

## What can I do to manage a critical or traumatic incident?

- ◆ Try periods of relaxation and strenuous exercise
- ◆ Understand that your feelings are normal
- ◆ Talk with others about your feelings
- ◆ Allow your support system to help
- ◆ Reach out. People do care.
- ◆ Maintain as normal a schedule as possible
- ◆ Avoid drugs and excessive alcohol use
- ◆ Get plenty of rest
- ◆ Eat well balanced meals
- ◆ Speak with the CF&R Chaplin or a Peer Supporter
- ◆ Take advantage of CF&R's trauma response program.

### Emergency Contact information:

- ◆ Dr. Larry Bergmann 765-0700
- ◆ Chaplin Michael Bingham 551-0476
- ◆ Chief Cam Gillam 545-3730/ 561-1643
- ◆ Any Peer Supporter

**C**risis Intervention must be activated immediately by notifying the CF&R Safety Officer and by activating the Peer Support Network (PSN) in the following situations:

- ◆ Blood Bourne Exposure(s) to CF&R personnel (Safety Officer **only** unless requested by the exposed personnel).
- ◆ Line of duty death or serious injury of emergency/public safety worker.
- ◆ Suicides of CF&R personnel.
- ◆ Emergency responses involving trauma to victims known by CF&R responders.
- ◆ Multiple casualty incidents.
- ◆ Major disasters.
- ◆ Events that have an unusual impact on CF&R personnel, such as those involving children.
- ◆ Any incident deemed necessary by **any** Incident Commander. The area Battalion Chief will also be notified by the IC.
- ◆ *Anyone can call for confidential help at anytime.*
- ◆ For general information contact:  
Chief Gillam or any Peer Supporter



*Confidential help 24/7 for*

## Critical Incident Stress

*Don't manage it alone.*

## **W**hat is a Critical Incident?

A Critical or Traumatic Incident is a call that has the potential to negatively affect your work and personal life.

When fire service personnel are exposed to a traumatic event, most will manage it effectively. Depending on the type of incident and other factors, there may be times when such exposure can lead to strong emotional and physical reactions.

Many of these reactions are short term. However, in some cases they may last weeks, months or even years. The important thing to realize is that help is available to prevent these possible long lasting problems and that Columbia Fire & Rescue has these services available.

## **W**hat are some of the things I may experience?

- ◆ Fatigue
- ◆ Nausea
- ◆ Muscle tremors or tension
- ◆ Thirst
- ◆ Headache
- ◆ Visual changes
- ◆ Sweating
- ◆ Elevated blood pressure

## **T**he Way We Think.

### *Cognitive Reactions*

- ◆ Confusion
- ◆ Poor attention
- ◆ Blaming someone for what happened
- ◆ Poor decision making
- ◆ Poor concentration
- ◆ Memory problems
- ◆ Over alert

## **T**he Way We Feel.

### *Emotional Reactions*

- ◆ Anger
- ◆ Sadness
- ◆ Grief
- ◆ Guilt
- ◆ Depression
- ◆ Fear
- ◆ Irritability

## **T**he Way We Act.

### *Behavioral Reactions*

- ◆ Changes in activity
- ◆ Withdrawal
- ◆ Alcohol or drug use
- ◆ Changes in eating habits
- ◆ Changes in sexual behavior
- ◆ Increased startle response
- ◆ Avoiding the scene of the incident

## **T**he Way We Believe.

### *Spiritual Reactions*

- ◆ Anger at God
- ◆ Increase in religious involvement
- ◆ Questioning basic beliefs
- ◆ Belief that God is powerless