

# Foothills Behavioral Health Partners

## Tips for Individuals with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

1. **Witnessing or experiencing a traumatic event(s)** may cause anxiety or panic feelings after the event as well as a desire to avoid places, people, or things that remind you of the event(s). In addition, people with PTSD may find that they are easily startled, think about the event(s) often, and/or have flashbacks or nightmares about the event. If you are experiencing these symptoms, and they are interfering with your life, you may have posttraumatic stress disorder or PTSD.
2. **Educate yourself about this disorder and actively participate** in your treatment. Ask your therapist for resources or visit [www.fbhpartners.com](http://www.fbhpartners.com) for online information about PTSD.
3. **Give yourself time to heal.** This may be a difficult time in your life. Allow yourself to mourn any losses. Try to be patient with changes in your emotions.
4. **Ask for support** from people who care about you and who will listen and empathize with your situation. Talk about your experience only in ways you feel comfortable - such as by talking with family or close friends, or keeping a journal. Also, let your loved ones know about things that may trigger your symptoms so that they can support you during those times.
5. **Find out about available support groups.** They have been proven to be helpful for people with PTSD. Often, members may have suggestions about how to cope, and many people find it very helpful to know they are not alone in their experiences.
6. **Seek Help from a mental health professional.** Individual or group counseling can be a safe and effective way to work towards your recovery. You may also learn ways that help you to overcome the effects of the trauma.
7. **Engage in healthy behaviors** to help cope with stress. Eat well-balanced meals, exercise, and get plenty of rest. Relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, yoga, visualization or listening to calm music may help you relax.
8. **Establish or reestablish routines** around such things as eating meals, waking and falling asleep, exercising and engaging in other daily activities at similar times each day. Routines can help create a sense of normalcy and control.
9. **Help others as you are able.** Helping others, even during your own time of distress, can give you a sense of control and can make you feel better about yourself.
10. **If possible, avoid major life decisions** such as switching jobs, marital status or place to live until you are feeling more stable, because these activities will add to your stress.

*Developed in Collaboration with FBHP Providers and Member and Family Affairs*

