

## Coping while sitting on the sidelines

The Earthquake in Haiti has left many family members and friends outside of Haiti worried about those they care about and love.

Dealing with your own feelings of stress, worry, anxiety, helplessness, sorrow, frustration is one of your most important challenges in the coming days and weeks.

**Concrete steps to take to try and find out about the safety of those in Haiti.**

- Cell phones and text messages are always worth a try. But they are unlikely to work for some time.
- The U.S. State Department (888-407-4747) is a resource to use when trying to find U.S. citizens believed to be in Haiti. Be patient as it may take some time to speak to a representative.
- For Haitian nationals, the Embassy of Haiti can be contacted at **(202) 232-4090**
- For nationals of other countries, contact the Embassy for that country
- Consider contacting other people in the U.S. or abroad who may be in touch with someone in Haiti.

***It may take some time before you are able to learn about loved ones.***

## Some tips to help with feelings:

Be aware that everyone has different ways of coping. Some people will try to carry on “business as usual” or act as though nothing has happened. Others may be very emotional and find it difficult to focus or stop crying, have trouble sleeping, eating or carrying on with everyday activity.

Everything in between these two extremes is possible and would be considered quite normal.

- ***Focusing on basic self care is important and helpful:***
  - Sleeping, eating, exercising, avoiding non-prescribed drugs and alcohol
- ***Focus on things you can control and “let go” of things beyond your control.***
- ***Spend time with people and do things that you find comforting. This is very individual.***
  - Stay in contact with friends & family
  - Continue personal spiritual practices
  - Listen to music
  - Exercise
  - Focus attention on something such as a hobby



**Check in with your immediate family, and those to whom you are closest. See if they need information and support. They may be concerned about the same people in Haiti that you are thinking about.**

- ***Provide age appropriate information to children.***

*Keep a focus on basic self care and routines. Be more flexible and provide extra comfort. Don't worry if you see some acting out. It is a common way for children to express their anxiety.*
- ***Let other people around you know if you are struggling.***

*You don't need to continue to talk about it if you do not want to. Try to let other people close to you know, even if you don't want to talk about it. It will help them understand some of your behavior and enable them to give you space or other support that might be of help.*
- ***If you or a family member continue to have trouble coping, consider contacting:***
  - a doctor to discuss medications and activity that may help
  - the **Aetna EAP, we can help**

**Aetna Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**

**1-888-238-6232**

**TTY-TDD 866-843-6323**

