Critical Incident Stress Management
What is a Critical Incident?
Critical Incident

- Any event which a stressful impact sufficient enough to overwhelm the usually effective coping skills of either an individual or group.
Critical Incident

• Typically sudden powerful events which are outside the range of ordinary human experience.
Critical Incident

1. * Line-of-duty death / death at the workplace
2. * Serious line-of-duty / workplace injury
3. * Suicide of co-worker, friend,
4. * Multi-casualty incident /disaster
5. * Police shooting or injury or death to a civilian as a result of operational procedures /events with extreme threat
Critical Incident

6. Significant events involving children

7. Victim relative or known to helper

8. Prolonged incidents especially with loss

9. Excessive media interest

10. Any powerful event which overwhelms a person’s usual ability to cope
Miscellaneous Events

- Repetitive horrible events
- Symbolic events
- Multiple events
- Events with personal meaning
- Threatening events
- Administrative abandonment
What is Critical Incident Stress?

The reaction a person or group has to a critical incident.
5 Ways We Can Be Affected By Critical Incident Stress

1. Physically
2. Emotionally
3. Cognitively
4. Behaviorally
5. Spiritually
Common Signs and Symptoms of Critical Incident Stress

**Body**
- headaches
- frequent infections
- taut muscles
- muscular twitches
- fatigue
- skin irritations
- breathlessness

**Mind**
- worrying
- muddled thinking
- impaired judgement
- nightmares
- indecisions
- negativity
- hasty decisions

**Emotions**
- loss of confidence
- more fussy
- irritability
- depression
- apathy
- alienation
- apprehension

**Behavior**
- accident prone
- loss of appetite
- loss of sex drive
- drinking more
- insomnia
- restlessness
- smoking more
Physical

- Excessive sweating
- Nausea
- Increased heart rate
- Elevated blood pressure
- Rapid breathing
- Dizzy spells
Cognitive

- Confusion
- Difficulty making decisions
- Lowered concentration
- Memory dysfunction
- Lowering of all higher cognitive functions
• Emotional shock
• Anger
• Grief
• Depression
• Feeling overwhelmed
Behavioral

- Changes in ordinary behavior
- Changes in eating
- Decreased personal hygiene
- Prolonged silences
- Withdrawal from others
- Changes
Spiritual

- Anger at God
- Questioning basic beliefs
- Loss of meaning or purpose
- Withdrawal from place of worship
- Sense of isolation from God
- Anger at clergy
Stress Response Syndromes

- Immediate - up to 24 hrs
- Delayed - 24 to 72 hrs
Post-traumatic stress is a normal reaction in a normal person, to an abnormal event.
Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

A comprehensive, systematic program for the mitigation of critical incident related stress.
Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

- An intervention protocol developed specifically for dealing with traumatic events.
- It is a formal, highly structured and professionally recognized process for helping those involved in a critical incident to share their experiences, vent emotions, learn about stress reactions and symptoms and given referral for further help if required.
- It is not psychotherapy. It is a confidential, voluntary and educative process, sometimes called 'psychological first aid'.
Goals of Critical Incident Stress Management

- Prevent traumatic stress
- Mitigate traumatic stress
- Intervene to assist recovery from traumatic stress
Goals cont.

- Accelerate recovery whenever possible
- Restore to function
- Maintain worker health and welfare
CISD Objectives

- Education
- Ventilation
- Reassurance
- Forewarning
- Positive contact with MHP
- Improve interagency cooperation
CISD Objectives continued

- Contradict fallacy of uniqueness
- Increase group cohesiveness
- Restore self confidence
- Facilitate follow-up
Critical Incident Stress Management

- Pre-crisis preparation
- Demobilization
  - (large groups of public safety)
- Crisis Management Briefings
  - (large groups primary victims)
- Defusing
- Pastoral crisis intervention
Critical Incident Stress Management

- Critical Incident Stress Debriefing
- One-on-one crisis intervention
- Family CISM
- Organizational crisis intervention/consultation
- Follow-up and referral mechanisms
CISM - Who needs it?

Those exposed to critical incidents including:

- Communications
- Military
- Fire
- Law Enforcement
- EMS
  - Hospital
- Schools
- Any one else possibly affected…
How CISM Helps First Responders

CISM helps by providing:

- One-on-one peer support
- Demobilization of information
- Crisis management briefings
- Defusing
- Critical incident stress debriefings
One-on-One Peer Support

Peer support is provided to individuals:

- Mitigate symptoms
- Return to previous level of functioning
- Provide referrals if needed
Responding to Critical Incidents

This occurs:

- At anytime post crisis
- To inform and consult
- Provide psychological decompression
- Stress management
- Typically occurs in large groups/organizations
Defusing

This occurs:

- Post crisis (within a 12 hour time period)
- To address symptom mitigation
- To assist with providing possible closure
- Triage of services and presenting symptoms
- Typically occurs in small groups
Critical Incident Stress Debriefing

This occurs:

- Post crisis
  - (occurs within 1-10 days, 3-4 weeks following mass disasters)
- Facilitates psychological closure
- To address symptom mitigation
- Triage of services and presenting symptoms
- Typically occurs in small groups
1.3.17 STRESS EVALUATION AS A RESULT OF USE OF DEADLY FORCE

1. A deputy directly involved in a deadly force incident that results in injury or death of a person shall undergo a stress evaluation as outlined below.

