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PUTTING FIRST RESPONDERS AND THEIR FAMILIES FIRST
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Fire/EMS Peer-Support Training Available

These peer support classes teach public safety employees or teams the specific, concrete peer support skills that they can immediately take back to their departments. The presentations are humorous, dynamic, thought provoking and involve the participants in various ways (not only through role plays). Departments may choose a combination of classes appropriate for their team, or request certain training be tailored to specific issues.

The Tower of Mental Health. **One hour**

This is not the typical class about how to eat right, exercise and get enough rest. This training is not a lecture, power point or role-play. This is a thought-provoking training unlike any other, which will allow firefighters to reprioritize life during the training and prepare for different choices in the future.

The "F" Word in Peer Support: Talking to Your Colleagues About Fear. 90 minutes

Often times, the most painful things for first responders to contain are not a hazmat spill, structure fire or a distraught RP on the phone, but the intense feelings of helplessness or powerlessness. The fight, flight, fright and freeze reactions are programmed in our bodies so that we can survive a threat. There are different strategies to talk about fear in a way that will empower others without using hot button words like fear.

The subject of Panic is different than fear and could be an hour training on its own. Peer Support Team members will learn a distancing technique and other specific skills to help another firefighter to think differently about these unpleasant events.

***(don't)* Leave me alone! Dealing with isolation in peer support**. **One hour**

If a firefighter suffers a back injury, or falls off a ladder, it is common to reach out, send a card or a text until the employee returns to work. With a stress injury, that seems to be more of a challenge. This course confronts the challenge head on and provides an opportunity for peers to design and rehearse tactics for situations involving a stress injury.

Strong Self-Care. **One hour**

This course will focus on stronger self care to prevent burn out and compassion fatigue. Each student will be allowed 20 minutes to create his or her own 30-day action plan for strong self-care. The peer support team will be encouraged to set standards for self care, suggest ways to keep these individual skills current, and ways to keep the team healthy as a unit.

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Basic Peer Support Skills. 2 hours

This interactive, multimedia peer support course is balanced with lecture and scenarios that provide the student a chance to practice peer support skills and receive feedback on their contributions. The focus here will be on skills such as open-ended questions, paraphrasing, peer pitfalls (questions to avoid) and resources or referrals to use. Topics such as suicide, alcohol abuse, or grief can be addressed as time and interest allows. In general, the least experienced peers will be given the most opportunities to practice with more experienced peers giving feedback.

Substance Abuse. 90 minutes

What are the roles and rules in an alcoholic family? What are codependency and denial, and how do they affect each family member? Why do some people think alcohol helps them sleep? What about alcohol and critical incidents? What resources are available when someone wants to stop drinking?
This humorous to-the-point presentation leaves people talking.

When a child dies. Various

For many people in the fire service, the death of a child during a shift is almost a taboo topic. Yet a call for service that involves the death of a child can have a profound effect on a firefighter. This dynamic presentation can be requested in a one-hour, four-hour or full day format and is geared for a multiagency audience of first responders. Different hypothetical scenarios are presented with a police officer, paramedic, firefighter, and dispatcher, to teach the symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. Participants are empowered to challenge the negative beliefs after a tough call for service when a colleague is in distress. Unhealthy coping skills are discussed as well as healthy strategies to use for future critical incidents. There are no photos or 911 tapes in this presentation and culturally appropriate humor is used to balance the intensity of this topic.
This presentation has been well received by peer support teams since 2008.

Please call me at 510-797-4911 to schedule training for your department.