



Ohio Task Force 1

National US&R Response System



Ohio Task Force One
Urban Search and Rescue
CISM Awareness
Self Study Post-test

INSTRUCTIONS

This self-study package was developed so that the team members with Ohio Task Force 1 may study and learn CISM Awareness as their time permits. Material found in this packet is a power point presentation and a post-test.

All material found on the post-test is covered in the CISM power point on the CD.

Requirements for completion: Print out the documents from the disk labeled CISM Written Test. Participants will view the power point and complete the written evaluation. The evaluation is multiple choice. Mark the most appropriate answer. This post-test consists of 10 questions and a score of 80% or better is required to obtain a certificate of completion for this course. Successful completion of this self-study packet will meet the requirement for CISM awareness.

Once the post-test has been completed, return it to the following address:

OHTF1
ATTN: Training
444 West Third Street
Suite 20-231
Dayton, OH 45402

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Darrel at 937-512-5103 or via e-mail at dwilt@ohf1.com

Critical Incident Stress Awareness

A Rescuer's Silent Injury

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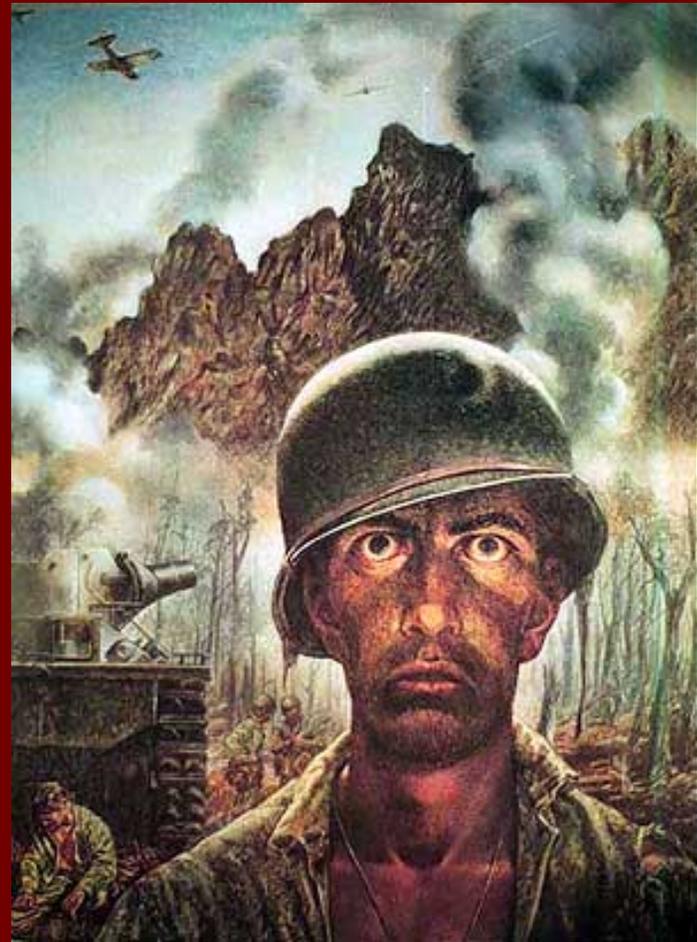
Medical Specialist
Ohio Task Force One

Objectives

- Define the "critical incident."
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of critical incident stress.
- Define Critical Incident Stress Management, its utility and limitations.
- Learn what to expect when attending a defusing or debriefing.
- Learn internal mechanisms to survive an exposure to a critical incident.

Some Background on CISM

- During WWI, the medical community began to recognize a link between the behavior of soldiers and the psychological trauma they encountered.
- Sometimes called “shell shocked”
- Picture by Tom Lea – Life Magazine Journalist accompanying Marines on Peleliu island in WWII – *The Two-Thousand Yard Stare*.



Some Background on CISM



- Formal CISM for emergency service workers has roots in the 1980's.
- 30% Emergency Services workers will burn out in less than 7 years.
- 10% will commit suicide due to critical incident stress.
- Steve Forbes & Robert O'Donnell.

Some Background on CISM

- In the days following the Oklahoma City bombing, Robert O'Donnell voiced the desire to assist with the rescue operations, but could not go.
- He took his own life due to post traumatic stress events that returned to the surface following the OKC bombing.



What is a “Critical Incident?”

- Any event outside the usual realm of human experience that is markedly distressing and exceeds normal coping mechanisms.
- The individual defines what “their” critical incident or event is. An incident that you may be able to easily cope with, noticeably affects another individual.

Critical Incidents

- Line of Duty Death.
- Serious injury in the line of duty.
- Suicide of a peer.
- Serious pediatric illness, injury, or death.
- Multicasualty event that has a high profile in the media.
- Incidents with particularly gruesome injuries or deaths.

Critical Incidents

- Treating or extricating someone you know that is seriously ill or injured.
- Terrorism.
- You name it.

