

How Family and Friends Can Help

Please!

- Listen carefully.
- Spend time with traumatized person.
- Offer your assistance and a listening ear if they have not asked for help.
- Reassure them that they are safe.
- Help them with everyday tasks like cleaning, cooking, caring for the family, and minding children.
- Give them some private time.
- Don't take their anger or other feelings personally.
- Don't tell them that they are "lucky it wasn't worse" -traumatized people are not consoled by those statements. Instead, tell them that you are sorry such an event has occurred and you want to understand and assist them.
- Seek to understand them, it's not about you.
- Help them to avoid self medication.
- Help get them back to normal life activities.

Southern Law Enforcement Foundation

Christopher Abbott, Director

Cell: 504-274-5206

Email: chris.abbott@slefoundation.com

Website: www.slefoundation.com

Region 1

Michael & June Scott—225-715-8975

John Fourcade—504-296-3491

Region 2

Ginny Higgins—337-316-7196

David Mouton—337-523-6097

Region 3

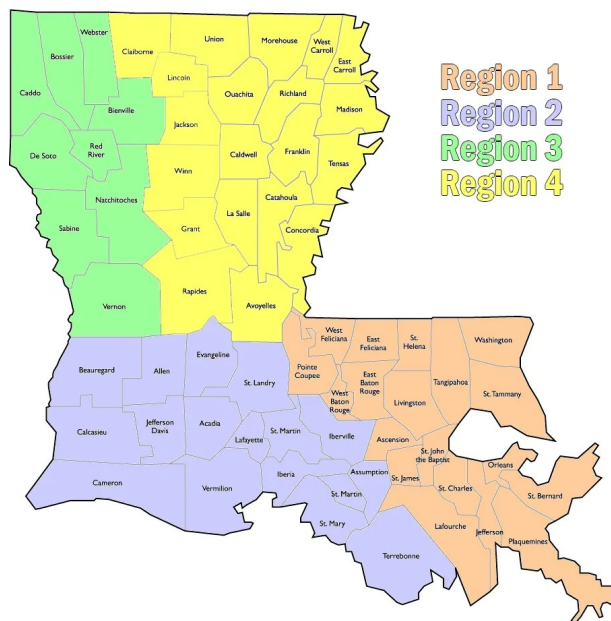
Michael King—318-453-5758

Jaqueline Horton—318-470-2187

Region 4

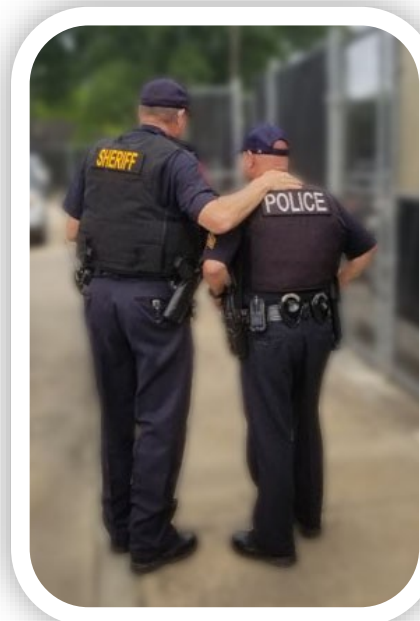
Sarah Campbell—318-235-6258

David Williamson—318-512-9052



Southern Law Enforcement Foundation

CISM/PEER SUPPORT



Following any critical incident in Louisiana, the Foundation urges each member of our profession or agencies to reach out for support. Call us at 504-274-5206 or visit our website at www.slefoundation.com. Southern Law Enforcement Foundation is 700 strong and we are ready to serve the needs of our brothers and sisters and our agencies. All services are free and the information is confidential.

