

General Public in Emergency

What you feel — normal. What you do — matters.



ISRAEL TRAUMA COALITION
response. preparedness. resilience.

You live in a reality no one chose. Fear, pain, anger, confusion — **all of these are normal responses to an abnormal situation.** There is no "right" way to feel. This guide will help you identify, understand, and act — even in the heart of the crisis.

☺ Normalization — What you may be experiencing, and that's okay

😰 Fear & Anxiety

- Worry about what might happen
- Racing heart, difficulty breathing
- Recurring thoughts about danger
- Trouble sleeping, nightmares

😞 Sadness & Pain

- Grief over what has changed
- Longing for routine and security
- Crying without a clear reason
- Heaviness and deep fatigue

😡 Anger & Frustration

- Anger at the situation or leadership
- Sense of unfairness
- Irritability toward loved ones
- Frustration over lack of control

😵 Confusion & Dissociation

- Difficulty concentrating, mental fog
- Feeling "not yourself"
- Forgetting everyday things
- Difficulty making decisions

😴 Sleep & Energy

- Disturbed sleep, waking at night
- Fatigue even after sleeping
- Low energy, appetite changes
- Wanting to sleep more than usual

🩸 Physical Reactions

- Muscle tension, headaches
- Nausea, stomach pain, tremors
- Changes in breathing
- Skin symptoms, rashes

Important: These reactions are **biology, not weakness.** The brain and body respond to a real threat. Most people recover naturally once the situation improves. **You are stronger than you think.**

⚠️ When to Worry — Signs of Distress Worth Noticing

🔴 Emotional Signs

- Overwhelming anxiety that doesn't ease
- Deep sadness and persistent emptiness
- Thoughts of self-harm or complete hopelessness
- Prolonged disconnection from surroundings

🔴 Behavioral Signs

- Not leaving home for many days
- Neglecting eating, sleep, or hygiene
- Turning to alcohol or substances
- Complete social isolation; unable to function

🔴 Physical Warning Signs

- Not sleeping for 3+ consecutive nights
- Increased physical pain with no medical cause
- Persistent breathing difficulties or rapid heartbeat

🔴 Requires Immediate Attention

- Thoughts of self-harm — seek help NOW
- Complete detachment from reality
- Unable to care for yourself or your children
- Feeling you are endangering yourself

🛠️ Coping Tools — What Helps in an Emergency

♥ Emotional — Recognize & Contain

- Accept what you feel — without judgment
- Name the emotion: "I'm scared," "I'm sad"
- Write what you feel — journaling releases tension
- Remember: feelings pass, even the strongest ones

✓ Behavioral — Act & Maintain Routine

- Keep basic routine: sleep, food, movement
- Limit news — twice a day, 30 minutes max
- Do one thing you enjoy every day
- Complete a small task — sense of achievement

💎 Cognitive — Manage Thoughts

- Separate facts from imagination
- Ask: "What do I know for certain now?"
- Focus on one thing, not everything at once

🌀 Physical — Release Tension

- Deep breathing — 4 in, 7 hold, 8 out
- Walk, stretch, light movement
- Cold water on face — reduces arousal

👥 Social — Connect

- Share with one close person
- Be near others — even in silence
- Help someone — gives sense of meaning

🌀 Calming Breath — 4-7-8 (30 seconds)

Inhale
4 sec



Hold
7 sec



Exhale
8 sec



Repeat
3-4 x

Can be done anywhere — in the safe room, outdoors, at work. Reduces nervous arousal within minutes.

📍 Grounding — 5-4-3-2-1 (When Overwhelmed)

5 things you SEE

4 you FEEL

3 you HEAR

2 you SMELL

1 you TASTE

Returns the brain to the present moment and reduces panic.

In the Protected Room (Safe Room) — Practical Tools for Difficult Moments

Remember: The protected room is the **safest place**. Fear is natural — but it can be managed. These tools help with self-regulation even under maximum stress.

🚨 Fear of Missiles & Sirens

- Remind yourself: the room protects you
- Count backwards from 10 — focuses the mind
- Say: "I'm safe now, the room is protecting me"
- Hold a familiar object — ball, blanket, toy

🚪 Claustrophobia

- Stand close to the door — that's allowed
- Focus on a fixed point in the distance
- Slow, long breaths — lungs expanding
- Remember: temporary; the door opens soon

👤 Fear of Crowding

- Find "your corner" — even a small one
- Put on headphones — creates personal space
- Talk to one person — connecting and calming
- Take a small responsibility in the group

😱 Acute Panic

- Sit on the floor — low = stable
- Place hands on belly — feel the breath
- Say out loud: "I'm breathing, I'm here"
- 5-4-3-2-1: notice 5 things you can see

👨‍👩‍👧‍👦 With Children

- Stay calm — they read you
- Bring a game, book, crayons
- Sing together — regulating and connecting
- Give them a role: "Help me count"

👴 Elderly with War Memories

- "This is different — we are protected now"
- Share a memory — talking helps
- Hold someone's hand — feeling safer
- Take deep breaths together

📞 Mental Health & Resilience Support Lines

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National Resilience Center — Israeli Trauma Coalition

Referral to community services and local mental health support · israeltraumacoalition.org

sahar.org.il
SAHAR

Anonymous emotional support · 24/7 chat

1800-363-363
NATAL

Trauma & stress center · 24/7 · Free

1201

WhatsApp: 052-8451201

ERAN

Emotional first aid · 24/7 · Free · Also Arabic & Russian

02-5844457
Hadassah

Trauma care for children & youth

08-6552344
TAMAR

For the Arab community · Phone & WhatsApp

📍 Regional Resilience Centers

Sderot

08-6611150 / 08-6611140

Eshkol

08-9965264

Sdot Negev

050-5727378

Sha'ar HaNegev

051-2266275

Ashkelon

*2542

Hof Ashkelon

08-6576728

Aman (Netivot, Mercavim, Bnei Shimon)

055-3063863

Etzion

058-3989550

Ofakim

054-8220057

Yehuda

055-9534177 / 02-9969560

Shomron

055-2779285

Binyamin

106

Bedouin Community (South)
072-2212788



Wadi Ara Community Resilience Center

054-2296030



Always remember: Asking for help is **strength, not weakness**. You don't have to go through this alone. Mental health professionals are here for you.

➔ **5486 National Resilience Center**

<https://israeltraumacoalition.org>

Israeli Trauma Coalition