

Grade 8 Life Orientation Worksheet

Dealing with trauma

Read the following passage.

People can experience trauma both directly and indirectly. South Africans live in a violent, crime-ridden society. Most South Africans have experienced some level of crime in their lives. Many South Africans know somebody who has been a victim of **violent** crime even if they themselves have not experienced it. Simply hearing about it daily on the news can be very frightening.

But trauma comes in different packages. Causes of trauma can be:

- Disease and illness
- Losing or grieving for a loved one
- Abuse: physical, mental and emotional
- Violence
- Accidents
- Natural disasters

Sometimes dealing with the scars of trauma just takes a bit of time, but sometimes people struggle to recover and constantly have feelings of anxiety, guilt, stress or shame. It is possible that they are suffering from post-traumatic stress.

This can be worsened by bottling up your feelings, rather than sharing them.

It is common after a traumatic experience to:

- Feel fear and anxiety when you think about the trauma
- Re-experience the trauma, even when you try to block out the thoughts
- Feel jumpy, shaky and unable to concentrate
- Want to avoid any similar situation or place that may remind you of the trauma
- Feel anger, shame or guilt
- Want to hide away and not speak of the experience
- Feel grief, helplessness, depression and sadness
- Have relationship trouble with your parents, friends, teachers and even yourself

Unfortunately, traumatic experiences can leave you feeling very alone and lonely. You may feel that nobody understands, and because it is often hard to speak about a traumatic experience, you close up and keep people at a distance. Many people who would want to offer support and help read these messages the wrong way and keep their distance. They think that you need time alone and do not wish to push or pry until you are ready. Unfortunately, that often only serves to further isolate you.

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Spending time and talking to people who care about you and will be supportive and understanding is a very important way to recover from trauma. Finding professional help if you feel that you are not getting over it is the next important step.

Discussion about trauma

Divide into workgroups of up to 10 people per group.

Discuss traumatic situations that people experience in South Africa.

Discuss possible ways of dealing with those types of trauma.

Your teacher will assess your participation in the group discussion using this checklist.

Checklist for observation of group discussion			
Name:		Date:	
	Criteria: Does the learner:	Yes	No
1	Wait for a pause before s/he interrupts a speaker?		
2	Interrupt a speaker politely?		
3	Show evidence of having understood the concept of dealing with trauma?		
4	Keep to the topic under discussion?		
5	Cover all the points listed above?		
6	Give reasons to support alternative points of view?		
7	Make points clearly using appropriate vocal volume?		
8	Make eye contact when speaking?		
9	Use body language appropriately?		
10	Make notes when applicable to remember points made by others?		
2 marks for every 'yes' answer: 20 total			

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Suggested Solutions

Question number	Possible marks	Solution
1	20	See checklist in Appendix of Assessment Tools.

Appendix of assessment tools

Checklist for observation of group discussion			
Name: _____ Date: _____			
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