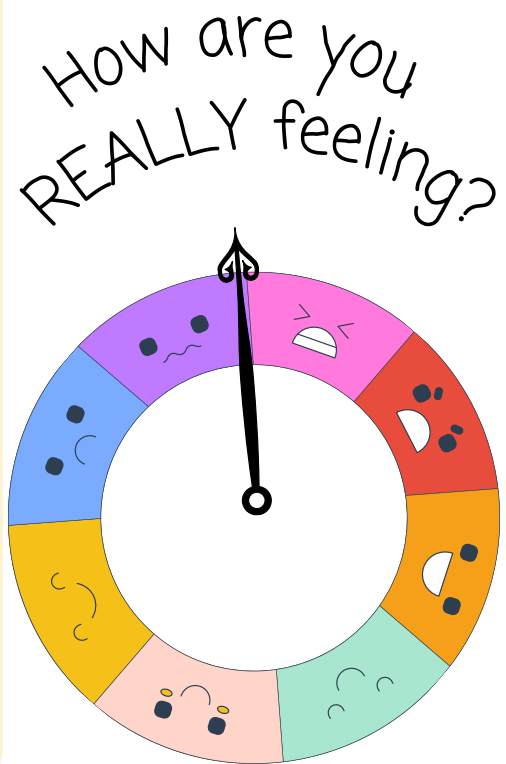


Self-Care Strategies after a Crisis in the Community

Coping with a crisis that affects your community can be deeply stressful. You or your loved ones may have been physically impacted, and concerns about the safety of others can weigh heavily. At times, the way the broader community responds may also add to this stress. This guide offers practical ways to support your well-being during and after a crisis.

Validate Your Experience

- **Pause & Check in:** Everyone experiences crisis differently. You may feel strong emotions, or you may feel relatively unaffected. Both are valid. Sometimes shock sets in first, and you might not recognize the stress right away. Taking a few moments to pause and check in with yourself can help you better understand what you need.
- **It's OK to Struggle:** Balancing academic responsibilities while worrying about family, friends, and your community is incredibly hard. Your concern and emotional distress are normal responses to abnormal circumstances. Give yourself some grace by considering what you would say to a close friend facing the same struggles, and offering those same words to yourself.



Stay Connected with Others

- **Lean on each other:** Stay connected with people who provide supportive presence, like friends, family, or neighbors. Social support plays an important role in helping people cope with and recover from stressful situations.
- **Use support :** If being in public places or traveling feels distressing, consider going with someone you trust or in a group until you feel more at ease.

Support Others while Taking Care of Yourself

- **Reach out and check in:** If you're worried about loved ones or others affected, connecting with them can provide comfort and support for both of you.
- **Take care of yourself too:** Supporting others matters, and so does your own well-being. Try to balance caring for others with caring for yourself, especially if you're in a helper role.



Be Mindful of Media and Messaging






- **Choose information carefully:** Be cautious of news or commentary that blames or scapegoats entire groups of people for the actions of an individual. These messages can harm community connection and may increase fear and tension.
- **Limit exposure to distressing content:** Reduce time spent viewing graphic images or videos on the news or social media, especially if you find yourself doomscrolling.

Care for Yourself in Small Ways

- **Ways to help your body relax:** Techniques like slow breathing, imagery, or muscle relaxation can help reduce stress and bring a sense of calm.
- **Notice coping patterns:** You may feel tempted to use alcohol, tobacco or other substance to manage stress, but increasing use can make it harder to cope over time.



TIPS TO HELP MANAGE YOUR *Unquiet Mind*

-  Find **five** things you can **see**.
-  Find **four** things you can **touch**.
-  Find **three** things you can **hear**.
-  Find **two** things you can **smell**.
-  Find **one** thing you can **taste**.

Emotional First-aid

- **Grounding Exercise (5-4-3-2-1 Skill):** when you are in a crisis or feel out of control, this exercise can help bring down the intensity of your emotion until you can use your usual self-care strategies and seek emotional support. Use it when you are in extreme distress, when you are at your max and need something now.

Want More Skills Like this?

Scan the QR code below to access the **Virtual Hope Box**:



Or

Request a **physical hope box** at University Counseling Service



Schedule an Appt at UCS



Watch for Red Flags

- **Be aware of potential red flags:** If you're unable to get out of bed, aren't eating or sleeping well, or are falling far behind, please reach out to **University Counseling Service (UCS) at 319-335-7294** for professional support. Your well-being matters, and there are resources to help.
- **Let Yourself Receive Help:** Talking to someone, even briefly, can help lighten the emotional load.

If you're in crisis and need to speak with someone immediately, please utilize the following 24/7 resources:

• **UI Support and Crisis Line:**

- Call/text: 844-461-5420

• **Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:**

- Call/text: 988

• **The Trevor Project:**

- Text "start" to 678-678
- Call: 1-866-488-7386

• **BlackLine**

- Call: 1-800-604-5841
- A space for peer support

• **GuideLink Access Center**

- 300 Southgate Ave.
- Call: 319-688-800

• **UIHC Emergency Room**

• **Call 911**

Don't know where to start and are looking to think through next steps?

Connect with Student Care and Assistance:

- Call 319-335-1162 or email: dos-assistance@uiowa.edu

For On-line Peer Support



Togetherall is an online community where students can share their thoughts and feelings anonymously and safely with peers around the U.S and abroad.

It provides a supportive peer environment with around-the-clock supervision by licensed mental health professionals.





Let's Talk, Hawks! is an informal drop-in service offered by the University Counseling Service (UCS). You can learn mental health skills and resources, share your mental health concerns, work on problem solving together, or ask questions about counseling and UCS.

Let's Talk, Hawks! Conversations are:

- Open to all students
- First come, first served
- Brief—up to 15 minutes
- Informal—no paperwork to be completed
- Not counseling or a crisis service

**Scan the QR code to
book a 15-minute 1-on-1
informal conversation
with a UCS therapist**

