



It's ok to not be ok.

OVA will provide you with notifications regarding the offender's status throughout the state criminal justice system, including your opportunity to provide comments to the PA Parole Board. These notifications are important; however, they may cause significant emotional distress, anxiety and fear. This is a normal response to an abnormal situation.

The following feelings and responses - and more - are common, and we are here to assist you.

- shock, disbelief, confusion
- grief, denial, depression
- feelings of detachment
- fatigue, nausea, dizziness
- anxiety, panic
- withdrawal from social activities, family and friends
- poor concentration and disorientation
- flashbacks or feeling like the trauma is occurring now
- headaches, lack of sleep, elevated heart rate
- difficulty experiencing common daily events

Figuring out how to take care of yourself and protect yourself when you experience these responses can help you cope in a healthy way. We call this **self-care**. Self-care doesn't just mean making a plan; it also means putting that plan into action.



Self-Care

For many victims/survivors and families, life has forever changed. Life may feel empty and lonely. What seemed important before may not seem important now. The path to healing is different for everyone. Often times, for survivors and others affected by crime, healing leads to a desire to help others. If you have a desire to speak out or access restorative justice services, please contact our office.

Remember to honor how you feel. Being over burdened can lead to under productivity. Practice saying no in a way that you feel comfortable. Counseling can also be incredibly valuable.

Emotional

Moving your body is great for lowering stress and clearing your mind. It's important to eat healthy, exercise in some way, and get plenty of sleep.

Physical

Spending time on a hobby or interest is an investment in yourself. This looks different for everyone, but it is important to not feel guilty about self-care.

Personal

Engaging in something nurturing to your soul is considered spiritual self-care. This can be with a local religious organization, but it may also be spending time in nature.

Spiritual

Quality time with another human being (or beings) can be rejuvenating. Invest in building relationships that bring you comfort and peace.

Social

Treating yourself can be as simple as spending time doing something you enjoy that isn't easy to find time for in your normal routine.

Pampering

Remember, these overwhelming feelings and reactions will not be with you forever. As you invest in yourself, you will continue to grow and evolve. Life may never look like it did before, but there is a place beyond the pain. Hope never leaves us.

OVA is here to support you. Reach us at 800.563.6399 or RA-OVAinfo@pa.gov.