



# Coping After Community Violence

## Coping With Grief

It is common for individuals and communities to undergo grief and anger following an episode of community violence. Grief is the typical reaction of sadness, emotion, and bewilderment that arises from losing someone or something significant. While most individuals naturally grieve after losing a loved one, grief and anger can stem from various other types of losses. In cases of community violence, individuals might lose their sense of safety, trust in their neighbors, or faith in local authorities. The trauma and grief from community violence can affect everyone involved.

After an episode of community violence, some of the physical reactions to grief and anger may include:

- Anger, feeling edgy or lashing out at others
- Overwhelming sadness
- Feeling like you have to keep busy
- Having difficulty readjusting to home or work life
- Lack of energy
- Not connecting with others
- Worrying a lot of the time
- Thinking about hurting yourself or something else

## Tips to Help with Grief

If you are feeling any of the above reactions, talking to others who understand and respect how you feel— family members, faith leaders, people you trust—is a helpful way to ease your grief. Recognize that the onset of difficult emotions may occur hours, days or even weeks after the event. No matter the timeline, those feelings are valid and they will likely be less and less intense over time. Other ways to help as you process your reactions include:

- Make sure to move your body and eat nutritious meals.
- Do the things that you used to enjoy doing, even if you don't always feel like it. This will help you get back into your routines.
- Allow yourself to feel joy at times and to cry when you need to.
- Seek professional help. If you have continued difficulties, consult a doctor or mental health professional.
- Limit social media and news exposure. Give your brain time to process the newfound grief and anger.
- Remember that what is traumatic for one person isn't always traumatic for another person. Everyone experiences trauma differently, but everyone's feelings are valid.

***You are not alone.***  
***Please seek help if you need it.***