

Hearts and Sirens

Benefits of a CISM Intervention

- Reduce stress at work and at home
- Reduce feelings of isolation and abnormality
- Prevents onset of delayed psychological reactions
- Improves coping skills for future incidents
- Reduces effects of stress related diseases
- Reduces early retirement due to job related stressor, accidents, injuries and/or disease
- Enhances job satisfaction
- Supports professionals and their families in time of need
- Provides educational and psychological support for job related stress
- Promotes departmental cohesion and team functioning
- Help first responders get back to doing the job they love
- Enhances functioning on the job by decreasing distraction of stress related concerns

Request for Services

Mercury Team consists of both active and retired police, fire and rescue personnel who act as peer support counselors. As a backup we offer referral to a network of higher levels of care including behavioral counseling, addiction treatment and inpatient retreats for stress related concerns. These programs specialize in first responders and understand the unique needs of emergency services culture. Mercury team serves as part of a network of mutual aid teams that provide critical incident support across the state, region and nation and is recognized by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (www.ICISF.org)

All information discussed during a CISM intervention is strictly **confidential** and will not be discussed with anyone outside the intervention. Statutory laws across the nation have established testimonial privilege for members of an official state recognized Critical Incident Stress Management Team.

Team services can be accessed 24 hours through county dispatch.



**CRITICAL INCIDENT
RESPONSE TEAM**

Hearts and Sirens

*A Service Dedicated to the Loved Ones
Of Helper Provider Professionals*

www.mercurycism.org



Contact Information

Gloucester County Dispatch: 856-589-0911

Our Mission Statement

The Mercury Critical Incident Response Team was established to provide an organized system of crisis intervention to assist helper provider professionals reduce the number of job related stress casualties among professional ranks.

Serving: Community Public Safety Services, Communication Specialists, Critical Care Providers and their families. This may include: Police, Fire, EMS, Corrections, Dispatch, Hospitals, and Flight Rescue.

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Your loved one has experienced a critical incident...

What is a critical incident?

A critical incident is defined as any event that overwhelms normal coping mechanisms and may have impacted the ability to function effectively during or after the critical incident. Stress is unique to the individual as beauty is to the eye of the beholder...personal. What may stress one individual in a situation may not be stressful to others. Stress can be cumulative over a number of incidents or unusual events over time.

Informational Facts:

- He/she may be experiencing some NORMAL stress responses to such an event. Critical Incident stress effects up to 87% of all helper professionals.
- No one is immune from the impact of critical incident stress regardless of past experiences or years of service. Your loved one may experience critical incident stress at an time during their career.
- Your loved one may experience a variety of thoughts and reactions of a stress response OR they may experience numbness or absence of any responses.
- You may not understand what your loved one is going through at this time, but offer your love, support and acceptance.
- Don't be afraid to ask what you can do that they would consider helpful.
- Accept the fact that life will go on: theirs, yours, your children and others around you.
- Attempt to maintain or return to normal routine as soon as possible.
- Avoid entering into major decisions following a critical incident. Your loved one's ability to process information, problem solve, and make decisions may be hampered at this time.

**Contact Mercury Critical Incident Response Team:
911 Dispatch - www.mercurycism.org**

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What is helpful?

- Talking is GOOD medicine.... LISTENING IS KEY.
- Encourage well-balanced and regular meals that include foods they enjoy.
- Encourage plenty of rest.
- Provide some "Private Time"
- Exercise together even if only a brisk walk.
- Suffering? Don't take their anger and frustration personally.
- Encourage, but do not pressure your loved one to talk about their experience.
- Offer expressions of support and that you are sorry such an event occurred and you want to understand.
- Avoid trying to fix things! AVOID statements such as, "It could have been worse" or "It's fate" or "They asked for it" or "It's God's will" or "Quit if it bothers you that much"

Remember....

- Suffering from the effects of critical incident stress is "individual" and completely NORMAL
- Your loved one is probably not the only one that may be experiencing critical incident related stress. They are probably sharing some of their thoughts and reactions.
- The thoughts and reactions will normally subside and disappear in time. All phases of our lives overlap and influence each other: personal, professional, family, financial, spiritual, etc.
- The impact of critical incident stress can be intensified/influenced or mitigated by our own personal perspective and the status of family, professional, financial spiritual situations.
- If the signs of stress that your loved one is experiencing do not begin to subside within a few weeks OR if they intensify, consider seeking further assistance through your CISM team, EAP or private system of health care.
- The Mercury team can help you, your loved one, or child find a professional who understands critical incident stress and how it can impact you and your family.

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