

Spiritual & Psychological First Aid

A Critical Incident Stress Management Course

Purpose of Course:

To increase awareness and enhance an individual's ability to provide effective spiritual and psychological care to survivors in times of loss, disaster, emergency, trauma, and crisis settings.

Course Description:

Research validates that the help and support people receive in times of crisis matters. Providing effective emotional and spiritual care to individuals, families, and communities in difficult times is critical and can help promote resiliency. This two-day course endeavors to build helping skills and a better understanding of the unique role of the crisis responder and trains participants in the fundamental principles of spiritual and psychological first aid (SPFA). Care provided in SPFA may be defined as a practical, compassionate and supportive presence designed to mitigate acute distress, assess needs, provide essential supportive care, and link with other support systems as needed for ongoing spiritual, emotional, and mental health care. *(When taught at an ICISF Conference, the following may apply: 14 Contact Hours, pending approval for the following CEUs: 14 CE Credits for Psychologists; 14 CE Hours for California MFTs and LCSWs; 14 Contact Hours for National Certified Addiction Counselors OR 1.4 General CEUs from UMBC; 14 PDHs for EAPs; 14 Nursing Contact Hours).* Completion of this class and receipt of a certificate indicating full attendance (14 Contact Hours) qualify as a class in ICISF's Certificate of Specialized Training Program.

Course Objectives:

At the conclusion of this course, successful students will be able to:

- Identify evidence-informed foundations for SPFA
- Articulate an understanding of a "supportive presence" and "companioning."
- Define the essential elements of connecting and communicating with people in crisis
- Prepare survivors to understand commonly experienced psychological/ behavioral reactions and the process of recovery
- Identify indicators of resiliency, recovery and post traumatic growth to encourage help, hope and healing
- Identify how meeting basic human needs is foundational to providing SPFA
- Demonstrate essential interventions to help stabilize and protect people in crisis
- Create a safe environment that facilitates effective listening and crisis communication
- Link survivors with existing community support services and develop an ongoing care plan.
- Demonstrate skills for assessing spiritual and emotional needs of individuals in crisis
- Utilize a spiritual assessment framework to identify ways to help an individual draw on spiritual and religious resources to cope and foster resiliency

Course Participants:

Targeted participants will be trained clergy, chaplains, mental health professionals, crisis responders, and individuals who desire to enhance their skills in providing SPFA to survivors of loss, disaster, emergency, trauma, and crisis settings.

Course Format:

This two-day (14 hour) course creatively utilizes an interactive educational format. Participants will engage in group discussion, individual and group exercises, interactive lecture, observation of videos, and practice through role plays.



A partnership between the Institute for
Compassionate Care and the International
Critical Incident Stress Foundation, Inc.

