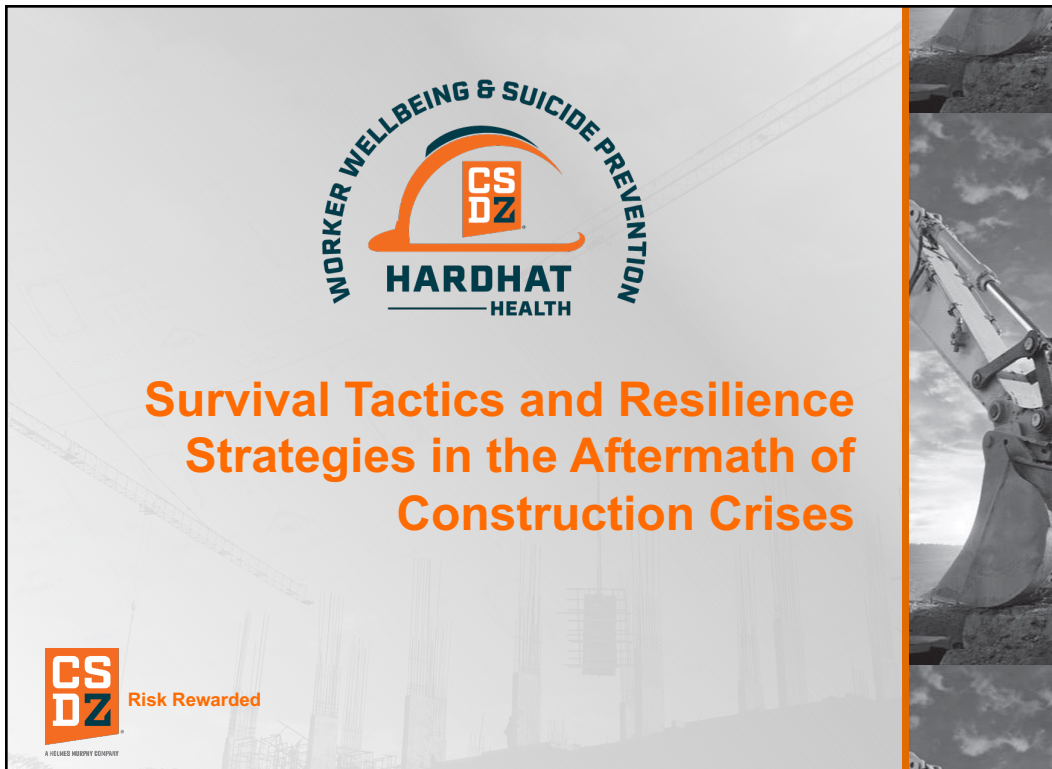




WORKER WELLBEING & SUICIDE PREVENTION



HARDHAT
HEALTH

Survival Tactics and Resilience Strategies in the Aftermath of Construction Crises



A HELMUT HUBERT COMPANY

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Co-Presenter

Rob Dahl, CSP, ARM

Risk & Safety Specialist



Areas of Expertise:

- ✓ Heavy/Highway
- ✓ Commercial Building
- ✓ Specialty Trades
- ✓ Mining (Surface)
- ✓ General Industry/Manufacturing
- ✓ Fleet Operations
- ✓ Catastrophic Incident Response





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Co-Presenter

Cal Beyer

VP Workforce Risk & Worker Wellbeing



Areas of Expertise:

- ✓ Construction and Manufacturing
- ✓ Risk Management
- ✓ Cultural Change
- ✓ Critical Incident Response
- ✓ Worker Wellbeing
- ✓ Mental Health, Substance Misuse, Suicide and Overdose Prevention



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Disclaimer

This program does not provide either legal or claims advice. The practices described highlight risk management practices to demonstrate employers' caring culture for employees involved in potentially traumatic workplace experiences.

