



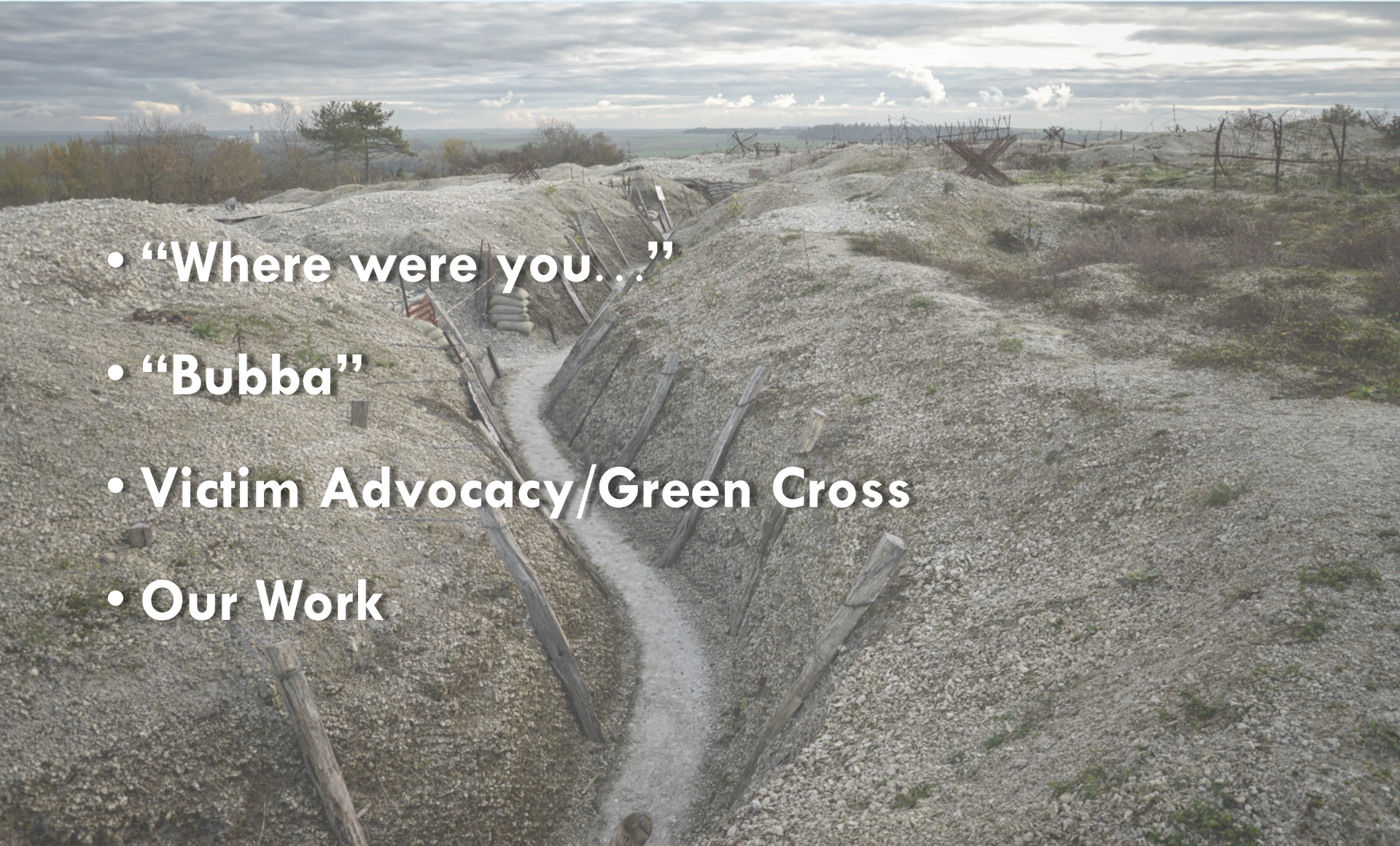
Effect of Stress on People in Crisis



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Introduction

- Professional Experience
- Atlanta Real Estate Collaborative
- Open Doors
- Partnership with Hope Atlanta

