

Transform your Life with Dr. Shana

I inspire change *but* I teach *transformation*



How to Survive Hurricane Harvey

Tips to understand the storms impact

- This was a shared traumatic event that the entire city of Houston experienced whether our homes were flooded or not
- We were helpless as we watched our city be overtaken by water and we watched family, friends and strangers be on the brink of devastation and we couldn't do anything about it at the time
- The entire city needs to recover emotionally
- First responders or those who are helping others need to be aware of their emotional health especially if you were in the storm as well

Tips to manage the emotional distress from the storm

****Limit television coverage of Hurricane Harvey if possible****

1. **SELF CARE** using the **The 4 F's to manage stress:**
 - **Fitness**— Regular aerobic exercise helps you control stress. Aerobic exercise also produces endorphins- a chemical which creates a euphoric feeling. To get moving you can simply take a walk outdoors or take the steps instead of the elevator, run the stairs in

your home, do floor exercises, use fitness videos or cable fitness channels, etc

➤ **Food—Dietary Changes**

- ❖ Reduce sugar and fat intake (these foods simulate the stress response)
- ❖ Reduce red meat intake
- ❖ Reduce caffeine intake (Caffeine triggers a mini stress response)
- ❖ Reduce salt intake (Salt can lead to high blood pressure)
- ❖ Reduce liquor intake (Liquor can interfere with sleep and can lead to addictions/ added stress)
- ❖ Increase the intake of B12/stress complex Vitamins (These supplements build synapses in the brain and help facilitate the efficient transmission of electrical signals to the brain)

➤ **Forty Winks**—Work to get 6 to 8 hours of sleep nightly as soon as possible. If you are displaced this is more difficult and you will need to use more techniques to improve your sleep. Use relaxation techniques including meditation, deep breathing, exercise (stretching, yoga, etc.), mindfulness (being in the moment) or thought dumping (Keep a note pad next to your bed and jot down any thoughts you have that are keeping you from sleeping. This will get them out of your head and allow the mind to be clearer so you can rest)

➤ **Fun**—Purposefully spend time with family or friends and positive support networks. LAUGH! Laughter also produces a sense of euphoria, triggered by the release of endorphins. Choose to watch

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TV that is light and funny such as comedies. Limit news and other heavy and distressing media. This may include social media as well.

2. Ask for help—It is impossible to do this alone!!
3. Talk about it (seek professional help if needed)
4. Get organized/create a plan (if possible have someone else assist you with this as it can be overwhelming)
5. Change scenery or take breaks when possible when working or include music in your work environment
6. Connect to your power source

Tips on how to deal with loss of belongings and/or home

1. This loss has a similar impact as the loss of a loved one
2. The grief process can occur—STAGES: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance
3. Acceptance is the stage when one creates new meaning from what was lost. This may take years.
4. Everyone goes thru this process differently and in varying amounts of time

Tips on how to talk with your kids about the storm

1. Know that children may be highly anxious and emotionally sensitive, perhaps more clingy etc.
2. Stop children from watching the news
3. Ask them what they are thinking and how they feel
4. Ask if they have questions
5. Provide honest information that is age appropriate and sensitive to their emotional vulnerability

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6. Reassure them that this hurricane is not a normal occurrence and that they are safe
7. Return to a normal routine as soon as possible

Tips on how to provide help to storm survivors

1. Be gentle—remember they are in a crisis and possibly not thinking clearly because they are overwhelmed
2. When helping be sure to offer specific assistance—the generic “Let me know if you need something” is not very helpful when someone is in shock from a crisis. They may not know what they need. An alternative is to speak to the person who is coordinating the recovery/rebuild effort for the storm victim and ask them what is needed.
3. Tell the victim 2 or 3 things that you can do to help and let them decide if any of those might be helpful for them
4. Sometimes just being there to listen is all you can do
5. When you show up to their home just look around and get busy—don’t ask a million questions—that only adds stress!

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