POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)

There are three categories of reactions to traumatic stress – thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Here are few examples of each:

THOUGHTS

• Recurring dreams or nightmares about the disaster.
• Reconstructing the events surrounding the disaster in your mind, in an effort to make it come out differently.
• Difficulty concentrating or remembering things.
• Questioning your spiritual or religious beliefs.
• Repeated thoughts or memories of the disaster, or of loved ones that died in the disaster, which are hard to stop.

FEELINGS

• Feeling numb, withdrawn, or disconnected.
• Experiencing fear and anxiety when things remind you of the disaster, particularly sights, sounds, and smells.
• Feeling a lack of involvement or enjoyment in everyday activities.
• Feeling depressed, blue, or down much of the time.
• Feeling bursts of anger, or intense irritability.
• Feeling a sense of emptiness or hopelessness about the future.

BEHAVIORS

• Being overprotective of your and your family’s safety.
• Isolating yourself from others.
• Becoming very alert at times and startling easily.
• Having problems getting to sleep or staying asleep.
• Avoiding activities that remind you of the disaster, avoiding places or people that bring back memories.
• Having increased conflict with family members.
• Keeping excessively busy to avoid thinking about the disaster and what has happened to you.
• Being tearful or crying for no apparent reason.

If you feel that you are experiencing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, call the Oregon Attorney Assistance Program for assistance 503-226-1057.