

STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH THE ANNIVERSARY OF SEPTEMBER 11th

Anniversaries of tragedies can be difficult times for many people. For some, the anniversary of 9/11 continues to be a powerful reminder of loss. For others, who thought they had put the tragedy behind them, the anniversary may produce unexpected anxiety or grief.

The anniversary and the media replay of that day's destruction may stir strong emotions and difficult memories in many of us. But there are ways to cope:

- **Observe the anniversary in a way that's comfortable for you.** Being with other people, getting involved in memorial activities and talking about the tragedy are all important coping strategies, but taking time to be by yourself – to think and reflect – can be helpful and healing as well.
- **Limit television as much as possible.** The visual images can prompt especially strong reactions. Instead, be prepared to turn to a movie channel, read a book, or go to Blockbusters.
- **If you start to feel overwhelmed, talk with a friend, family member, or your IAM EAP.** Often, talking about your fears and feelings is enough to relieve stress and realize that other people share your feelings. Taking action is a sign of strength and self-awareness.
- **Recall other times you've experienced strong emotions.** Identify which coping strategies have worked for you in the past, and use them.
- **Don't compare yourself to how others around you appear to be dealing with the September 11 anniversary.** Everyone experiences and copes with stress differently. Try not to judge people's emotions by their outsides.
- **If you have children, encourage them to discuss their concerns and feelings with you.**
- **If you have strong feelings that haven't or won't go away, seeking help from a professional may prove useful.** Your IAM EAP can provide you with referrals.
- **Share this information with a co-worker who may be struggling with the upcoming anniversary.**