1. **Stress evaluation will not be limited to incidents involving only deadly force, but may be applied to any deputy involved in actions that may produce stress related after-effects.**

   1. In other law enforcement actions involving the potential of stress related after-effects, the bureau commander of the involved deputy will determine if a stress evaluation will be performed.

2. The stress evaluation may be altered or waived if internal or external investigation reveals criminal or severe procedural violations.

2. The stress evaluation process will be controlled and directed by the bureau commander of the involved deputy. The following is a guide and may be varied by the bureau commander in order to accommodate the involved deputy.
1.3.17 STRESS EVALUATION AS A RESULT OF USE OF DEADLY FORCE

1. Second day following the incident
   1. No duty assignment. Upon leaving duty at 1700 hours the first day following the incident, the deputy will not return to duty until 0800 hours the third day following the incident. This time will be given with pay.
   2. The deputy will be encouraged to pursue a chosen hobby or physical activity. The psychologist chosen by the department will have explained the rationale for this time off and attempted to involve the spouse or a close associate in the activity.

2. Third day following the incident
   1. The deputy reports at 0800 hours to the division or section as determined on the first day following the incident.
   2. The deputy meets with the psychologist and a peer group of personnel that have been involved with circumstances similar to the involved deputy. This meeting is an open discussion of anxieties to date, and addresses what might be anticipated in the future.
      1. The department is a member of the Sedgwick County Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (C.I.S.D.) Team, and this group may be used as the support structure specified in F(2), above.
1.3.17 STRESS EVALUATION AS A RESULT OF USE OF DEADLY FORCE

- **Fourth and fifth days following the incident**
  - The deputy will continue to work a non-uniform, daytime assignment for a minimum of one week following the incident. During this week or anytime after, the deputy may request and be granted additional counseling or professional assistance for himself/herself or his/her immediate family.
  - The division commander will meet with the deputy and discuss the deputy's personal preferences as far as returning to his/her regular duty assignment.
  - The bureau commander will schedule an appointment with the sheriff/undersheriff to determine if any additional steps will be taken. This meeting should include the division or section commander the deputy works for, the psychologist and any others the bureau commander deems appropriate.
  - **As a result of this meeting, a determination will be made to:**
    - Return the deputy to his/her former assignment;
    - Permanently reassign the deputy;
    - Temporarily reassign the deputy and direct additional professional counseling be obtained; or
    - Either (a) or (b) above with additional counseling mandated.
Current CISM Team Members

- Brown, Wayne;
- Carlton, Christopher;
- Casanova, Chris;
- Dehning, Lin;
- Freeman, Rhonda;
- Gibson, Tedd;
- Gourley, Kari;
- Hallacy, Timothy T.;
- Hay, Reinhard;
- Hein, David;
- Johnson, Brenton;
- Kogle, Robbie;
- Kooser, Kenneth;
- McKnight, Tiffany M.;
- Moore, Willetta;
- Muntz, Adrienne;
- Osburn, Randy;
- Page, Joseph C.;
- Palmer, Paige M.;
- Reynolds, Larry;
- Sutherland, Joel;
- Thompson, Lanon
Summary -

- We are all “programmed” by our past. Think in terms of “programming” and not the traditional psychological way of looking at life and problems.
- Once that training foundation is established, principles to your careers and lives.
- There was a way to live your life that you could not comprehend because you have not experienced it.
- It will be difficult to learn more about something when you have no idea what it is.
- It is not about being happy or depressed, but confident in what you can do.
- It should not be about constantly trying to “fix” yourself.
- Make life about plugging the drain of anxiety and anger with training and discipline.
- Create the ability to handle life and your career on your own terms.
- It is a much more interesting life and more enjoyable career.
Take an active part in your survival

Pain is inevitable

Suffering is optional
THE INSTANT WILLINGNESS TO OBEY ORDERS, RESPECT AUTHORITY, AND TO BECOME SELF-RELIANT.
Training is work that needs to be done to promote survival.

THE MOMENT WE BELIEVE THAT SUCCESS IS DETERMINED BY AN INGRAINED LEVEL OF ABILITY AS OPPOSED TO RESILIENCE AND HARD WORK, WE WILL BE BRITTLE IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY.

- JOSH WAITZKIN FROM PSYCHOLOGY TODAY INTERVIEW, NOVEMBER 2008
Training is Necessary

No single technique is perfect, 100% of the time. That’s why we train multiple techniques to survive a physical attack. Every technique taught is practiced and drilled several times so it becomes ‘muscle memory’ and you don’t have to think about it when the time comes for a fight. In a real “on the streets” fight survival depends upon how much you’ve trained, and how well you can think under stress while giving it everything you’ve got.