

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Seminar

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Introduction

- Purpose of this meeting
- My specialties
 - Mental health
 - Organizations
 - Critical incidents





Topics of Discussion

- How we experience a traumatic event
- Common reactions to a stressful event
 - Physical
 - Mental
 - Emotional
 - Behavioral
- How to respond to your reactions

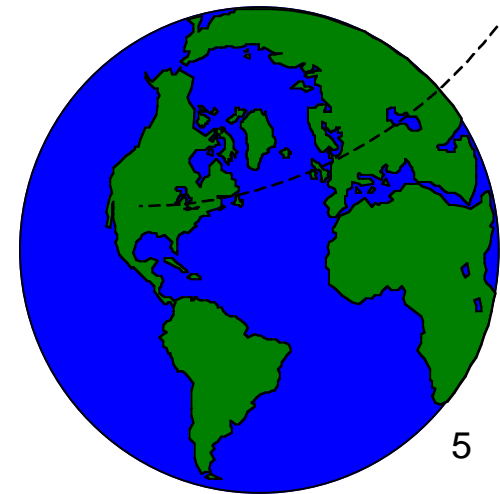
Experiencing a traumatic event

- Being oriented in the world
 - Existing links to the world
 - Knowing who, where, why we are through these links
 - Links disrupted, changed, broken
- Our orientation and functioning can be disturbed



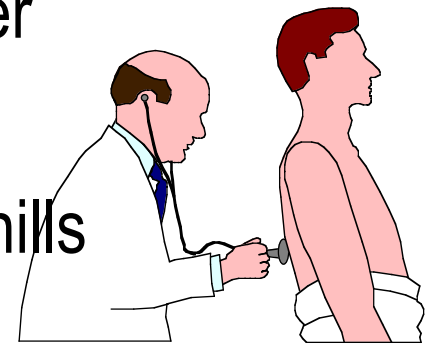
How this relates to you

- Your former orientation may have been disrupted
- Disruption in our view of self and world and future can have an impact
 - on the way you feel
 - on the way you think
 - on the actions you take





Possible physical reactions

- fatigue
- insomnia
- muscle tremors, twitches, chest pain
- breathing difficulty
- elevated BP
- rapid heartbeat
- headaches
- visual difficulties
- nausea
- thirst, hunger
- dizziness
- sweating, chills
- weakness
- fainting





Possible mental reactions

- blaming
 - confusion
 - poor attention
 - inability to decide
 - +/- alertness
 - poor concentration
 - forgetfulness
 - trouble identifying known objects or people
 - +/- awareness of surroundings
 - poor problem solving
 - altered sense of time, place, person
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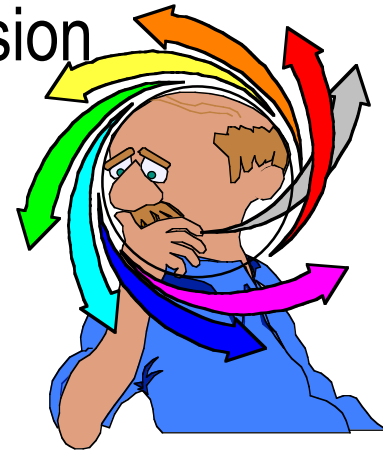
More possible mental reactions

- disturbed thinking
- nightmares
- inescapable images
- flashbacks
- suicidal ideas
- disbelief
- changes in values
- search for meaning



Possible emotional reactions

- anxiety
- survivor guilt, self-blame
- grief
- denial
- severe panic
- fear of loss or going crazy
- emotional numbness
- depression
- lack of capacity for enjoyment
- apprehension

