

## Suggestions for Coping

*This list of suggestions for preserving and building your coping skills is not exhaustive. It is important and encouraged that you find the skills that best suit your needs and work effectively for you. While some things may work for you others may not; if something does not work for you, try something else. After considering this list, spend a few minutes contemplating other things that may work for you.*

- ▶ Give yourself permission to feel, express, and deal with your reactions, feelings, and emotions.
- ▶ Focus on your strengths and use those to build your coping skills.
- ▶ Practice relaxation techniques to calm anxiety and decompress. Use deep breathing, visualization, muscle relaxation, and grounding techniques.
- ▶ Set small, realistic goals to tackle obstacles.
- ▶ Take breaks. You do not have to push yourself to do more if your body or mind is telling you that you need a break. Listen to your physical and mental cues about taking a break.
- ▶ Eat healthy meals.
- ▶ Utilize light exercise and stretching to relieve tension and stress that is built up in your muscles.
- ▶ Get enough rest to increase your reserve strength.
- ▶ Acknowledge unresolved issues and use the reactions associated with those issues as a motivator to make the necessary changes to heal.
- ▶ Educate yourself and your family about normal reactions to crisis, trauma, and victimization.
- ▶ Remember that men and women react differently. If you are having trouble communicating or understanding where a family member, partner, or friend is coming from, clarify feelings to better understand one another. Try not to assume things.
- ▶ Talk to your children. Be supportive. Set examples by expressing your feelings and showing problem solving skills in dealing with your reactions and family problems.
- ▶ Ask for support and help from your family, friends, church, or other community resources.
- ▶ Remember that you are not alone. Call a family member, friend, advocate, counselor, or a hotline.