

SUPPORT BRIEFING “SCRIPT”

Please note: this “script” has been prepared for trained peer support team members. If you have not been trained in peer support, CISM, PFA, etc., it is advised that you email: info@crisissupportsolutions.com for directions and training options.

PART ONE:

Leader of department / division / office offers welcome and Information

1. Expression of sympathy (especially with loss)
2. Delivers the “facts” – what happened, where we go from here...
3. Introduces Peer Team Lead

PART TWO:

Peer Team Lead delivers support

4. **Expression of sympathy (especially with loss) – be genuine and sincere**

Example: “My name is _____; and I’m with the _____; I’m here today with several other peer team members. First, let me say how sorry we are for your loss, I understand from many of you that _____ was a good man and losing him today is a total shock _____.”

5. **Acknowledge event as powerful, unexpected and overwhelming**

Example: “I think it’s fair to say that no one expected _____, no one predicted it or saw it coming. What happened out there today can be characterized as ‘powerful’ or ‘severe’ – if it were anything less than that, we wouldn’t be here with you today. Because you couldn’t have predicted it... because you didn’t expect it... because of this powerful / severe event, it makes sense for you all to feel overwhelmed _____.”

6. **Acknowledge a few other “factors” that may apply**

Example: “Given this unexpected and overwhelming _____, you can expect to experience a wide-range of reactions. We know that those reactions are going to be more intense because you are deeply connected to this tragedy and the people involved _____.”

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7. Acknowledge a few expected “reactions” that may apply

Such as: confused, in shock, anxious, worried, scared, irritated, frustrated, sad, lacking trust, feeling out of control, disrupted schedule, feeling responsible or placing blame, trouble making decisions, trouble sleeping, digesting, muscle aches/tension, etc.

Example: “You may not have been able to predict or plan for this tragedy, but we can help you predict the reactions you may experience as a result. Over the next few minutes, hours and days, expect for you to feel ‘not quite like yourself’ – you feeling ‘not normal’ is actually ‘normal’ at this point. Expect to have trouble concentrating, more easily distracted, irritable, anxious, worried, panicked or frightened, wanting to shut down or isolate (or the opposite) not wanting to be alone, angry or questioning your belief system, upset tummy, crying at the drop of a hat, lacking patience, trouble sleeping, eating, not wanting to remember but finding it impossible to forget _____”

8. Offer guidance

Suggest coping techniques – but be specific to the reactions identified.

Example: “Here’s what we know that can help you get through the next minutes, hours and days: First, recognize your ‘reactions’ are normal or typical – given what you’ve just survived. Expect to feel not like yourself for a little while, but then expect that you will return to your ‘normal’ again. Until then, help yourself move toward ‘recovery’ by staying hydrated. There are lots of stress chemicals, flush those out with water. Also, consider burning those out with exercise – in whatever way you enjoy moving your body (walking, running, biking, rowing, strolling...) your body was designed to move, so consider some form of movement / activity. Consider venting (or telling stories) with people that you trust. With that, allow others to care for you during this time...and don’t be afraid to ask for what you need. Be patient with yourself – and with others – they are overwhelmed like you _____”

9. Close with strengths and hope

Example: “I understand that you all are a tight group – I heard one even call you all a ‘family’. If that’s the case, then you know – as well as I – that tragedies strike families. Some tragedies can even tear families apart. But tragedies can

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also pull people together, make families even stronger. Those that get stronger are those that lean on each other, encourage each other, care, support and love through the pain and suffering. I understand that you are that kind of family_____”

Or: “You could not control what happened out there today, but you can control what you do from here. You can control the amount of love, support and care that you give yourself and each other_____”

PART THREE:

Back to Leadership for Q&A

PART FOUR:

Trained team members refer to [CSS 6-part protocol ©](#) as a guide to providing support.