

Tips for well-being and resilience

(longer-term coping)

Try your best to:

Maintain healthy routines

Make sure to get enough sleep and keep a regular bedtime and regular mealtimes.

Connect with others

You don't need to talk about what's stressing you out to benefit from social interactions. Text or call a friend, relative or acquaintance, arrange to meet for a walk or coffee or some other fun activity.

At least once a day:

Leave your house

Go back to at least some of your regular activities if you are able.

Plan one activity

Try watching a show, listening to a new album or podcast, going for a walk, eating a favorite snack...what will it be today?

REMEMBER:

It's okay to ask for help

Think about what do you need and who can help you have that need met?

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ALL WELCOME



**King County
Sexual Assault
Resource Center**



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Sexual Assault
Resource Center**

Managing common reactions to sexual assault



After sexual assault or other traumatic events

In the days and weeks after a traumatic event, most people experience some of these reactions: avoidance, changes in mood, and negative and intrusive thoughts.

If any of these reactions are happening to you or someone you love, that is **completely normal**.

Remember:
Recovery is possible
with the right support.

We're here to help.

Avoidance

- ▶ Not wanting to talk about it
- ▶ Isolating from others
- ▶ Avoiding important activities
- ▶ Avoiding reminders of what happened
- ▶ Trying to push thoughts and memories away
- ▶ Using alcohol or drugs to cope

Changes in mood

Feeling intense emotions such as:

- ▶ Fear and anxiety
- ▶ Sadness and depression
- ▶ Irritability and anger
- ▶ Guilt and shame
- ▶ Hopelessness
- ▶ Emotional numbness

Negative and intrusive thoughts

- ▶ Thoughts about what happened
- ▶ Flashbacks and nightmares
- ▶ Self-blame
- ▶ Thinking the world is unsafe and no one can be trusted
- ▶ Thinking you are “damaged” forever
- ▶ Feeling like you are losing your mind

Coping tips for here and now

Some strategies that can help you feel better in the moment and get you through a stressful situation:

Focus on your breathing and practice “square breathing”



Breathe in (4 counts)

Hold (4 counts)

Breathe out (4 counts)

Hold (4 counts)

Repeat

Focus your attention on:

5 things you can **see**

4 things you can **feel**

3 things you can **hear**

2 things you can **smell**

1 thing you can **taste**

Move your body

Move around for a few seconds to a few minutes, as you are able. A brief, brisk walk, going up and down a flight of stairs, doing a wall sit, or other forms of movement can help you improve your mood and decrease anxiety.

Contract and relax

Contract and relax one group of muscles at a time. As you are able, clench your fists for a few seconds, hold, and then relax completely; shrug your shoulders, hold, and relax; scrunch up your face, hold, and relax. Try it with other parts of your body too!