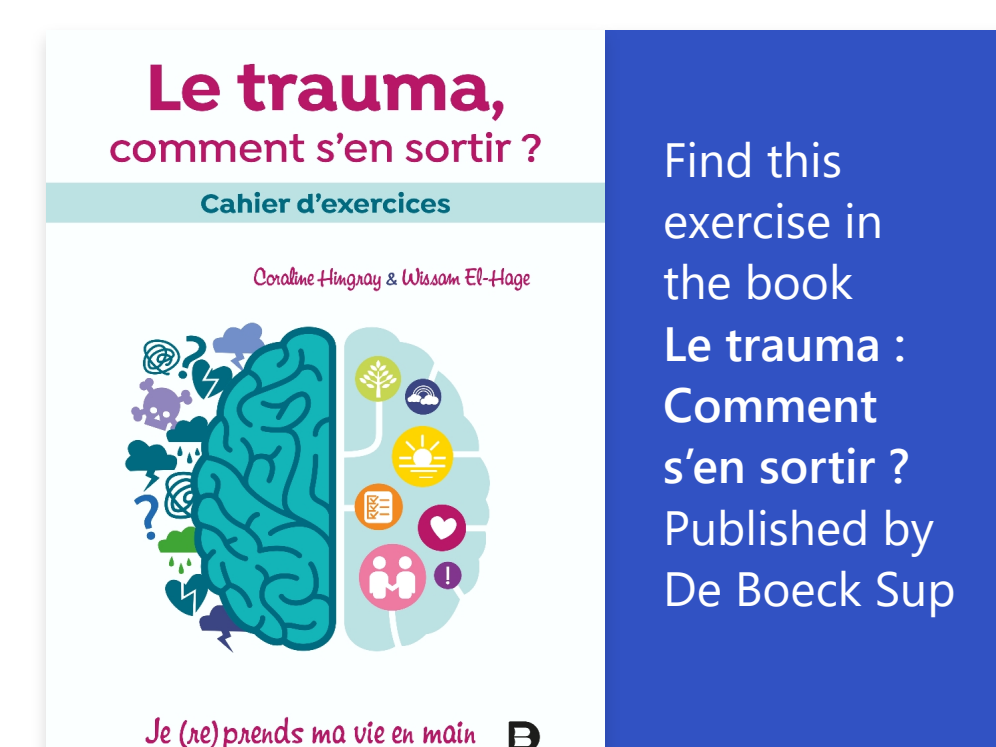


Practical information

ACUTE STRESS DISORDER



Find this exercise in the book
Le trauma : Comment s'en sortir ?
Published by De Boeck Sup

TRUE OR FALSE

"A few days after a trauma, everything should go back to normal." False!

The experience at the time of the trauma is often so intense and so overwhelming, and the physiological and psychological reactions so unusual, that it takes several days and often weeks to begin to feel like yourself and feel more together.

"You have to talk about it right away, let it all out, talk about everything."

Partially true! Talking about it is a choice and a possibility, but not an obligation. The most important thing is to offer an opportunity for listening.

"Don't make a big deal out of it."

False. This attitude is very harmful and increases the risk of developing post-traumatic symptoms.

The person must be offered listening, understanding, support and empathy for their suffering, and be given the opportunity to express themselves. Friends and relatives can often provide this essential support.

A REAL-LIFE EXPERIENCE

“

For almost two weeks, I felt a kind of trembling in my body, I couldn't sleep or calm down...

”

“

The next day, the cops were already asking for as many details as possible, but I couldn't do it, I wasn't able to think yet, to put things in order, it was horrible, and then I was crying all the time.

”

“

Ever since my mother told me that my brother had had an accident, time has stood still... I can't tell you what I've been doing the last few days. My body feels heavy... I feel like I'm absent, everything feels unreal, I stay at home, without moving, curled up in tears... I don't know how long I'm going to stay like this. I can't believe it.”

”

Practical information

ACUTE STRESS DISORDER



A WORD FROM THE EXPERTS...

- In the days and first month following the event, you may experience various transient reactions: this is called acute stress disorder. If these symptoms persist for more than one month, it is called post-traumatic stress disorder.
- These symptoms cause significant suffering and affect the person's functioning. A diagnosis of acute stress disorder requires a person to have had at least nine of the described symptoms for between three days and one month.



Practical information

ACUTE STRESS DISORDER

This experience of acute stress is destabilising, intense and disrupts your ability to reason, act calmly and interact with those around you. This distress is not always taken into account, especially when you have to deal with administrative procedures, police officers, insurers, investigators, employers... or even by those around you.

THE ESSENTIALS

- Acute stress is a pathological state that reflects our difficulty incorporating the trauma into our life story.
- Post-traumatic dissociation (disconnection from reality or from our own body) and its consequences, when unchecked, may persist.