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- “Where were you...”
 - “Bubba”
 - Victim Advocacy/Green Cross
 - Our Work

Today's Discussion

A

Activating Event(s)

- Defining Crisis
- Defining Stress
- Recognizing Stress

B

Beliefs and Behavioral
Response

- The Phases of Crisis
- The Stress Cycle
- Common Stress Reactions

C

Consequences

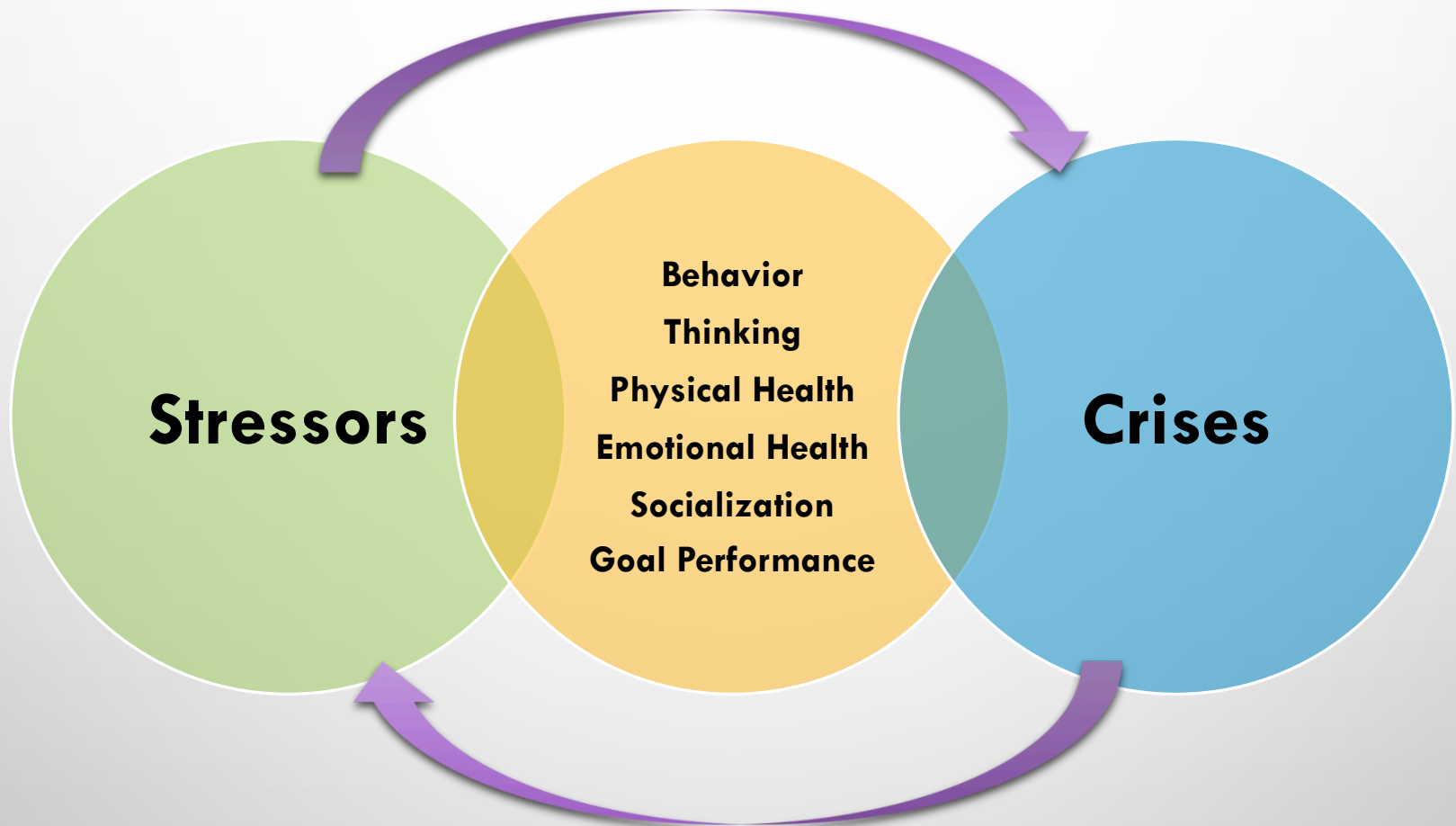
- Incident Response
- CISM
- Managing Your Workplace

