

## Debriefing Script

### INTRODUCTION

- ❖ Hi, my name is (your name). I am a crisis response team member (state team), and I'd like to introduce the other team members (do so). We were called out today by (contact person) to help you work through this crisis.
- ❖ We appreciate the opportunity to be of assistance. We recognize this is a tough and difficult time and some of you may not want to be here...that is fine, this is not a mandatory gathering. Do know that, however, your participation would be an encouragement to others, promote cohesiveness in this (working group), and support for the organization/department/company.
- ❖ You each probably had a different perspective on the event and by sharing you may provide a "piece of the puzzle" that others may be wondering about.
- ❖ I'd like to briefly explain what we are going to do and some *GROUND RULES* before we begin...

-There is no rank (if applicable) in the discussion

-Only individuals involved in the incident are to be included...look around the ring—is there anybody that shouldn't be here?

-Please silence all phones, radios, electronic devices

-We will take no breaks...if you need to leave, a member of our team will follow to make sure you are OK

-Participation is voluntary, you do not need to share if you do not wish

-One person at a time speaks

-This is *not* a critique/investigation/PIA (post-incident analysis). Please keep your comments to your reactions from the event.

-Everything shared should be considered confidential. Our team is not going to share what has been said, we would ask that you *not* disclose anything to others outside this group.

-Explain the Debriefing process (that it provides an outlet for those involved to share their experiences and reactions to the event, express thoughts and concerns since the event, and what one can do to feel better and return to pre-incident functionality if troubled).

- ❖ Be sure to let each tell their story and thoughts, even if they differ from your remembrances of the event.

## FACT

- ❖ Can we begin by going around the circle and stating our names, and where we were at the onset of the event. What we'd like is to get a picture of what the event was and the details as they pertained to you.
- ❖ In your recounting of the event, try to be as descriptive as you can accounting for things you saw, heard, smelled, felt, etc. This will help us all develop a sense of the scene.

## THOUGHT

- ❖ As you realized what was going on, what were your thoughts?
- ❖ When you first came off "operational auto-pilot" (act-react), what were your responses to what was going on or what had occurred?
- ❖ Share any emotions you had during the event.

## REACTION

- ❖ What has been the hardest part of this event for you?
- ❖ Are there things about the event that you still have questions about?
- ❖ If there is one thing you could change about the event, without changing the outcome of the event, what would that be?
- ❖ Is there any positive thing you can pick out from this event? It's okay if there isn't...

## SYMPTOM

- ❖ Since the event, what are some of the thoughts, feelings, and reactions you have experienced?
- ❖ Has anyone else had similar symptoms?

## TEACHING

- ❖ What we've heard you share here, though unique to this event, is that you are experiencing normal reactions that a normal person would have to an abnormal event.
- ❖ There are proven ways that you can help yourself to get through this crisis and help you feel better.
- ❖ (Share information about keeping to a routine, staying away from excessive caffeine and alcohol and sugar<sup>1</sup>, getting some light exercise, do those things that calm and bring relaxation to your life, etc.)

## RE-ENTRY

- ❖ We like to conclude by discussing one thing that you are going to do for yourself that will help you through this tough time.
- ❖ With each one of your permission, we would like to just follow up with a phone call or visit to "touch base" within the next couple of days.