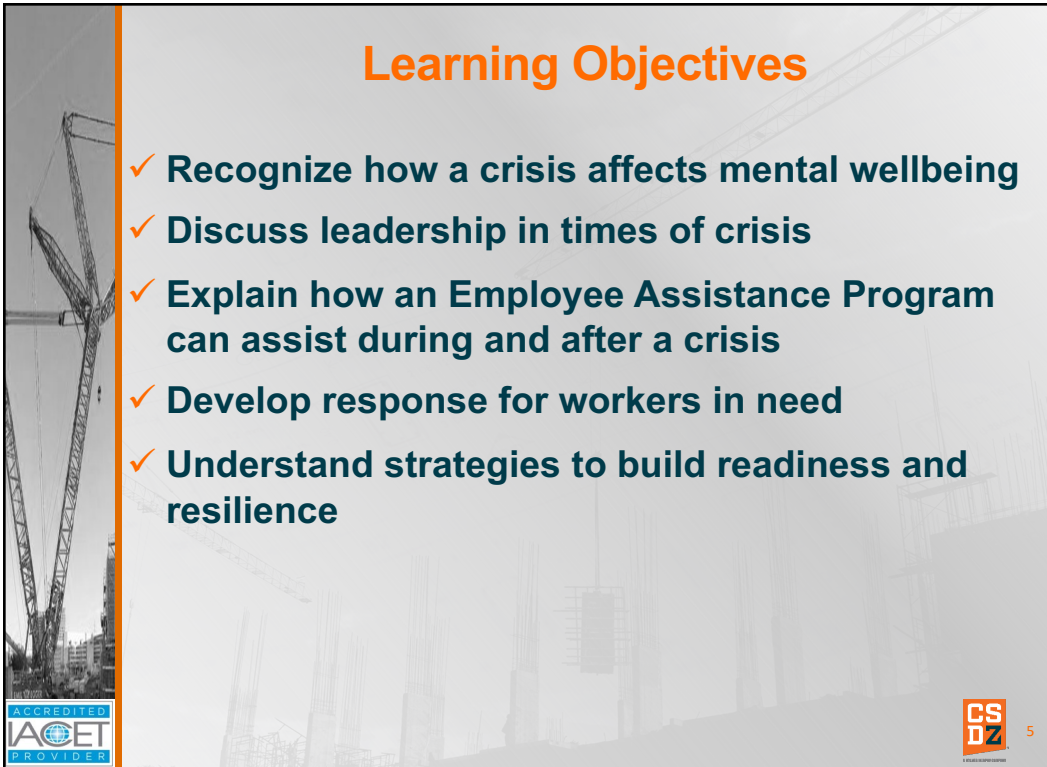
Importantly, there are jurisdictional differences between states on the compensability of "stress" and "post-traumatic stress" in workers compensation. For some professions in some states, there are statutory presumptions of coverage.

Seeking legal and claim management counsel is therefore advisable to understand the risks to rewards associated with instituting critical incident response services.



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Learning Objectives

- ✓ Recognize how a crisis affects mental wellbeing
- ✓ Discuss leadership in times of crisis
- ✓ Explain how an Employee Assistance Program can assist during and after a crisis
- ✓ Develop response for workers in need
- ✓ Understand strategies to build readiness and resilience




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When the Unthinkable Happens

How will your company respond?

2 workers crushed by 1,000 pounds of rebar in construction accident on West Side

OSHA wraps up Edgewater death investigation

OSHA proposes fines for construction company after bridge death (UPDATE)

Worker ran over at Chicago water reclamation plant

Collapsed sewer trench killed construction worker in Alamo, TX

Woman dies after driving around road barricades

Dump truck runs over Oregon construction worker

Construction worker killed in Mount Prospect crash

OSHA cites utility contractors for 'serious' safety violations in 2018 Sun Prairie explosion

Illinois construction accident attorneys get \$6.74 million construction accident verdict

New Mexico worker electrocuted when crane boom hit power line

\$12,000,000 settlement for a construction worker paralyzed when he was struck by falling construction materials.

