



Trauma Support

2012



Discovery Health recognises the importance of trauma support and counselling for anyone who has experienced an extraordinary event. This document will explain the care and support we provide to your clients and their loved ones when faced with the after-effects of a traumatic event.

Understanding trauma

Trauma happens when a person is exposed to an extraordinary situation that causes physical and emotional after-effects. Someone doesn't have to be hurt to have experienced trauma. Witnessing any type of personal or environmental disaster or being threatened with an assault are also traumatic incidents.

Being overwhelmed by a traumatic incident provokes responses like intense fear, helplessness and horror. Everyone reacts differently when we experience a traumatic event. It's a normal reaction for a person to feel and be super-stressed after going through a traumatic event. A person doesn't walk away from a trauma without experiencing a painful reaction.

Trauma affects one's emotional reactions and thought process. The following emotions strongly manifest as part of trauma:

- Panic
- Fear
- Shock
- Helplessness
- Loneliness
- Depression
- Grief
- Denial

A person who has experienced trauma, often also behaves differently than normal, like:

- Finding it difficult to make decisions
- Having a feeling of losing control
- Finding it difficult to concentrate
- Withdrawing socially
- Having recurring flashbacks to the trauma
- Blaming others
- Forgetting easily
- Exhibiting impulsive, erratic behaviour

Such a person can even have physical problems after the trauma, such as:

- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Elevated blood pressure
- Headaches
- Gastrointestinal disturbances (diarrhoea, constipation, abdominal cramps)

These emotions and responses are normal and usually just a temporary reaction to an overwhelming event.

About why we've established Discovery Trauma Support

Any one of us can land up in a crisis or traumatic incident within the blink of an eye. It is how we deal with our natural response of panic, shock and fear that makes the difference.

Discovery Health knows that if its members can deal with trauma in the right way immediately, any physical or emotional symptoms will run its course without causing long-term harm. The right care and support also will help your clients to return to their routines and leave them prepared to deal with the aftermath of other traumatic events or crises.

Discovery Trauma Support reaches out to all members

To give support in times of need and identify trauma early on, Discovery Health has partnered with ER24 to bring Discovery Trauma Support to the members of all the medical schemes we administer.

Available in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban and Cape Town, this service gives your clients and their families extra support in a time of crisis. At Discovery Trauma Support, trained counsellors are available night and day to provide telephonic or face-to-face counselling.

Whether it is the death of a loved one, attempted suicide, domestic violence, sexual assault or trauma after a crime, the Discovery Trauma Support counsellors are there to provide support to your clients.

Your clients and their families have the support of counsellors if they've experienced any of the following events:

- Death, natural or unnatural
- Attempted suicide
- Domestic violence
- Sexual assault
- Crime, either during or after the crime incident

The Discovery trauma counsellors also provide support during death notifications, and assist your clients after an accident and while they are in hospital.

In trauma or a crisis

Call Discovery Trauma Support on 0860 999 911

Discovery Trauma Support is available to assist your clients 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Mobile, face-to-face counselling by trained counsellors is made possible by our fleet of dedicated Discovery Trauma Support vehicles.