

A DISRUPTIVE SHOCK

You were the victim of a traumatic event.

Before this traumatic event, you probably never thought about the fact that your life could change overnight. You felt safe and in control of your own life. But during the traumatic event, you felt powerless, vulnerable and terrified. At the moment of the event, you may not have felt or thought anything at all. You were only concerned with surviving as best you could. Afterwards, you felt the shock: the fear, the anger, the powerlessness and the dejection. You may have shaken and cried. Or, the other way round, you may have been staring silently ahead, without realising anything.

Usually, such an unpleasant event disappears from your mind after a while. But some experiences are so shocking that they are difficult to forget. When you experience something like this, it can completely disrupt your life. It takes time to recover from such an event. How long it takes to recover is different for everyone.

It is also possible that it is not easy to process the shocking event. You notice this in all sorts of physical and psychological symptoms. For example, you have palpitations, you startle easily and you are depressed. If you have such symptoms over a longer period, there is a chance that you will develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Then the event has been so shocking for you that you continue to suffer from too much tension and stress. Your life after (= post) the shocking (= traumatic) event is seriously disturbed.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND HELP?

If the symptoms and negative feelings persist, then it is important to do something about it. Do not think too easily that it will go away by itself. If you do nothing, your symptoms may get worse. The most important thing is that you accept for yourself that there is a problem and that you realise that you want to change something about it. You certainly do not have to be ashamed or to conceal your complaints. Being open about your problems actually helps you to place your complaints and reduce them. Talking about your problem, experience and feelings is often the first step towards a solution.

Most likely, you can call on professional help through POBOS (www.pobos.be) and find the support you need. Of course, you can always turn to your general practitioner, who can refer you and help you find a solution to your problem if necessary.

You can also do a 'self-scan' and in that way map out for yourself whether it is best to continue looking for professional help. Via this [link](#) you will find a short questionnaire – **POBOS Trauma Scan (IES-R)** - with which you can find out if and to what extent you need professional help in coping with the shocking event.