Dump truck driver charged in fatal crash on I-90

Electrician dies after fall at Bucks arena

Driver killed in construction zone crash on I-94

Truck driver fatally crushed by pipe on construction site

Wisconsin construction accident - Worker fell 30-feet to his death

Construction worker killed, another injured along I-94

Columbus Ohio construction injury: concrete pump truck collapsed




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Crisis Management

- ✓ Some believe that if you haven't experienced a crisis, you probably will
- ✓ If your incident response is handled poorly, it can quickly become a crisis – the first hour is critical
- ✓ Under stress, we revert to what we know and how we have been trained to respond
- ✓ A crisis management plan provides an organized response, deploys critical resources quickly, and minimizes disruption
- ✓ Helps provide reassurance to those involved and protects your reputation in the face of adversity



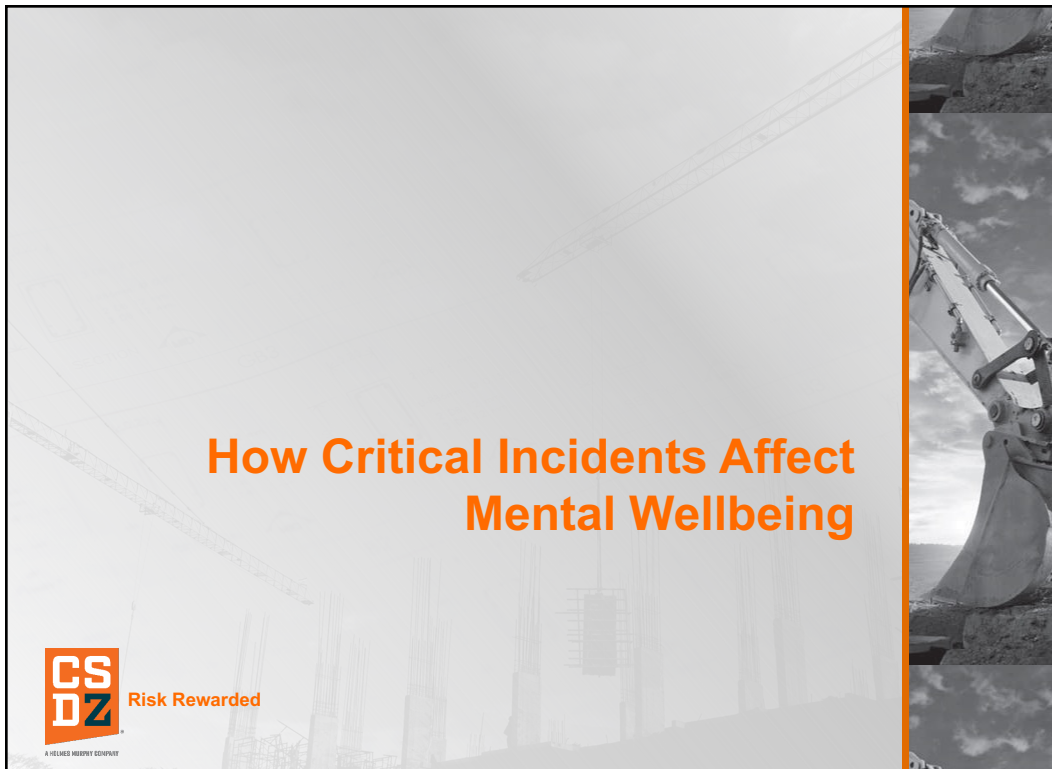
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Critical Incident Response

