

Chapter 8: Behavioral Resiliency

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8

Preparing for Delivery

Time

The *Behavioral Resiliency* chapter is approximately 4 hours of classroom training, including the final exam.

Follow the Lesson Plan for a guide to scheduling this course. Time allotments for specific topics are provided within the plan. You may devote more time to classroom and hands-on activities as needed, as the plan reflects the minimum suggested time allotments.

Staffing

The maximum participant – instructor ratio is 25:1.

During classroom activities, the recommended participant – instructor ratio is 10:1.

During hands-on activities, the recommended participant – instructor ratio is 5:1.

Materials Needed

For this chapter, you will need the following:



- A copy of the Infectious Disease Operations Participant Guide (PG)
- A flip chart or whiteboard and markers
- A computer and projector or monitor

The table on the following page lists the materials needed for this lesson.

Chapter 8: Behavioral Resiliency

Preparing for Delivery (continued)

Chapter 8: Behavioral Resiliency

Lesson Overview	Media 	Handouts 
Introduction and Objectives (10 min.)	<i>Slides 1 to 3</i>	
Exercise 1: Critical Incidents (40 min.)	<i>Slides 4 to 6</i>	<i>HO 37: Critical Incidents</i>
Exercise 2: Understanding Trauma-Related Stress (40 min.)	<i>Slides 7 to 8</i>	<i>HO 38: Understanding Trauma-Related Stress</i>
Exercise 3: Managing Stress and Communications (50 min.)	<i>Slides 9 to 10</i>	<i>HO 39: Managing Stress and Communications</i>
Summary (10 min.)	<i>Slides 2 to 3</i>	<i>Chapter 8: Things to Remember</i>

Introduction and Objectives

Introduction and Objectives



10
Minutes

Tell participants that this chapter will cover content about dealing with the stress that can accompany working around highly infectious diseases and emergency response operations.

Display Slides 1 to 3. Introduce the chapter and review the chapter objectives. At the end of this chapter, participants will be able to:

1. Define *critical incident*.
2. Explain the purpose of a Critical Incident Debriefing.
3. List the four principles of trauma-related stress.
4. List the symptoms of a stress reaction.
5. Explain how to manage stress during and after a critical incident.
6. Describe considerations for families of victims of a critical incident.
7. Explain the importance of following protocols for media and social media contact during and after a critical incident.

Invite questions about the objectives.



SL 1 to 3



PG: 8-5 to 8-7

Chapter 8: Behavioral Resiliency

Exercise 1: Critical Incidents



40
Minutes

Exercise 1: Critical Incidents

Objectives

1. Define *critical incident*.
2. Explain the purpose of a Critical Incident Debriefing.



SL 4 to 6

Display Slides 4 and 5. Open the lesson by asking participants to think about the differences between *removal actions* and *remedial actions* on an infectious disease worksite. Have participants discuss their ideas in pairs and share them with the class. Draw a T-chart on the board with *removal action* and *remedial action* at the top. List their ideas in the chart.



HO 37: Critical Incidents

Display Slide 6 and compare the chart with the one that participants came up with. Explain that most of the work that environmental services are likely to do will be more remedial, but it's good to know about incidents such as removal actions, in case they are ever called into one.



PG: 8–8 to 8–10

Distribute Handout 37: *Critical Incidents*. Read the directions aloud. Have participants complete the handout in pairs. Tell participants to look at PG pages 8–8 to 8–10 as a reference. Then have each pair check their answers with another pair.

Check the answers with the class. (See the answer key on the the following page.) Answer any questions that may have come up in the completion of the handout.

Conclude by saying that in response to a critical incident on a jobsite, it is important for employers to recognize the mental and emotional impact that such an event can have both on workers and their families.

