

Coping with War or Terrorism

The staff at Student Counseling Services is available to help the Youngstown State University community manage the stress and anxiety associated with war and terrorism.

If you or your group needs consultation, support, outreach programming, or anything else, please give us a call at 330-941-3737.

The following information from the National Mental Health Association may be useful towards understanding your own reactions to current events. We have also provided links to a variety of other resources at the end.

Understanding Your Mental Health in Times of War and Terrorism

Facing a new war and the continuing terrorist threat, people experience many powerful emotions. For most people, the intense feelings of anxiety, sadness, grief and anger are healthy and appropriate. But some people may have a more profound and debilitating reaction.

It is important to remember that everyone reacts differently to trauma and each person has his or her own tolerance level for difficult feelings. To cope with these emotions, there are some things you can do for yourself and others.

Experts say that remaining engaged in our world, staying connected with people, and being optimistic about the challenges ahead are key to riding through otherwise traumatic times. In fact, even in times of turmoil, people can make changes that improve their lives and life satisfaction.

Knowing what is a normal response to an abnormal situation, and what signs might indicate you have a more serious problem, will help you determine if and when to seek help from a mental health professional.

Common Responses

It is common to have difficulty managing your feelings during times of war, threat of terrorism or traumatic events. Many people will experience symptoms such as:

- Disbelief and shock
- Fear and anxiety about the future
- Disorientation; difficulty making decisions or concentrating
- Inability to focus
- Apathy and emotional numbing
- Irritability and anger
- Sadness and depression
- Feeling powerless
- Extreme changes in eating patterns; loss of appetite or overeating
- Crying for “no apparent reason”
- Headaches and stomach problems
- Difficulty sleeping
- Excessive use of alcohol and drugs



visit our website

<https://ysu.edu/student-counseling-services>

Contact Student Counseling Services at 330-941-3737

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY



**Student
Counseling
Services**

Signs to Seek Help

When feelings do not go away or are so intense that they impair your ability to function in daily life, you may have a diagnosable disorder that requires mental healthcare. There are signs that can help you determine whether you are having a normal reaction to crisis or if you're experiencing a mental health problem. These signs include:

- Nightmares and reoccurring thoughts about war or a traumatic event
- Being unable to stop thinking about the war or a traumatic event
- Avoiding thoughts, feelings or conversations that remind you of a traumatic event
- Avoiding places or people that remind you of a traumatic event
- Having a sense of a foreshortened future
- Continued difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep
- Feeling jumpy or easily startled
- Being overly concerned about safety
- Feeling guilty, worthless or hopeless
- Not taking pleasure in activities once enjoyed
- Having thoughts of death or suicide

If you are experiencing these symptoms, please speak with someone at Student Counseling Services.

Tips for Coping

- Talk about it. By talking with others, you can relieve stress and realize that others share your feelings.
- Take care of yourself. Get plenty of rest and exercise, avoid excessive drinking and eat properly. Avoid foods that are high in calories and fat.
- Limit exposure to images of the war. Especially avoid television news programs or social media.
- Do something positive. Connect with others, volunteer. By helping others there is a benefit to all and improves individual emotional well-being.
- Ask for help. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness. Talk with a trusted relative, friend or spiritual advisor.

Resources

National Mental Health Association

<http://www.nmha.org/>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline>

Resources for Troops/Veterans, Families & Clinicians

<http://kspope.com/torvic/war.php>

Crisis Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Resource Center

<http://crisisresponse.promoteprevent.org/war-and-terrorism-top-5-resources>

Student Counseling Services

<https://ysu.edu/student-counseling-services>

330-941-3737 (after business hours and weekends/holidays press 1 after the message to have your call transferred to a mental health professional)



visit our website

<https://ysu.edu/student-counseling-services>

Contact Student Counseling Services at 330-941-3737

Last updated: 2/24/2022

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY



**Student
Counseling
Services**