

## STRESS REACTIONS

The signs and symptoms of a stress reaction may last a few days, a few weeks or a few months and occasionally longer depending on the severity of the traumatic event. With understanding and the support of loved ones the stress reactions usually pass more quickly. Occasionally, the traumatic event is so painful that professional assistance from a counselor may be necessary. This does not imply craziness or weakness. It simply indicates that the particular event was just too powerful for the person to manage by himself or herself.

Here are some VERY COMMON signs and signals of stress reaction:

PHYSICAL	COGNITIVE	EMOTIONAL	BEHAVIORAL	RELATIONAL	SPIRITUAL
Fatigue, nausea	Blaming someone	Anxiety	Change in relationships	Withdrawal from family, co-workers, colleagues	Questions about one's faith
Muscle tremors/twitches	Confusion	Guilt	Change in speech patterns		Self-blame, condemnation
Chest pain	Poor attention	Grief	Withdrawal/Isolation	Isolation or seeking support	Remorse and survivor guilt
Difficulty breathing	Heightened or lowered alertness	Denial	Emotional outbursts	Withdrawal from organizations & affiliations	Realization of personal vulnerability
Elevated blood pressure	Poor concentration	Severe panic (Rare)	Suspiciousness		Withdrawal from faith or religion
Rapid heart rate	Memory problems	Emotional shock	Loss/increase of appetite	Media response	Concerns about reality of eternity
Thirst	Hyper-vigilance	Fear	Abuse of alcohol	Monetary stress	Anger at God
Headaches	Difficulty identifying familiar objects or people	Inappropriate emotional response	Hyper-alert to environment	Uncertainty of one's employment status	Questions about evil in the world
Visual difficulties	Increased/decreased awareness of surroundings	Loss of emotional control	Inability to rest	Discontinuation of educational goals or lack of motivation	Coping with fears of the unknown: "what if"
Vomiting	Poor problem-solving skills	Depression	Intensified pacing	"Red Tape Stress" – Social Security, criminal justice system, state/federal agencies, healthcare providers, insurance companies	Searching for meaning and hope
Grinding of teeth	Diminished abstract thinking skills	Apprehension	Change/diminished work habits		Seeking justice
Weakness	Loss of time, place, or person orientation	Uncertainty	Non-specific health complaints		Standing firm on faith and prayer
Dizziness	Disturbed thinking	Feeling overwhelmed	Erratic movements		
Profuse sweating	Nightmares	Intense anger	Change in sexual functioning		
Chills	Intrusive images	Irritability	Isolation		
Shock symptoms	ECT.	Agitation	Startle reflex		
Fainting		ECT.	ETC.		
ETC.					