

From Stanley Kim, Board Certified Chaplain
What to Expect after a Crisis

With an event like the shooting at Taiwanese Church, **experiencing some form of stress is to be expected.** What we need to be mindful of is how these stressors impact or alter our mood, behaviors, and our spirit.

Especially now that we have been living with the Covid pandemic for three years, we more or less have some form of cumulative stress that erodes our coping mechanisms we otherwise have which helps us when we experience a traumatic event.

Most symptoms of distress can be managed with constructive debriefing, therapy, along with healthy habits such as healthy eating, exercise, sleeping/resting.

Our goal should be to find/get back to a normal, balanced life. However, symptoms of distress can become a bigger issue if left unattended, and then there are more severe symptoms that we should consult a trained therapists and psychiatrists without delay. Following are more severe symptoms:

- Confusion (efforts at “dumbing down” terms)
- Difficulty in decision-making, that is a new issue that wasn’t there before.
- Difficulty in problem solving
- Inability to understand consequences of behavior
- Suicidal/homicidal thoughts
- Panic (often associated with self-medication)
- Pathological Grief
- Depression: decreased appetite, energy, sleep, sexual desire,
- Risk-taking
- Increased consumption of alcohol/substance use
- Increased Family discord
- Increased violence
- Anti-social behaviors
- Headaches
- Visual distortions
- Blood in stools, sputum, vomit, urine
- Chest pain
- Breathing difficulty
- Loss of consciousness
- Feeling abandoned by God
- Withdrawal from usual Spiritual/faith life
- Hallucinations of religious/spiritual nature

Sourced:

Emergency response to crisis, Mitchell & Resnik (1986)

Crisis Intervention, Slaikeu (1984)

Critical Incident Stress Management, Mitchell & Everly (2001)