

Is your team prepared to Respond?

◆ We will discuss:

- Our growth
- Our development
- Our CARE Team
- Our Diversity
- Our Study

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Nassau Citizen Corps background

- ◆ Nassau County 287 sq miles, population of 1.3 million
- ◆ CERT Started in 2003
- ◆ 40 volunteers from 2 communities-
Incorporated Village of Freeport being one.
- ◆ By years end 100+
- ◆ In 4 years- 600+

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Education is the Key

- ◆ Curriculum starts out basic
- ◆ Need for increased response training
- ◆ Including additional psychological training

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CERT Mission:

- ◆ Most good for the most people
- ◆ Prepare for disaster
- ◆ Assist and **COPE** with Aftermath of disaster
- ◆ CERT volunteers are not first responders they are citizens
- ◆ Need for additional psychological training and **CARE**

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The CARE Team is

- ◆ Team Within a Team
- ◆ For the volunteers
- ◆ For the program
- ◆ For the programs protection!
- ◆ Reduce liability!

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Why a Comprehensive CARE Program

- ◆ Prepare CERT members for the emotional stresses they will encounter in responding to disasters
- ◆ Function as a support system for CERT volunteers during team activations

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Are Your Teams Prepared to Respond?

- ◆ Have You:
 - Created a comprehensive deployment plan?
 - Initiated behavioral awareness training?
 - Identified and trained your core leaders in CATSM?
 - Recruited members for your CARE TEAM?
 - Created a partnership with your local MRC?
 - Partnered with faith-based and/or non profit organizations?
 - Identified local mental health professionals?

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Traumatic Event

- ◆ Intense stressor which is outside the experiences of everyday life.
- ◆ A situation that evokes feelings of intense fear, horror, or hopelessness. Creating the potential for physical and psychological injuries, requiring treatment in survivors and responders.

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Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

- ◆ It is a psychiatric disorder, which can affect a small number of individuals after exposure to an extremely traumatic event.
- ◆ Early efforts must be made to prevent debilitating *emotional scars* from negatively impacting people's lives.
- ◆ Implementation of a *Traumatic Stress Protocol*.
- ◆ Address the needs of the "whole person".

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PTSD Signs & Symptoms

◆ Cognitive/Emotional

- Agitation
- Anxiety
- Confusion

◆ Behavioral

- Avoidance
- Change in social behavioral
- Withdrawal

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PTSD Signs & Symptoms

◆ Physical

- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Twitches

◆ Spiritual

- Anger at God
- Loss of meaning and purpose
- Questioning of one's basic beliefs

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CERT CARE TEAM

◆ Staff

- Mental Health Professionals
- CERT Volunteers (Peers)

◆ Purpose

- Educational Role
- Provide on scene support

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CERT CARE TEAM

◆ Training

- Expand on the concepts presented in Basic CERT Class.
- Aware of the needs and behavior of traumatized victims.
- Emphasize the importance of self-care.

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Psychological First Aid

◆ Goals are to create and sustain an environment of:

- Safety
- Calm
- Connectedness to others
- Empowerment
- Hope

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Psychological First Aid is....

- ◆ Practical frontline emotional Assistance.
- ◆ Easy to learn, recall, and apply.
- ◆ A way of preventing harmful behavior.
- ◆ Likely to increase the success of an overall emergency response.

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Psychological First Aid is not....

- ◆ Debriefing
- ◆ Counseling
- ◆ Psychotherapy
- ◆ Mental Health Treatment

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CARE TEAM should:

- ◆ Present a calm Reassuring Demeanor.
- ◆ Be direct, informative, nurturing, and problem solving.
- ◆ Give Accurate Information and explanations.
- ◆ Talk to individuals about their emotional reactions.
- ◆ Convey a sense of hope and positive expectations.

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CARE TEAM should:

- ◆ Normalize the individual's emotional reaction.
- ◆ Explain what can and will be done to assist.

