

# Healing From Trauma

*"Healing is not linear or circular. It is a releasing dance with your body, a dialogue of truth with your soul, a meaning making with your mind and heart."*

- Cherie Spehar

Just as trauma affects people differently, each person's path to healing is their own. It may take some time to figure out what strategy will work best, so do your best to be patient and kind with yourself. Here are some suggestions to get you started.

## Emotional

- Engage support system
- Seek professional support
- Call a local hotline
- Be patient with yourself
- Cry
- Laugh
- Hit a punching bag
- Daily affirmations

## Physical

- Rest/take naps
- Take a warm bath/shower
- Drink plenty of water
- Exercise
- Stretch
- Spend time in the sun
- Eat healthy & regularly
- Seek medical treatment
- Take deep breaths

## Cognitive

- Unplug
- Take a social media break
- Find a fidget
- Practice doing one thing at a time
- Take breaks
- Listen to music
- Journal
- Practice mindfulness

## Behavioral

- Get a planner
- Organize
- Set alarms to remember to: eat/drink water, & prepare for sleep
- Learn new coping skills
- Discover a new routine
- Ask for support
- Create art

## Social

- Make plans with a friend
- Have fun
- Spend time outdoors
- Make a phone date with a friend
- Set boundaries; it's ok to say "No"
- Volunteer
- Find an online support group

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# Common Reactions to Trauma

Trauma is a natural response to an extremely stressful event that overwhelms a person's perceived ability to cope.

The experience of trauma is different for everyone and may be emotional, physical, cognitive, behavioral or social. Some people are impacted in all of these ways, while others might only experience one or two. Understanding these reactions can help you to select coping skills to support you in your healing.

*"Trauma creates change you don't choose. Healing is about creating change you do choose."*

- Michelle Rosenthal

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## Emotional

- Anger/irritability
- Anxiety
- Denial/shock/disbelief
- Depression/sadness
- Fear/distrust/phobias
- Humiliation/shame
- Guilt/self-blame
- Numbness
- Embarrassment
- Low self-esteem

## Physical

- Fatigue
- Gastrointestinal irritability
- Headaches
- Muscular tension
- Soreness
- Immune system responses: getting a cold
- STIs
- Physical injuries
- Panic attacks

## Cognitive

- Confusion
- Flashbacks
- Difficulty concentrating
- Intrusive thoughts
- Irrational thoughts
- Forgetfulness
- Fogginess
- Indecisiveness
- Difficulty completing tasks
- Thoughts about suicide

## Behavioral

- Eating/diet changes
- Sleep changes
- Nightmares/bad dreams
- Substance use
- Self-harm
- Lifestyle changes
- Changes in sexual behavior
- Impulsivity
- Lack of interest
- Lack of motivation
- Perfectionism

## Social

- Withdrawal
- Isolation
- Discomfort around people
- Not wanting to be alone
- Being nervous in crowds
- Loss of trust in self / others
- Fear of seeing perpetrator
- Difficulties with intimacy
- Change of friends