






R3 CONTINUUM
READY. RESPOND. RECOVER.

Broadening the Value of critical Incident Response
Jeff Gorter, LMSW



"Hard to tell from here. Could be buzzards. Could be grief counsellors."

What Comes to Mind



Ongoing Controversy

Are We Asking The Right Question?



A Rose is a Rose...except when its not

- A **Disruptive Event** (formerly Critical Incident) is *any* event that has the real or perceived power to temporarily disrupt an individual or group's ability to cope
- Impossible to predict accurately – it's the **impact**, not the incident
- Crisis, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder



Start With the End in Mind...

- Most CIR models historically were developed in the **First Responder**/Public Safety Arena (i.e. Mitchell Model)
- These models have unknown or **indirect relevance** to corporate/workplace outcomes following a disruptive event
- Recent debate and research continues to focus almost exclusively on **clinical** perspectives (i.e. *prevention of PTSD*)
- Corporate Customers expect specific **productivity deliverables**



Research – Preliminary Findings

Incident Type	Frequency	Percent
Accident/Injury	933	3.3
Robbery	5378	19.0
Armed Robbery	3609	12.7
Death	12728	44.9
Assault	176	.6
Homicide/Suicide	920	3.2
Illness	309	1.1
Layoff/Termination	2295	8.1
Medical Event	237	.8
Natural Disaster	273	1.0
Shooting	162	.6
Threat/Violence	504	1.8
Other	818	2.9
Total	28942	100.0



Research Implications and Applications

Top Three Response Categories:

- **Death**
 - Most are natural or accidental
 - Non-work related as well as related to work function

- **Robbery/Armed Robbery**
 - Targeted criminal activity

- **Layoffs/Downsizing/Termination**
 - Planned event with predictable disruption associated



Implications and Applications

Challenge existing concept of CIR

- PTSD is the **least likely** outcome
- Are EAP customers seeking a clinical intervention or a **management tool**?
- Data suggests that CIR is most often requested – and presumably valued – more for the later
- Disruptive events (non-traumatizing deaths, downsizings, etc.) are no less impactful from a **business continuity** perspective



Implications and Applications

Clear opportunity to demonstrate value of EAP

- Goal is as much about a business objective as a clinical outcome
- **Disruptive Event Management** becomes the focus
- Expands the utility of EAP services to multiple stakeholders
 - *Executive Leadership*
 - *Risk Management*
 - *Enterprise Resilience*
 - *Business Continuity*
 - *Safety*



A Commitment to Resilience

- Resilience is the most common trajectory (Bonano)
- Efforts should be directed to **promote resilience** vs. pursuing pathology (iatrogenic effect)
- **Organizational Resilience** and **Personal Resilience** are closely aligned



Promoting Resilience

Watch your Language!



A Little Knowledge is a Dangerous thing



The Trauma Culture

We live in a culture of trauma that needlessly **reinforces personal narratives** of victimization (Chase, 2005)

A culture of trauma is socially constructed through **language**:

- The language of critical incidents
- Cultural Roles: The Hero-Victim Syndrome





The Trauma Culture: The Language of Critical Incidents

- "Traumatic Event" or "Critical Incident" are **symbolically loaded**
- "Trauma victim" communicates **powerlessness**
- "Recovery" **assumes injury**, damage or pathology
- Care is needed to avoid defining **negative identities** for employees
- The clear majority are resilient, and many report **personal growth** (PTG)




Cultural Roles: The Hero-Victim Syndrome


- A cultural narrative about victims is compelling
- Workplace CIR evolved out of emergency services
- Hero & Victim: Complimentary cultural roles (Reyes, 2015)
- Perceiving victims has **consequences** for those so perceived
- Over focusing on “**rescuing**” victims distracts from:
 - Promoting solution-oriented change
 - Facilitating individual resilience
 - Maintaining an organizational focus



Interface of Individual & Organizational Resilience



Distinct experiences, or
...different expressions of the same phenomenon?



