



# IT'S OK TO ASK FOR HELP

## SECONDARY TRAUMA

Here are some of the common signs and symptoms of secondary trauma. This can happen to anyone and it's important if you notice these signs and symptoms that you ask for help. To be clear, what you're looking for, in yourself or others, are changes in behaviour.

**For information on what to do if you notice any of these signs visit [oscar kilo.org.uk](https://oscar kilo.org.uk) or contact your wellbeing team.**

### Re-experience symptoms

- › Unable to switch off from the work.
- › Upsetting dreams or flashbacks.
- › Overreactions to work related issues.
- › Victimised feelings of hopelessness and helplessness.

### Arousal symptoms

- › Unreasonable anger or irritability focused at family, colleagues or situations.
- › Self-destructive behaviour such as driving too fast or having an affair.
- › Jumpy, or an inability to sleep or relax.
- › Inability to concentrate, leading to increased numbers of accidents or errors.
- › Sensitivity to noise and bright lights.

### Negative thinking symptoms

- › Negative self-beliefs eg, "I'm incompetent"; "The world is bad"; "No one can be trusted."
- › Lack of interest in things that used to be enjoyable.
- › Negative outlook on life leading to unreasonable fears, beliefs and attitudes.
- › Feelings of isolation from family and friends.
- › Emotional numbing and difficulty in showing sensitivity or positive emotions.

### Avoidance symptoms

- › Putting off doing work or dealing with demanding cases.
- › Not looking too deeply.
- › Avoiding questions that might lead to upsetting responses.
- › Blocking out or forgetting the most distressing areas.
- › Using alcohol to block out feelings.