

Emotional Support

Having someone to talk to when encountering emotions, big or small, can help you to experience emotions in a good way.

Are you a Survivor or a family member of a former residential school student? If so, cultural and emotional support, and professional mental health counselling services are available to you.

Services are provided through cultural supports such as Elders or Knowledge Holders, or Indigenous community workers who will listen, talk and share space with you in a safe and respectful way.

National Indian Residential School Crisis Line
Toll-free: 1-866-925-4419

The Hope for Wellness Help Line
Toll-free: 1-855-242-3310
Online Chat: www.hopeforwellness.ca

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Crisis Line
Toll-free: 1-844-413-6649

Some Self-Care Strategies

What's your self-care vision? What things can you do to help yourself experience your emotions in a good way?

- Nurture yourself as you would a good friend
- Practice a healthy lifestyle (avoid substance use)
- Take walks and exercise
- Get out on the land
- Smudge, pray, sing
- Sew, drum, dance
- Spend time with family and friends
- Laugh, cry, talk
- Meditate, sleep – get plenty of rest
- Seek spiritual guidance
- Eat healthy foods
- Ask for help
- Seek counselling

A 24-HOUR NATIONAL INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL CRISIS LINE

is available to provide immediate emotional assistance: **1-866-925-4419**



Encountering Strong Emotional Reactions

Be good to yourself



Thinking about how residential school affected you can lead to positive or negative thoughts or memories. This brochure is designed to help you recognize the reactions you may have.

Revisiting painful memories can be an important step in the healing process. It can also lead to difficult thoughts, feelings and behaviors. For some people, strong emotional reactions are normal. This can happen immediately, within hours, days or weeks after. Your reactions may even surprise you.

When past emotions or memories are triggered, you need to be kind to yourself and others. It is helpful to have a vision of how to take care of yourself as a way to honour what you have been through.

Some common reactions you may experience:

Spiritual

moral distress, questioning your religion, questioning your values, doubting the goodness of humanity, feeling disconnected

Behavioural

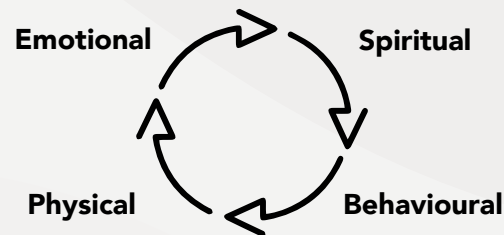
flashbacks, agitation, appetite changes, substance use, quick to anger, isolating self, mood swings, shock, conflict in relationships, can't concentrate

Physical

trouble sleeping, nightmares, stomach aches, nausea, general body aches, headaches, crying, panic attacks

Emotional

sadness, anger, frustration, feeling alone, mistrust of others, feelings of guilt, shame, blame, fear, hopelessness, overwhelmed



Important Things To Know

- If you encounter any of the experiences listed in this brochure, please know that this is not uncommon. If these feelings or experiences last longer than a few weeks, consider talking to someone who can help you.
- It is important to reach out and talk to others for support to help you to navigate these emotions in a good way.
- **Please DO NOT** remain alone if you are having thoughts of hurting yourself or hurting others. **Tell someone you feel safe with.** These thoughts are often temporary and talking with someone you trust can really help.
- Though it can sometimes be difficult and painful, **healing is possible.** Healing is a journey and there are supports available to walk alongside you.