Corporate Impact of Disruptive Events

- Actual or perceived **decreased safety**
- Pursuit of medical and psychiatric **opinions**
- Employees coping with **issues** related to grief/loss, financial strain, generalized stress, family concerns, physical needs
- **Harsh judgments** if emergency decisions were handled poorly
- **Tolerance** among departments and personnel often **decrease** as stress, role conflict, and extreme fatigue set in
- Difficulty concentrating at work/**increased mistakes**
- **Irritability** with fellow workers and customers
- Decreased **productivity**
- Ongoing corporate **financial concerns**
- **Absenteeism and presenteeism**

Adapted from: Veteran's Administration & National Center for PTSD



Same Worries, Different Flavors...


<p><u>Employee's Concerns:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cope with the immediate crisis • Resist reactive decision making (personal cost) • Maintain stability for self/family • Access appropriate care if/when needed 	<p><u>Employer's Concerns:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contain the immediate crisis • Mitigate the dynamics of reactivity (corporate cost) • Maintain viability of the organization • Facilitate access to appropriate care
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Ready. Respond. Recover.™


Core Objectives of DEM

Worker	Workplace
<p>Individual Resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase tolerance to stress • Foster adaptability to stressors (Newman, 2005) • Integrate experience into sense of self (Bonanno, 2004) • Preserve/restore functioning 	<p>Organizational Resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support/guide leadership • Identify emotional barriers/themes • Foster RTW/operations • Preserving organizational structure, stability and functioning (DeFraia, 2011, 2015a)



Why Offer DEM Services?

- It's the right thing to do.
- Do the right thing and it's good for business.
 - Message sent to staff
 - Reputational risk within the community and marketplace
 - Reduce attrition and sick-time
 - Reduce claims/contain cost
 - Return to productivity
 - Substantive and defensible action

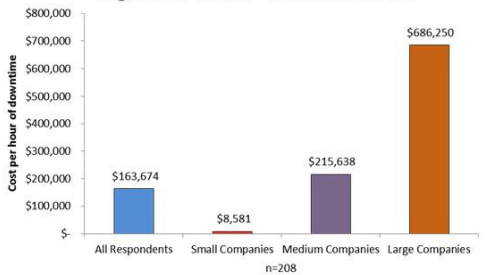


The Smart Thing to Do

- OSHA's General Duty Clause requires employer's to provide a safe workplace
- Failure to plan for "**postvention**" is as risky as failure to plan for **prevention**
- Employers can be held responsible for **Mitigation** (taking reasonable action to minimize the amount of loss/injury suffered following a disruptive event)



Regardless of Size - Downtime Hurts



Source: Aberdeen Group, May 2013

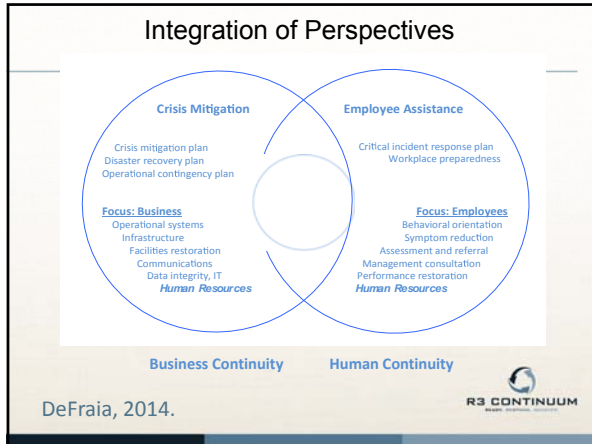
Business Continuity and The Human Element

There is no business recovery without people who:

- Are **healthy** enough to return to work and be productive
- Are assured enough of their **safety** to not feel afraid to return to work
- Have had their **trust** in the leadership established so that they desire to return to work
- Have had their **loyalty** rewarded so they remain employees over the short haul and the long haul

Marsh Crisis Academy






SAMHSA Recommendations

“The challenge for the incorporation of resilience into a workplace is to identify what enhances the ability of an organization to rebound effectively.”

