

# **Coping With Traumatic Events**

## **How to Help Myself and Others**

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

1. I didn't know Beth and I feel bad, confused, uncertain if "I have the right" to be upset.

Here at SUNY Potsdam and Crane we are a small, close-knit community. This is a tragedy that may affect all of us in surprising ways. Unlike abstract tragedy we read about and see on the news your brain can fill in a lot of missing details when it is your environment and community that has been stuck with tragedy. This may also be triggering past experiences you have gone through which increase these feelings. You absolutely have the right to feel however you feel.

2. I don't feel as upset as others seem to, is that wrong?

No, that's normal as well. Human beings are vastly different in the way they respond to tragedy and distressing events. It doesn't mean you are insensitive or not caring.

3. I don't feel I can.... Go to class, play music, attend to my academics. Will this get better?

Right now, and in the coming weeks, your physical and emotional reactions to the traumatic events will ebb and flow. Small, measured returns to these activities will help signal to your brain reminders of the event do not mean you are in danger. These can also allow for emotional release which helps your brain process trauma. Do so as you are able and comfortable.

4. I can't...eat, sleep, feel at ease, since everything happened, why?

Acute stress causes a number of symptoms. Please see the second handout (Why Do I Feel This Way?) supplied with this FAQ sheet to understand more about these and specific coping methods to help.

5. Will all of these feelings go away?

Traumatic events change our way of looking at the world. With the help and support of your friends, family, and the community efforts here at SUNY Potsdam, you will be able to integrate this experience into your life and return to your previous level of functioning. This will vary for everyone, and we encourage you to reach out for help in any number of ways such as:

Talking with friends, faculty and staff, and family members as comfortable.

Contacting the College Counseling Center at **315-267-2330**

Texting with a licensed counselor 24/7 by **texting Got5U to 741-741**

Calling Reachout Crisis Hotline at **315-265-2422**