



The For You series

🌸 TRAUMA AND ITS AFTERMATH

After something that hurt you

A gentle, plain guide for life after a frightening or deeply hurtful event: why your reactions are normal and not weakness, what trauma does, why it lingers, what truly helps, and how healing really works.

Who this is for: adults living after a frightening or deeply hurtful event, and the people who care about them.

Cited: NICE, NHS, and peer-reviewed research.

Languages: English, Hindi, Marathi, and Kannada.

Read it free at weave.clinic/family

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✿ WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING

Your reactions are normal

✿ IN SHORT

Something frightening or deeply hurtful happened to you, and what you are feeling since is a normal response to an abnormal event. It is not weakness, not madness, and not weak character. Reactions like these are common in the weeks after a hard event, and they can get better with the right help.

You may have been told to just move on, to be strong, to stop dwelling on it. You may have said the same things to yourself, and felt ashamed that you could not simply switch it off. The truth is gentler than that. When something overwhelming happens to a person, the mind and body react. That reaction is not a flaw in you.

It is common to carry some of these reactions in the days and weeks after a frightening or deeply hurtful event. They are the marks of having lived through something hard, not proof that something is wrong with who you are. What happened to you was real, and your reactions are a normal response to it, not a sign of weakness.

More, if you want it ^

There is an old, cruel idea that strong people are not affected by terrible things, and that being shaken means you are somehow lesser. It is simply not true. Soldiers, doctors, survivors of accidents and violence and loss, calm and capable people of every kind carry these reactions. Being affected by something overwhelming is part of being human, not a failure of nerve. Understanding that is not making excuses. It is the first honest step toward feeling steadier again.

● TRY THIS

Say this once, plainly, even if it feels strange: what happened to me was real, and the way I have been feeling since is a normal response, not a weakness. Notice how that sits compared with the things you may have been told, or told yourself. You are allowed to treat this as something to heal from, not a fault to hide.

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✿ WHAT TRAUMA DOES

When the alarm stays on

✿ IN SHORT

After a hard event the body's alarm system can stay switched on, as if the danger were still here. That can look like the event replaying in your mind. It can mean feeling on edge or easily startled, steering away from anything that reminds you, and feeling numb or cut off. Broken sleep, a short temper, and a low mood often come too.

Your body has an alarm built to protect you in danger. In a frightening moment it floods you with fear and readiness so you can survive. After trauma, that alarm can get stuck in the on position, firing long after the danger has passed, as if the threat were still in the room.

That can show up in a handful of ways. The event can come back uninvited, in vivid memories, sudden flashbacks, or nightmares that feel as real as the day it happened. You can feel constantly on edge, watchful, jumpy at small sounds. You can find yourself steering away from people, places, or anything that brings it back. And you can feel strangely numb, flat, or cut off from the people and the life around you. Broken sleep, a short fuse, and a heavy low mood often come along too. These are not random faults; they are an alarm system still trying to protect you.



The avoidance loop. A reminder brings the fear flooding back, so you steer away, which brings brief relief, but the alarm never gets the chance to settle, so the next reminder hits just as hard.

A reminder appears, even a small one.

The fear floods back as if the danger were here now.

You steer away from it, which brings a little relief.

But the alarm never settles, so the next reminder hits just as hard.

More, if you want it ^

None of these reactions mean you are broken or that you are going mad. A mind that replays a terrible event is trying, clumsily, to make sense of it. A body that stays on edge is trying to keep you safe. Numbness is the mind turning the volume down on feelings that were too much to bear. Each one made sense in the moment of danger. The problem is only that they have outstayed the danger, and that is exactly the part that can be helped.

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✿ WHY IT LINGERS

Why it does not just fade

✿ IN SHORT

An ordinary memory gets filed away as something that is over and in the past. A trauma memory often gets stored in a raw, unfinished way, so it keeps intruding as if it were still happening. Steering away from reminders brings relief in the moment. But it quietly keeps the memory stuck and the alarm switched on.

Most memories settle over time. The mind files them away with a clear stamp on them: this happened, it is over, it is in the past. A trauma memory often does not get filed that way. It gets stored raw and unfinished, without that stamp. So it keeps breaking back into the present as though the danger were here right now. That is why a smell, a sound, or a date can drag the whole thing back in an instant.

Reactions can begin straight after the event, or they can stay quiet and surface months, even years, later. For some people they ease on their own. For others they settle into an ongoing problem that makes ordinary life hard. The single thing that most keeps them going is understandable and very human: avoidance. Steering clear of the reminders brings real relief in the moment, but it never lets the alarm learn that the danger has passed, so the memory stays raw and the fear stays ready. Avoiding the reminders calms you for a moment, but it quietly keeps the fear alive.

