

Self Care

Mercury Team/ICISF CISM intervention

Is Confidential	Is NOT a critique
Is Peer Driven	Is available at NO charge
Is Educational	Allows peer support
Allows Ventilation	Provides Follow-up
Insures "we" are not alone	Is evidence based

CISM Core Elements

Pre-incident Education/Preparation	Defusings
On-scene support	CISM Debriefings
Family Education/support	Chaplain Services
Administrative Consultation	Follow-up services
Disaster Demobilizations	Referral Services
One to one peer support	Funeral Support
Crisis Management Briefings	

Responsibilities

Your agency will be asked to notify all participants invited to attend a CISM intervention regarding time, location or special issues prior to the intervention. The location should be quiet, comfortable, space suitable for the expected group size and free from interruptions. The personnel are expected and will benefit greatly to be off duty during any CISM debriefing. Mercury Team interventions are provided by trained volunteer professionals, without charge to any agency.

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.

When in doubt call for a phone consult!



CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE TEAM

Self Care Following a Critical Incident

What is a critical incident?

A critical incident is a "turning point" event often referred to as a crisis event. An event that has a stressful impact, sufficient enough to overwhelm the usually effective coping skills of either an individual or a group of individuals may be considered a critical incident.

Critical incidents are typically sudden, powerful events, which are outside the normal range of ordinary human experiences. Due to the sudden and unusual events they can initiate a strong emotional effect even on well-trained professionals.

Our mission Statement

The Mercury Critical Incident Response Team was established in 1984 to provide an organized system of crisis intervention to assist first responder professionals to reduce the number of job related stress casualties, to mitigate the effects of critical incident stress and to initiate the healing process when traumatic events occur.



Contact Information

Gloucester County Dispatch: 856-589-0911

www.mercurycism.org

Self Care Following a Critical Incident....

Common Signs/Reactions/Thoughts of concern

Critical incidents may produce a wide range of stress symptoms. Stress symptoms usually occur in five different categories: Cognitive (thinking), physical (body), emotional (feeling), behavioral (actions) and spiritual (relationship with God). The more symptoms experienced, the more powerful the stress reaction. The longer the reactions persist, the more potential there is for lasting harm. The following is only a sample of stress symptoms that can show up after a critical incident:

Cognitive

Poor Concentration	Difficulties with Calculations
Poor Attention Span	Difficulty Making Decisions
Slowed Problem Solving	Memory Problems

Emotional

Guilt	Feeling Lost/Overwhelmed
Depression	Anxiety/Fear
Grief	Loss of Emotional Control
Anger	

Physical

Muscle Tremors	Chest Pains
Gastrointestinal Distress	Difficulty Breathing
Headaches	Elevated Blood Pressure

Behavioral

Excessive Silence	Sleep Disturbances
Extreme Behavioral Change	Changes in Eating Habits
Withdrawal From Contact	Change in Work Habits

Spiritual

Uncharacteristic Religious Involvement	Anger at Clergy
Sense of Isolation from God	Questioning Basic Beliefs
Loss of Meaning or Purpose	Faith Practices Seem Empty
Withdrawal from Place of Worship	Anger at God

Thoughts and reactions in relation to a stressful event may last a few days, weeks, or months and occasionally longer depending on the severity of the traumatic event. With understanding and the support of loved ones, the stress reactions usually pass more quickly. Occasionally the traumatic event is so painful that professional assistance from a counselor may be beneficial and necessary. This does not imply craziness or weakness. The need simply indicates that the particular event was just too powerful for the individual to manage on his/her own.

Self Care Following a Critical Incident...

Taking Care of Yourself...

- Vigorous Exercise (especially within the first 24 hours)
- Plenty of rest
- Normal routine
- Structure your time, keep busy
- Use Vitamins B, C, and D to combat stress reactions
- Spend time with trusted family, friends, co-workers
- Relaxation
- Mediation
- Massage
- Do things that feel good to you
- Reach out-avoid isolation
- Avoid life altering decisions
- Avoid/Reduce the use of caffeine, drugs, alcohol
- Keep a personal journal-write your way through sleepless nights
- Maintain good posture-removes the weight from your shoulders
- Watch out for your peers/co-workers
- Remember it is okay to smile and laugh-laughter increases oxygen to your brain
- Recognize you are experiencing stress

Avoid Negative Coping

- AVOID – Denial or ignoring the problem
- AVOID – Fault finding or complaining, or being critical and judgmental
- AVOID – Indulging or buying on impulse or wasting time or sleeping in
- AVOID – Passivity or procrastination...Hoping it gets better
- AVOID – Revenge or getting even or talking mean- sarcasm
- AVOID – Stubbornness or rigidity or demanding your own way or refusal to be swayed
- Watch out for illnesses, developing headaches, stomach disorders, or being accident-prone.

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or Local 911

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