



Psychological First Aid

What is a critical incident?

- Traumatic events are unexpected and negative incidents that suddenly and unexpectedly intrude on our lives.
- Can range from mild disruptions to our lives through sudden changes in physical circumstances such as minor accidents to severe and unexpected physical injury

Common Reactions to Trauma or a Critical Incident:

Common Reactions After Stressful Events

Common physical, cognitive (thinking) and emotional reactions indicative of traumatic stress are outlined below:

<i>Physical</i>	<i>Cognitive (thinking)</i>	<i>Emotional</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatigue/ Exhaustion • Nausea • Restlessness • Head Aches • Disturbed Sleep • Nightmares • Excessive alertness & being easily startled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor Concentration • Flashbacks • Disorientation • Poor Attention & Memory • Intrusive Thoughts • Confusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear • Numbness & Detachment • Avoidance • Depression • Guilt • Over-sensitivity • Anxiety & Panic • Withdrawal & Tearfulness

What is Psychological First Aid?

Safety:

- Provide or ensure immediate safety as well as physical and emotional comfort

Calm

- Provide a calm environment as free as possible from stress or further trauma
- Listen to people without forcing them to talk

Connectedness

- Help people to connect with loved ones
- Keep families together where possible

Self-efficacy and group efficacy

- Assist individuals in processes for decision making and problem solving
- Reassure them that their feelings are normal.

Help

- Link people with agencies or professional where possible and offer up to date accurate information
- Provide practical help such as food, water, warmth & shelter where possible

Hope

- Convey the message that people can / will recover and be there with them for support