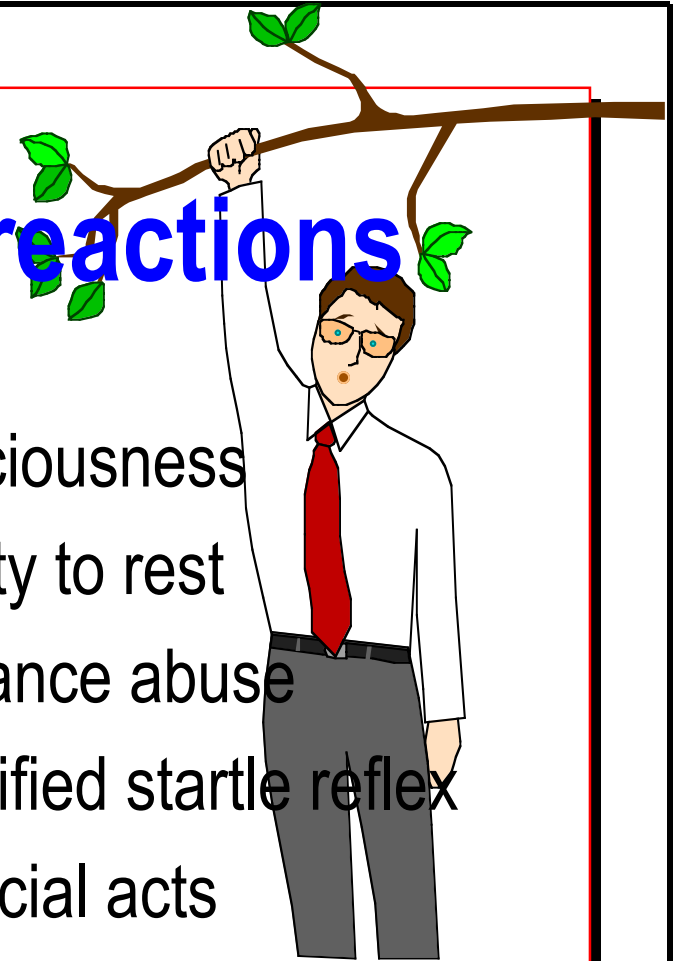


More possible emotional reactions

- uncertainty
- loss of emotional control
- intense anger
- irritability
- agitation
- helplessness
- mistrust
- feelings of worthlessness
- apathy, boredom

Possible behavioral reactions

- changes in normal activities
- change in speech
- withdrawal from others
- emotional outbursts
- change in communication
- suspiciousness
- inability to rest
- substance abuse
- intensified startle reflex
- antisocial acts
- pacing





More possible behavioral reactions

- erratic movements
- decreased personal hygiene
- diminished sexual drive
- appetite disturbance
- prolonged silences
- accident proneness

Post-Trauma DON'TS

- don't drink alcohol excessively
- don't use drugs or alcohol to numb feelings
- don't withdraw from important others
- don't increase caffeine
- don't stay away from work
- don't reduce leisure activities



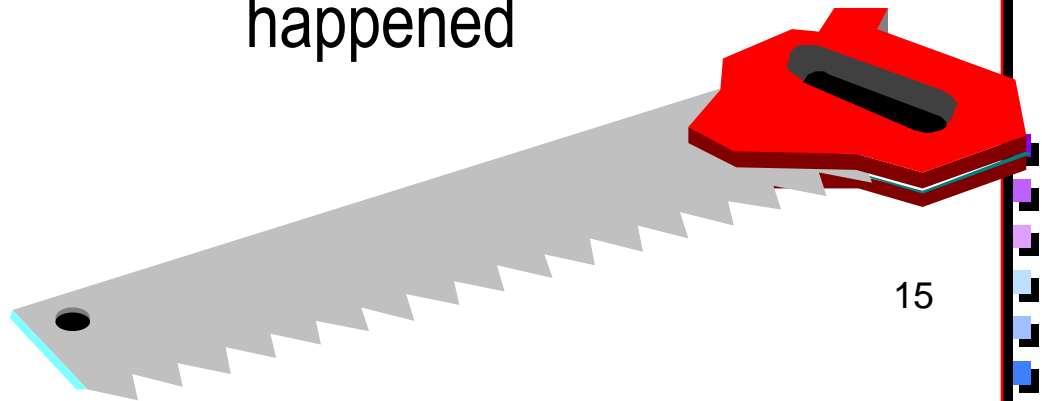


More Post-Trauma DON'TS

- don't have unrealistic expectations for recovery
- don't look for easy answers
- don't take on new major projects
- don't pretend everything is okay
- don't make major changes if you don't need to

