
HOW DO I BEST SUPPORT MY PEOPLE?

The impact of the recent attacks and the reactions of your people will be as diverse as they are. We recommend that you tailor the suggestions in this guide with your knowledge of your people, and also by consulting with them about what they need.

From best practice research there are a few important findings to keep in mind:

1. Most people will recover from traumatic experiences – don't assume that everyone will be negatively impacted
2. Support and maintain a "normal" workplace environment as best you can, routines, predictability and supportive relationships at work are all helpful as people continue to make sense of what has happened.
3. Although talking about what happened can be helpful, no-one should be forced to talk about their experiences. For some people, it is important that they have some quiet time to think things through.

It can be difficult for people to process their emotional reactions until they are feeling safe. Continued threats or talk of threats may make this processing more difficult and possibly make the recovery process slower. Over the next few days and weeks it is likely that your people will be experiencing attention and concentration difficulties and finding it harder to focus on work tasks.

It is helpful for leaders to lead by example, be seen to be actively using self-care strategies, as well as providing leadership and direction for teams.

WHAT SPECIFIC ACTIONS CAN WE TAKE TO HELP OUR PEOPLE?

- Consult with your people: what do you need? How can we best support you?
- Consult and be clear on work priorities – what is realistic to focus on and achieve right now?
- Agree on day-to-day plans – specific goals are likely to be helpful.
- Review priorities and plans regularly.
- Support autonomy (a sense of control) – encourage and allow people to have as much say as possible about what they need/how they work.
- If individuals or teams are feeling overwhelmed negotiate smaller goals.
- Discuss and agree work routines – shorter work hours may be helpful to encourage more recovery time as well as more flexibility around work.
- Encourage and model time for recovery breaks: see self-help strategies handout.
- Limit exposure to media coverage – facts are helpful, graphic images and emotional reporting is not.
- Reduce disruptions as much as possible; a calm workplace is helpful.
- Provide individual help as required – either via EAP services or community health services – if distress or anxiety is high.

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HOW DO I BEST SUPPORT MY PEOPLE? ... CONTINUED

DO WE CONDUCT DE-BRIEFING SESSIONS?

From current available best practice guidelines critical incident stress de-briefing is **not** recommended (this is systematic, brief, single-session interventions focusing on the traumatic incident).

What is recommended is general practical and social support and provision of information, including acknowledgement of the psychological impact of traumatic incidents. Ideally this will include reassurance about immediate distress, information about the likely course of possible symptoms, and practical and emotional support in the first month after the incident.

Something Like:

“When you have been through traumatic experience like the recent attacks you may be struggling with upsetting emotions, frightening reminders or memories, or a sense of constant danger that you just can’t kick. Or you may feel numb, disconnected, and wanting to be away from other people.

“When difficult things like this happen it can take time to get over the shock and feel safe again. But looking after yourself well and support from family and friends as well as supporting others can speed your recovery”.

OTHER RESOURCES WITH HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS AND IDEAS:

Building resilience to manage indirect exposure to terror

https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/terror-exposure?utm_medium=social&utm_source=linkedin&utm_content=1552661213

Seven strategies to turn trauma into strength

https://upliftconnect.com/seven-strategies-to-turn-trauma-into-strength/?utm_campaign=f1753282e5-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_10_25_01_44&utm_term=0_19c1fc07c2-f1753282e5-114655589&utm_content=86507473&utm_medium=social&utm_source=linkedin&hss_channel=lcp-2578683

Coping with terrorism

<http://www.helpstartshere.org/helpstartshere/?p=916>