slowly.** Repeat, and count to 20 if necessary.
- **Maintain a positive attitude.** Try replacing negative thoughts with positive ones.
- **Get involved.** Volunteer or find another way to be active in your community, which creates a support network and gives you a break from everyday stress.
- **Learn what triggers your anxiety.** Is it images of the event, crowds or loud noises? Try to identify your triggers and tell yourself it's just a reminder. The event is not happening again and the bad feelings will pass. Try writing down what bothers you when you are feeling stressed or anxious, and look for a pattern. Practice the coping skills that help – breathing, walking and talking to others.