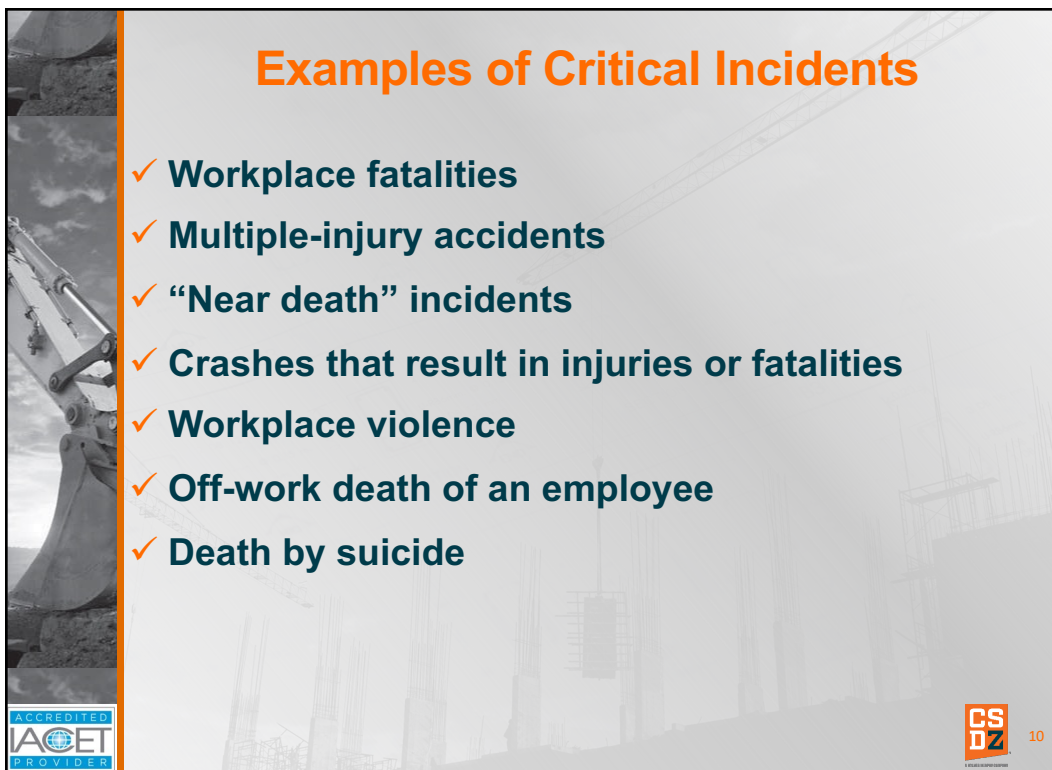
- ✓ Immediate actions taken following an incident to safely and effectively reduce its **impact on people and the environment**
- ✓ These events demand calm, confident, and decisive action during chaos
- ✓ Without a planned response, poor decisions are made, precious time is lost, and containing the situation becomes increasingly difficult
- ✓ If you don't get this right, you may have a crisis on your hands



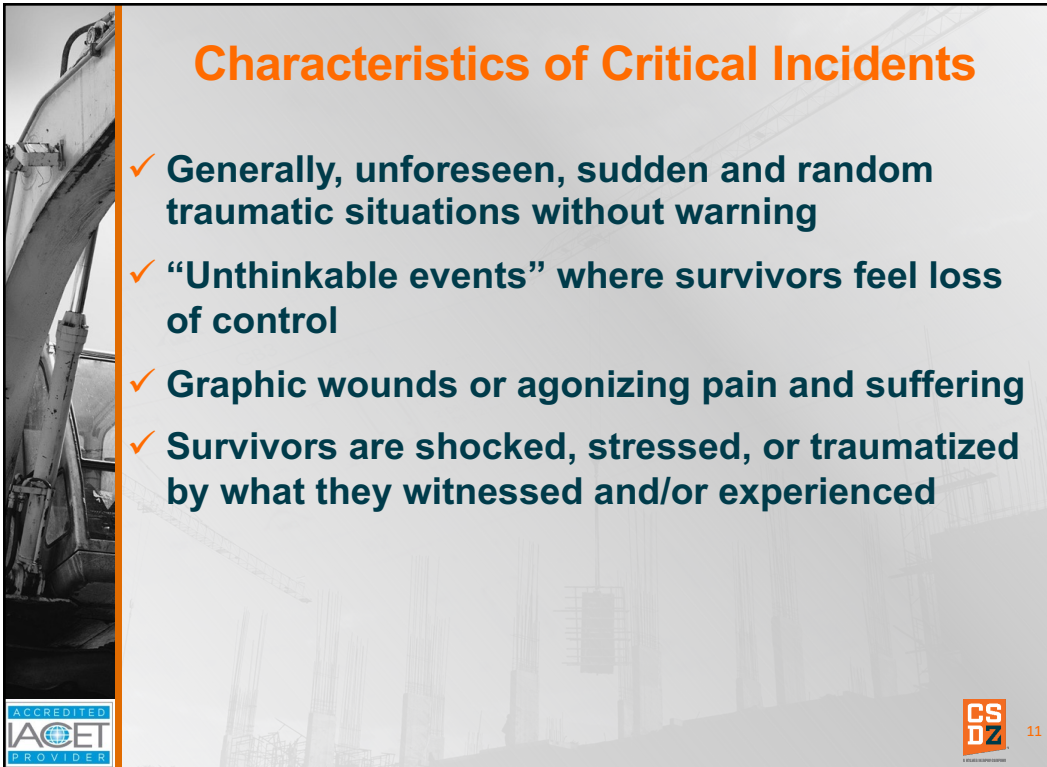
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Characteristics of Critical Incidents

