

# 5 Techniques

to cope with  
exposure to trauma



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**Here are 5 techniques  
that can help you cope with  
exposure to trauma or  
distressing content**

**A traumatic event involves direct exposure to a threat of death or severe injury—whether you experience it yourself, witness it, or learn it happened to a loved one.**

**When faced with such profound experiences, or even difficult graphic content, having tools to navigate these challenges is crucial.**

# Common reactions

One might notice varied **physical reactions** (like tension or digestive issues), intense **emotional responses** (fear, anxiety, numbness), **cognitive shifts** (confusion, difficulty concentrating), and distinct **behavioral changes** (restlessness, anger, or withdrawal).

These are **natural**, complex ways our bodies and minds try to cope with overwhelming situations

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# What can be done to cope?





# Ensure physical safety

First, prioritize your safety by following authorities' instructions and avoiding unnecessary risks.

Second, remember that strong reactions after a traumatic event are normal—it's an expected part of the healing process. As time passes, distress often lessens, and these feelings can even be replaced by adaptation and growth.

Additionally, you can boost your self-regulation by connecting with your community, friends, and family to encourage hope.



# Gathering Information & Limiting Exposure

When faced with difficult events, gathering information wisely is key to understanding the situation and coping effectively.

Always stick to reliable sources, but it's equally important to minimize your overall media consumption.

Be especially mindful of limiting your exposure to distressing images and reports on social media, as too much can significantly impact your ability to cope



# Help the body return to a state of balance

Even amidst security challenges, engaging in physical activities helps reduce stress.

During stressful times, breathing can become shallow; breathing exercises (like inhaling slowly through your nose, holding, and exhaling) help regulate your body and calm your nervous system. Simple physical actions like rubbing your hands together, self-massaging, or shrugging your shoulders can also help bring a sense of regulation. In difficult moments, imagining good memories of places or people can offer a sense of security.





## Connect & Share

Connecting with your community and loved ones is a powerful way to strengthen and preserve our well-being.

Make an effort to increase contact and share activities with friends and family. Expressing and talking about your experiences, even the difficult ones, with those you trust can be incredibly healing.

Finding a role to play in your environment, no matter how small, or extending help to someone who might be struggling, can also significantly boost your sense of well-being.



## Hope & Control

Strengthen your sense of meaning and hope by breaking down long-term coping into shorter, manageable chunks, like focusing just until the end of the day or week. For each period, set modest, realistic goals to achieve, as meeting small goals can build a strong sense of capability.

Take time to examine what is currently within your control in your environment and reflect on the meaningful things you've already accomplished.




**This might help  
someone you know**

**Feel free to share it**

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**American Friends of NATAL is dedicated to supporting and strengthening NATAL's life-changing work, providing critical assistance to Israelis coping from trauma, primarily caused by terrorism and war.**

**In the U.S., AFN builds awareness, fosters partnerships, and unites a community of supporters committed to ensuring the resilience, health, and well-being of Israel—now and for generations to come.**



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