



If you have been the victim of a crime it is likely that you are experiencing a range of reactions and feelings. Although this may be worrying for you, they are normal reactions to such a traumatic event. Your reactions may be physical (e.g. headaches/nausea), emotional (e.g. depression/anger) or social (e.g. unable to work/withdrawn).

It is important to understand that your reactions are normal after a stressful event, and they will decrease over time. Here are some suggestions to help you cope:

Take Care of Yourself

- Don't be too hard on yourself and give yourself permission to take time to recover
- Treat yourself (e.g. identify something you enjoy and make a plan to do it)
- Take time out for yourself
- Pamper yourself (e.g. soak in a bubble bath and eat well balanced, regular meals)
- Try to avoid excessive alcohol and/or drug intake
- Try exercise (e.g. go for a walk), it helps to relieve stress and is good for you
- Treat yourself to your favourite food
- Cry if you need to
- Write down how you feel in a journal or as poetry
- Read self-help books
- Maintain regular routines if possible (e.g. work or study)

Release Anger

- Feeling angry is a normal reaction to crime – you have the right to feel angry
- Express your anger in a way that is not hurtful to yourself or others
- Talk to someone you trust
- Write about your anger
- Walk or exercise
- Listen to loud music
- Take time out
- Be assertive
- Tell people what you need from them
- Scream in the shower or where no-one can hear you

Support

- Support is the key to recovery
- Talk to friends or family you can trust
- Tell others how you are feeling
- Speak to a counsellor
- Join a support group

This fact sheet has been developed to provide general information to victims of crime. It is not intended as a replacement for medical, therapeutic or legal advice. If you have particular concerns please contact your general practitioner, counsellor or Victim Support Service.

Relaxation

- Try to rest.
- Find a peaceful place and try to relax
- Listen to a relaxation tape
- Play your favourite music
- Take deep breaths – control your breathing
- Try aromatherapy (e.g. lavender oil is calming and relaxing)
- Have a bath with bubbles or lavender oil
- Do something you enjoy (e.g. gardening or walking)
- Watch TV
- Read a good book
- Drink herbal tea (e.g. Chamomile tea)
- Drink warm milk
- Meditation
- Yoga
- Have a massage

Remember

- You need to feel safe
- You should not do anything that makes you feel uncomfortable or if it increases your stress levels excessively (e.g. return to the scene of the crime)
- You know what feels right for you and therefore, you need to make your own decisions
- It is not a good time to make dramatic changes in your life
- You will have good days and bad days
- The reactions will become less intense and they are temporary

Further Information

If you would like more information, please contact the Victim Helpdesk on 1800 VICTIM (1800 842 846) or view our website at www.victimsa.org.