



## PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID

*Remember there is no right or wrong way to feel and react to a disaster!*

### Do

#### Promote **SAFETY**

- Help people meet basic needs such as food and medical assistance.

#### Promote **CALM**

- Provide accurate information about the situation and listen to those who want to share their feelings and stories.

#### Promote **CONNECTEDNESS**

- Help people to contact their loved ones and keep families together.

#### Promote **HOPE**

- Acknowledge the difficulty of the situation and remind people that the Department is doing all it can to help and to manage it.

#### Promote **SELF-SUFFICIENCY**

- Give practical suggestion on what people can do.

### Don't

- Don't force people to share their stories.
- Don't say everything will be OK.
- Don't tell people what and how they should feel.
- Don't tell people how they should have acted earlier.
- Don't make promises that cannot be kept.
- Don't criticize services in front of those who are in need of them.

## SELF-CARE TIPS FOR DISASTER VOLUNTEERS

### TAKING CARE OF YOUR BODY

- Get enough sleep and rest. Eat healthy. Exercise as much you can. Avoid drugs and excessive drinking and smoking.

### TAKING CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

- Learn about normal and abnormal reactions to disasters. Don't ignore your own emotions. Know when to seek help. Do things you find relaxing.

### TAKING CARE OF YOUR SPIRITUAL SELF

- Make time to reflect. Meditate. Pray. Find spiritual connection or community.

### INCREASING YOUR RESILIENCY

- Do something that will help you to regain a sense of control. Focus on your strengths and positive coping skills.

### REACHING OUT

- Express your feelings. If you feel overwhelmed reach out. Do not be afraid to accept help. For support call 1-800-LIFENET.

### REMAINING ACTIVE

- Go back to your normal activities as soon as it feels comfortable to do so.

### MANAGING YOUR WORKLOAD

- Maintain a healthy balance between your work and rest. Take breaks and time off. Prioritize your tasks.

### REDUCING YOUR STRESS

- Do things you find comforting: exercise, read, listen to music. Be with people whose company you enjoy. Practice stress reducing exercises.

**For mental health referrals call LifeNet, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day at 1800-LifeNet. LifeNet staff are mental health professionals who speak a variety of languages.**