

EFFECTS OF VICTIMIZATION

Crime victims can experience a number of symptoms and common effect following a violent or sexual crime. This information sheet serves to highlight some of the most common. Not all individuals will experience the same symptoms/effects, or they may not experience them to the same degree. You may experience some or all of these, as well as some symptoms that may not be included. Your work with a therapist will help you to identify and address your specific experiences.

POSSIBLE EMOTIONAL EFFECTS

- Disbelief or shock
- Anxiety or nervousness
- Fear
- Sadness or depression
- Anger or irritability
- Guilt or shame
- Feeling emotionally numb
- Grief
- Feeling lost or abandoned; Feeling disconnected, isolated, estranged from others

POSSIBLE PHYSICAL EFFECTS

- Feeling nauseous or upset stomach
- Difficulty with appetite
- Experiencing tremors or the shakes; experiencing chills or sweats
- Difficulty with, or lack of, coordination
- Chest pains, heart palpitations, or difficulty with blood pressure
- Difficulty breathing
- Panic or anxiety attacks
- Headaches
- Sleep disturbances such as inability to fall or stay asleep; Nightmares
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded or disconnected from body
- Heightened or decreased sensitivity to pain
- Strong startle response

POSSIBLE COGNITIVE OR MENTAL EFFECTS

- Confusion; disorientation
- Difficulty processing information or making decisions
- Difficulty with concentration
- Memory issues
- Intrusive, uncontrollable, racing, or persistently negative thoughts

POSSIBLE SOCIAL OR BEHAVIORAL EFFECTS

- Lack of involvement with outside world
- Difficulty trusting others
- Difficulty with intimacy (physical, emotional, sexual, etc.)
- Avoidance of certain people, places, events, activities, etc. that might trigger memories of the trauma
- Spending more time and energy monitoring surroundings for possible danger
- Withdrawal from social situations
- Loss of interest and/or motivation to participate in social activities
- Decreased or blunted feelings of joy or pleasure when participating in activities of daily living
- Increased desire or effort to self-medicate with substances, sex, food, etc.
- Thoughts or actions of self-harm
- Thoughts or actions of suicide
- Engaging in risky behavior

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