

USACE Critical Incident Stress Management Team

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) is confidential and discreet peer support in response to stressful work environments or incidents.

CISM decreases the overall impact of stress and accelerate recovery in people who are having normal reactions to abnormal events, such as work stress.

Any incident may be defined as “critical” if unusually strong negative emotions are generated in those involved. For example:

- Death or serious injury
- Employee suicide or unexpected death
- Traumatic events involving children
- Exposure to grieving public
- Traumatic events including disasters
- Extended negative media exposure
- Family / loved one stress

The USACE CISM Team is a group of peer supporters, Corps employees representing all mission areas, who have undergone special training to assist their fellow employees.

The USACE CISM Team provides information about critical incidents and stress that employees can use to help cope. Support is provided in an atmosphere of empathy and care to identify personal options for dealing with stress to include:

- * -Resilience and stress education
- * -Confidential one-on-one support
- * -Emergency mobilization
- * -Employee Assistance Program (EAP) referral
- * -Suicide Prevention Education

Prevent Stress Respond to Stress Restore Your Normal

- Movement followed by relaxation may reduce some physical stress signs
- Eat well-balanced meals and regularly drink water
- Take rest breaks
- Try some slow breathing activities to relieve stress
- Do enjoyable activities
- Consider journaling to get emotions and thoughts on paper
- Keep your life as routine as possible
- Confide in trusted people or friends
- Structure your time
- Limit exposure to uncomfortable settings
- Share some feelings with co-workers and loved ones
- Give yourself permission to be emotional; be authentic with your feelings
- Participate in healthy activities
- Consider using the Crisis Text Line by texting “hello” to 741741 for discreet and confidential help
- In an emergency, call either 911 or 988



To contact a Peer Supporter or activate a CISM Response Team call: 1-314-925-5250 or email cism-vm@usace.army.mil

For more information about CISM, email CDL-CISM-SeniorLeadership@usace.army.mil

or visit

<https://usace.dps.mil/sites/KMP/SitePages/CISM.aspx>

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What is Stress

Our bodies react in specific ways to things happening around us. This is called stress and it normally goes away quickly. Stress may be caused by conflict, changes, significant events and our perception of events.

If you are subjected to a serious event or an ongoing series of events, it can overcome your body's functions and not allow a return to normal. This is called critical incident stress.

Although the event may be over, you may experience some reactions to your body.

It is very common for people to have uncomfortable reactions when they have experienced a traumatic event.

Sometimes the emotional aftershocks appear immediately. Occasionally they appear hours or days later. In some cases, weeks or months may pass before those uncomfortable feelings occur.



Signs and Symptoms of Stress

These signs are usually temporary and usually go away or recede with time.

With the understanding and the support of peers, the uncomfortable feelings of stress usually pass more quickly. Occasionally, the stress requires professional assistance.

If stress interferes with your home or work life, please contact your CISM Peer Supporter, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), your healthcare provider, and/or other helping professional.



Changes in Your Mind	Changes in Your Feelings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Memory Challenges -Decision Making challenges -Concentration Issues -Confusion or Inattention -Negative Thoughts -Changes in your Thoughts -Changes in your Judgment -A New Focus on the Event/Trauma -Desire to Escape or Run Away -Changes in your Life Meaning or Life Purpose -Questioning your Beliefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Change in Mood -Change in the Sensitivity of your Feelings -Feeling Restless -Feeling Anxious , Nervous, or "On Edge" -Feeling Depressed or "Low Energy" -Feeling Anger and/or Resentful -Feeling Easily Irritated -A Sense of Being Overwhelmed -A Lack of Confidence -Feeling Numb or a Lack of Feeling -Urge to Laugh or Cry at Inappropriate Times
Physical Changes	Behavioral Changes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Change in Eating Habits -Head and/or Body Aches. -Digestive Issues -Muscle Tension or Pain -Sleeping Changes -Fatigue -Higher heartrate -Weight Gain or Loss -Change in Sex Drive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Changes to Sleeping Patterns -Socially Isolating yourself -Neglecting Your Normal Responsibilities -Increased Alcohol and/or Drug Use -Nervous Habits (Nail Biting, Pacing, Teeth Grinding or Jaw Clenching) -A change in your Normal Activities -Changes to your Temper -Changes to your Reactions to Problems

