

Regarding your son or daughter disappearance, you should be aware about...

1. **The disappearance of your son or daughter is an unexpected and unanticipated situation where none psychological resources have been developed to prepare you to cope with the situation.** Therefore, it is natural that you may lose the sense of control and security that you had as a family until this moment.
2. In the very first moments of a son or daughter disappearance, it is normal that the family may see itself involved in a multitude of emotional responses: Feelings of confusion, frustration, anxiety, deep sadness, uncertainty, impotent, anger, guilt, abandonment, even to the point of neglecting our personal needs or those of others... **All these are normal reactions to the abnormal situation you are living.**
3. It should also be taken into consideration that what needs to be done first is trying to locate your son or daughter so he/ she can return home; therefore you have to communicate the situation as soon as possible to the police, relatives and friends...
4. Remember that our team of psychologists, social workers and lawyers is at your disposal 24 hours a day, all seven days of the week, in the Anar 116000 hotline service for Missing children cases.

Emergency psychological guidelines in the very first moments of your son/ daughter disappearance.

- **Don't remain alone, don't isolate yourself. If you need help, ask for it.**
- **Don't suppress your emotions.** If you need to cry and give vent to your feelings, do it, it will make you feel better.
- If you find yourself very agitated, anxious or unable to cope with a high level of agitation ask for the emergency services (112) help.
- If you find yourself stuck, not knowing what to do or where to go, remember that we are at your disposal 24 hours a day, seven days a-week, in the Anar 116000 hotline service for Missing children cases.

General psychological recommendations

- **Remain STRONG because you are an active searching member; your disappeared son/ daughter needs you.**
- **Accept the fact:** Don't deny that your son or daughter has disappeared. It's your current reality. **You need time** to face the facts as they occur.
- **Allow yourself to be helped** by other relatives; they may want to feel useful in this moment.
- **Seek for professional help to cope with this situation** if necessary. You can't and you must not bear this alone. Invite your relatives to seek professional support as well. Don't dismiss seeking **psychiatric support** and supervised medication. Stay away from alcohol, drugs, and massive consumption of medicines as they may difficult your active role in the searching process.

- **If required, ask for support to family associations of missing persons.** It can be useful to access mutual support groups.
- It is important to **organize your family**, your every day life and routines according to the current situation and to take care of emotional needs that you and your family may have.
- Take care for your **diet and try to rest enough**. We know it takes an effort but you need to do it.
- **Exercise**. It can be enough to walk around or taking the dog for a walk.
- **Give importance to your emotional wellbeing** and try to look for ways to give vent to your emotions (through crying and comfort with the people we love, through laughing...). Express your feelings to a neighbor, friend, to your family, to a professional therapist...Give **and allow yourself to be embraced and receive other types of affection** from the people around you and those who love you.
- **Help all family relatives to remain united** in the search of your son or daughter.
- **If you need it, look for a place where you can be alone for a few minutes**, solitude can help you to relax, even at work.
- It is important that you can **keep your daily routine**, if possible. **Staying busy is positive**; you can cook, write letters, a dairy...
- **Don't blame yourself, don't assume the blame of others**. You are not responsible of your son/ daughter disappearance and you are doing everything you can. On the other side, you need to keep working to cover the basic needs of the family, including those of your disappeared son or daughter, try not to feel guilty for going back to work.
- **If you are a religious person** and/ or follower of any religion don't hesitate to seek comfort and support in your faith...
- **Avoid making your son/ daughter disappearance into a taboo**, it is necessary to talk about your son/ daughter disappearance, but avoid making the disappearance the only conversation topic.

- In order to accept and cope with your son/ daughter disappearance, **don't be afraid of visiting places** or listening to conversations that remind you of the disappearance.
- **Rely upon your couple if you have it**, you need each other.

Remember that at 116000 a professional team of psychologists, social workers and attorneys, is available to provide assistance to you 24 hours a day seven days a week.

**If you want more information please go through our website:
www.anar.org/116000**