Handout 37: Critical Incidents



Handout 37 Critical Incidents

Instructions: Complete the sentences. Use the words in the box.

anxiety	contain	cope	crisis	emotional
impact	mental	response	trained	traumatic

1. A *critical incident* can be defined as an event that happens abruptly, and that has an **impact** that can overwhelm a person's normally effective ability to deal with physical or emotional stress.
2. Many employers respond by following an emergency **response** plan, which generally consists of the organizing, coordinating, and the directing of available resources in order to respond to the event and bring the emergency under control.
3. The goal of this coordinated effort is to **contain** the incident and minimize the physical and structural impact on people, structures, and the community.
4. Rarely does a workplace emergency response plan address the emotional and **mental** impact of a critical incident on affected workers.
5. In recent years there has been more focus and attention on the effects of **traumatic** events on individuals, the surviving victims, their co-workers, and the workers' families.
6. A **crisis** management plan includes a set of strategies designed to help an organization deal with a sudden and significant negative event, with an established protocol for critical incident response.
7. This kind of plan can help contractors and impacted workers deal with the **emotional** aspects of experiencing a workplace critical incident.
8. After a critical incident, some workers may experience flashbacks, **anxiety** about work activities, physical reactions, and depression.
9. A **trained** specialist may visit the worksite and conduct a critical incident debriefing in order to provide assistance and support to those affected by the incident.
10. A critical incident debriefing can help workers and others to be better able to recognize and **cope** with the emotions such traumatic events can produce.

Infectious Disease Operations

Chapter 8: Behavioral Resiliency

Exercise 2: Understanding Trauma-Related Stress



40
Minutes

Exercise 2: Understanding Trauma-Related Stress

Objectives

3. List the four principles of trauma-related stress.
4. List the symptoms of a stress reaction.



SL 7 to 8

Display Slides 7 and 8. Open the lesson by asking, “What causes you stress on the job?” Have a few volunteers shout out their answers. Then ask, “What kinds of symptoms do you think people may experience if they suffer severe stress from an event like this?” Have participants discuss in pairs and share their answers with the class. Note their ideas on the board. Explain that in the next activity, they will look at the topic of trauma-related stress in more detail.



HO 38: Understanding
Trauma-Related Stress

Distribute Handout 38: *Understanding Trauma-Related Stress*. Tell participants to work with a partner. Have participants read the questions individually, then discuss possible answers with their partner, and write them down. Tell participants they can look at PG pages 8–10 to 8–14 as a reference.



PG: 8–10 to 8–14

Check the answers with the class. (See the answer key on the following page.) Note key points from the discussion on the board or a sheet of flip chart paper. Answer any questions that may have come up in the completion of the handout.

Conclude by saying that trauma-related stress can result in many different types of symptoms, and that it is unusual *not* to experience severe stress after a critical incident. Professional assistance from a specialist or counselor may be useful, if not necessary, to begin to heal and move forward.

Handout 38: Understanding Trauma-Related Stress



Handout 38 Understanding Trauma-Related Stress

Instructions: Answer the questions.

1. What are the four principles of trauma-related stress?

- **Trauma is in the eye of the beholder.** Each individual may perceive different things to be traumatic. What is traumatic for one person may not be for another, it is completely subjective.
- **The traumatic response is a normal response to an abnormal event.** Responding to trauma is an appropriate way for the body and mind to handle what it has just seen and/or experienced. It is the physiological way we protect ourselves.
- **Traumatic stress is a psychobiological event – it impacts the body and the mind.**
- **What you resist persists.** By not addressing symptoms of a traumatic event and/or not allowing yourself to have a response or ignoring feelings will prolong being able to move forward and recover. If a traumatic response is not addressed it will likely surface at a future time one doesn't expect.

2. Why are some people reluctant to seek help for trauma-related stress?

Some people are reluctant to seek help for trauma-related stress because they think it implies craziness or weakness.

3. What are some physical signs and symptoms of severe stress?

Answers should include some of the following: nausea, tremors (lips, hands), profuse sweating, diarrhea, rapid heartbeat, increased blood pressure, muscle aches, upset stomach, feeling uncoordinated, chills, chest pain, rapid breathing, headaches, sleep disturbances, and weight loss/gain.

4. What are some cognitive signs and symptoms of severe stress?

Answers should include some of the following: slowed thinking, difficulty in problem-solving, disorientation, difficulty concentrating, difficulty naming objects, distressing dreams, difficulty making decisions, confusion, difficulty calculating, memory problems, seeing the event over and over (flashbacks), and poor attention span.

