



## ASSISTANCE INFORMATION SHEET - FOLLOWING AN EARTHQUAKE

1. The key need for people following an earthquake is the need to feel safe. To feel psychologically safe, people need to feel physically safe. None of us can control the earth and whether another quake will happen. We can however remind ourselves of our safety plan and the safest places in our houses and workplaces. If you do not feel safe, don't be alone; go to a neighbour, friends or a family member.
2. It is normal to have high adrenaline and high anxiety following an earthquake — do not worry about it - you are having a normal reaction to an abnormal event. Your adrenaline will come down as the aftershocks calm down.
3. To help reduce the adrenaline, you need as much sleep as possible. When you sleep your body repairs and you can cope. If you are having trouble sleeping, where possible, have someone be on watch and tell yourself "Now is the time for sleeping"; everyone is safe, I am safe, my family is safe and now I need to sleep so that I feel better."
4. If you live in a place that rocks quite badly with aftershocks; and the aftershocks are interrupting your sleep; then consider decamping for a short period of time; getting sleep is a non-negotiable.
5. Don't make the anxiety worse by asking "What if ...." Remind yourself everyone is safe and that everyone (including emergency services) is geared up to help.
6. Limit the amount of exposure you have to stories and details about the quakes; turn off the news; and delete the Geonet app from your phone. It will not help you to have this information — as no-one can control or even know when or where the next shake might happen. All it is doing is keeping you in an anxious state.
7. It is normal to startle to aftershocks — remind yourself that it is just the earth settling back down. Even in the worst case scenario if there was another quake you are more prepared now as are all the emergency services — everything is in place to keep you safe.
8. For those of you who feel helpless not knowing how to help others, remember physical safety and sleep are the priorities at the moment.
9. Remember that when you feel helpless, it is normal to feel irritable or angry and it is normal for others to feel that way too, help others to understand that they are feeling helpless and the best way through helplessness is to have a safety plan.
10. Where possible; keep up your usual activities — getting back to a normally structured day helps quieten the adrenaline.