

WHY DO I FEEL THE WAY I DO?

The loss or damage to your home, property, and personal belongings has set into motion months of effort to recover and rebuild.

While physical property and possessions are concerns that consume your time and energy, emotional reactions to disaster are often pushed aside or ignored.

As you endure long-term stress, your health can be adversely affected. It is common for headaches, stomach or intestinal problems, colds, viruses, and an increase in allergies to occur more frequently.

Pre-existing medical conditions such as heart problems and high blood pressure may be made worse by the prolonged stress.

You have been through an exceptionally stressful situation and emotional reactions may continue for many months following the disaster. It is common for people to experience a wide range of emotional reactions to a disaster.

Flyer adapted from Wisconsin Project Recovery - Lutheran Social Services.



Call the hotline for free and confidential assistance.

Nebraska Rural Response Hotline

1-800-464-0258

National Disaster Distress Helpline

1-800-985-5990

Nebraska Strong Recovery Project

Stress and distress are
common during recovery.

You are not alone...



FREE & CONFIDENTIAL

Nebraska Rural Response Hotline

1-800-464-0258

National Disaster Distress Helpline

1-800-985-5990

The Effects of Prolonged Stress

The Downhill Slope: Prolonged Stress

Natural disasters often lead to prolonged emotional and physical stress. During times of extreme stress, people experience varying stages of emotion. Alarm or shock is often the first stage, followed by resistance (denial), then exhaustion.

Exhaustion, fear, anger, cynicism, disillusionment, and depression are common. These responses are normal and appropriate for something (a home, a farm, a business, a dream) which is lost over a long period of time.



Negative results of prolonged stress include:

- Difficulty falling or staying asleep
- Nightmares
- Irritability; outbursts of anger
- Excessive drinking/drug use
- Difficulty concentrating
- Excessive worry, hyper vigilance or extreme concern
- Re-experiencing the event
- Guilt and self-doubt
- Withdrawal and suspicion
- Sudden painful emotions
- Apathy, avoidance of emotions, activities, and situations associated with the event



The Healing Power of Grief

The Uphill Climb: Recovery

Everybody has their own individual timetable for grief. Some people may go through the rest of their lives angry with the unfairness of the event. With support and guidance, however, most people are able to move beyond these feelings.

Fortunately, grief can be one of the most healing experiences we can go through. People can learn valuable lessons from adversity.



Lessons learned might include:

- Re-framing the meaning of life and setting priorities; finding larger purposes, value, and meaning to life.
- Realizing the importance of relationships that helping others may be a way to “repay” the help received during the disaster.
- The positive power of connection to our neighbors and communities.
- The qualities of strong families; which include commitment, appreciation, communication time, coping, and spiritual wellness.
- The need to say thanks and the benefits of celebration.

Here's what you can do right now to ensure you are ready for the uphill climb!

- Get plenty of rest.
- Take time for yourself.
- Talk to someone if you're feeling overwhelmed.

WHEN TO GET HELP

Feelings of detachment, avoidance, and apathy might be an effective way of conserving emotional energy and re-grouping.

If it becomes a problem or interferes with your day-to-day life, it may be time to seek help.

See your doctor or call the hotline for free, confidential assistance.

Nebraska Rural Response Hotline

1-800-464-0258

OR

National Disaster Distress

1-800-985-5990