Tips for Coping

- For local concerns, follow the advice of the Alexandria Police. www.alexandriava.gov/Police
- Make sure you have access to media, but limit excessive exposure.
- Identify the feelings you are experiencing. Understand that your feelings are normal.
- Talk to others about your feelings.
- Focus on your strengths and abilities, and those of your family and community.
- Stay healthy by sleeping regularly, eating right, avoiding drugs or alcohol, exercising and doing things you enjoy.
- Maintain routine.
- Remember that people react in different ways.
- Ask for help if it gets to be too much.

If you are in crisis and need to talk to someone, call 24/7:

CrisisLink Hotline 703.527.4077
Information & Referral 703.752.5254
Text "connect" to 855-11
TTY, please dial 7-1-1

Department of
Community & Human Services
Emergency Services 703.746.3401

Anti-stress Stretches

Finger Fan: Extend your arms straight out in front of you with palms up. Spread your fingers as far apart as possible and hold for 5 seconds.

Upper-back Stretch: Sit up straight with your fingers inter-laced behind your head. Keep your shoulders down, lift your chest and bring your elbows back as far as you can. Hold for 10 seconds.

Ear to Shoulder: Lower your right ear to your right shoulder and hold for 10 seconds. Repeat on other side.

Overhead Reach: Raise your arms over your head and interlace your fingers with your palms facing up. Keep your shoulders down and stretch upwards. Hold for 20 seconds.

Knee Pull: While seated, pull one knee up to your chest as high as possible. Hold with both hands for 10 seconds then repeat the other knee.

Waist Bend: Reach arms overhead with finger interlaced. Keep shoulders down and bend to one side at the waist. Hold for 20 seconds then repeat on the other side.

Coping with Uncertainty & Fear

Department of Community and Human Services

703.746.4900
www.alexandriava.gov/DCHS

Reactions to Uncertainty and Fear

Normal Reactions May Include:

- Fear, terror
- Anxiety, increased worry
- Not wanting to leave home
- Not wanting to be separate from loved ones
- Irritability
- Anger
- Fatigue, exhaustion
- Sadness, crying
- Changes in appetite
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Inability to concentrate
- Forgetfulness
- Frequent errors
- Difficulty making decisions
- Confusion
- Hyperactivity
- Physical complaints
- Diarrhea
- Nightmares
- New or increased use of tobacco products, alcohol or other drugs

Reactions in Young People May Include:

- Anxiety and irritability
- Sadness and crying
- Fear of separation, being alone
- Clinging, fear of strangers
- Worry, nightmares
- Regression to immature behavior
- Reluctance to go to school
- Increased shyness or aggressiveness
- Headaches, stomachaches, other physical complaints
- Nervousness about the future

How You Can Help Young People:

- Take care of yourself.
- Stay calm.
- Talk with them about their feelings.
- Encourage them to express their feelings through drawing or playing.
- Give honest answers to their questions; keep information at a level they can understand.
- Listen.
- Maintain routine and regular discipline.
- Reassure them that you are together and you will do everything you can to protect them.
- Give them lots of love.

Ways to Manage General Stress

- Think positively and surround yourself with others who do so.
- Don't demand too much of yourself.
- Ask for help.
- Accept that you can't control everything and be flexible.
- Make a list of things to do each day and set reasonable priorities.
- Divide big tasks into smaller ones.
- Eat healthy and avoid sugar.
- Get plenty of sleep each night.
- Exercise some each day to boost energy and improve your mood.
- Relax and do something you like.
- Avoid alcohol and other drugs.
- Use mistakes to learn.
- If possible, say "no" to tasks that you know will be stressful for you.
- Talk about things with a friend.
- Laugh and have fun.
- Let yourself cry.
- Practice deep breathing. Take a slow deep breath through your nose to the count of five. Hold your breath for another 5-count then exhale through your mouth for a 5-count.
- Try not to judge yourself and others.