

When something tragic happens close to home

When something really upsetting happens in your community, it can **shake how you see the world**.

Even if you weren't there, or didn't know the people involved, news like this can still hit hard. You might feel shocked, sad, angry, scared, numb – or all of these at once. **There's no "right" way to feel.**

Big events can make things suddenly feel unsafe or out of control. That reaction is human. And you're not weak for being affected.

Why it can feel so intense – even if it didn't happen to you

Hearing about violence, loss, or disaster can cause secondary trauma. That means your brain and body react to someone else's trauma, especially when the event feels close to home or reminds you of your own life.

You might notice:

- replaying details of the event in your head
- feeling jumpy, anxious or on edge
- having trouble sleeping or concentrating
- feeling flat, numb or disconnected
- worrying more about your own safety or the people you care about.

This doesn't mean something is wrong with you. It means your brain is trying to protect you by staying alert.

Grief isn't just about losing someone you know

Grief isn't only about death, and it doesn't only happen when you personally lose someone. You can grieve:

- people you didn't know but feel connected to
- a sense of safety or trust in the world
- the idea that bad things "won't happen here"

Grief can show up as sadness, but also as anger, confusion, guilt, fear, or even feeling nothing at all. It can come in waves. You might feel okay one moment and overwhelmed the next. **All of this is normal.**

It's okay to feel big feelings

Sometimes people say things like “try not to think about it” or “others have it worse.” Even if they mean well, those comments can make you feel like you should push your feelings away.

You don't have to do that.

Letting yourself **notice what you're feeling** – without judging it, is part of coping. Big feelings don't mean you're not coping, they mean something big has happened.

Things that can help when the news feels heavy

You can't control what happened, but there are things you can do to steady yourself.

Take breaks from the news

It's okay to stay informed, but constant scrolling can make everything feel more intense. Try **setting limits** – like checking updates once or twice a day instead of all the time.

Ground your body

When your body feels tense or shaky, **grounding** can help:

- Take **slow, deep breaths** (in through your nose, out through your mouth).
- Name five things you can see, four you can feel, three you can hear.
- **Move your body** – stretch, walk, or shake out tension .

Stick to routines

Keeping some **normal structure** (sleep, meals, school, hobbies) can help your brain feel safer, even when things feel uncertain.

Express what's inside

Talking, writing, drawing, listening to music or creating something can help feelings move instead of getting stuck. You don't need perfect words – just honesty.

Stay connected

Being around **people who feel safe** can make a big difference. That might be friends, family, teachers, or a counsellor. You don't have to explain everything – even sitting quietly together can help.

When things feel like too much

If the feelings aren't easing or are starting to affect your sleep, school, or relationships, extra support can help – especially if you're feeling constantly on edge, hopeless, or unsafe.

Talking things through with a trained counsellor can help you make sense of what you're feeling and find ways to cope that work for you. You deserve support, no matter how "close" or "far away" the event was.

You're not alone in this.

Tragic events can make the world feel darker – but they can also remind us how deeply people care. Feeling affected means you have empathy. And empathy is a strength.

Whatever you're feeling right now, it matters. And **help is available when you're ready.**

We're here for you. Anytime. Any reason

No problem is too big or too small.
We're here for you, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



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