



Employees Find TISM Services Helpful

A key component of the TISM program is providing quality service and we have incorporated the distribution and collection of TISM Satisfaction Surveys for Quality Assurance purposes. As TISM team members we know that group debriefing and defusing sessions are valuable and help employees process the incident in a healthy way that serves to begin the healing process. Here's what some employee's had to say when asked "What was most helpful?"

Being able to hear others share their thoughts that may have been the same as my own . . . talking out loud in a safe place with co-workers."

"Talking it out . . . I feel better that I was able to relate all of the different emotions I was feeling."

"Being able to talk to individuals that were at the incident – and the information that was available . . . I am thankful that this program was available."

"I feel better and have a better understanding of what is going on with me personally."

"Facilitators were very professional and made staff comfortable so they could express themselves more easily . . . thank you."

In addition to individual comments, the scores for the evaluations are overwhelmingly rated as high. Participants consistently report that TISM team members are helpful and courteous, that individuals feel better able to cope, and that they would recommend TISM services to others.

Keep up the great work!

Hello and Farewell

La Rochefoucauld states "The only thing constant in life is change". The TISM team is in a constant state of change. We welcome our newest Mental Health member, Frank Zeig, from the Department of Community Health/Caro Center.

At the same time, we send our fondest farewell and good wishes to Steve Meno who recently retired. Steve served on the TISM team as a Mental Health member for many years and in 2002 became the Department TISM Coordinator for the Department of Community Health.

TISM Bulletin – Summer 2009

Employee Service Program

Steve demonstrated warmth, dedication and commitment to the TISM program and he will be missed.

Several TISM team members retired or left state employment this year and include Carolyn Sample, PS member from Secretary of State, and Nancy Ralston, PS from Community Health. We appreciate the many years of service these members have provided and wish them well.

Team membership is currently just under 150 volunteers. Please notify the appropriate Department Coordinator or State TISM Coordinator of retirement or other plans that may impact the team.



2008 TISM Activity

The TISM Team remains strong and active and continues to provide excellent services to state of Michigan employees. As of 6/30/2009 there have been 40 TISM incidents. The TISM program has assisted 344 employees from nine departments. TISM services cover a broad range of activities and thus far the breakdown is as follows:

Crisis Management Briefing: 9%
Debriefing: 26%
Defusing: 1%
Management Consultation: 11%
Grief/TISM Handouts: 35%
Individual services: 5%
Education: 13%

Since the inception of the TISM program we have assisted more than 15,000 state employees.

Group Crisis Intervention Learning Opportunities

September 27-29:

The Michigan Crisis Response Association is offering Group Crisis Intervention and other courses in Tustin (near Cadillac). \$280.00 includes shared lodging for two nights, meals and materials. Visit www.mcrainc.com to view a brochure.

Contact your Department Coordinator to arrange registration. Please note: The Group Crisis Intervention course, provided by an ICISF certified trainer, is the only ICISF course that is **required** for TISM team members.

TISM Inservice Postponed

Due to Executive Directives restricting travel and training, the TISM Inservice will not be held this fall. We will keep you updated on any changes.



Skill Center - Communication Open and Closed-ended Questions

The “Yes/No” No-No

The king of closed-ended questions, are those that can be answered with “yes” or “no”. Closed-ended questions usually close the door to communication. A series of yes or no questions is not only limiting, they can be frustrating for both facilitators and participants.

“Were you present when the incident occurred?” “Yes”

“Have you experienced a traumatic incident in the past?” “Yes”

“Is there a time when you felt like this before?” “No”

If you’ve ever had this happen, you may recognize a sinking feeling. Open-ended questions to the rescue! Open-ended questions usually help to keep the door open and provide more options for responses.

“Tell me where you were when” “I was standing by the window and saw”

“What were your first thoughts?” “I thought I was going to be cut by broken glass.”

“How did you get away?” “I don’t know, I don’t remember moving”

Closed-ended questions aren’t all bad - they can be used to establish a fact or starting point and can be followed by an open-ended question. In some situations, it will be most productive to begin with a closed-ended question followed by an open-ended question to gain elaboration (Everly & Mitchell, 1999).

“Have you experienced a traumatic incident in the past?” “Yes”

“What was it like?” “It was weird, like time stopped”

If you find yourself or a team member caught in a “yes/no” trap, remember to use words that elicit an active response, such as “tell me” or “describe”. The open-ended questions above also use “how and “what” to encourage open communication. More communication strategies and techniques will be highlighted in future publications.

Activated Team Members

Thanks to all of the TISM team members who are prepared to respond and assist as needed. The following team members actively assisted with direct services as of June 30, 2009. (For ease of identification Department Coordinators and TISM program leadership names have been highlighted.)

Dave Barry	Andrea Hartman	Rick Raymond
Keith Behm	Harry Hunter	Christine Reitzel
Doug Bushong	Norm Jasmund	Bryan Renaud
John Byrne	Jim Kivell	Mark Richard
Shari Curran	Diane Koskinen	Roland Samaroo
Steve Darling	Rosanne Leland	Greg Schultz
John Fahrne	Peter Mason	Robin Spaulding
Gary Fancett	Melinda Mackey	Mary Elaine Westberg
Sharon Gaier	Deb Manoleas	Tom Wingate
Richard Gilchrest	Kathleen McFarlan	Patti Yerke
Paul Grondin		

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References:

Everly G.S. & Mitchell, J.T. (1999). Critical incident stress management. Ellicott City: Chevron Publishing Company .