Chapter 8: Behavioral Resiliency

Handout 38: Understanding Trauma-Related Stress (continued)



Handout 38

Understanding Trauma-Related Stress

5. What are some emotional signs and symptoms of severe stress?

Answers should include some of the following: anxiety, guilt, depression, feeling lost, feeling numb, shock, fear, grief, sadness, anger, startled, and apathy.

6. What are some behavioral signs and symptoms of severe stress?

Answers should include some of the following: feeling abandoned, worrying about others, wanting to limit contact with others, unusual anger, change in eating habits, paranoia, isolation, wanting to hide/withdrawal, irritability, prolonged silence, and decreased personal hygiene.

7. Who is at greatest risk for severe stress symptoms?

Workers who directly experience or witness any of the following, either during or after a disaster, are at greatest risk for severe and possibly long-term stress symptoms.

- Life threatening danger or physical harm.
- Exposure to gruesome death, bodily injury, or dead or maimed bodies.
- Extreme environmental/human violence or destruction.
- Loss of home, valued possessions, neighborhood, or community.
- Loss of communication with or support from close relations.
- Extreme fatigue, weather exposure, hunger, or sleep deprivation.
- Extended exposure to danger, loss, or emotional/physical strain.
- Exposure to contamination (such as biological agents or toxic chemicals).

Exercise 3: Managing Stress and Communications

Exercise 3: Managing Stress and Communications



50
Minutes

Objectives

5. Explain how to manage stress during and after a critical incident.
6. Describe considerations for families of victims of a critical incident.
7. Explain the importance of following protocols for media and social media contact during and after a critical incident.

Display Slides 9 and 10. Open the lesson by asking, “Which of these things seem like a good idea for dealing with severe stress?” Discuss with the class. (Reinforce that while dealing with severe stress from a critical incident, it’s important to take care of physical and mental health, and it’s not a good idea to make extreme life changes during this time.) Explain that in the next activity, they will look at the topic of managing stress during and after a disaster, as well as managing communications with the families of impacted individuals, and dealing with media, in more detail.

Divide the class into 3 groups.

Distribute Handout 39: *Managing Stress and Communications*. Explain that each group will prepare and deliver a short presentation about some of the aspects of managing stress and managing communications, depending on which group they’ve been assigned. Tell them to prepare notes for their presentations on pieces of flip chart paper, and to practice their delivery. Give them about 10 minutes to prepare. They can look at PG pages 8–14 to 8–17 and 8–24 to 8–25 as a reference.

Have groups take turns giving their presentations to the class. Participants should listen as each group presents, and take notes about the presentations on their handouts. (See the answer key on the the following page.) Answer any questions that may have come up in the completion of the handout.

Conclude by saying that everyone has a different response to severe stress, and that everyone needs to find the best ways to take care of their stress symptoms in the face of a disaster. This includes not only impacted workers, but also their co-workers, families, and friends. Employers should establish clear protocols for dealing with media questions or for posting images or information about a critical incident on social media, for the sake of all involved.



SL 9 to 10



HO 39: Managing Stress
and Communications



Flip Chart



PG: 8–14 to 8–17
PG: 8–24 to 8–25

Chapter 8: Behavioral Resiliency

Handout 39: Managing Stress and Communications



Handout 39

Managing Stress and Communications

Group 1

Instructions: Prepare and deliver a presentation about the following:

- What are some ways to help manage stress *during* a disaster operation?
- What are some ways to help manage stress *after* a disaster operation?

Use this space to prepare your notes, or to take notes as you listen to another group's presentation.

Managing Stress During a Disaster Operation:

You will need to take care of yourself to help stay focused on hazards at the site and to maintain the constant vigilance needed for you and your fellow workers' safety. You may not recognize the need to take care of yourself and to monitor your own emotional and physical health, especially when your assignment stretches into several weeks. In addition to attending any critical incident debriefing meetings that your employer may hold, here are some additional ways that you can manage your stress during a disaster operation:

- Develop a "buddy" system with a co-worker.
- Watch out for each other. Co-workers may be intently focused on a particular task and may not notice a hazard nearby or behind.
- Take care of yourself physically by exercising regularly and eating small quantities of food frequently.
- Take frequent rest breaks. The work you will be doing may take place in an extremely dangerous environment. Mental fatigue over long shifts can put you at increased risk for injury.
- Make sure that you drink plenty of fluids such as water and juices.
- Try to eat a variety of foods and increase your intake of complex carbohydrates (breads, whole grain muffins, granola bars, etc.).
- Whenever possible, take breaks away from the work area. Eat and drink in the cleanest area available.
- Recognize and accept what you cannot change – the chain of command, organizational structure, waiting, equipment failures, etc.
- Give yourself permission to feel rotten – you are in a difficult situation.