D

Decisions

- Developing best practices before, during, and after crises or stress-inducing events

The Stress/Crisis Relationship



Defining a Crisis

A time of intense difficulty,
trouble, or danger

Any event that is going (or is
expected) to lead to an
unstable and/or dangerous
situation

Crisis

Unexpected
Creates uncertainty
Seen as a threat to
important goals

Unique to that person

Fink's Crisis Lifecycle

Prodromal

Risk cues that potential crisis can emerge

Crisis breakout

Triggering event with resulting damage

Chronic

Lingering effects of crisis

Resolution

Crisis no longer a concern to stakeholders

Mitroff's Five Stages of Crisis Management

Signal detection

Warning signs & efforts to prevent

Probing & prevention

Search risk factors & reduce potential for damage

Damage containment

Keep from spreading to uncontaminated areas

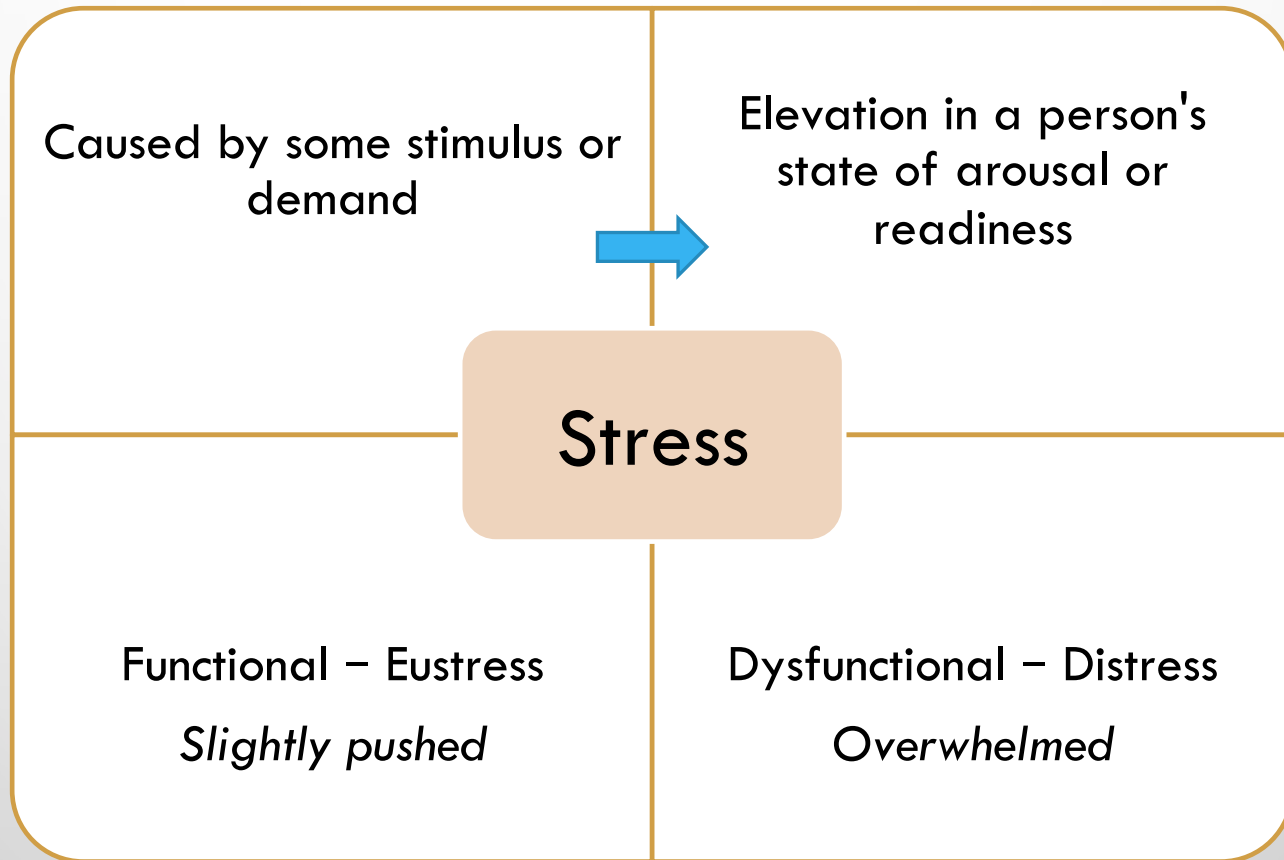
Recovery

Return to normal operations asap

Learning

Review & critique CM efforts for improvements

Defining Stress

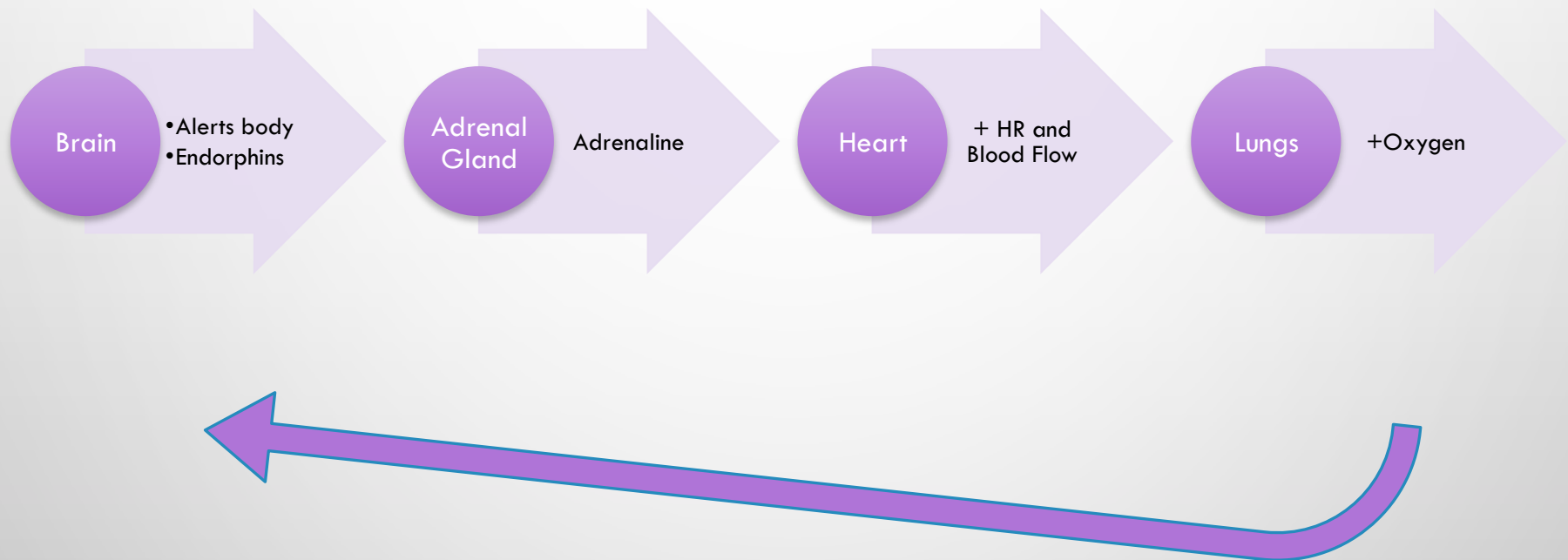


The Stress Cycle

- Temporary Benefits
- The Brain's Test
 - Have we been here before?
 - If so, how did we feel?
 - What was the outcome?
 - Can we cope with the situation now?