- ✓ Generally, unforeseen, sudden and random traumatic situations without warning
- ✓ “Unthinkable events” where survivors feel loss of control
- ✓ Graphic wounds or agonizing pain and suffering
- ✓ Survivors are shocked, stressed, or traumatized by what they witnessed and/or experienced



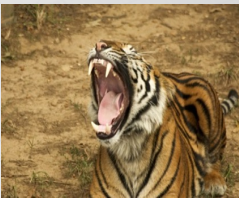
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Human Responses to a Tragedy

FIGHT. FLIGHT. FREEZE. FOCUS.



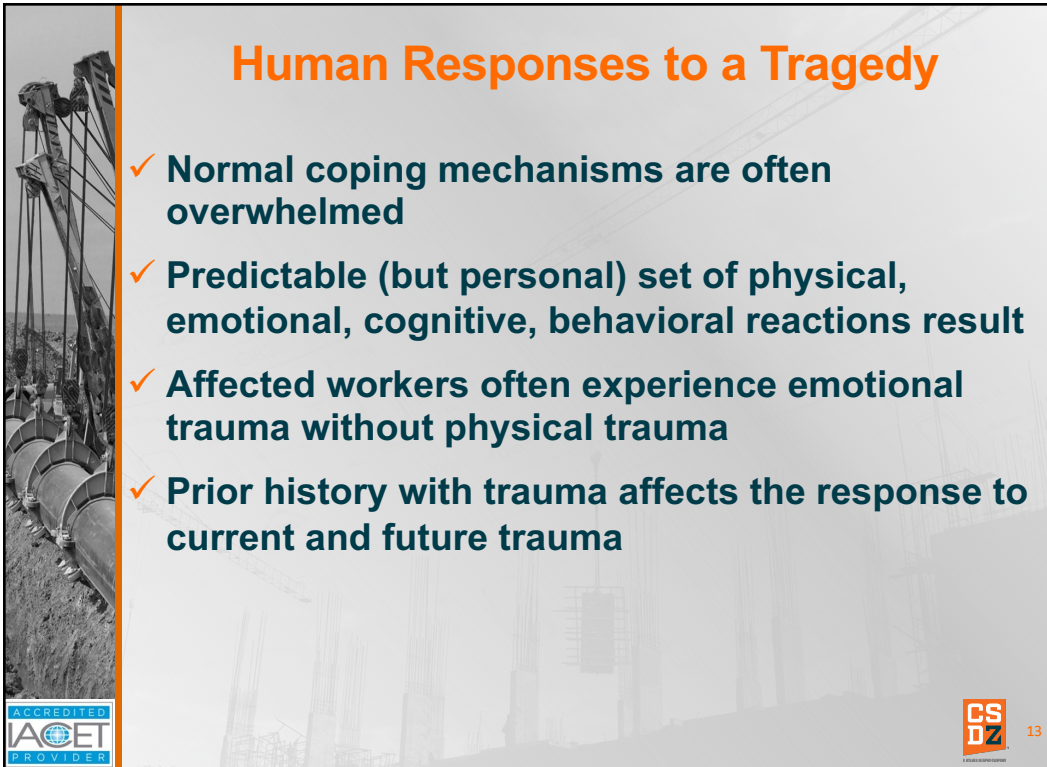



<https://vimeo.com/showcase/6969317/video/404760036>



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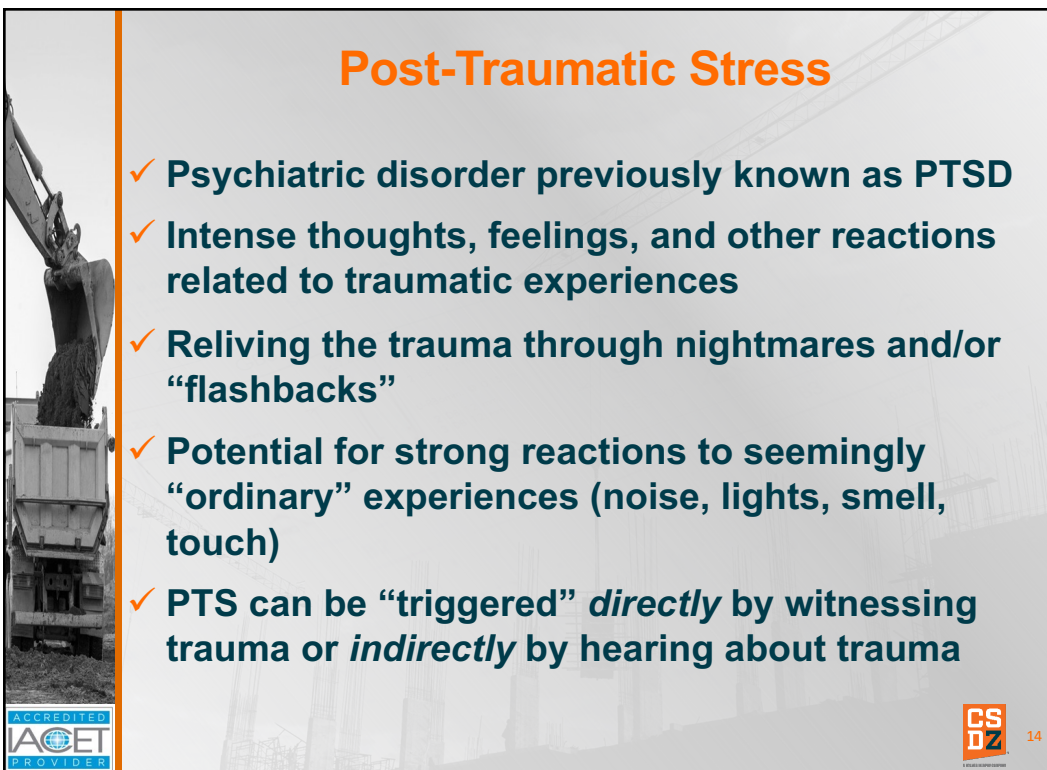


Human Responses to a Tragedy

- ✓ Normal coping mechanisms are often overwhelmed
- ✓ Predictable (but personal) set of physical, emotional, cognitive, behavioral reactions result
- ✓ Affected workers often experience emotional trauma without physical trauma
- ✓ Prior history with trauma affects the response to current and future trauma

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Post-Traumatic Stress

- ✓ Psychiatric disorder previously known as PTSD
- ✓ Intense thoughts, feelings, and other reactions related to traumatic experiences
- ✓ Reliving the trauma through nightmares and/or “flashbacks”
- ✓ Potential for strong reactions to seemingly “ordinary” experiences (noise, lights, smell, touch)
- ✓ PTS can be “triggered” *directly* by witnessing trauma or *indirectly* by hearing about trauma

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Critical Incident Response Services

- ✓ **Onsite vs. Virtual**
- ✓ **External counselor vs. “in-house huddle”**
- ✓ **Flexibility needed – not one size fits all**
- ✓ **Incident-specific response needed (Scale and severity)**
 - Company-wide
 - Division or Department
 - Crew
 - Individual(s) only
- ✓ **Timing of intervention is important**
- ✓ **Initial services vs. extended counseling services**




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Demonstrating a Caring Culture

- ✓ **Easy to get distracted by the operation and logistical demands following an incident (emergency action checklists)**
- ✓ **Need to pay special attention to the human needs of those involved**
 - Take a focused break after initial phase of incident response to assess the wellbeing of those involved, offer support, provide guidance for self care
- ✓ **Sharing empathy and concern**
- ✓ **Reinforcing psychological safety**




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Psychological Safety in the Field

- ✓ Workers feel comfortable asking questions about things they don't understand or don't know.
- ✓ Workers feel comfortable asking other workers for help when they need it.
- ✓ Workers feel they can disagree with work plans and offer other ideas or options.
- ✓ Workers are invited to contribute regardless of their job title or length of employment.