Post-Trauma DO'S

- do get enough rest
- do maintain a good diet and exercise program
- do follow a familiar routine
- do find, talk with supportive peers and family
- do take time for leisure
- do take one thing at a time
- do attend any meetings regarding what has happened

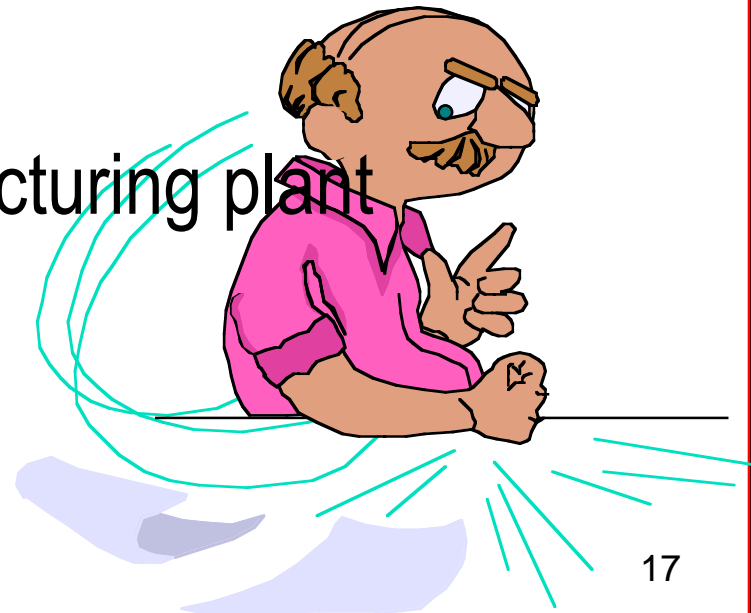


More Post-Trauma DO'S

- do spend time with family and friends
- do create a serene scene to escape to, in fantasy or reality
- do expect the experience to bother you
- do practice some form of relaxation
- do practice mindfulness observe your ideas, feelings, without reacting
- if symptoms persist: seek professional help

Real Life

- a fatal accident at a local mine
- a tragic automobile accident
- a divorce
- massive layoff at a manufacturing plant
- a bank robbery (again!)





What This Means

- there are natural human reactions to traumatic events
- you can take active steps to deal with these or other unpleasant reactions
- this material is available through HR
- if necessary: call 1-800-???-????

Next Steps

- please follow the ideas in this presentation
- follow other healthy responses that have worked for you
- remember you can ask for more help in addressing your own experience of this trauma

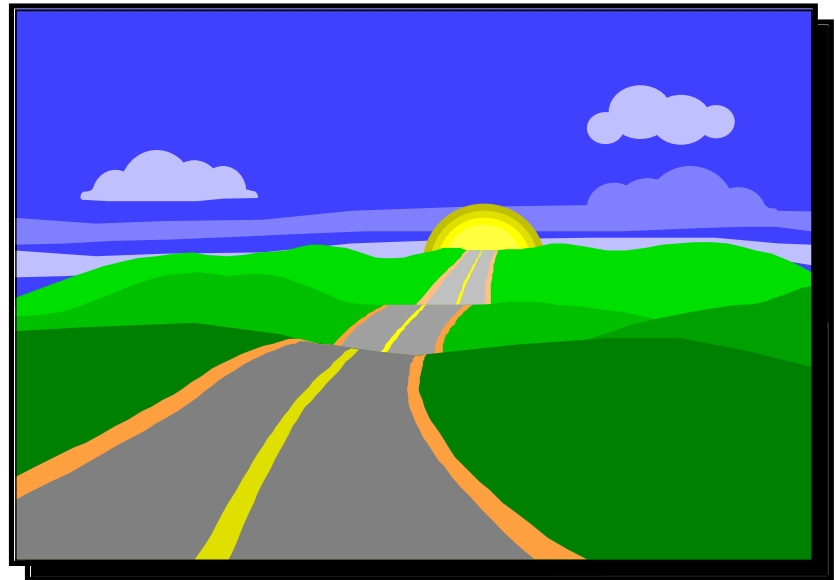
A Practical Guide to Feeling Better: Part I

