

## Self care tips for dealing with disasters

From the many years of experience Lifeline has had in supporting people following disaster events, they know only too well how events as the floods can have a powerful impact on the psychological and emotional wellbeing of those affected.

Lifeline counsellors are highly trained in their supportive role of providing psychological first-aid to those affected by disasters.

They do this through the Lifeline Community Recovery Program which is specifically designed to provide support to individuals and communities affected by disasters or events.

Lifeline encourages those who are affected by the floods to:

- Share your feelings when you are ready
- Try to keep the rest of your life as normal as possible
- Accept support of people who care
- Take the time to be with your close family and friends
- Express your needs clearly and honestly to family, friends and those in helping professions
- Look after yourself – eat well, sleep and take time out
- Let your children talk to you and others about their emotions
- Call Lifeline if necessary – a Lifeline Telephone Crisis Supporter is available 24 hours a day – 13 11 14

### ***Normal emotions during loss & change***

Feelings that you can expect or may have experienced include:

#### **Anger**

At what has happened.

At whoever or whatever caused it.

At those trying to help. At the injustice, 'Why me, Why us?'

#### **Helplessness**

Unable to change the situation.

#### **Fear**

Of 'breaking down' or 'losing control.'

Of losing the business, farm, lifestyle. Of the uncertainty.

#### **Disappointment**

Life is turning out like this after so many years of hard work.

#### **Failure**

Blaming yourself when it is out of control.



**Lifeline** Saving Lives

Crisis Support. Suicide Prevention.

[ucommunity.org.au/lifeline](http://ucommunity.org.au/lifeline)

**Guilt**

For being better or worse off than others.  
Regrets for things not done.

**Shame**

For being exposed as helpless, 'emotional' and needing others.  
For not reacting as one would wish.

**Sadness**

For losses of every kind.

**Longing**

For all that has gone.

**Isolation**

Wanting to be alone  
Irritated or cannot bear the demands of being with others.

**Numbness**

Feeling empty inside or a loss of all feelings.

**Let Down**

A sudden loss of energy and enthusiasm. Hope - for the future for better times.

These feelings are normal during a disaster. In your own time, talk with others who care for you. Share your feelings and provide support for your children to share their feelings. Accept the support of people who care, and take the time to be with your family and friends.