

EARTHQUAKE

Think of trauma as an earthquake happening in your life. Think of a city. There are roads and railways and buildings and the people who live in the city know how to get around to the places they want to go. There is order and familiarity. If there isn't familiarity with a certain part of town, there are maps for sale in every gas station. So you get to feel pretty at home living in your city. In the same way you get to feel at home living in your life.

Then there's an earthquake. A BIG one. The roads and railways and buildings are all torn apart and turned to rubble in a matter of a few seconds. No more order. No more familiarity. No gas stations. No maps. You look around but you don't recognize anything. You don't even know where the corner store at the end of your block used to be. You don't know how to get around anymore. Even if the buses and trains worked, there are no roads to drive on. So you start wandering around in the chaos thinking in the back of your mind that you should be able to make sense of it because, after all, you've lived here for years. When you can't make sense of it you start to get scared and you start to feel lost and disoriented. It might even occur to you that you've gone crazy.

You're not crazy. A devastating event has happened in your life. Where there was once order, it has created chaos. The ground is all broken up and uneven. You don't know where to put your feet anymore. It's impossible to walk steady. You keep losing your balance and almost falling.

The thing is, you're better than you ever knew you were at catching your balance before you hit the ground. Or someone else close to you catches your arm and steadies you. When you do fall, you get up again, either on your own or someone from the rescue squad helps you.

If the earthquake didn't kill you, the odds are in your favor that you will be alright. It takes time, effort and energy, but people rebuild their cities after earthquakes. Remember that.

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