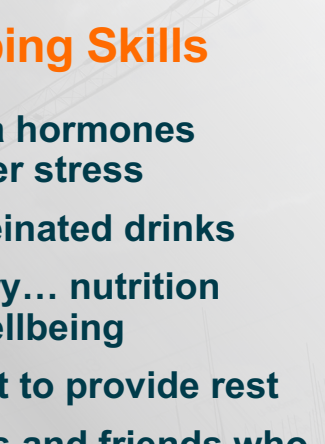




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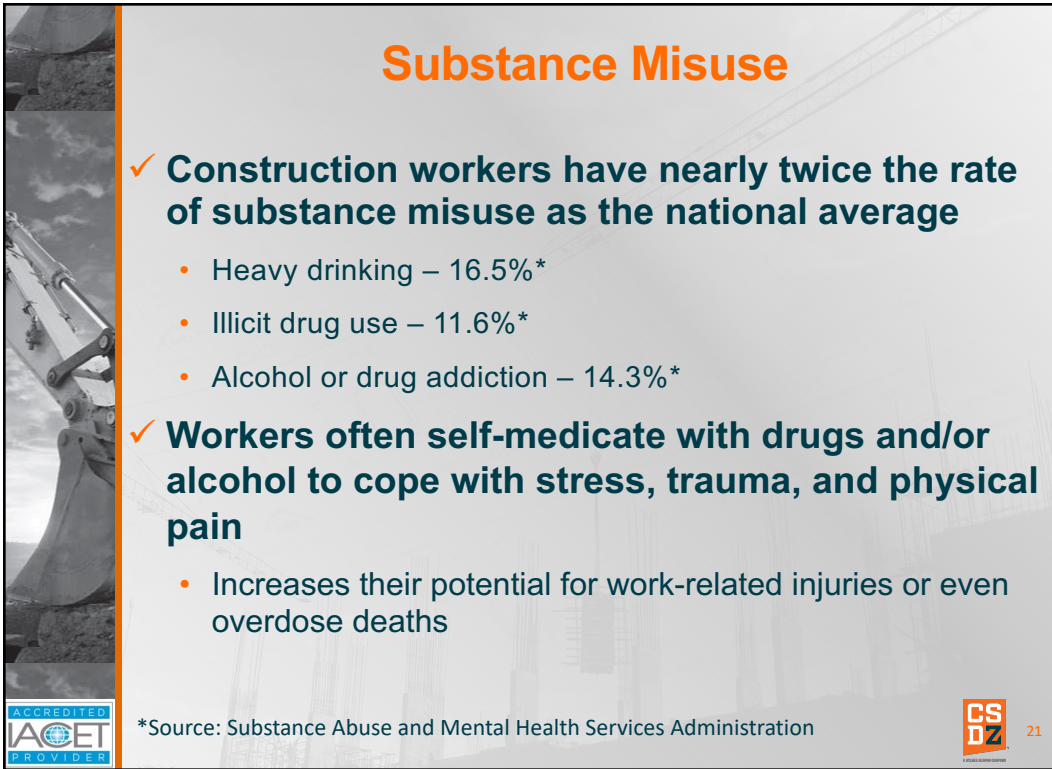
Teaching Healthy Coping Skills

- ✓ Stay hydrated to flush out extra hormones released when the body is under stress
- ✓ Avoid alcohol and sugary, caffeinated drinks
- ✓ Eat even if you don't feel hungry... nutrition helps promote recovery and wellbeing
- ✓ Sleep when you feel you need it to provide rest
- ✓ Stay connected with loved ones and friends who are offering support by listening and being present for you
- ✓ Be present for others
- ✓ Seek professional support





