

How to help someone you know following a natural disaster



Check-in

and ask how they're coping, even if you don't know what to say spending time with them may be the most helpful thing you can do.



Listen without judgement

and allow them to express their emotions.



Avoid the cliches

by not using phrases like "you're lucky it wasn't worse" or "I know how you feel".



Don't take it personally

If the person is angry or upset, focus on what they're saying, rather than how they're saying it.



Express empathy

by letting them know you're sorry about what has happened and that you're here to listen and help where you can.



Encourage them to seek support

from their local doctor, community-based helplines, or their organisation's Employee Assistance Program.

Common reactions

- Feelings of fear, numbness and detachment.
- Feelings of anger, irritability, anxiety or panic.
- Difficulty sleeping, nightmares, fatigue or exhaustion.
- Becoming withdrawn or isolated.
- Loss of interest in normal activities.
- Excessive alertness or being easily startled.
- Intrusive thoughts and memories.
- Visual flashbacks.
- Poor concentration and memory.
- Disorientation and confusion.

