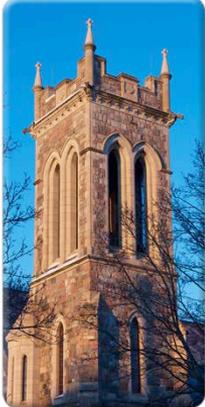




A Century of Service
and Benefits for
the Episcopal Church



Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Introducing the Use of Psychological First Aid



Host:
Krishna Dholakia, MS, RD, CDE, CDN
Senior Health Education Specialist
Church Pension Group

Presenter:
Jody Horstman, Ph.D., HSPP
Licensed clinical psychologist and clinical addiction
counselor

May 2020
CPG Webinar Series



Host



Krishna Dholakia, MS, RD, CDE, CDN
Senior Health Education Specialist
Church Pension Group

Krishna has been with the Church Pension Group since 2015 where she develops health programs and resources in order to promote, maintain, and improve member health. Krishna is a registered dietitian, diabetes educator, and 500-hr certified yoga teacher.



Presenter



Jody Horstman, Ph.D., HSPP

A licensed clinical psychologist and clinical addiction counselor. Jody joined Aspire Indiana, Inc. in March of 2012 and serves as the Chief Clinical Officer. Dr. Horstman has worked in community mental health in Indiana for 26 years. She is a member of Indiana's State Disaster Mental Health Team and is a trainer of Psychological First Aid (PFA).



Agenda

- **Definitions**
- **Impact of Disasters**
- **The Human Response**
- **Needs of Survivors**
- **Resilience and Self-Care**
- **Introduction to Psychological First Aid**



Definitions

Resilience

Reflects the ability to maintain a stable equilibrium; to bounce back and to move forward

- Resilience is common
- 70-80% of resilience is based on skills developed over time



Definitions

Crisis

Events or situations perceived as intolerably difficult that exceed an individual's available resources and coping mechanisms.

Responder/Caregiver

Someone who is there "to help." This can be a formal or informal role.

Survivor

Is an individual who has been directly impacted by the event. By definition, a responder/caregiver is also a survivor.



Impact of Disasters

Psychological Impact

Psychological
“footprint”

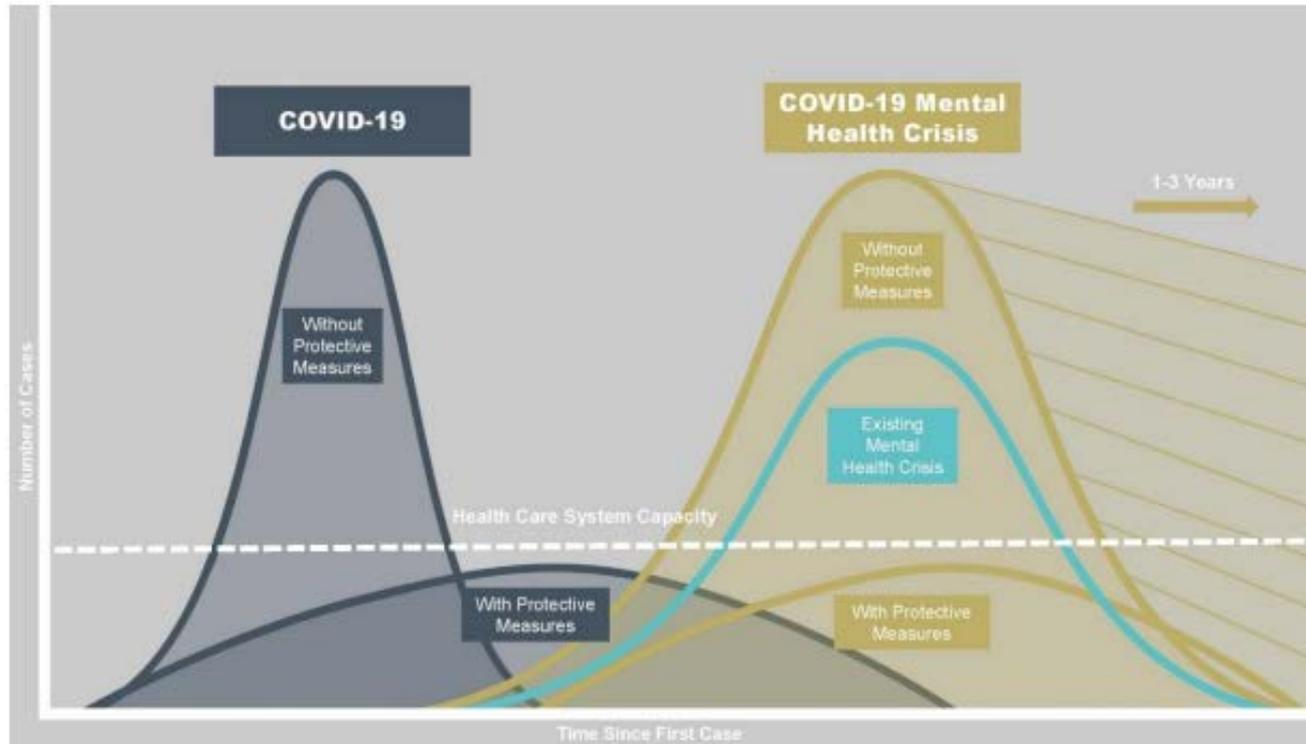
Medical
“footprint”



