

Path to Coping

It is important to understand that each of us has different ways of coping with difficult news and situations. It is impossible to predict how you, your loved ones, and others may react.

There is no right or wrong way to feel. When you encounter difficult experiences you may feel such things as:

- **Shock** when you hear news that doesn't make sense to you.
- **Disbelief** that what happened is really true.
- **Helpless** because you may want to "fix" what happened, and are unable to do anything to change the outcome.
- **Sadness** about the news and compassion for the affected individuals, families, loved ones.
- **Anger** over the news and its implications.
- **Anxiety** because of all the unanswered questions you may have, or that others might ask of you.
- **Confusion** about the mix of feelings that you may be experiencing, especially when the feelings seem to come in waves.
- **Grief** because of this news and also because it may trigger memories of other losses.

Steps to take care of yourself include:

- **Seek out support** from friends, family or LifeMatters. Let people who care about you know what is helpful and what is not.
- **Avoid gossip.** Don't listen to it or engage it. Make others aware that engaging in gossip does not help.
- **Recognize** there may never be answers to some of the questions you and others may have regarding the situation.
- **Reflect** on what has helped you cope with difficult situations in the past, and determine if those are things that can help you now.
- **Engage** in healthy sleep, diet, and exercise routines.
- **Avoid** impulsive or destructive behaviors such as excessive drinking, eating, or drug use.
- **Limit your exposure** to media, online blogs or other forums that you may find upsetting if the event is in the news. Be aware of the potential that more news might unfold.
- **Be patient.** Give yourself time to heal. Give others time to heal.

*LifeMatters has professional counselors available 24 hours a day, every day of the year.
Call anytime at 1-800-634-6433 or visit us online at mylifematters.com.*

LifeMatters[®]
800-634-6433