

SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO TO SPEED UP THE RECOVERY PROCESS

- ◆ **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.
- ◆ Avoid *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-members 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 (type/record) your way through those sleepless hours.
- ◆ Do things that feel good to you.
- ◆ Realize those around you are 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.
- ◆ Reoccurring 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).

FOR FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

- ◆ Listen carefully.
- ◆ Spend time with the traumatized person.
- ◆ Offer your assistance and a listening ear if they have not asked for help.
- ◆ Reassure them that they are safe.
- ◆ Help them with everyday tasks like cleaning, cooking, caring for the family.
- ◆ Give them some private time.
- ◆ Don't take their anger or other feelings personally.
- ◆ Don't tell them that they are "lucky it wasn't worse." Traumatized people are not consoled by those statements. Instead, tell them that you are sorry such an event has occurred and you want to understand and help them.