

Acupuncturists offer free trauma treatment in Marathon bombing aftermath

Our friend Robert Gracey sends the following:

Massachusetts acupuncturists in affiliation with the New England School of Acupuncture (NESAs), Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine Society of Massachusetts (AOMSM) and Acupuncture Without Borders (AWB) are joining together through [Boston Acupuncture Trauma Relief \(BATR\)](#) to provide treatment and healing for those affected by the tragic Boston Marathon bombings and related events. Participating acupuncturists are offering free acupuncture treatments to those in need.

The development of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a possible result of both man-made and natural disasters. Acupuncture has been used by AWB in tragic situations like the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy, and most recently in Newtown, Connecticut. The Department of Defense has also been working with acupuncture to help veterans returning from foreign wars alleviate trauma symptoms that may linger after deployment.

It is common for those who have undergone trauma to experience “triggers” that will set off a response, like a car backfire, the sounds of heavy equipment, or news updates as the case unfolds. It is also common for sufferers to experience physical symptoms like sweating, labored breathing, increased heart rate, and nausea. The most important thing to know is everyone reacts to traumatic exposure differently and there is no right or wrong way to feel or act. It is perfectly normal to have a reaction; it’s a natural part of the healing process.

Common Symptoms Following Exposure to Trauma:

- Restlessness/anxiety/lack of focus
- Difficulty sleeping/nightmares
- Reactions to loud noises or sudden movements
- Feeling a sense of danger or extreme alertness
- Upsetting images coming up at unwanted times
- Reliving/re-experiencing the event in your mind
- Feelings of numbness, guilt, or depression
- Loss of interest in daily activities

While acupuncturists are not first responders, we understand, because we feel it ourselves, the feelings of angst and confusion that simmer in the aftermath. The use of acupuncture for trauma is a vital bridge between first intervention and the healing process that allows those affected to move through the experience and heal. In addition, acupuncture can also help those recover from their physical injuries.

As one of many acupuncturists offering free trauma relief, Gracey and others are offering free services to those in need. For more information please contact Robert Gracy 617-549-1196 or rgracey@graceyhealth.com ([Gracey Holistic Health](#)), the New England School of Acupuncture clinic at 617-558-6372, or chose from a list of acupuncturists via the following NESAs landing page: <http://traumarelief.nesa.edu/>.

-Anita M. Harris

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