5. Do not speculate and give false information about what has taken place. This is especially true for older children (e.g., adolescents). Misrepresentation of facts may exacerbate false and distorted thinking (e.g., "Can I get drafted?"). Don't hesitate to admit that you do not have the answers for all that is asked. Don't dwell on the details and scope of the event, especially with young children. However, strive to separate fact from fiction.

6. Monitor exposure to media. Do not overexpose children to television and radio, especially preschool and elementary-aged children. This is certainly the case when graphic and perhaps, live programming is being broadcasted. Use alternate audio and video materials (e.g., videos, DVD, music) to distract them from live television viewing. You may also channel their feelings and curiosity into some form of helping behavior. For example, have them write a letter or draw pictures, donate clothes, or help raise money for those affected by the event.

7. Realistically provide reassurance about their safety. Assure them that steps are being taken to make their schools and community safer places to live, for example. Moreover, express that the event is very extraordinary and uncommon. Older kids may benefit from becoming engaged in the process of developing "safety" methods. For example, they can develop a list of emergency contact numbers or determine ways to increase communication with their family when they are away from home, etc. These responses may also foster a sense of empowerment. Again, keeping the age and developmental level of the child in mind is of paramount importance. Telling a child that they are entirely safe may be difficult at a time when you, personally, are not feeling secure. In fact, such information may be a distortion of reality. However, younger children (preschool age) will not comprehend the nature and intricacy of certain events (e.g., terrorist attacks) and thus, reassurance of safety may be the best and most healthy information that we can offer. Attempt to remain reasonably honest with adolescents about the impact of the disaster on your family as well as the world.

8. Consider the reactions of children with histories of past traumatic experiences, losses, or emotional disturbance (e.g., depression, anxiety). Traumatic incidents tend to dredge up maladaptive thoughts and feelings, especially with adolescents. Be observant for signs of suicide, substance abuse, severe sleeping and eating disturbance, and externalizing of angry or aggressive feelings. As mentioned earlier, do not hesitate to seek the assistance of a mental health professional within the school or community settings.

9. Make an effort to maintain a "normal" routine. This may be quite difficult, especially if you are directly affected by the incident (e.g., loss of a family member or friend). Keeping some consistency in household chores, dinner time, homework, bedtime can foster the healing and recovery process. Do not be overly rigid but attempt to approximate those routines that have become familiar and routine. This may help maintain a sense of "connectedness" to the past and help mitigate against anxiety and "fear of the unknown."

10. Monitor your own emotional status. Be aware that you may also be feeling grief, anxiety, guilt, and anger as you attempt to make sense out of the senseless. Keep in touch with close friends, family, clergy, school and mental health professionals as needed. Try to get adequate sleep and nutrition. Incorporate exercise and other enjoyable activities within your routine. Again, do not hesitate to obtain professional assistance if you or your child are in need.