● TRY THIS

For one week, without forcing anything, simply notice what your mind steers away from. A street, a topic, a photo, a kind of conversation. You are not making yourself face any of it yet, only noticing the shape of the avoidance. A doctor or counsellor can do a great deal more with "I cannot go near that part of town" than with "I just feel bad."

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✿ WHAT ACTUALLY HELPS

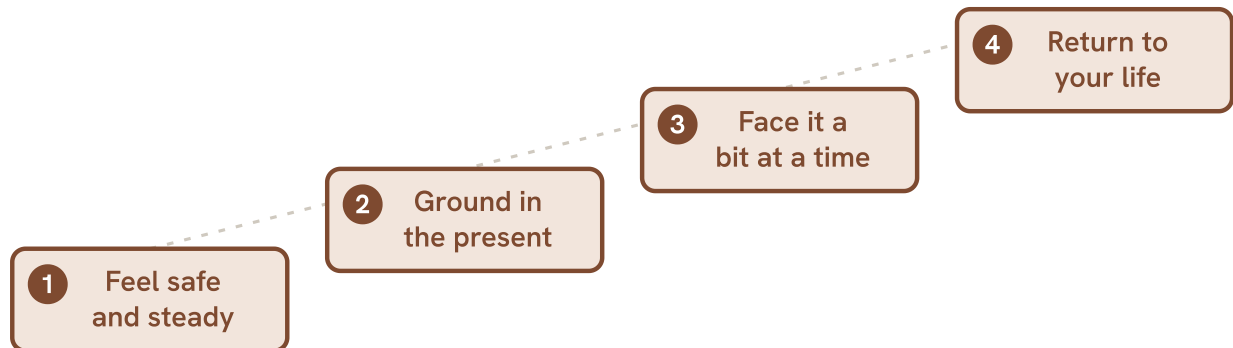
What truly helps

✿ IN SHORT

Help is real and it works. The proven path is not to grit your teeth and bury it. It is to feel safe and steady first, then learn to ground yourself in the present. From there, you face the memory and the reminders a little at a time instead of avoiding them. Trauma-focused talking therapies do this. For some people a doctor may add medicine.

The most effective treatments for trauma are trauma-focused talking therapies, and they work in a way that may surprise you. They do not ask you to relive the worst day over and over until you are numb. They help the mind finally file the memory as something that is over. And they help you face the reminders gently, in small steps, so the alarm can at last learn that the danger has passed.

Two of these therapies have the strongest backing. One is a trauma-focused form of talking therapy that works with the memory and the thoughts tied to it. The other, called EMDR, helps the brain reprocess the memory using guided eye movements. In careful trials, both clearly reduce trauma reactions compared with no treatment. The work almost always begins with safety and steadiness first, because you cannot process a memory while the alarm is screaming. You do not bury the memory; you help your mind finally file it as something that is over.



each step rests on the one before

Healing, step by step. You start with safety, learn to steady yourself, then face the memory a little at a time, and slowly return to the life you stepped back from. Each step rests on the one before.

First, feel safe and steady in the present.

Learn ways to ground yourself when the alarm fires.

Face the memory and the reminders a little at a time.

Slowly return to the parts of life you stepped back from.

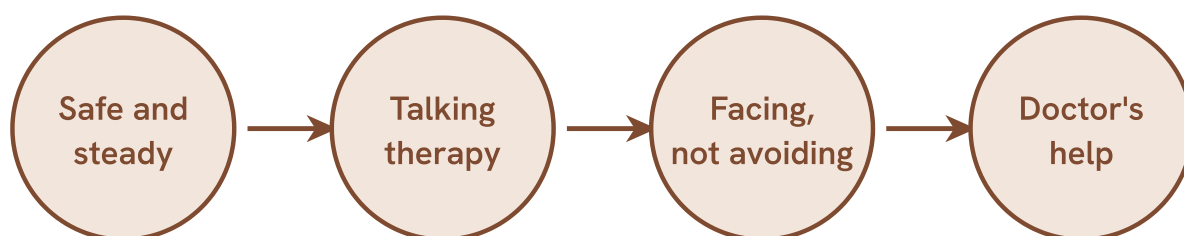


Anil, finding steady ground again.

Anil is 38 and works in Belagavi. A road accident two years ago left him jumpy at every horn, unable to drive the route where it happened, and oddly distant from his own family. He thought he was simply weak for not getting over it. What changed was unglamorous and gradual. With help he learned to steady himself first, then went back to the memory and the road in small, supported steps instead of avoiding them. The early weeks were uneven. But slowly the horn stopped meaning danger, the route became just a road again, and he felt himself return to the people he loves.

More, if you want it ^

Medicine can be part of the help, used thoughtfully. When trauma reactions are severe, or when they feed a heavy low mood or constant anxiety, a doctor may weigh offering tablets alongside therapy, talked through with you against the benefits and the downsides. Medicine is a tool to discuss with a doctor, not a thing to be ashamed of and not a thing to start on your own. For most people the lasting change comes from the therapy, with medicine as support where it is needed.



