

Critical Incident Stress Prevention Tips

- Strenuous physical activity coupled with relaxation reduces some reactions to stress
- Eat well-balanced and regular meals (even if you don't feel like it)
- Take rest breaks
- Do activities you enjoy
- Keep your life as routine as possible
- Confide in someone you trust
- Structure your time; keep busy
- Limit exposure to sights, sounds, and odors
- Share your feelings with co-workers and be aware of their feelings."
- Give yourself permission to react, don't try and hide your feelings
- Talk to people, they do care! Talk can be the most healing medicine
- Avoid alcohol and drug use



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The CISM Team provides information about critical incidents and stress reactions that employees can use to help identify healthy life choices. The team provides an atmosphere of concern and caring as well as identifying personal options for dealing with stress including:

- Pre-incident and stress education
- Confidential on-scene group and one-on-one support
- Emergency mobilization and demobilization
- Post visit follow-up
- Employee Assistance Program referral

Critical Incident Stress Management Team Southwestern Division

To Request SWD CISM Assistance call

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Southwestern Division

Ft. Worth District

Galveston District

Little Rock District

Tulsa District

Mission

Southwestern Division Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) is a program designed to provide peer support and healthy life choices in response to stressful work environment incidents.

Critical stress management is a process designed to lessen the overall impact of acute or cumulative stress and to accelerate recovery in people who are having normal reactions to abnormal events.

Critical Incident: Any situation faced by employees which causes them to experience unusually strong emotional reactions which may have the potential to interfere with their ability to function either immediately or post-event. Any incident, regardless of the type, may be defined as “critical” if unusually strong emotions are generated in the people involved, for example:

- Line of duty death or serious injury
- Employee suicide or unexpected death
- Significant events involving children
- Traumatic events including disasters
- High-impact recovery operation, exposure to grieving public
- Extended negative media exposure

Signs and Symptoms

Cognitive

- Poor concentration
- Intrusive images
- Hyper-vigilance
- Poor problem solving
- Dulled awareness

Emotional

- Anxiety
- Anger/irritability
- Fear/Panic
- Depression
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Inappropriate emotional response
- Apprehension

Spiritual

- Questioning one’s basic beliefs
- Loss of meaning or purpose
- Change in church involvement
- Sense of isolation
- Church rituals seem empty

Have you experienced an incident that caused unusually strong emotional reactions? Have you ever felt overwhelmed by job stressors?

These reactions, if not addressed, have the potential to interfere with your ability to function either at work or at home.

Although the event may be over, you may experience very some strong physical or emotional reactions. It is very common for people to have aftershocks when they have passed through a horrible event.

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

The signs and symptoms of a stress reaction may last days, weeks, or longer depending on the severity of the event.

With the understanding and the support of peers, stress reactions usually pass more quickly. Occasionally, the traumatic event is so painful that professional assistance from a counselor is necessary.