

A large wildfire is burning in a forest, with thick smoke rising into the sky. The fire is concentrated in the middle ground, with bright orange and yellow flames visible. The surrounding forest is dense with green trees. The sky is filled with large, billowing clouds of white and grey smoke, with some sunlight breaking through on the right side.

Critical Incident Stress Management

*"Life's most urgent question is:
What are you doing for others?"*

Martin Luther King, Jr.



CISM

CISM: Critical Incident Stress Management

Emergency Service Workers

- The average person will experience 2.4 crises in their life time
- Experience more human tragedy in the first three years of employment than most will see in a life time
- Devastating long-term affects can be expected if the tragedy is not dealt with properly



What is a Critical Incident

- An event that has the capacity to overwhelm an individual's coping mechanisms
 - Inability to perform daily activities
 - Inability to concentrate on normal job duties
- May occur outside of work



Critical Incidents

- Line of duty death/off duty death
- Suicide of a co-worker
- Aviation accident
- Entrapment
- Burn-over
- Shooting
- Serious Accident or Injury

- Shelter deployment
- Traffic Collisions involving fatalities
- Disaster recovery work
- Significant event involving children
- Events charged with profound emotions

Types of Stress

- Eustress – positive motivating
- Distress – excessive & debilitating
- Cumulative – builds up over time
- Traumatic – critical incident
 - Normal coping is overwhelmed
 - Intrusive memories
 - Affects normal life functioning

Reactions to Crisis and Trauma

Physical	Cognitive	Emotional	Relational	Behavioral	Spiritual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatigue • Insomnia • Chills • Nausea • Headaches • Indigestion • Elevated BP • Chest pain • Muscle Tremors • Sweating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blaming • Confusion • Poor Attention • Poor Decisions • Lack Concentration • Memory Problems • Difficulty remembering details • Hyper-Vigilant • Nightmares • Intrusive Images 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anxiety • Crying • Numbing • Guilt/Survivor Guilt • Grief • Disbelief • Denial • Panic • Anger • Obsessiveness • Emotional Shock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdrawal from Family, Coworkers, Colleagues • Withdrawal from Organizations or other Affiliations • Lack of Community or Involvement • Biases/ Stigmas may become prevalent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-Social • Accident Prone • Loss/Increase of Appetite • Inability to Rest • Change in Speech • Alcohol/Drug Consumption • Recklessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Searching for meaning and hope • Vulnerability and Mortality • Withdraw from faith and religion • Redefining moral values

Critical Incident Stress Management and Employee Assistance Program

- CISM is a coordinated program of tactics designed to alleviate negative reactions to traumatic experiences
 - Short-term, adaptive process helps individuals return to their daily routines more quickly
 - Information and education
 - Early Intervention is key
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Requesting CISM Support

- Agency Administrator responsible for requesting CISM response
 - 24-48 hours following a critical incident
- Local dispatch/appropriate GACC will contact R5 CISM Coordinator
- Strategic Response to Crisis Plan developed including appropriate CISM support
- CISM Coordinator will deploy a CISM Lead and Peers

The Process

- Description of Incident
 - who, what, where, when, & how
- Number of employees needing CISM services
- Family members or children involved
- Desired date, time, and location for CISM support
- Media involvement in incident

CISM Support Resources

- One-on-one peer support
- Crisis Management Briefing
- Defusing/Debriefing
- Mental Health Professionals trained in trauma
 - Understand the agency culture
- Clergy support
- Community resources



Why Peer Support Works

- Camaraderie among peers
- Intervention is directed at individuals with similar backgrounds
- Peers have credibility that academic training cannot create
- Peers understand the unique traumas, and job related stresses
- Not psychotherapy or counseling



Effective CISM Program

- Pre-incident education (Resistance education)
 - Mental and physical health
- Restore people impacted by traumatic events (Resilience, Recovery)
 - CISM response
- Commitment to recruit and train peers
- Resources – CISM, EAP, Community, Wildland Fire Fighter Foundation, Veterans

Program Activity

- 130 trained peers
 - Basic/Group
- Mob Guide/ordering process
- Oversight
 - Draft charter
 - Operating plan
- 2015 CISM application and THSP mobilization

- Acting CISM Coordinator
- Building capacity with Peers
- Increasing Training
 - Following the ICISF Model



2014 CISM Responses

- Drowning (multiple)
- Fatality vehicle accidents (multiple)
- Shelter Deployments
- Law enforcement shooting (multiple)
- Off-duty death (multiple)
- Near Miss (multiple)
- Heart attack
- Serious injury - snag

- Snag fatality
- Air plane crash
- Air Tanker Crash
- Helicopter Crash
- Chainsaw Injury
- Earthquake (modified peer response)

- 507 employees provided with a variety of CISM resources

Develop a National Interagency Approach

- Standardized and nationally coordinated Critical Incident Peer Support program, in which positions, scope/limitation of duties, training standards, and intervention protocols are clearly defined under a single research-based intervention model.

National Resource Support Framework

- CISM
 - Pre-Incident Education
 - Critical Incident Intervention
 - Peer Support
- Post-Incident Support and Education
- Follow-Up Care
- Resilience Programs
- Psychological First Aid

National CISM Vision

DOCTRINE

- Actions demonstrate people are the greatest value
- Service – professional, standardized, consistent agency wide
- Psychological/social science foundation using a evidence-based approach
- Maintaining a learning culture/foster continuous improvement
- Prepared to respond appropriately
- Shared responsibility
- Code of Ethics exists
- “Do No Harm”

Moving Forward

- Monitor exposure, well-being, follow-up resources
 - Peer Supporters
 - Coordinators
 - Employees
- Collaborate with additional resources
 - Health, wellbeing, performance, safety



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