

## **CIS Things to Try**

WITHIN THE FIRST 24-48 HOURS periods of appropriate physical exercise, alternated with relaxation will alleviate some of the physical reactions.

Structure your time – Keep Busy.

You're normal and having normal reactions – don't label yourself crazy.

Talk to people – talk is the most healing medicine

Be aware of numbing the pain with overuse of drugs or alcohol; you don't need to complicate this with a substance abuse problem.

Reach out – people do care.

Maintain as normal a schedule as possible.

Spend time with others.

Help your co-workers as much as possible by sharing feelings and checking out how they are doing.

Give yourself permission to feel rotten and share your feelings with others.

Keep a journal; write your way through those sleepless hours.

Do things that feel good to you.

Realize those around you are also under stress.

Don't make any big life changes.

Do make as many daily decisions as possible which will give you a feeling of control over your life, i.e., if someone asks you what you want to eat – answer them even if you're not sure.

Get plenty of rest.

Recurring thoughts, dreams or flashbacks are normal – don't try to fight them – they'll decrease over time and become less painful.

Eat well-balanced and regular meals (even if you don't feel like it).

## SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS

| Physical             | Cognitive                                                         | Emotional                        | Behavioral                      |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Chills               | Confusion                                                         | Fear                             | withdrawal                      |
| Thirst               | Nightmares                                                        | Guilt                            | Antisocial acts                 |
| Fatigue              | Uncertainty                                                       | Grief                            | Inability to rest               |
| Nausea               | Hypervigilance                                                    | Panic                            | Intensified pacing              |
| Fainting             | Suspiciousness                                                    | Denial                           | Erratic movements               |
| Twitches             | Intrusive images                                                  | Anxiety                          | Change in social activity       |
| Vomiting             | Blaming someone                                                   | Agitation                        | Change in speech patterns       |
| Dizziness            | Poor problem solving                                              | Irritability                     | Loss of or increase in appetite |
| Weakness             | Poor abstract thinking                                            | Depression                       | Hyperalert to environment       |
| Chest pain           | Poor attention/decisions                                          | Intense anger                    | Increased alcohol consumption   |
| Headaches            | Poor concentration/memory disorientation of time, place or person | Apprehension                     | Change in usual communications  |
| Elevated BP          | Difficulty identifying objects or people                          | Emotional shock                  | Etc...                          |
| Rapid heart rate     | Heightened or lowered alertness                                   | Emotional outburst               |                                 |
| Muscle tremors       | Increased or decreased awareness of surroundings                  | Feeling overwhelmed              |                                 |
| Grinding of teeth    | Etc...                                                            | Loss of emotional control        |                                 |
| Shock symptoms       |                                                                   | Inappropriate emotional response |                                 |
| Visual disturbances  |                                                                   | Anxiety                          |                                 |
| Profuse sweating     |                                                                   | Etc...                           |                                 |
| Difficulty breathing |                                                                   |                                  |                                 |
| Etc...               |                                                                   |                                  |                                 |

**\*Any of these physical symptoms may indicate the need for medical evaluation. When in doubt, contact a physician.**