Stress Response Biology



Behavioral

- Increase or decrease in activity level
- Substance use or abuse (alcohol or drugs)
- Difficulty communicating or listening
- Irritability, outbursts of anger, frequent arguments
- Inability to rest or relax
- Decline in job performance; absenteeism
- Frequent crying
- Hyper-vigilance or excessive worry
- Avoidance of activities or places that trigger memories
- Becoming accident prone

Physical

- Gastrointestinal problems
- Headaches, other aches and pains
- Visual disturbances
- Weight loss or gain
- Sweating or chills
- Tremors or muscle twitching
- Being easily startled
- Chronic fatigue or sleep disturbances
- Immune system disorders

Psychological/Emotional

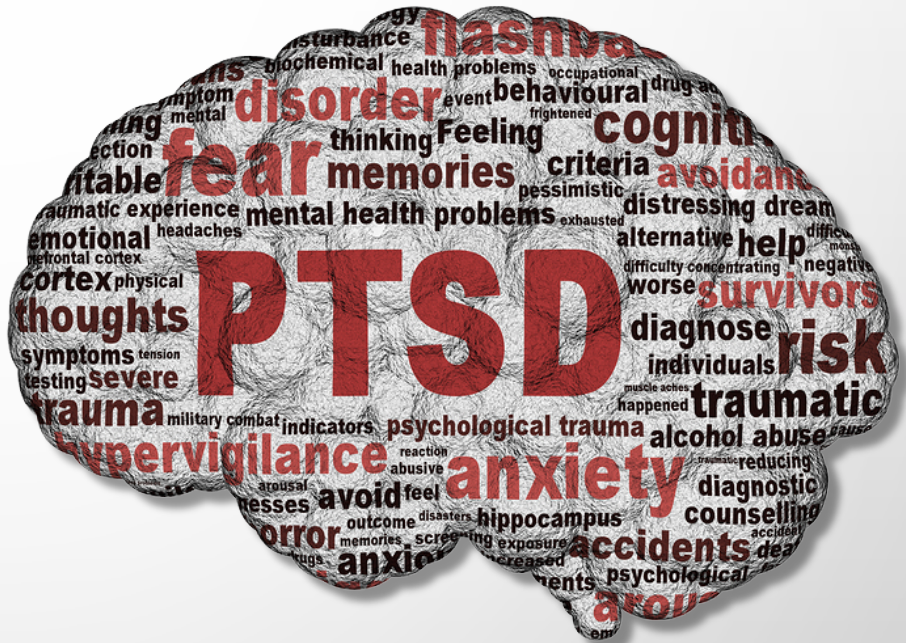
- Feeling heroic, euphoric, or invulnerable
- Denial
- Anxiety or fear
- Depression
- Guilt
- Apathy
- Grief

Cognitive (Thinking)

- Memory problems
- Disorientation and confusion
- Slow thought processes;
lack of concentration
- Difficulty setting priorities or
making decisions
- Loss of objectivity

Social

- Blaming pleasure or have fun
- Difficulty in giving or accepting support or help
- Inability to experience
- Isolation



Stress Response

- We do not all interpret each situation in the same way
- Because of this, we do not all call on the same resources for each situation
- We do not all have the same resources and skills.