Emotional Phases of Disaster



Flattening the “Second Curve”



Characteristics of Crisis Events

Event precipitating the crisis is perceived as threatening

- Inability to modify or reduce the impact
- Increase in fear, tension, and/or confusion
- High level of subjective discomfort
- A state of disequilibrium



Consequences of Critical Events



Losses

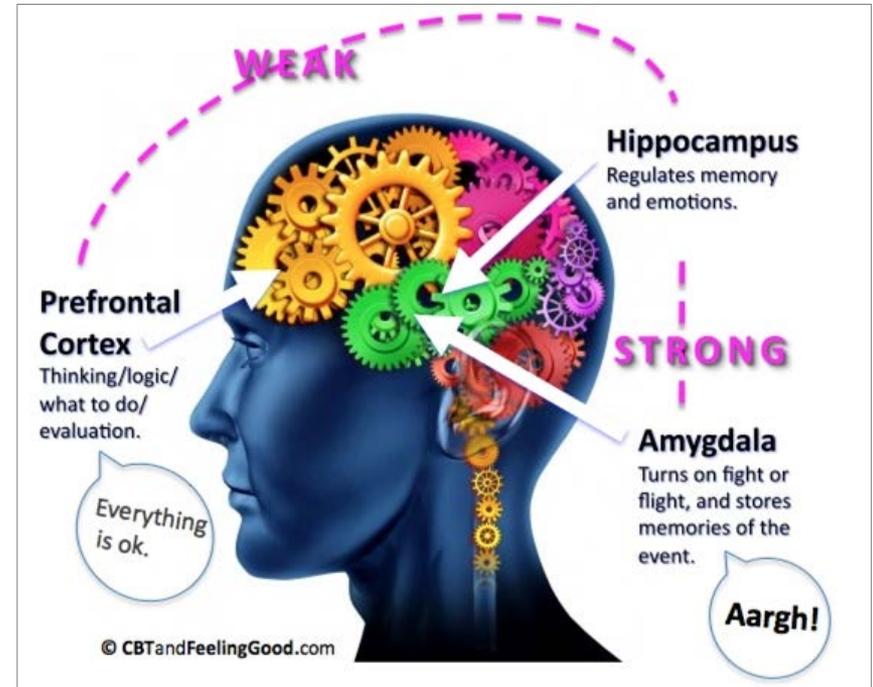
- Loved ones
- Material goods
- Employment/income
- Social cohesion
- Dignity, trust, and safety
- Positive self-image
- Trust in the future



The Human Response

Brain in “Crisis”

- Normal response
- Role of the amygdala and the “fear” response
- Fight/flight/freeze
- Ways we **don’t** help ourselves



Immediate & Delayed Responses



- Cognitive
- Behavioral
- Emotional
- Physical
- Spiritual



Psychological and Emotional Reactions

- Irritability or anger
- Self-blame or blaming others
- Isolation and withdrawal
- Fear of recurrence
- Feeling stunned, numb, overwhelmed
- Feeling helpless
- Mood swings
- Sadness, depression, grief
- Denial
- Concentration and memory problems
- Relationship problems/
marital discord