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Emotional trauma
and stress are
normal reactions to
abnormal events.

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Protect

- ◆ Individuals from further physical harm.
- ◆ Individuals dignity and privacy following a crisis.
- ◆ Individuals from danger to self or others.

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- ◆ Individuals to safe quiet areas.
- ◆ With calm, compassionate but authoritative tone.
- ◆ Any available personnel to appropriate tasks.

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Connect

- ◆ Individuals in need of further assistance with mental health providers.
- ◆ Individuals and families with printed and other resources.
- ◆ Individuals to information about event the event or any other news pertaining to the situation* .

* From

<http://ebiz.netopia.com/projectphoenix/psychologicalfirstaid>

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Diversity

- ◆ Many different cultures in the village
- ◆ How to deal with the diversity
- ◆ What the different impact is

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Deployment

- ◆ Need to have everything in place
- ◆ Need to follow NIMS / ICS
- ◆ We need to get our act together before we ask volunteers to

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The Study

- ◆ Understanding what motivates citizens to become CERTs
- ◆ investigated personality styles, trauma symptoms, and guilt as motivational factors

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volunteers were administered

- ◆ demographic questionnaire
- ◆ Millon Index of Personality Styles - Revised
- ◆ Trauma Symptoms Inventory
- ◆ Interpersonal Guilt Questionnaire

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Demographics

- ◆ 51.6% Christian
- ◆ 37.4% Jewish
- ◆ 25.3% income below \$60,000
- ◆ 18.7% income of \$60,000-80,000
- ◆ 29.7% high income above \$100,000
- ◆ 64.86% worked in an office or identified as “professionals.”
- ◆ 14.3% identified as retired
- ◆ 7.7% identified as teachers
- ◆ 9.9% identified as social workers or medical/health worker

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Personality Styles

- ◆ **Actively Modifying**
- ◆ **Other-Nurturing**
- ◆ **Pleasure-Enhancing**
- ◆ **Pain-Avoiding**

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Previous Trauma / Survivor Guilt

- ◆ The Hypothesis was that people who participate in CERT have experienced previous traumatic events and suffer from survivor guilt. Theories of social action support that people altruistically volunteer to help others as a way to resolve that guilt.
- ◆ The sample population also exhibited trauma symptoms, correlating with significant levels of survivor guilt

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Trauma Symptoms

- ◆ reported at clinically significant levels. Such symptoms include: intrusive experiences, defensive avoidance, dissociation, and impaired self-reference. Similarly, findings indicated clinically significance accumulation of impairment in internal self-regulation, an inadequate sense of self, and/or inadequate self capabilities.

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Survivor Guilt

- ◆ sample population rated significantly higher than the previously researched populations on the survivor guilt scales. Survivor guilt is the guilt one feels having survived a catastrophic event while others have not. Can be a way to regain control, or it at its most pathological level, can be a form of punishment. Guilt by itself is necessarily for adaptation. Survivor guilt can be irrational and potentially pathogenic. Survivor guilt increases the likelihood and susceptibility for developing post-traumatic stress symptoms.

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also indicate

- ◆ **Omnipotent Responsibility Guilt** “an exaggerated sense of responsibility and concern for the happiness and well-being of others” It was anticipated that CERTs are motivated to assist in large-scale emergencies by a sense of feeling better off than others.

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Overall

- ◆ study was small and had significant limitations that impede conclusive results
- ◆ Results are suggestive, and further research is needed

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Results

- ◆ are worthy of noting, however, and support future research in the field of Disaster Psychology, specifically as pertaining to citizen response and CERT.

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Consider

- ◆ citizen responders and the CERT program training curriculum should consider the impact of psychological functioning on citizen response and community preparedness.

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Recommendations

- ◆ training curriculum include a more in depth psychological module with psycho-educational components such as defining trauma, vicarious trauma, offering coping strategies, and debriefing practices.

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Much More is needed



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