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APA OFFERS RESOURCES ON MANAGING TRAUMATIC STRESS IN WAKE OF HAITI EARTHQUAKE

WASHINGTON – For those who may be struggling to cope from a distance or are having trouble dealing with the images of the Haiti earthquake aftermath, the American Psychological Association (APA) offers free resources on managing distress from afar and tips for recovering from disasters on its Web site, www.apa.org/helpcenter.

“The sheer number of lost lives, the wounded and the destruction of homes and communities as a result of the earthquake is tragic,” said APA President Carol Goodheart, Ed.D. “This is also a difficult time for those who are witnessing from a distance the loss of friends and family and the destruction of land in their native country.”

People living in the United States who have lost family and friends or are waiting for news of their loved ones are most likely to feel distress about this disaster. APA offers the following tips to help people manage any distress:

- **Take a news break.** Watching endless replays of footage from the disaster can make your stress even greater. Although you will want to keep informed – especially if you have loved ones in Haiti – taking a break from watching the news or social media updates can lessen your distress.
- **Control what you can.** There are routines in your life that you can continue, such as going to work or school and making meals. It helps to maintain these routines to give yourself a break from constantly thinking about the earthquake.
- **Find a productive way to help if you can.** Many organizations are providing various forms of aid to survivors. Contributing or volunteering is a positive action that can help you to make a difference.

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- **Keep things in perspective.** While an earthquake can bring tremendous hardship and loss, remember to focus on the things that are good in your life. Persevere and trust in your ability to get through the challenging days ahead.

For additional information on managing traumatic stress in the aftermath of disasters, visit www.apa.org/helpcenter. And follow the APA Help Center at www.twitter.com/APAHelpCenter and read APA's Mind/Body Health campaign blog, www.yourmindyourbody.org.

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The American Psychological Association, in Washington, D.C., is the largest scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States and is the world's largest association of psychologists. APA's membership includes more than 150,000 researchers, educators, clinicians, consultants and students. Through its divisions in 54 subfields of psychology and affiliations with 60 state, territorial and Canadian provincial associations, APA works to advance psychology as a science, as a profession and as a means of promoting health, education and human welfare.