

## Reaction to Critical Incident Stress

A crisis occurs when an event shatters an individual's world as they've always viewed it. It is an event so severe that the way they've always dealt with problems no longer works. It pushes them outside of the equilibrium of normal life into a place that is frightening and unfamiliar, where they have a difficult time regaining their balance.

People may experience a wide-range of strong reactions following such a traumatic event. These reactions may occur immediately, or they may not be experienced for a few weeks.

Occasionally, a second event, such as an anniversary date, may trigger stress reactions. These signs and symptoms effect every part of a person's life: the way they think, the way the feel emotionally, and the way they feel physically. In addition, it can effect the way they relate to others and cause them to question God or their religious faith.

Below are some of the more common symptoms.

PHYSICAL	THINKING	EMOTIONAL	RELATIONAL	BEHAVIORAL	SPIRITUAL
Shock	Blaming others	Guilt	Withdrawn from friends and family	Withdrawn	Blame Self
*Chest Pain	Confusion	Grief		Emotional Outbursts	Survivor Guilt
Nausea	Lack of concentration	Denial	Isolation	Change in Speech	Questions Faith
*Headaches		Numbness		Suspicious	Anger at God
*Dizziness	Difficulty calculating	Panic	Drop-out: school, church, work	Appetite loss or increase	Feels Vulnerable
Insomnia	Memory problems	Startle Response	Loss of interest in goals	Startle Response	Concern about hereafter
Chills	Blaming self	Shock		Inability to rest	Questioning God
*Elevated Blood Pressure	Hyper-vigilance	Depression		Use of Alcohol	Redefining moral values
*Exhaustion	Poor Decisions	Intense Anger		Change in sexual functioning	Searching for Meaning and Hope
*Rapid heart rate		Irritability		Non-specific bodily ailments	Withdrawn from Faith and Religion
Muscles aches		Euphoria		Crying	Bargaining with God
		Obsessive		Reckless	
		Loss of Emotional Control			

\*Do NOT ignore physical symptoms. See a doctor for a medical evaluation.