

Building Resilience

Resilience is the ability to navigate through adversity and learn from it as we move forward.

The **BOUNCE** acronym provides guidance for SAR volunteers:

Believe in our ability to respond effectively

Optimism, focus on the positive aspects of the callout

Understand the key strengths and values of your team

Network of mutual support, care and encouragement

Contribute to help others and give back

Energy – the ability to sustain levels of energy and enthusiasm

Building Resilience in SAR also involves **training together** to build skills and confidence in self and team; **finding your niche** by doing the SAR activities that energize you; and **maintaining perspective** by owning what's yours and not what isn't.



Tips for Family and Friends

A supportive network of family and friends can be helpful for anyone experiencing Critical Incident Stress.

If a relative, friend or life partner is affected by a traumatic event here are some suggestions for support:

- Encourage them to talk, ask them how they are doing
- Let them know you care
- Remind them their feelings are normal
- Let their emotions flow – without judgment
- Do not tell them you know how they feel – you don't
- Listen, listen, listen - Be willing to say nothing
- Just being there is often the biggest help
- Encourage them to seek professional help if their symptoms don't diminish



For more information:
www.bcsara.com/cism

Any family member of a
SAR volunteer can call the CISM team

1-800-663-3456

Taking Care of Yourself

Before and After Tough Callouts

SAR volunteers who experience traumatic events (critical incidents) may experience a wide range of reactions which may affect your physical and emotional health.

These reactions, which we call Critical Incident Stress, are normal, and most often run a natural course. However, there is much you can do to mitigate your reactions as well as prepare yourself for subsequent tough calls.



Critical Incident Stress is a normal reaction to an abnormal, stressful event.

Tough callouts summon the best in each of us. They also trigger the release of a flood of powerful hormones and chemicals which enable us to function at a high level.

Following a traumatic event, we need to mentally process this abnormal experience at the same time as our bodies are dealing with dispersal of these hormones and chemicals.

It is normal in this situation to experience a number of physical and emotional symptoms collectively known as Critical Incident Stress.

These strong reactions may occur shortly after a stressful incident or even weeks or months later.

Know the Symptoms of Critical Incident Stress and Know How to Seek Help.

Helpful Tips for Self Care

Here are some stress relieving strategies:

Take Care of Basics:

- Eat healthy foods, vegetables and protein are your friends
- Drink plenty of water – to help flush away the hormones and chemicals in your body.
- Take time to exercise – even ten minutes of brisk walking will get positive endorphins flowing
- Get adequate rest and sleep
- Avoid excess caffeine, alcohol or cannabis

Reach Out and Connect:

- Spend time with others, maintain your social connections
- Maintain your regular routine
- Talk to a trusted friend about how you are feeling



Tips for Calming:

- Seek out a slice of nature – take a walk in the woods
- Practice gratitude, keep a journal of positive thoughts and experiences
- Practice mindfulness - follow a daily meditation routine
- Avoid negative media, including social media

Be Kind to Yourself:

- Expect the incident to bother you. Allow yourself time to heal
- Do not take blame for tragedies that befall others
- Take satisfaction and pride in how your team performed
- Take time to have fun and enjoy leisure activities – laugh a little
- Know and respect your limits – if you need to step away temporarily, do so.

Know When to Seek Help:

Contact the BCSARA CISM team which will provide individual or group support. Any SAR member can activate this service by calling:



1-800-663-3456