



Trauma Responder's Self-Test

Crisis Response Network/Post-action Outreach Committee

The Post Action Outreach Committee (PAOC) of our chapter's Crisis Response Network (CRN), as part of our post action outreach program, has prepared this "Trauma Responders' Self Assessment" form for all chapter members participating in a trauma response for their personal use. Additionally, a valuable post-action debriefing program can be made available for chapter members.

Each of us experiences a traumatic event in different ways. Participating in a trauma response and hearing survivors' stories multiple times can heighten the potential for responders to experience vicarious or secondary trauma, or compassion fatigue. How we react is also unique to our individual experiences, and it is important to have a plan to manage our reactions.

The following are some thoughts and questions to use to self assess your reactions and to form a reaction management plan. Use these questions and ideas as a gauge to assess your strengths, your coping skills, and additional resources that you might need.

1. Ask yourself, "Have I ever felt like this before?"

Many times it's just the event that is different, not the reaction. In the past, for example, following a stressful period or crisis, maybe you found yourself having some unwanted thoughts or feelings, and now you're experiencing similar thoughts and feelings.

2. Ask yourself, "If I have experienced this reaction before, how did I manage it?" What worked for you? What didn't work quite so well?

For example, if you stay with the unwanted thoughts or feelings, what helped you to manage them before – talking to others, participating in a debriefing, distracting yourself, exercise?

3. Ask yourself, "What have others done (or are doing) to manage their reactions?"

Reaching out to friends, family or others who have shared the experience can reduce the isolation that can come with a traumatic event. Don't underestimate the power of exchanging ideas, suggestions, and skills – it can only add to your coping skills.

4. Ask yourself, "If I haven't experienced this reaction before, or the reaction is lingering longer than I hoped, what are my choices? Who can I reach out to for assistance?"

The San Fernando Valley CAMFT's Crisis Response Network's Post Action Outreach program is here for you: debriefing for the debriefers will be made available, as will other consultation. Contact us at postaction@sfvcamft.org!