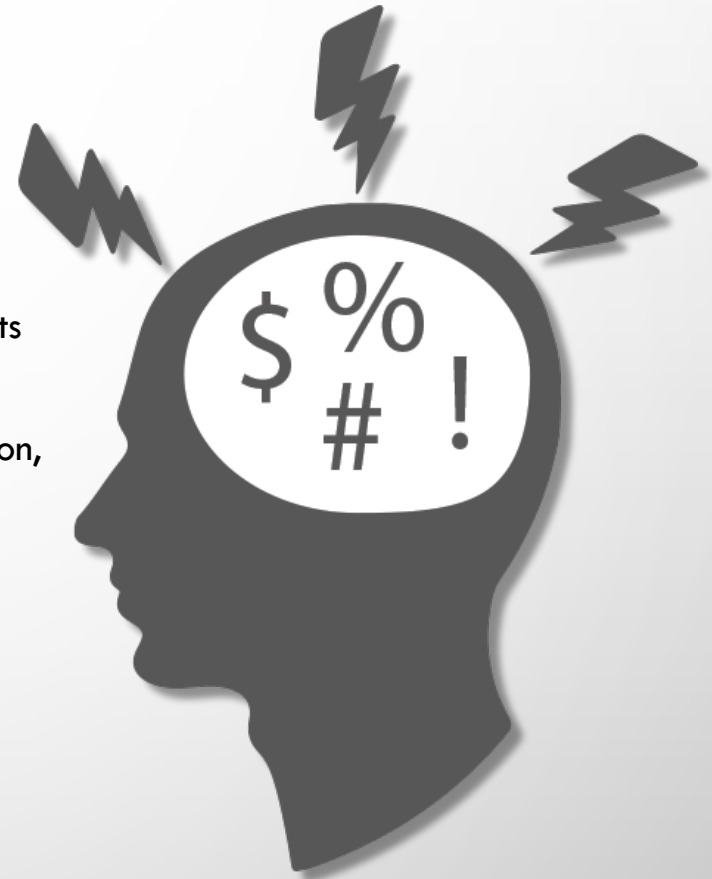
1. Familiarize yourself with signs of stress.
2. Get enough rest, exercise regularly, and maintain a healthy diet.
3. Have a life outside of job.
4. Avoid tobacco, alcohol, drugs, and excessive caffeine.
5. Draw strength from faith, friends, and family.
6. Maintain sense of humor.
7. Have a personal preparedness plan.
8. Participate in training offered at workplace.
9. Get a regular physical checkup.
10. Ask for help if you need it.





Minimize Stress During the Crisis

- Adhere to established safety policies and procedures.
- Encourage and support coworkers.
- Recognize that "not having enough to do" or "waiting" are expected parts of managing a crisis.
- Take regular breaks whenever you experience troubling incidents and after each work shift. Use time off to "decompress."
- Practice relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, and gentle stretching.
- Eat regular, nutritious meals and get enough sleep.
- Avoid alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and excessive caffeine.
- Stay in contact with your family and friends.
- Pace self between low and high-stress activities.



Minimize Stress During the Crisis

- Clearly define individual roles Institute briefings at each shift change that cover the current status of the work environment, safety procedures, and required safety equipment (CMHS, 1994).
- Partner inexperienced workers with experienced veterans. The buddy system is an effective method to provide support, monitor stress, and reinforce safety procedures. Require outreach personnel to enter the community in pairs (CMHS, 1994).
- Rotate workers from high-stress to lower stress functions (CMHS, 1994).
- Initiate, encourage, and monitor work breaks, especially when casualties are involved (McCarroll, Ursano, Wright, & Fullerton, 1993). During lengthy events, implement longer breaks and days off, and curtail weekend work as soon as possible.
- Establish respite areas that visually separate workers from the scene and the public. At longer operations, establish an area where responders can shower, eat, change clothes, and sleep



Minimize Stress After the Crisis

- Consider participating in organized debriefing or critique.
- Reconnect with family.
- Have a physical checkup.
- Continue normal leisure activities. Stay involved with hobbies and interests.
- Consider stress management techniques such as meditation, acupuncture, and massage therapy.
- Draw upon your spirituality and personal beliefs. Take advantage of faith-based counselors and workplace counseling units.
- Avoid using alcohol, tobacco, or drugs to cope with stress. Seek professional substance abuse treatment if necessary.
- Use Employee Assistance Programs.