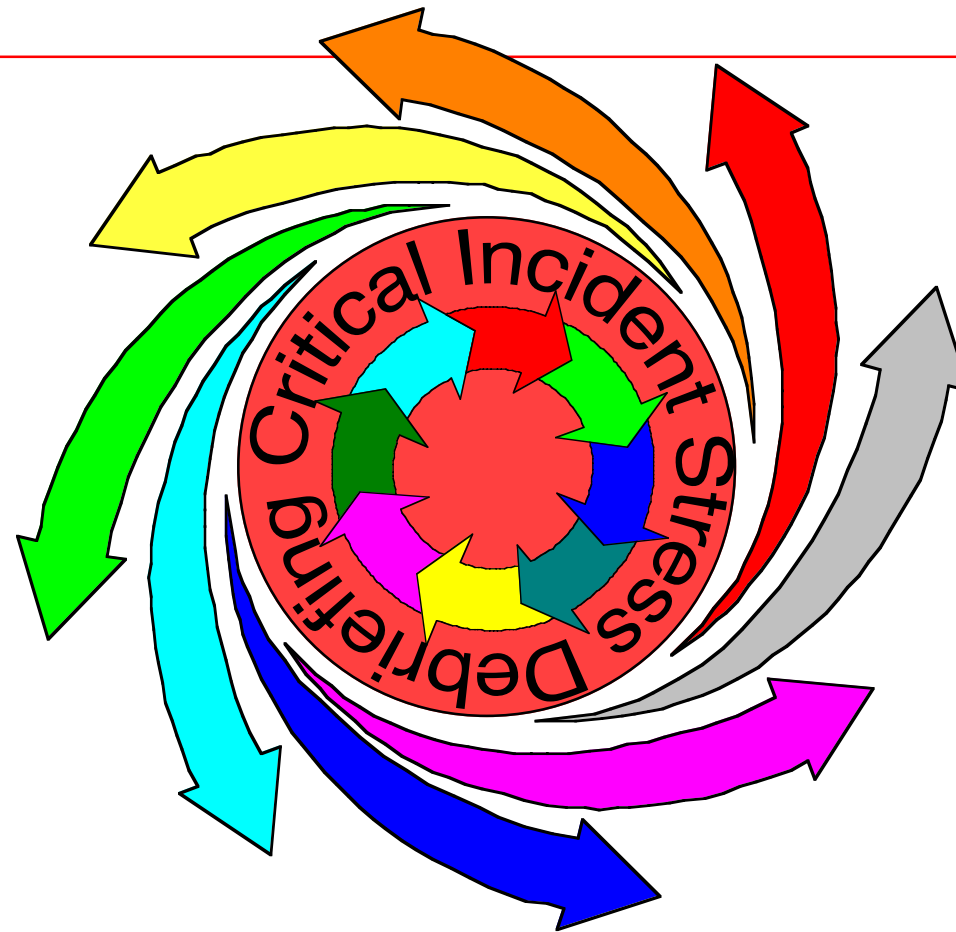
- find someone you trust
- give yourself permission to feel whatever you feel
- do make as many daily decisions as possible
- practice relaxation and meditation
- create a quiet scene
- play soft background music
- maintain a normal schedule



A Practical Guide to Feeling Better: Part II

- take one thing at a time
- allow time for a task
- spruce up your surroundings
- escape for a while





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