Stages of a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)

Objectives

Stage 1  Introduction  To introduce intervention team members, explain process, set expectations.

Stage 2  Fact  To describe traumatic event from each participant’s perspective on a cognitive level.

Stage 3  Thought  To allow participants to describe cognitive reactions and to transition to emotional reactions.

Stage 4  Reaction  To identify the most traumatic aspect of the event for the participants and identify emotional reactions.

Stage 5  Symptom  To identify personal symptoms of distress and transition back to cognitive level.

Stage 6  Teaching  To educate as to normal reactions and adaptive coping mechanisms, i.e., stress management. Provide cognitive anchor.

Stage 7  Re-Entry  To clarify ambiguities, prepare for termination, facilitate “psychological closure,” i.e., reconstruction.
Remember: Go around the room to each person for the first two steps. Meaning, only go around the room twice.