USED TOGETHER, AT YOUR OWN PACE

Things that help, used together. You build them at your own pace, not all in one go and not in one perfect week.

Feeling safe and steady in the present, first of all.

A trauma-focused talking therapy that helps you process it.

Gently facing reminders instead of avoiding them.

A doctor's help, including medicine if it is needed.

REMEMBER

Healing is not all-or-nothing, and a hard day does not undo the ground you have gained. The skill is to keep feeling safe, keep facing things a little at a time, and let the steadier days add up, even when one day knocks you back. Gentle and steady, at your own pace, beats forcing it.

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✿ WHEN IT IS MORE THAN A ROUGH PATCH

When to reach out

✿ IN SHORT

Sometimes the reactions are severe. Sometimes they last for weeks and wear down your days. Sometimes trauma starts feeding low mood, heavy anxiety, or drinking to cope. Any of these is a signal to reach out, not to push through alone. Treatment works, you can get help even without a formal diagnosis, and reaching out early gives the best chance.

A run of hard weeks after something frightening is part of being human. It is worth reaching out when the reactions are severe, or when they settle in for weeks and start running your days, your sleep, your work, and your closeness to people. Often trauma does not travel alone. It can feed a low mood that will not lift, a constant heavy anxiety, or a pull to drink or numb it all. And each of those can feed the trauma right back.

You are far from the only one carrying this quietly. In India, most adults who could benefit from mental health care never receive it. Reaching out is not a sign that you have failed; it is one of the most common unmet needs there is.

around 5 in 6

Indian adults who need mental health care do not get it

In India most people who could benefit from help never receive it. Not getting help is common, and it is not a sign of personal failure. You are far from alone.

A doctor or counsellor can look at the whole picture, treat the trauma, and check whether something underneath needs care too, and the earlier you reach out, the better the odds. You do not need a label or a formal diagnosis to deserve help, and you do not have to reach some breaking point first. You can get the right help even without a formal diagnosis, and even years after the event.

♥ IF IT EVER FEELS TOO HEAVY

If you ever feel that the weight is too much to carry, or have thoughts that life is not worth living, please reach out right away. You do not have to carry that alone, and it can get better with help. You can call Tele-MANAS, the free national helpline, on 14416, any time, day or night. The crisis card linked below has more people you can reach.

● TRY THIS

Write down one question you would want to ask a doctor or counsellor, and keep it on your phone. Something like "Since the accident I cannot sleep and I avoid driving, what can help?" Having the question ready makes the first visit far easier, and the first visit is the hard one.

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✿ YOU CAN HEAL

You are not broken

✿ IN SHORT

What happened to you is something you are living through, not who you are. Trauma is serious but treatable, and it can respond very well to help, even years later. Healing happens at your own pace. A setback is part of the road, not a failure. And the silence around it in many Indian families is not the truth about you.



Steady again, and back in your own life.

The hardest part for many people is not the fear itself. It is the quiet belief that being shaken by what happened makes them weak, damaged, or somehow broken. That belief is understandable, and it is wrong. Trauma is a serious but treatable thing you are working through, not a verdict on your strength or your worth, and steadiness is something a person can find again, even a long time after the event.

Healing comes slowly and usually plainly. Most people who get the right help do feel steadier, and many feel fully themselves again, even years after what happened. For some, a hard stretch returns later, in a stressful month or near a painful anniversary, and that too is part of the road, not proof you have failed.

A setback is a part of the road to ride out with your supports, not the end of it.

In many Indian families this kind of pain is brushed off as nothing, or carried in silence, and that silence falls heaviest on the person living through it. The silence is not the truth about you.



*The same mind that learned to
brace against danger can, with
safety, support, and time, learn that
it is safe again. It rarely happens all
at once, and almost always in many
ordinary, gradually steadier days.*

More, if you want it ^

Keep the supports that helped, forgive the days that knock you back, and begin again gently. Picking your steadying habits back up after a hard week is not starting over. It is the work itself, and it is how most real healing actually looks. Steadiness comes back not in one perfect day but in many ordinary ones, most of them quiet, many of them helped by feeling safe and reaching for support.

** IN YOUR CORNER**

If the weight ever feels too heavy, or you have thoughts that life is not worth living, please reach out, not push through alone. You can call Tele-MANAS, the free national helpline, on 14416, any time, day or night. The crisis card below has more people you can reach.

● TRY THIS

This week, set up one small support for yourself, a person you can talk to, a calm grounding habit, or that one question ready for a doctor. Keep it for a week, and notice what even a little steadiness does.

WHERE THIS COMES FROM

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This guide helps you recognise and understand. It is not a diagnosis. For that, see a professional.

● Feeling like it is all too much? **Read the crisis card.** Help is one page away.