

WHAT TO DO ABOUT FLASHBACKS

REMEMBER! Flashbacks are normal after a critical incident. You are likely to experience more flashbacks if you believe that you are "going crazy" or "losing it". Flashbacks will probably fade as you remind yourself that they are common.

Flashbacks may follow a "trigger". A trigger is an event or thought which reminds you of the traumatic incident. It is also possible that there will be no trigger. These flashbacks seem more frightening because they are less easily explained.

Learn to talk to yourself. When you have a flashback, remind yourself of the facts. Talk to yourself by saying something like: "I'm okay, I just had a frightening flashback. Flashbacks are normal after the type of incident I lived through. I will be okay in a minute or so."

Learn how to talk to others. Use your support systems. Go to someone who was in the situation with you. They know what you are going through. Go to a friend or loved one who can listen to you. Tell them in detail about what you experienced.

If flashbacks interfere with your work or at home, consider seeking post-trauma counseling from a qualified, experienced professional.