Critical Incident Stress Management

- Psychological First Aid
- 7-phase, **small group**, supportive crisis intervention process

Trauma-Informed Care

- Organizational structure and intervention framework
- Safety for consumers and providers



Minimize Stress in the Workplace

- Set the tone by relating to workers with respect and valuing their contributions.
- Hold regular staff meetings to plan, problem solve, recognize accomplishments, and promote staff cohesiveness (CMHS, 2000).
- Clearly communicate the rationale behind procedural or supervisory changes and performance expectations (CMHS, 2000).
- Create a formal employee suggestion system (CMHS, 2000) and encourage staff to contribute.
- Resolve conflicts early and quickly (Figley, 1995).
- Prepare workers for concrete tasks they may perform through technical training (Mccarroll et al., 1993).
- Acknowledge that work is often stressful and connect staff to professional help if necessary.
- Promote an atmosphere where attention to one's emotional state is acceptable and encouraged rather than stigmatized or disregarded.

Self Awareness

- Recognize and heed early warning signs for stress reactions.
- Accept that one may not be able to self-assess problematic stress reactions.
- Recognize that over-identification with or feeling overwhelmed by victims' and families' grief and trauma may signal a need for support and consultation.
- Understand the differences between professional helping relationships and friendships to help maintain appropriate roles and boundaries.
- Examine personal prejudices and cultural stereotypes.
- Recognize when one's own experience with trauma or one's personal history interfere with effectiveness.
- Be aware of personal vulnerabilities and emotional reactions and the importance of team and supervisor support.



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- Model and COMMUNICATE
 - Validate and Redirect
 - Don't Threaten –
 - Be Concrete
 - Undivided Attention
 - Be Nonjudgmental
 - Focus on Feelings
 - Allow Silence
 - Clarify Messages
 - Develop a Plan
 - Use a Team Approach
 - Use Positive Self-Talk
 - Recognize Personal Limits
 - Debrief

Reality Testing

The ability to distinguish thoughts and perceptions that originate from our mind versus stimuli that comes from outside our mind.

Thought Disorders

Impacts cognition, sensory input, memory, emotions

Positive Symptoms

Pathological additions to normal behavior

Heightened Perceptions & Hallucinations

Sensory flooding

- Difficulty distinguishing relevant from irrelevant sensory information

Hallucinations

- Perceptions contrary to reality w/o external stimulus
- Most often auditory
- Can be visual, tactile, somatic, gustatory, olfactory

Inappropriate Affect

Emotions unsuited to the situation

- Smile or laugh when describing something serious
- Sad or angry in some happy circumstance
- Inappropriate shifts in mood
- Inappropriately intense mood
- May represent a response to another positive symptom (e.g., hallucination)

Delusions beliefs contrary to reality

- Delusions of persecution: Others are out to get you, victimize you, slander you
- Delusions of reference: Attach special/personal meaning to things, occurrences or behaviors of others
- Delusions of grandeur: Believe oneself to have special importance or power
- Delusions of control: Belief that others are controlling your thoughts, feelings, or behavior

Negative Symptoms

Negative Symptoms

Characteristics that are lacking or reduced

Blunted or Flat Affect

Blunted: Less expression of feeling than most

Flat: Virtually no emotion

- May reflect deficiency in experience of or expression of emotions

Loss of Volition (the power of choosing or determining)

Avolition

- Feel drained of energy or interest in normal goals
- Unable to begin or follow through on activities

Ambivalence

- Conflicted feelings about many things

Anhedonia

- Inability to experience pleasure

Poverty of Speech

A decrease in speech or speech content (alogia)
little or no reply/meaning

Social Withdrawal

Personal and emotional withdrawal from others

Disorganized Thinking and/or Speech

Disorganization is usually inferred from speech

Derailment or Loose Associations

Switch from one topic to another

Conceptual difficulties

Concrete thinking (i.e., difficulty thinking abstractly)

Tangentiality

Answer to questions may be obliquely or completely unrelated

Peculiar word usage

- Neologisms
- Word Salad
- Perseveration
- Clang associations

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More Information



Thank you for your time!