Physical and Behavioral Reactions

- Loss of appetite
- Headaches or chest pain
- Diarrhea, stomach pain, or nausea
- Hyperactivity
- Increase in drug or alcohol consumption
- Nightmares
- Insomnia
- Fatigue
- Re-emergence or exacerbation of existing health concerns
- Risky sexual behavior
- Hand tremors
- Hair loss



Spiritual Reactions

- Changes in relationships
- Questions of beliefs and values
- Re-evaluation of life structure
- Religious belief questions and issues
- Changes in relationships
- Social isolation
- No view of future
- Sudden divorce/marriage



Common “Responder” Reactions

- Compassion strain/psychic numbing
- Vicarious traumatization
- Hyperarousal and hypervigilance
- Confusion/memory/cognition difficulties
- Withdrawal and isolation
- Fatigue
- Those that help are often seen as “safe” and can be the target of people’s anger and frustration



Needs of Survivors

What Survivors Need

- To feel safe and secure
- To have basic survival needs met
- To tell their story
- To reconnect with coping skills
- Build or increase skills associated with resilience



Self-Care and Resilience

The Trauma Exposure Response

- Feeling hopeless and helpless
- A sense that one can never do enough
- Diminished creativity
- Inability to embrace complexity
- Minimizing
- Chronic exhaustion/physical ailments
- Dissociative moments
- Guilt
- Anger and cynicism
- Hypervigilance
- Inability to empathize/numbing
- Increased addictive behavior
- Inability to listen/deliberate avoidance
- Sense of persecution
- Fear
- Grandiosity: an inflated sense of importance related to one's work



“Self-care is never a selfish act – it is simply good stewardship of the only gift that I was put on the earth to offer others. Anytime we can listen to true self and give it the care it requires, we do so not only for ourselves but for the many others whose lives we touch.”

As quoted in *Resilient Ministry: What Pastors Told Us About Surviving and Thriving*,
by Bob Burns, Tasha D. Chapman, and Donald C. Guthrie, 2013.



Ways to Cope

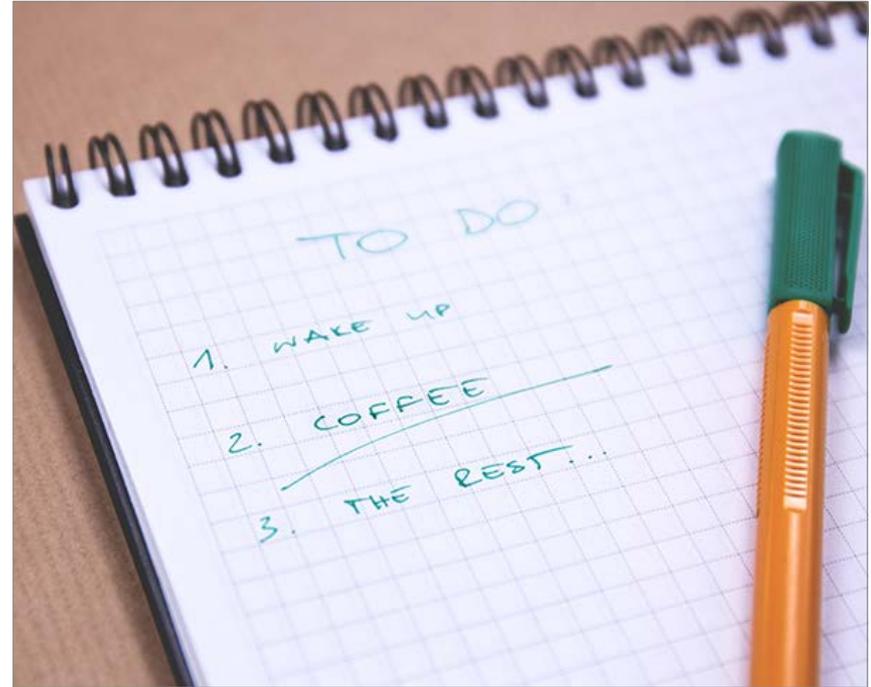


- Schedule breaks and time for yourself
- Set limits
- “Schedule” a specific amount of time in the day to worry or cry.
- Set aside a physical “safe” place for yourself that is “work free”
- Delegate tasks and responsibilities to others when possible



Ways to Cope (cont'd)

- Invoke triage
- Say “NO”
- Try to re-establish and keep a regular schedule
- Find a “safe” person to talk honestly with
- Identify a “trust” person to give you honest feedback



