

SPR Facts

In *SPR, your preferences matter*. You should tell your SPR instructor which problems are most important to you. Your instructor will listen to your priorities.

SPR is active. SPR is not just talking to someone. Your SPR instructor will encourage you to take action and apply the skills in your daily life.

SPR is flexible. SPR instructors don't teach every skill to every person. Instructors help you choose the skill or skills that will most likely help your unique situation. The number of visits will also depend on your needs. Some people need as few as one or two visits.



Health Link
811

Mental Health Help Line
1-877-303-2642
Open 24 hours a day,
7 days a week

For more information about
Skills for Psychological Recovery
visit: www.nctsn.org

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Produced by
Mental Health Promotion & Illness Prevention
email: hpdp.mh.earlyid@ahs.ca



Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR) After a Disaster or Emergency



Acknowledgements

Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR)—After a Disaster or Emergency brochure has been adapted from the *Skills for Psychological Recovery Field Operations Guide* (National Center for PTSD and National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2010)

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The Recovery Period

There are different periods of time after a traumatic event, disaster, or emergency. The 'recovery period' happens in the weeks or months after the initial crisis. During the recovery period, you start to deal with the impact the event had on you and your life. It is common to have symptoms of stress in the recovery period.

Here are some examples of symptoms you might have:

- **Physical:** headaches, stomach aches, low energy.
- **Thinking:** trouble concentrating, worrying, repetitive thoughts, questioning spiritual beliefs.
- **Emotional:** feeling helpless, feeling overwhelmed, guilty, irritable, angry, or afraid.
- **Behaviour:** sleeping too much or too little, withdrawing from people, using alcohol or drugs.

How Can Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR) Help Me?

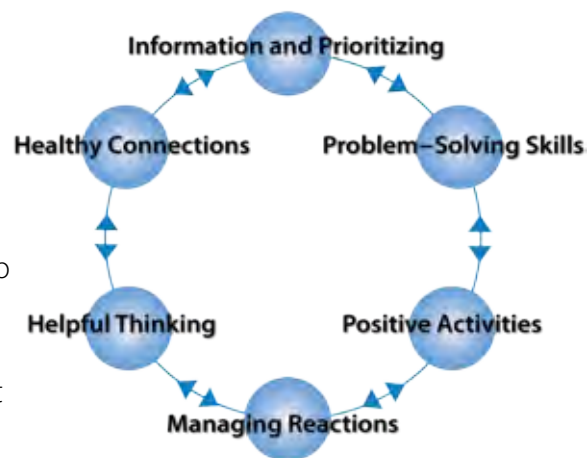
The purpose of Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR) is to help you build your skills so that you can cope with stress better and feel more in control of your life. Certified SPR instructors teach the skills to children, adolescents, and adults during the recovery period. They can meet with you alone or with a group of people.

The skills in SPR are based on research. From this research, we know that you are more likely to feel better if you use these skills than if you do not take action.

Examples of SPR Skills

Here are some examples of skills taught in SPR and the problems you might use them for:

- **Problem-solving** e.g., if you have practical problems like living in temporary accommodations or have to work long hours to make up for financial losses
- **Positive Activity Scheduling** e.g., if you have feelings of sadness or feel like staying home instead of going out to do your usual social activities
- **Managing Physical and Emotional Reactions** e.g., if you have upsetting reactions, feel more irritable, or have sleep difficulties
- **Helpful Thinking** e.g., if you have negative thoughts about yourself (e.g., "I should be coping better.") or about your situation (e.g., "Things will never get better.")
- **Re-building Healthy Social Connections** e.g., if you have lost contact with family or friends you used to interact with, or if you have no one to talk to.



Source: *Skills for Psychological Recovery Field Operations Guide* (National Center for PTSD and the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2010)

How is SPR different from counselling?

SPR isn't the same as formal mental health treatment. It doesn't mean you have a diagnosable mental health condition if you learn SPR. For most people, SPR will be all the help they need in the recovery period. The SPR instructor will refer you to your healthcare provider or a mental health professional for a more intensive treatment if you have a serious mental health issue.

There are some cases where SPR isn't appropriate such as:

- If you have thoughts of harm to yourself or others.
- If you have an unstable medical condition.
- If you hear or see things that are not there.
- If you have a severe cognitive disability.