

Psychiatric Disabilities

BEFORE A DISASTER HAPPENS...

There are several ways you might react to an emergency on emotional, mental, or physical levels. It is important to anticipate reactions you may have and think through strategies for coping with them.

It is possible that the following emotional responses might occur or become more severe during and after an emergency: confusion, fear, paranoia, sadness, panic, depression, withdrawal, irritability, and anxiety.

You might also experience one or more of the following: difficulty with memory or mental processing, shaking, pacing, shouting, or crying.

Seek advice from friends, family, therapists, or other service providers on additional ideas for coping.

Let members of your Personal Support Network know what your plans are, and keep them apprised so that they can lend support during an emergency.

Practice communicating your needs.

Think about and plan for the reactions you may have during and after a disaster.

Think about what an emergency worker will need to know.

For example:

“I have a panic disorder. If I panic, (instructions for medication or other intervention).”

Write your statement below: _____

Practice your statement so that you remember it and can tell an emergency worker when you need to.