

Take Care of Your Emotional Health This Hurricane Season

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GUAYNABO, Puerto Rico – Disasters can take an emotional toll on survivors that may last long after the event is over. It's normal to experience stress and worry about what can happen when a new hurricane season starts.

Accepting how you feel and taking care of your emotional health are key to preparing effectively for the 2019 hurricane season. Some of the signs that you are experiencing disaster-related stress include:

- Sadness or feelings of hopelessness
- Difficulty sleeping
- Poor work performance
- Difficulty concentrating or communicating thoughts
- Headaches/stomach problems
- Disorientation or confusion

Even small changes can make a difference.

- **Take care of yourself** - Something as simple as adding a short walk or meditation to your routine can help you feel better. Try to eat healthier and get enough sleep.
- **Take a break** - Take time to do activities that you enjoy. Take deep breaths and pause to remind yourself that the way you feel today is not permanent.
- **Express your feelings and connect with others** - Talk to someone about your feelings, even when it may be difficult. Spend time with family and friends.



- **Stay informed, but do so wisely -** Knowing what may happen during an emergency can help ease your stress. Watch the news for official updates from reliable sources. Don't overexpose yourself to news that may trigger feelings from past experiences related to disasters.
- **Seek help when needed -** Don't be afraid of reaching out for help. Seek counseling if you or someone in your family is experiencing issues with disaster-related stress. Doctors, counselors, support groups or religious institutions can help you cope.

Another important step is preparing your emergency kit for this hurricane season. Gather enough food and water for at least 10 days for each member in your household and make a family plan. Being prepared can reduce stress.

If your emotional health gets worse or persists for prolonged periods of time, it might be helpful to get professional help. You can also seek help calling Línea PAS at 800-981-0023, TTY 888-672-7622.

For more information on hurricane preparedness, visit www.fema.gov/disaster/4339/hurricane-preparedness.

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Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362) 711/VRS - Video Relay Service). Multilingual operators are available. (Press 2 for Spanish). TTY call 800-462-7585.



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Page 3 of 3