



BUSHFIRE RECOVERY SERIES

Tips for managing social connections.

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Spend time with people who care about you. One of the most important things you can do for yourself following a traumatic experience, is to spend time with family, friends and people in the community
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People need people. Although it may feel difficult during these periods, spending time with loved ones gives us a sense of connection and a feeling of being loved and cared for. Being around these people also provides reassurance that our reactions are normal and we are not alone.
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Start small. Sometimes reaching out to people can be difficult. It might be helpful to start off with a small contact, like having a cup of coffee with someone from your social network.
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Practical Support. Connecting with others can help lessen the burden of completing tasks to get back on track such as repairing property damage, replanting gardens or caring for children. There are always people willing to help out in times of need.
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Doing pleasurable activities. Making sure that you are still doing fun activities with friends and family is also essential. You could organise a lunch, bicycle ride or attend the movies to help lift your mood as well as others.
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Telecommunication. You may need to make contact over the phone or by using the internet to connect with friends and family who do not live nearby or have needed to leave their homes due to threat.
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Practice Patience. It is important to have patience with loved ones as they may be as distracted as you and dealing with their own stressors. Everyone responds in their own way to traumatic experiences.
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Giving to others. Remember social support feels good to give as well as to receive. There might be other people in the community who require your help. Other people complete us, and the benefits go both ways.
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Community groups. Look out for community groups that you can engage with to help develop new connects to others going through similar issues. Community recovery groups and activities are developed after a disaster to help bring people together.

Reference: Australian Psychological Society, 2020. "Australian bushfires 2020: Psychological preparation and recovery." <https://www.psychology.org.au/Australian-bushfires-2020>

If you would like to book an appointment and /or speak with one of our Counsellors, it's as easy as calling 1300 66 77 00 or visit our website www.accesswellbeingsservices.com.au

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