



News Release

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Are You Ready? Part II

Tampa, Fla. (August 1, 2008). Hurricane season and even the occurrence of tropical storms and depressions can affect us. Part I (written in July, 2008) described some common physical, emotional, mental and behavior responses. This article will address some effective ways to deal with changes in each of these four areas by taking care of yourself. So if you, or a family member is experiencing distress, these are some steps you might take:

- **Care for yourself by eating at least three balanced meals even if you do not feel like it. Try to avoid the “easy way” of eating any of the “fast foods” that are full of carbohydrates that use refined sugar, caffeine, or chocolate. Try to eat protein, healthy carbohydrates, vegetables and fruits.**
- **Do not use nicotine, alcohol, drugs or over-the-counter medications to “self medicate”. If you feel you need any type of medication, confer with a medical doctor.**
- **Hydrate yourself by drinking water. Alcohol, coffee, tea and soda may be “wet” but if they contain caffeine, you get further dehydrated from the “inside out.”**
- **Try to maintain as much of a routine as possible. This results in you having a sense of getting some degree of control back into your life.**

- **Avoid isolating yourself from others. Having a good support system in place will help to reduce your distress.**
- **Remember that a traumatic event affects energy, concentration, and resilience. Your reaction is unique to you. Take on what you know you can manage in terms of what you choose to do.**
- **Understand that getting over a traumatic event takes time. Most people have to deal with practical issues like food, water, housing etc. And only then are able to deal with the emotional and behavioral side of things.**
- **Seek help from a medical professional if you are experiencing physical distress or speak with a counselor if you find that you are feeling too overwhelmed.**

Remember that the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a benefit available to all employees and dependents of companies contracted with Wood & Associates for providing confidential free professional assistance 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. Remember that you or a dependent may contact the EAP regarding any concern that you might have – you don't have to wait until a problem becomes big to seek help. Above all, keep in mind that concerns develop over time but the way you address them can be changed. So, if you are faced with a traumatic event and applying the above strategies does not relieve your distress and are not sure where to turn or what you should do, help is just a phone call away. So, if you are concerned about how you might be or may already have been impacted by any traumatic event and are not sure where to turn or what you should do, help is just a phone call away.

About Wood & Associates

Wood & Associates is an Employee Assistance Program and behavioral health consulting firm that helps employers maintain productivity, safety and behavioral health in the workplace. Wood & Associates is a pioneer in the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) industry and has served employers and

employees in the greater Tampa Bay area and nationwide since 1982. The firm's diverse group of clients includes a number of major employers who also contract for its mental health and substance abuse services.

Gary L. Wood, Psy.D., founder of the Wood & Associates consulting practice, is a pioneer in the field of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services. Since 1979, his practice has centered on providing solutions to employee and organizational problems. Wood is a licensed clinical psychologist, a member of the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology, and a graduate of Rutgers University, West Georgia College and Mercer University.

Patricia N. Alexander earned a Ph.D. in mental health counseling at the University of Florida. Trained in critical incident stress management through the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, she is a Florida Licensed Mental Health Counselor and nationally certified counselor. Through her work experience she has addressed all types of critical incident situations, including explosions, multiple homicides, suicides, line-of-duty deaths, serious accidents and robberies. Alexander conducts training on stress management for law enforcement and businesses, and has developed peer support programs for law enforcement and industry. Alexander is an educator and consultant on a wide variety of behavioral health concerns.