

What is a Critical Incident?



A Critical Incident is a workplace event—extraordinary in nature—with the expectation of producing significant reactions on victims

or those either directly or indirectly impacted.

Who can be affected? Witnesses, employees, colleagues, clients and family members all can be affected by a Critical Incident.

Typical examples of a Critical Incident include: robbery; auto accident; client illness (eg heart attack in lobby); severe or prolonged illness of employee (eg cancer); sudden death of employee; and natural disaster.

The Debriefing

The purpose of the Critical Incident debriefing is to take the active memories of the event and store them into long term memory.

A major consequence of a traumatic event is that the person feels order and control in their life have been lost. The brain keeps turning over the sequence of events in order to regain order and control.

Until closure is reached our minds continue to run a memory track of the event in the hope of having the incident make sense and be logical.

We continue to “turn over” the situation and review it until our minds feel satisfied that it “now makes sense”.



In a debriefing a trained person helps the individual understand the event, their lack of ability to control situations and then to store the incident into long term memory.

Not all situations or persons need a debriefing. Sometimes just talking is enough to start the process of healing.

For those persons who continue to not sleep, have anger issues emerge, or continue to have difficulty in focusing attention a debriefing may prevent Post Traumatic Stress.

Bottom line

Your employee can feel comfortable and confident talking with Finding the Light Counselling about how a Critical Incident is affecting them. They know their concerns will be kept confidential.

Encouraging your valuable employee to receive a Critical Incident Debriefing may save you the possibility of losing the services of that staff member and the flow-on effect to other staff.

After hours and Saturday appointments are also available.

Call us now to discuss your organization’s needs and how we can help you.

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