



# Coping after a major weather event

People can experience a wide range of emotions before, during and after a significant event, disaster or trauma.

Stress, anxiety, and other depression-like symptoms are common reactions.

Here are a few starting points for managing and promoting well-being for yourself or those close to you, during or after a crisis:



## 1. Acknowledge your feelings

It's normal to feel overwhelmed, scared, or sad after a significant weather event. Allow yourself to feel and express your emotions. There is no right or wrong way to feel.



## 2. Stay connected

Reach out to friends and family for support and comfort. Talking about your feelings with others can help you process them.



## 3. Take care of your physical health

Eat nutritious food, stay hydrated, and get enough rest. Exercise can also help reduce stress and anxiety.



## 4. Seek professional help

If your feelings of distress persist or become too much to handle, consider reaching out to a mental health professional and speak with a financial advisor if needed, who can tailor solutions for your particular situation.



## 5. Focus on the present

Try to stay in the moment and focus on what you can control. Try not to dwell on the past or worry about the future.



## 6. Get involved in the recovery effort

Volunteering or helping others can give you a sense of purpose and help you feel less helpless.



## 7. Be kind to yourself

Be gentle and compassionate with yourself. You are going through a difficult time and it's important to treat yourself with care and understanding. Avoid making any big life changes if you can.



## Noticing signs of stress in yourself or others after a significant weather event.

During a crisis, you may experience stress symptoms such as:

1. **Physical symptoms:** headaches, muscle tension, fatigue, chest pain, rapid heartbeat, stomach problems.
2. **Emotional symptoms:** anxiety, fear, anger, sadness, irritability, feeling overwhelmed.
3. **Cognitive symptoms:** difficulty concentrating, forgetfulness, confusion, negative thoughts, constant worrying.
4. **Behavioral symptoms:** changes in eating or sleeping habits, avoidance of certain situations, withdrawal from people, increased use of drugs or alcohol, social withdrawal.

It's important to note that these symptoms can vary in intensity and duration, and everyone reacts differently to stress. If symptoms persist or interfere with daily life, it is recommended you seek professional help.

## Tips for supporting someone in distress after a significant weather event.

It can be difficult when supporting people or communities that have experienced trauma from a crisis. Whether you are dealing with an individual or whole communities, try these tips when supporting someone in distress:

1. **Empathy:** Show understanding and compassion for their situation.
2. **Active listening:** Listen to their concerns and acknowledge their feelings.
3. **Patience:** Give them enough time to express their concerns and avoid interrupting.
4. **Clear communication:** Provide clear and concise information to help alleviate their distress.
5. **Problem-solving:** Work with the client to find a solution to their problem.
6. **Escalation:** If the situation is beyond your control, know when to escalate it to a higher authority.
7. **Self-care:** Take breaks and engage in self-care activities to avoid burnout. The better you look after yourself the better your support to others will be.
8. **Teamwork:** Collaborate with colleagues to provide the best support for clients in distress.
9. **Professionalism:** Maintain a professional demeanor even in difficult situations.
10. **Continuously improving:** Seek feedback and continuously improve your skills to better handle clients or individuals in distress.

## How EAP can help

If you have been affected by the recent floodings or weather events, or would like to talk, or seek support for trauma, contact EAP Services to book an appointment with a professional.

**[Click here to make an appointment or call 0800 327 669.](#)**

EAP Services also offers appointments with a Financial Advisor who can tailor support to your specific needs. Appointments are confidential and there is no cost to you, can be conducted online, in person or via a phone call.

**[eapservices.co.nz](http://eapservices.co.nz)**