

Skills for Psychological Recovery Overview and Review of Skills



Skill	Goals	Rationale	Steps
Gathering Information and Prioritizing Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To gather information to determine if there is a need for immediate referral within your agency or to other services ■ To understand the survivor's most pressing needs and concerns ■ To prioritize and plan SPR intervention strategies 	<p>In the post-disaster period, survivors often deal with ongoing distress and may need assistance with immediate or long-term medical or mental health conditions, be faced with a range of hardships and adversities, have concerns about safety, and experience difficulties in interpersonal interaction and role functioning. Gathering information is the first step in assisting survivors to identify and prioritize their current needs and concerns in order to address them.</p>	<p>After explaining the rationale for information gathering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify current needs and concerns 2. Prioritize areas to address 3. Make an action plan
Building Problem-Solving Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To help survivors to prioritize and solve difficulties or problems 	<p>Disasters often create many difficulties that can make survivors feel helpless or even immobilized in the face of numerous problems. Ongoing stress and pressures to “do something” can make it hard to step back and think effectively about the best way to handle a situation. Having a systematic way to solve problems can help survivors address problems more effectively, regain a sense of control, and increase their self-efficacy.</p>	<p>After explaining the rationale for problem- solving:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define the problem/decide ownership 2. Set the goal 3. Brainstorm 4. Evaluate and choose the best solutions
Promoting Positive Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To help survivors plan and engage in positive, pleasurable, or meaningful activities to improve their mood and regain a sense control 	<p>Disasters often disrupt normal routines and activities that provide a sense of purpose, control, and pleasure. When survivors identify, schedule, and engage in positive, pleasurable, or meaningful activities, it helps them reestablish routines, improve their mood, and restore a sense of control.</p>	<p>After explaining the rationale for engaging in positive activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and plan one or more activities 2. Schedule activities in a calendar

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Managing Reactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To enhance skills to calm upsetting physical and emotional reactions ■ Learn new strategies to deal with reactions to stressful situations, including reminders ■ Put words to difficult experiences to better understand and manage distress 	<p>Disaster survivors may experience upsetting physical and emotional reactions that often arise in confronting disaster-related experiences and reminders of the disaster, as well as ongoing stress or life changes. These reactions can adversely affect mood, decision-making, interpersonal life, daily functioning, and physical health. Learning skills to address and manage these reactions can help protect physical and mental health, improve self-confidence, enhance interpersonal and role functioning, and reduce maladaptive attempts at coping.</p>	<p>After explaining the rationale for learning how to manage distressing reactions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify distressing reactions and their triggers 2. Teach skills to address distressing reactions 3. Create a plan to manage a reaction
Promoting Helpful Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To help survivors identify what they are saying to themselves about the disaster experience or their current situation ■ To help survivors choose less distressing ways of thinking ■ NOTE: Helpful thinking is not positive thinking. ■ Negative thoughts may be accurate (“The government let us down”), but these thoughts are likely to create helplessness and distress vs. thinking more helpful thoughts (“Life isn’t fair, but I can get through it with some help”). 	<p>Many survivors struggle with distressing disaster-related thoughts as they try to adjust to post-disaster circumstances. These negative thoughts help maintain negative emotions such as fear, hopelessness, anger, anxiety, sadness, and guilt. Identifying and practicing more helpful ways of thinking can improve mood and reduce the intensity of distressing emotional and physical reactions.</p>	<p>After explaining the rationale for helpful thinking:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify unhelpful thoughts 2. Identify helpful thoughts 3. Rehearse helpful thoughts 4. Assign practice of helpful thoughts
Building Healthy Social Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To increase connections to positive relationships and to community supports 	<p>Social support from family, friends, and community members enhances recovery after a disaster by helping survivors meet their emotional and practical needs.</p>	<p>After explaining the rationale for healthy social connections:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a social connections map 2. Review the social connections map 3. Make a social support plan