Managing Stress After a Disaster:

Over time, your impressions and understanding of your experiences will change. This process is different for everyone. No matter what the event or your reaction to it, you can follow some basic steps to help adjust to the experience.

Your employer may hold a number of group meetings, including those with a certified mental health professional, to help support workers' emotional health. In addition to these meetings, it will be important for you to try to do the following things after returning home from a critical incident:

- Reach out – people really do care.
- Reconnect with family, spiritual, and community supports.
- Do not make any big life decisions.
- Catch up on rest (this may take several days).
- Eat well balanced, regular meals.
- Slow down – get back to a normal pace in your daily life.
- Understand that it's perfectly normal to want to talk about the disaster and equally normal not to want to talk about it.
- Expect disappointment, frustration, and conflict – sometimes coming home doesn't live up to what you imagined it would be. Keep recalling what's really important in your life and relationships so that small stressors don't lead to major conflicts.
- Don't be surprised if you experience mood swings; they will diminish with time.
- Appreciate a sense of humor in yourself and others. It is OK to laugh again.
- Don't overwhelm children with your experiences; be sure to talk about what happened in their lives while you were gone.
- If talking doesn't feel natural, other forms of expression or stress relief such as journal writing, hobbies, and exercise are recommended.
- Avoid use of drugs or alcohol. These are not healthy coping mechanisms and could lead to additional stressors or problems.

Handout 39: Managing Stress and Communications (continued)



Handout 39 Managing Stress and Communications

Group 2

Instructions: Prepare and deliver a presentation about the following:

What kinds of steps should employers take in consideration of the families and friends of workers impacted in a disaster?

Use this space to prepare your notes, or to take notes as you listen to another group's presentation.

Whether impacted workers live close to the site of a critical incident with their families or are away from their families and on the road or “traveling” for work will likely affect the amount of support required from the employer for a particular victim’s family members.

When a critical incident results in fatalities and/or serious injuries an employer will need to consider the following steps:

- Do families of those injured or killed need to be notified? By whom? How?
- Convey to employees what to say and not to say to families and others.
- Determine where or to whom calls from family members of injured or deceased workers should be forwarded.

Employers should be prepared for family interactions including:

- Making special arrangements to greet and address families of those who have died or are hospitalized.
- Anticipating the needs of family members arriving on site and assign personnel to immediately meet and direct family members who may arrive onsite.
- Protecting families from the media.
- Arranging to reunite family members with their loved ones as soon as possible, this could include coordinating and making travel arrangements for impacted family.
- Considering techniques for meeting families at home, at the hospital or other public places or over the phone.

Chapter 8: Behavioral Resiliency

Handout 39: Managing Stress and Communications (continued)



Handout 39 Managing Stress and Communications

Group 3

Instructions: Prepare and deliver a presentation about the following:

What kinds of steps should employers take with regard to media and social media communications about a critical incident?

Use this space to prepare your notes, or to take notes as you listen to another group's presentation.

Employers in the face of a critical incident should be prepared to manage contact with the media both for themselves and their employees. Workers should be assured that their employer has a plan in place to deal with media questions about the incident and to be educated on that plan. Workers should be instructed not to talk to the media, not to answer questions, and be instructed on where and to whom to direct reporters if they arrive to cover the incident.

In addition, workers should be advised not to take any pictures or video of a critical incident. However, recognizing that some people likely still will, workers should be told not to post any critical incident-related pictures or videos to social media – especially not before families of impacted workers have been notified that their loved one has been killed or severely injured.

Summary

Summary



10
Minutes

Distribute *Chapter 8: Things to Remember*.

Explain that the *Things to Remember* document is a take-home list of information that can be used for reference or self-study. Note that this document provides information about the chapter's learning objectives and may be used as a study guide for the end-of-course assessment.