Physical Symptoms

- Chills
- Thirst
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Fainting
- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Headaches
- Elevated B/P
- Rapid Pulse
- Visual Disturbances
- Difficulty Breathing
- Profuse Sweating
- *These may indicate a serious medical condition.*

Cognitive Symptoms

- Confusion
- Nightmares
- Uncertainty
- Hypervigilance
- Suspiciousness
- Blaming someone
- Poor problem solving
- Poor attention
- Poor concentration
- Disorientation
- Difficulty identifying objects
- Heightened or lowered alertness
- Intrusive images

Emotional Symptoms

- Fear
- Guilt
- Grief
- Denial
- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Depression
- Intense anger
- Apprehension
- Emotional outbursts
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Inappropriate emotional response

Behavioral Symptoms

- Withdrawal
- Antisocial acts
- Inability to rest
- Erratic movements
- Change in social activity
- Loss or increase in appetite
- Increased use of alcohol
- Hyper-alert to environment
- Change in usual communications

What is Critical Incident Stress Management?

- It's an organized approach directed at reducing and controlling the harmful effects of stress involving emergent situations.
- It's based in psychology and crisis intervention theory.
- It's education in awareness training, demobilizations, defusings, debriefings, and support services.

What is Critical Incident Stress Management?

- It helps speed the recovery of normal people with normal reactions to abnormal events.
- Layman's terms – Keeps the rescuer's head in the game so they can come back to work tomorrow and continue to be a good rescuer.

Critical Incident Stress Management – What It's Not

- For only those who “can't take it.”
- A sign of weakness.
- Counseling.
- Psychotherapy.
- A critique of the response to the incident.

Defusing and Debriefing

- The “bandage” that stops the psyche from bleeding.
- The emotional first aid following a traumatic event or a sequence of traumatic events of a “smaller” scale.

Defusing and Debriefing

- Defusing – A process immediately post event (12-24 hours), symptom driven, that allows for symptom mitigations, possible closure, and identifying those needing further intervention.
- Debriefing – A process within a day to 4 weeks following an event, depending on the size, that facilitates psychological closure, symptom mitigation and identifying those needing further intervention.

Defusing and Debriefing

- Utilizes peer counselors and mental health specialists that have an extensive CISM background and past EMS/Fire/Rescue experience.
- People that understand where you are coming from.

Defusing and Debriefing

- Without exception, includes only those directly involved in the incident.
- Confidential – no paper, recording devices, etc.
- Safe – allows rescuers to open up.
- Non-judgemental – not a critique of what occurred.

Defusing and Debriefing

- Provides the opportunity to vent the trauma and to learn ways to cope.
- Provides follow up and further help if needed.
- Helps to strengthen the bond of the group and help each other.

Defusing and Debriefing – Ground Rules

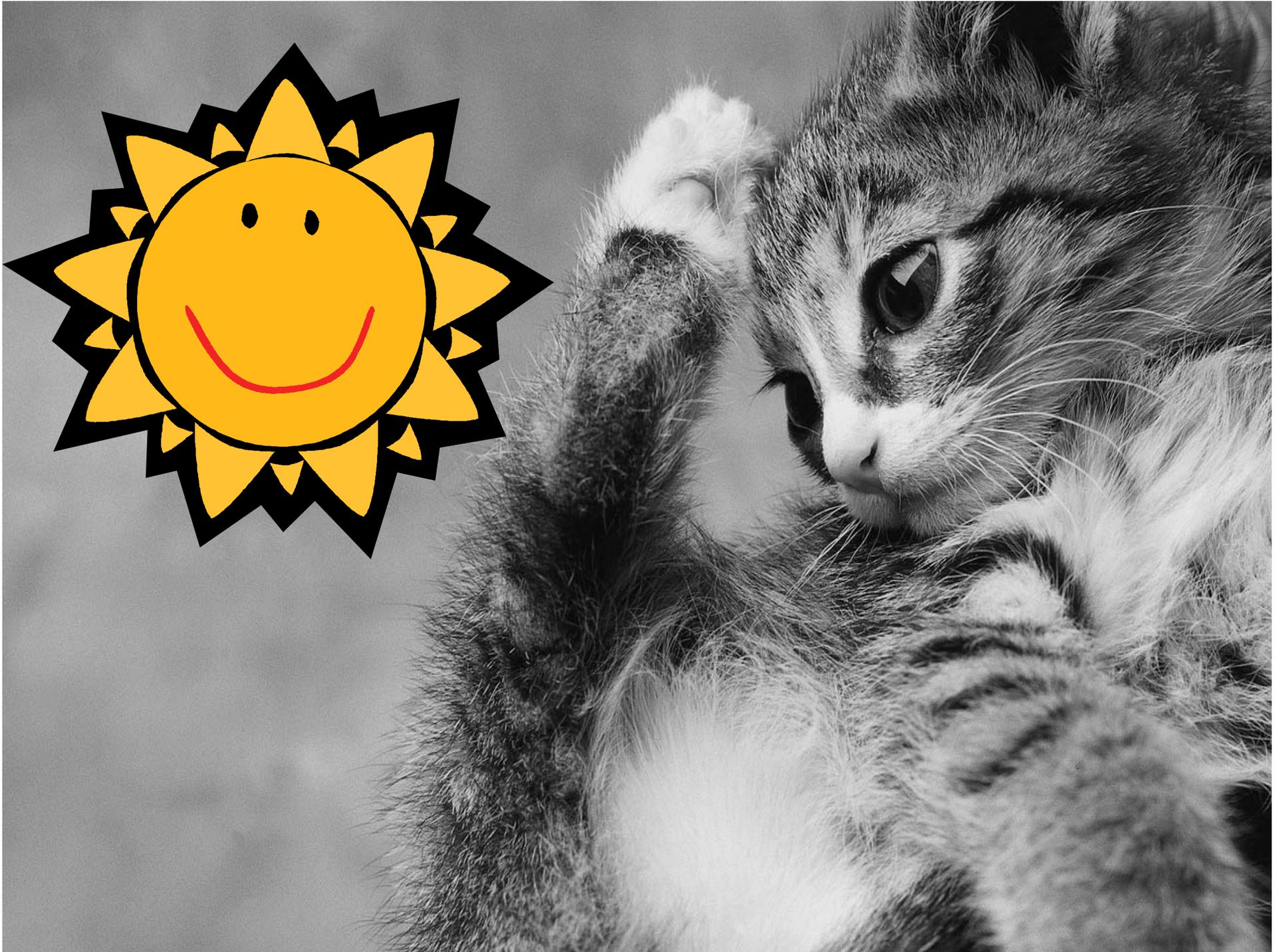
- Pagers, radios and phones off for the duration of the session.
- Those in the session are “off duty” to prevent disruption of the group.
- No “rank” exists – everyone is on the same level.
- Participation is voluntary, but encouraged.
- Defusing lasts about 45 minutes.
- Debriefings last about 90 minutes.