Confidentiality Law—La. Stat. tit. 40:2411

NORMAL DISTORTIONS SOMETIMES EXPERIENCED DURING A CRITICAL INCIDENT

- **Diminished Sounds:** You did not hear sounds at all, or the sounds had an usual distant, muffled quality.
- **Intensified Sounds:** Some sounds seemed much louder than normal.
- **Tunnel Vision:** Your vision became intensely focused on the perceived threat and that you had reduced ability to see other things around you.
- **Heightened Visual Clarity:** You could see some details or actions with unusual clarity and detail.
- **Slow-Motion Time:** Events seemed to be taking place in slow motion and seemed to take longer to happen than they really did.
- **Fast-Motion Time:** Events seemed to be happening much faster than normal.
- **Automatic Pilot:** You responded automatically to the perceived threat, giving little or no conscious thought to your actions.
- **Memory Loss for Parts of the Event:** After the event you come to realize that there were parts of it that you could not remember.
- **Memory Loss for Your Actions:** After the event you came to realize that you could not remember some of your own actions.
- **Dissociation:** You did not seem to experience certain aspects of the event, or there were moments when you had a strange sense of detachment, as if you were looking at yourself from outside.
- **Intrusive Distracting Thoughts:** You had some thoughts not directly relevant to the immediate tactical situation pop into your head, such as thinking about loved ones, later plans, etc.
- **False Memory:** You saw, heard or experienced something during the event that you later found out had not really happened.
- **Temporary Paralysis:** There was a brief time when you felt paralyzed and unable to move.

REACTIONS SOMETIMES EXPERIENCED FOLLOWING A CRITICAL INCIDENT

Physical Symptoms*

- ♦ Chills
- ♦ Thirst
- ♦ Fatigue
- ♦ Nausea
- ♦ Fainting
- ♦ Twitches
- ♦ Vomiting
- ♦ Dizziness
- ♦ Weakness
- ♦ Chest Pains
- ♦ Headaches
- ♦ Elevated Blood Pressure
- ♦ Rapid heart rate
- ♦ Muscle tremors
- ♦ Shock symptoms
- ♦ Grinding of teeth
- ♦ Visual difficulties
- ♦ Profuse sweating
- ♦ Difficulty breathing

Behavioral Symptoms*

- ♦ Withdrawal
- ♦ Antisocial acts
- ♦ Inability to rest
- ♦ Intensified pacing
- ♦ Erratic movements
- ♦ Change in social activity
- ♦ Change in speech patterns
- ♦ Loss or increase of appetite
- ♦ Hyper-alert or sensitive to environment
- ♦ Increased alcohol consumption
- ♦ Change in usual communications

** Any of these symptoms may indicate the need for medical evaluation. When in doubt, contact a physician.*

Emotional Symptoms*

- ♦ Fear
- ♦ Guilt
- ♦ Grief
- ♦ Panic
- ♦ Denial
- ♦ Anxiety
- ♦ Agitation
- ♦ Irritability
- ♦ Depression
- ♦ Intense anger
- ♦ Apprehension
- ♦ Emotional shock
- ♦ Emotional outbursts
- ♦ Feeling overwhelmed
- ♦ Loss of emotional control
- ♦ Thoughts of suicide/homicide
- ♦ Inappropriate emotional responses

Cognitive/Mental Symptoms*

- ♦ Confusion
- ♦ Nightmares
- ♦ Uncertainty
- ♦ Hyper-Vigilance, Watchful
- ♦ Suspiciousness
- ♦ Intrusive images
- ♦ Blaming someone
- ♦ Poor problem solving
- ♦ Poor abstract thinking
- ♦ Difficulty with numbers
- ♦ Poor concentration/memory
- ♦ Disorientation of time, place, or person
- ♦ Difficulty identifying objects or person
- ♦ Heightened or lowered alertness
- ♦ Increased or decreased awareness of surroundings
- ♦ Irritability
- ♦ Depression

THINGS TO TRY:

Within the first 24-48 hours

- Periods of appropriate physical exercise, alternated with relaxation will help some of the physical reactions.
- Structure your time, keep busy.
- You're normal and having normal reactions, don't label yourself crazy.
- Talk to people, talking is the most healing medicine.
- Be aware of numbing the pain with overuse of drugs or alcohol. You don't need to complicate this with a substance abuse problem.
- Reach out, people do care.
- Maintain as normal a schedule as possible.
- Spend time with others.
- Help your co-workers as much as possible by sharing feelings and checking out how they are doing.
- Give yourself permission to feel rotten and share your feelings with others.
- Keep a journal; write your way through those sleepless hours.
- Do things that feel good to you.
- Realize those around you are under stress.
- Don't make any big life changes.
- Do make as many daily decisions as possible that will give you a feeling of control over your life, i.e., if someone asks you what you want to eat, answer them even if you're not sure.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Don't try to fight reoccurring thoughts, dreams or flashbacks - they are normal and will decrease over time and become less painful.
- Eat well balanced and regular meals.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Seek spiritual guidance.

Source: IC/SF 2015 Permission granted