Display Slides 2 to 3 and briefly review the chapter objectives with the class. Review the information on the *Things to Remember* handout for each objective. Ask participants if they are comfortable with their knowledge about, or ability to do, each of the objectives, or if they need review or additional support on any of the items listed.

Ask the participants if they have any questions regarding any other topics of the chapter.

Address any questions or concerns.



Chapter 8:
Things to Remember



SL 2-3



PG: 8-18 to 8-19

Chapter 8: Behavioral Resiliency

Chapter 8: Things to Remember



Chapter 8: Behavioral Resiliency Things to Remember

1. A *critical incident* is an event that happens abruptly and has an impact that can overwhelm a person's normally effective ability to deal with physical or emotional stress. Workers in these types of situations may face the danger of death or physical injury, to themselves or to their coworkers, and they may see mass disaster or mass casualties. You may see and experience things that are beyond your body and mind's ability to cope with, without assistance. In addition to physical danger, you are at risk of being impacted behaviorally and emotionally, and the emotional aftershocks can be long-lasting.
2. Critical incident debriefing helps people cope. When worksite critical incidents occur, having a trained specialist visit the worksite and provide needed assistance and support to those who witnessed or may otherwise be affected by the incident is important. This type of support helps workers and others to be better able to recognize and cope with the emotions such traumatic events can produce. A critical incident debriefing plan should be in place for workers on the day of the incident, and the days following the incident.
3. A critical incident can cause you to experience a stress reaction with strong emotional reactions at any time during or after the incident. The four basic principles of trauma-related stress include the following:
 - Trauma is subjective and can have different effects on people.
 - A traumatic response is a normal response to an abnormal event.
 - Traumatic stress is a psychobiological event that impacts the body and the mind.
 - Symptoms of stress from a traumatic event should be addressed and not ignored.
4. The signs and symptoms of a stress reaction may last a few days, a few weeks, or a few months and occasionally longer depending on the severity of the traumatic event or a person's previous experiences. Symptoms of stress reaction can be grouped into the following categories:
 - Physical (nausea, increased blood pressure, headaches);
 - Cognitive (disorientation, distressing dreams, memory problems);
 - Emotional (anxiety, guilt, shock, grief, fear, anger); and
 - Behavioral (unusual anger, isolation, irritability).You may experience symptoms after responding to a disaster, and it's unusual to not experience any changes.
5. You will need to take care of yourself to help stay focused on hazards at the site, and to maintain the constant vigilance needed for you and your fellow workers' safety. You may not recognize the need to take care of yourself and to monitor your own emotional and physical health, especially when your assignment stretches into several weeks. In addition to attending any critical incident debriefing meetings that your employer may hold, here are some additional ways that you can manage your stress during a disaster operation:
 - Develop a "buddy" system with a co-worker, and watch out for each other.
 - Take care of yourself physically by exercising regularly and eating small quantities of food frequently.
 - Take frequent rest breaks.
 - Make sure that you drink plenty of fluids such as water and juices.
 - Try to eat a variety of foods and increase your intake of complex carbohydrates (breads, whole grain muffins, granola bars, etc.).

Chapter 8: Things to Remember (continued)



Chapter 8: Behavioral Resiliency Things to Remember

6. Whether impacted workers live close to the site of a critical incident with their families, or are away from their families and on the road or “traveling” for work, will likely affect the amount of support required from the employer for a particular victim’s family members. When a critical incident results in fatalities and/or serious injuries an employer will need to consider the following steps:
 - Do families of those injured or killed need to be notified? By whom? How?
 - Convey to employees what to say and not to say to families and others.
 - Determine where or to whom calls from family members of injured or deceased workers should be forwarded.
7. Employers in the face of a critical incident should also be prepared to manage contact with the media, both for themselves and their employees. Workers should be assured that their employer has a plan in place to deal with media questions about the incident, and to be informed about that plan. Workers should also be instructed not to talk to the media, not to answer questions, and to whom they should direct reporters if they arrive to cover the incident. In addition, workers should be advised not to take any pictures or video of a critical incident. However, recognizing that some people likely still will, workers should be told not to post any critical incident-related pictures or videos to social media.