SAMHSA, *Resilience And Stress Management*, 2007.


Signs of This Type of Resilience	Vulnerability Factors Inhibiting Resilience	Protective Factors Enhancing Resilience	Facilitators of Resilience
Individual Resilience The ability for an individual to cope with adversity and change			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Optimism •Flexibility •Self-confidence •Competence •Ineighthfulness •Perseverance •Perspective •Self-control •Sociability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Poor social skills •Poor problem solving •Lack of empathy •Family violence •Abuse or neglect •Divorce or partner breakup •Death or loss •Lack of social support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Social competence •Problem-solving skills •Good coping skills •Empathy •Secure or stable family •Supportive relationships •Intellectual abilities •Self-efficacy •Communication skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Individuals •Parents •Grandparents •Caregivers •Children •Adolescents •Friends •Partners •Spouses •Teachers •Faith Community


Signs of This Type of Resilience	Vulnerability Factors Inhibiting Resilience	Protective Factors Enhancing Resilience	Facilitators of Resilience
Organizational Resilience The ability for a business or industry, including its employees, to cope with adversity and change			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Proactive employees •Clear mission, goals, and values •Encourages opportunities to influence change •Clear communication •Nonjudgmental •Emphasizes learning •Rewards high performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Unclear expectations •Conflicted expectations •Threat to job security •Lack of personal control •Hostile atmosphere •Defensive atmosphere •Unethical environment •Lack of communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Open communication •Supportive colleagues •Clear responsibilities •Ethical environment •Sense of control •Job security •Supportive management •Connectedness among departments •Recognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Employers •Managers •Directors •Employees •Employee assistance programs •Other businesses



Absence Prevention

Stay at Work/Return to Work – a Key Marker of Functional Resilience






Goal: Stay at Work/Return to Work

APA Foundation Research in 2007

- Work is therapeutic
- Being off work is a crisis
- All possible resources need to be utilized to facilitate improved function and return the person to work asap
- This is echoed in Occupational Medicine and other disciplines




Ready. Respond. Recover.™

Impact of Worklessness

- Higher Mortality
- Poorer General Health
- Increased Chronic Illness
- Poorer Mental Health
- Higher Medical Costs, PCP Visits, and Hospital Admission Rates

– Waddell G., Burton K. *Is Work Good for your Health & Wellbeing?* 2006; UK: The Stationary Office.


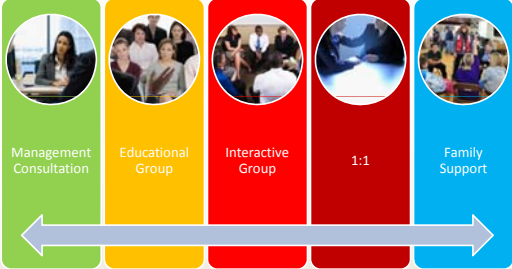


We are Stronger, Together

- “Work Family”
- Shared experience
- Mutual support
- Reduce isolation



Onsite Services



Disruptive Event Management (DEM)

Deliverables

- **Consultation** with the organization's leadership
- Positions the company's **leadership** favorably
- Allows employees to process in a safe **facilitated** environment
- **Identifies understandable reactions** to an unusual event so that people don't misinterpret their own reactions
- Builds group **support**
- Outline self-help recovery **strategies**
- Brainstorm **solutions** to overcome immediate **return-to-work** and return-to-life obstacles
- **Triage** movement toward either immediate workplace functioning or additional care



Finding The New Normal



Final Thoughts

"I've learned that people will forget what you said,
people will forget what you did,
but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Maya Angelou



Thank You!

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Stay Connected

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