



Healing Starts in Moments

The events of the past week, and specifically the past 24 hours have amplified feelings of fear, anxiety and for some, terror. What we witnessed and experienced in our country and city is trauma. For so many of us, this can trigger experiences of oppression and violence that continue to be experienced and denied in our community. The simplest definition of trauma is an experience that overwhelms one's capacity to cope. A traumatic response to the events of the past 24 hours may be experienced on both the individual and collective level, making it especially challenging for individuals with a trauma history. It is not uncommon for trauma responses to resurface and/or intensify.

We entered 2021 tired; 2020 was a hard year and our emotional reserves are low, if not drained. 2020 was layered with grief and trauma. As we are confronted by the traumatic events in the Capitol and around the country, some will be surprised at their capacity to manage this crisis with calm next steps, while others may find themselves thinking, "I am not sure how I will handle one more thing." Both responses are normal and make sense.

At the Wendt Center we believe that healing is possible; we witness healing and resilience every single day in our clients. We want to offer a few ideas to navigate the next few days or weeks. As we manage our experiences of grief and trauma, it is often helpful to slow down and take one moment at a time.

Narrow your focus to this point in time and identify one thing you can do to show yourself compassion. Here are some strategies to help you do that:

Breathe

- Take a slow deep breath in for 4 seconds and exhale slowly for 6 seconds

Move

- Dance, stretch, walk, shake.

Hydrate

- Slowly drink cold water: trace the feeling of the water going down as you drink.

Connect

- Call, text, video chat, visit (safely) with someone you trust and care about.

Affirm

- Repeat a calming statement or prayer. For example, I am bigger than my worry.

Unplug

- Take a technology break. Disconnect from the constant access to the news cycle.

Healing starts in moments. We do not need to know the entire pathway to healing to take one step.

[Wendt Center for Loss and Healing](#) is the Greater Washington region's premier resource for restoring hope and healthy functioning to adults, teens, and children who are coping with grief, loss, and trauma. Wendt Center Training Institute offers customized, trauma-informed [workshops](#) and [certifications](#) that equip mental health and allied professionals with skills to address grief, loss, and trauma in the communities in which they work and live.