

Feeling all sorts of emotions is normal in difficult times.

Going through a natural disaster can be stressful and scary, and right now, you may be feeling anxious, overwhelmed, tired, angry, hōhā, sad, or something else entirely. However you're feeling, it's perfectly normal. If you can, take things day by day or hour by hour, and remember you're doing the best you can.

Everyone responds differently in these situations and at their own pace. You could also be experiencing a range of physical reactions – feeling shaky, queasy, having no appetite, or struggling to concentrate. This is all completely normal and understandable.

Unexpected and scary events can also make us feel like we have little control. Regaining a sense of control in little ways can make us feel a lot better and help us look after ourselves and our loved ones. Here are some tips you might find helpful:

- Share your thoughts and feelings with whānau, friends, colleagues, neighbours, or others who have been through the same experience. If you need some extra support and have phone or internet reception, reach out to a helpline to talk with a trained counsellor. Check the back side of this leaflet for more details.
- Maintain simple routines wherever you can – going to bed at the same time every day, planning meals, setting aside time for the kids, or whatever works for you.
- Self-care may seem trivial when you're dealing with the effects of a natural disaster, but taking good care of your taha tinana (physical health) and taha hinengaro (mental health) is key when times are tough. As much as you can, do the little things that make you feel good, like exercising, reading, listening to music, or spending time with loved ones.
- Limit how much time you spend on social media or checking the news. Take time to rest when you need to.
- If you're able to, find something constructive to do. Shifting your focus to 'practical stuff' within your ability to control (like looking after others or checking in on neighbours) can help ease your stress levels.
- If you need to, reach out to a nurse or doctor at your local general practice.
- Be patient with yourself. You will find a sense of balance and peacefulness again, at your own pace.



Free support is at hand.

If you think someone you know needs further tautoko/support, or if you need support yourself, it's okay, there is help available – no one should go through a tough time alone.

In case of an emergency, call 111.

For more tips and support, go to [mentalhealth.org.nz](https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz).

Free helplines

- Need to talk? – Call or text **1737** any time for support from a trained counsellor
- The Depression Helpline – Call **0800 111 757** or text **4202** to talk to a trained counsellor about how you are feeling or to ask any questions
- Youthline – Call **0800 376 633**, text **234**, email talk@youthline.co.nz, or go to youthline.co.nz for an online chat
- The Lowdown – Text **5626** for support to help young people recognise and understand depression or anxiety
- Healthline – Call **0800 611 116** for health advice and information
- Alcohol Drug Helpline – Call **0800 787 797** to speak with a trained counsellor

Free wellbeing apps

You can download the Groov and Headstrong wellbeing apps for free for Android and Apple phones. You can find them in your Google Play or Apple App Store.

Rural Support Trusts

A local Rural Support Trust (RST) is a great place to access free and confidential support and advice. This nationwide network, run by local people, helps farming families and rural communities. RSTs have facilitators trained to recognise issues with mental health and wellbeing. They can also put you in touch with services including health information or financial support. You can give them a call to talk through your options. Call **0800 787 254 (0800 RURAL HELP)** to arrange a free and confidential chat at a place that suits you, or visit rural-support.org.nz

Farmstrong

Farmstrong is a nationwide wellbeing programme for the rural community. Their aim is to help you live well to farm well. On their website you can find a range of resources to help you manage your wellbeing. Visit farmstrong.co.nz