Caring for Ourselves

- Our lives do not happen “to” us
- We cannot outsource responsibility for our own choices
- We, equally, deserve to experience compassion, care, and love



Resilience Skills and “The Five Directions”

1. **Creating Space for Inquiry**
2. **Choosing our Focus**
3. **Building Compassion and Community**
4. **Finding Balance**
5. **Daily Practice of Centering Ourselves**



Introduction to Psychological First Aid

Psychological First Aid (PFA)

Designed to reduce the initial distress caused by traumatic events and to foster short and long-term adaptive functioning

- Appropriate to developmental levels across life span
- Families
- Communities
- Culturally informed and adaptable



PFA (cont'd)

- An approach for assisting individuals and groups in the aftermath of crisis, disaster or terrorism
- Designed to reduce the initial distress caused by traumatic events
- Designed to foster short and long term adaptive functioning



Core Actions of Psychological First Aid

- Make contact and engage survivors
- Help provide safety and comfort
- Assist in stabilization
- Information gathering
 - Current needs and concerns
- Practical assistance
- Connection with social supports
- Information on distress reactions/coping
- Linkage with collaborative services



When to Make a Referral or Seek Professional Help

- Disorientation
- Significant Depression
- Mental Illness
- Inability to care for basic needs
- Suicidal or homicidal thoughts or plans*
- Problematic substance use
- Domestic violence, child abuse, or elder abuse**



*If indicated, ask the individual if they are having thoughts of suicide or of harming others.

**If indicated, ask the individual if they feel safe in their home.



Resources and References

Psychological First Aid Online Courses



learn.nctsn.org/enrol/index.php?id=38



ptsd.va.gov/professional/manuals/psych-first-aid.asp

Mobile Apps



Psychological First Aid (PFA) Tutorial
Regents of the University of Minnesota

★★★★☆ 5.0, 2 Ratings
Free



Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others.

Laura van Dernoot Lipsky with Connie Burk. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc; San Francisco, CA. 2009

Institute for
Congregational
Trauma & Growth:
ictg.org



Church Publishing Resources

**May is
Mental Health
Awareness Month**

Explore some of the resources from Church Publishing related to mental health and mental illness.

Visit churchpublishing.org/mentalhealthawarenessmonth for more information.



EAP Online Resources

- **NEW website:** www.mycigna.com
- **Under the “Members” section, click on “Login” to access your benefits**
 - Enter your Employer ID: episcopal (lower case)
 - First-time visitors must register
 - On left-hand side, click on desired topic
 - Click on “Accept” for the privacy policy
- **Contact Number:** 866-395-7794

The screenshot shows the Cigna website's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) page. At the top, there are navigation tabs for "My Plans" and "My Health", along with user information for "Hi Richard" and links for "Profile", "Support Center", "Forms", "Español", and "Log Out". A "Live Chat" button indicates availability from M-F, 9am-8pm ET. Below the navigation is a search bar with the text "search myCigna.com" and a "SEARCH" button. A main menu includes links for "REVIEW MY COVERAGE", "MANAGE CLAIMS & BALANCES", "FIND PROVIDERS AND COSTS", and "ESTIMATE HEALTH CARE COSTS". The page title is "Employee Assistance Program (EAP)". The "Coverage Period" is listed as 01/01/2018 - 12/31/2018. A paragraph explains that Cigna's EAP provides access to licensed clinicians for various challenges. The "Cost" is noted as "No cost to you as part of your employer's program." A note states "Maximum visits with a licensed in-network counselor: Each person may use up to 10 visit(s) per issue per plan year." Below this are five icons with descriptions: "Share EAP with someone in your household", "Live chat with a Cigna EAP consultant (M-F, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. ET)", "Schedule a phone call with a Cigna EAP consultant", "Get an authorization to visit a licensed EAP counselor", and "Find a licensed EAP counselor near you". A "NEED HELP" sidebar on the right offers options to "Visit the Support Center", call 1-800-853-2713 for site help, or call 1-800-244-6224 for plan and coverage information. A "VIEW MORE" link is at the bottom of the sidebar. The "About Cigna's EAP Services" section at the bottom describes the program's access to face-to-face and phone counselors, and mentions additional resources available through the "WorkLife Resources" link.