Surviving the Critical Incident

- Do your best to keep work, play, and stress balanced and in control.
- Be aware of critical incident symptoms in yourself and your peers.
- Maintain good nutrition and meal schedules, even when you don't feel like it.
- Exercise
- Rest
- Be good to yourself.

Surviving the Critical Incident

- It is our responsibility to ourselves, our family, and the victims we rescue to remain in the game by staying healthy.
- Look out for your partner and other team members. Ask them if you can help or if they'd like a CISM team.



Critical Stress Incident Management Awareness
Ohio Task Force One – Self Study

Name: _____

1. What defines a critical incident?
 - a. Death or serious injury of a child.
 - b. Line of duty death.
 - c. An incident that particularly affects a responder.
 - d. Any of the above and others.

2. Physical signs and symptoms such as shortness of breath, rapid pulse, and profuse sweating are:
 - a. Clearly indicators of critical incident stress.
 - b. May indicate a medical condition.
 - c. Not indicators of critical incident stress.
 - d. Indications that the rescuer is having little distress related to the incident.

3. A week after responding to a fire where he removed five deceased children from the structure, you note that your partner has become very forgetful, gets confused easily, and seems to be having nightmares when he sleeps in the firehouse dorms at night. Although he voices no complaints, you recognize these as:
 - a. Cognitive symptoms of critical incident stress.
 - b. Nothing unusual.
 - c. Physical symptoms of critical incident stress.
 - d. Indications of drug abuse.

4. Critical incident stress management is:
 - a. A critique of the incident.
 - b. Counseling.
 - c. Psychotherapy.
 - d. An organized approach directed at reducing and controlling the harmful effects of stress involving emergent situations.

5. Which of the following is a component of critical incident stress management?
 - a. It's based in psychology and crisis intervention theory.
 - b. It's education in awareness training, demobilizations, defusings, debriefings, and support services.
 - c. It helps speed the recovery of normal people with normal reactions to abnormal events.
 - d. All of the above are components of critical incident stress management.

6. Defusings and debriefings are:
 - a. The emotional first aid following a traumatic event.
 - b. A quick critique of incident operations.
 - c. For persons displaying weakness following an incident.

- d. Psychotherapy sessions following a traumatic event.
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- 7. Persons involved in defusings and debriefings include:
 - a. Peer counselors and those directly involved in the incident.
 - b. Members of the media.
 - c. Department persons that were off-duty at the time of the incident and did not participate in the incident.
 - d. Your personal attorney.

 - 8. The purpose of defusings and debriefings is to:
 - a. Provide the opportunity to vent the trauma and to learn ways to cope.
 - b. Provide follow up and further help if needed.
 - c. Strengthen the bond of the group and help each other.
 - d. All of the above.

 - 9. Participation in a critical incident stress debriefing is:
 - a. Mandatory.
 - b. Voluntary, but encouraged.
 - c. Begun with a prayer.
 - d. Required of all those attending the session.

 - 10. You just got back from a particularly difficult deployment. Your team was tasked with recovering the bodies of firefighters caught in the collapse of a high rise. Clearly, you are having some difficulty coping with what you have seen, since you are having nightmares and intrusive thoughts of the response. You also have a poor appetite. In order to cope well, it is important to remember:
 - a. To not eat for a few days, since it could cause you to vomit.
 - b. To at least eat something, even if you don't feel like it.
 - c. Increase your consumption of caffeine to maintain alertness.
 - d. Consume two or three glasses of an adult beverage at bedtime to promote sleep.