

NEXT STEPS TO TAKE THROUGH A CRISIS

not necessarily in this order..

Reach out. Sometimes it's more comfortable to be alone, and that's okay for brief times. But you also need some accountability. You need encouragement. You need the simple presence of someone else.

Choose people wisely. It's important to not only reach out to people but to reach out to the right people. It's hard to know who that is when your world seems shattered, but consider:

- Who can I trust?
- Who will speak truth to me?
- Who will listen well and simply be present at times?
- Who has wisdom, not just in how to solve a problem but how to live well through it?

Allow space. While it's important to invite others into your world, you also need space to breathe at times. Just the right amount of space can provide brief reality checks and moments of clarity of the best next step for you.

Talk with God. You might not have many words to share with him. You might need to yell at him. You might not know him or trust him well, or you might be in the process of running away from him. Wherever you are, pause every now and then and try to catch a moment with him. Be honest. He already knows the details—even better than you—but acknowledging his presence and strength is a big deal.

Don't get ahead of yourself. You're not going to tie all the pieces up into a neat and tidy bow. To be honest, you don't even have all the pieces. Take the next step but don't have such high expectations of yourself (or anyone else) that you easily get overwhelmed.

Be patient with yourself and others. It's a tough time. You're going to choose wrong sometimes. You're going to get down. You're going to get frustrated, sad, angry, and so on. Be honest about the way you feel, but refuse to let your emotions run your decisions and interactions. When you do, forgive yourself and others and move forward.

Check your perspective. The big stuff seems overwhelming. So does the little stuff. There is just too much. Every now and then, look beyond the details and notice the bigness of a sunset or starry sky or the details of a good cup of coffee, the sweet smell of something familiar, or someone's small act of generosity and compassion.

Help someone. It seems counter-intuitive, but helping someone else—even if it's sharing a simple smile—can help you breathe and get a moment of perspective on what's happening around you.

Check out *Fractured Into Wholeness* by Susan H. Lawrence on Amazon, available in print and ebook formats.

For more resources and daily encouragement, visit PurePurpose.org.