

# Coping with TRAUMA



The word trauma is used to describe experiences or situations that are emotionally painful and distressing and that overwhelm people's ability to cope, leaving them powerless. Examples of traumatic events include the death of someone you love, experiencing abuse, a vehicle accident, an extremely difficult relationship or breakup.

## **What to expect if you were exposed to Trauma?**

It is normal to have strong reactions following a distressing or frightening event, but these should begin to reduce after a few weeks. Trauma signs to look out for include the following:





Physical	Cognitive/Mental	Emotional	Behavioural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chills</li> <li>• Difficulty breathing</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Elevated blood pressure</li> <li>• Fainting</li> <li>• Fatigue</li> <li>• Grinding teeth</li> <li>• Headaches</li> <li>• Muscle tremors</li> <li>• Nausea</li> <li>• Pain</li> <li>• Profuse sweating</li> <li>• Rapid heart rate</li> <li>• Twitches</li> <li>• Weakness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blaming someone</li> <li>• Change in alertness</li> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Hyper-vigilance</li> <li>• Increased or decreased awareness of surroundings</li> <li>• Intrusive images</li> <li>• Memory problems</li> <li>• Nightmares</li> <li>• Poor abstract thinking</li> <li>• Poor attention</li> <li>• Poor concentration</li> <li>• Poor decision-making</li> <li>• Poor problem solving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agitation</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Apprehension</li> <li>• Denial</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Emotional shock</li> <li>• Fear</li> <li>• Feeling overwhelmed</li> <li>• Grief</li> <li>• Guilt</li> <li>• Inappropriate emotional response</li> <li>• Irritability</li> <li>• Loss of emotional control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased alcohol consumption</li> <li>• Antisocial acts</li> <li>• Change in activity</li> <li>• Change in communication</li> <li>• Change in sexual functioning</li> <li>• Change in speech pattern</li> <li>• Emotional outbursts</li> <li>• Inability to rest</li> <li>• Change in appetite</li> <li>• Pacing</li> <li>• Startle reflex intensified</li> <li>• Suspiciousness</li> <li>• Social withdrawal</li> </ul>

**PRACTICE SELF-CARE THROUGH YOUR HEALING JOURNEY** by regularly taking action to do things that feel good and loving for yourself. Ideas for practicing self-care include the following:



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## PHYSICAL



Go for a walk



Dance



Hike



Swim



Get a hug



Play with a dog



Clean and reorganize your room



Take a bath

## EMOTIONAL



Practice Yoga



Light a candle



Talk with a friend



Go on a date



Write in your journal



Meditate



Write down a list of things you are grateful for





# PLATINUM HEALTH

HEALING FROM TRAUMA MIGHT FEEL OVERWHELMING BUT KNOW THAT YOU ARE NOT ALONE AND HELP IS AVAILABLE. FOR MORE INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE, YOU ARE WELCOME TO CONTACT PLATINUM HEALTH'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (**014 590 1700** OR **080 000 6942**). EAP COUNSELLORS (**010 133 0525**) ARE ALSO AVAILABLE 24 HOURS PER DAY, 7 DAYS PER WEEK TO OFFER COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT



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