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Substance Misuse

- ✓ **Construction workers have nearly twice the rate of substance misuse as the national average**
 - Heavy drinking – 16.5%*
 - Illicit drug use – 11.6%*
 - Alcohol or drug addiction – 14.3%*
- ✓ **Workers often self-medicate with drugs and/or alcohol to cope with stress, trauma, and physical pain**
 - Increases their potential for work-related injuries or even overdose deaths

*Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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The Use of EAPs in Times of Crisis

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Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)

- ✓ EAPs are severely underutilized in Construction
- ✓ Frequently embedded in Health Insurance Benefit or Union Health/Welfare Program
- ✓ Understand eligibility, available services, how to access services, and the frequency of services
- ✓ Provides professional counseling services to support those impacted by a traumatic incident
- ✓ Link EAP counselors with behavioral health services in company/union-sponsored health insurance
- ✓ Clergy/chaplains may provide some support, too




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EAP Lessons Learned

- ✓ Pre-planning before incident is advisable
 - Can't "Google" or ask Siri for crisis counselor at time of need
- ✓ Not all EAPs are equal and not all offer timely Critical Incident Response services
- ✓ Pre-load EAP and other Critical Incident Response resources in your smart phone
- ✓ Create a simple protocol for Critical Incident Response
- ✓ Ask insurance carriers about availability for services relating to claims
 - Remember: Not all Critical Incident Responses will involve insurance claims




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Roles for Crisis Responder(s)

- Consult with the organization's leadership
- Equip and empower leadership for communicating a response
- Identify normal reactions to an abnormal event so that people don't panic regarding their own reactions
- Let people talk if they wish to do so
- Build group support for resilience
- Outline self-help recovery strategies for individuals
- Brainstorm solutions to overcome immediate return-to-work and return-to-life obstacles
- Triage movement toward either immediate business-as-usual functioning or additional care



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Psychological First Aid

- Make contact and seek engagement
- Establish trust
- Stabilize emotions (if needed)
- Ensure safety and comfort
- Share Information on coping
- Address needs and concerns
- Provide practical assistance
- Connect to social supports
- Link with ongoing services



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Crisis Communication Process

 ACKNOWLEDGE <i>and name the trauma</i>	 COMMUNICATE <i>Pertinent information with confidence and compassion</i>	 TRANSITION <i>To adaptive functioning and/or refer to additional care (Crisis care network)</i>
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Source: Bob VandePol, Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Service and formerly of Crisis Care Network



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Examples of Union-Sponsored EAPs/MAPs

- ✓ **EAPs**
 - TEAM Wellness at Work
 - Sand Creek
- ✓ **Member Assistance Programs**
 - SMART Map (Sheet Metal)
 - Helping Hands (IUPAT/Painters)



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Communication with Family Members

- ✓ Sensitive process to responsibly inform families of seriously injured or deceased workers and on a timely basis
- ✓ Identify emergency contact(s)
- ✓ Who notifies next of kin and how?
 - Transportation arrangements
 - Anticipate potential need for medical assistance
 - Designate an internal contact for questions and follow up
 - Offer emotional support services

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Responding to a Worker in Need

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Responding to Workers in Need

- ✓ **Demonstrate empathy**
- ✓ **Actively listen – body language matters**
- ✓ **Share helpful resources**
 - Hotline information
 - Refer to the EAP – offer to make the call with them
- ✓ **Encourage self-care**
 - Hydration, nutrition, exercise, sleep
- ✓ **Follow up with the worker to demonstrate care and concern**



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Tips for Worker Wellbeing Conversations

- ✓ **Assess the behavior you are observing**
- ✓ **Carefully plan your approach**
- ✓ **Pull the worker aside to talk in private**
- ✓ **Ask the worker “Are you ok?”**
 - What if they say, “I’m fine”?
 - Offer your observations without being judgmental – say what you see (“you don’t seem fine or like yourself”)
 - If they aren’t willing to talk with you, find out who they will talk to and encourage that. Make yourself available if they change their mind
 - If they indicate they may be a suicide risk, this requires a higher degree of involvement of human resources and professional help



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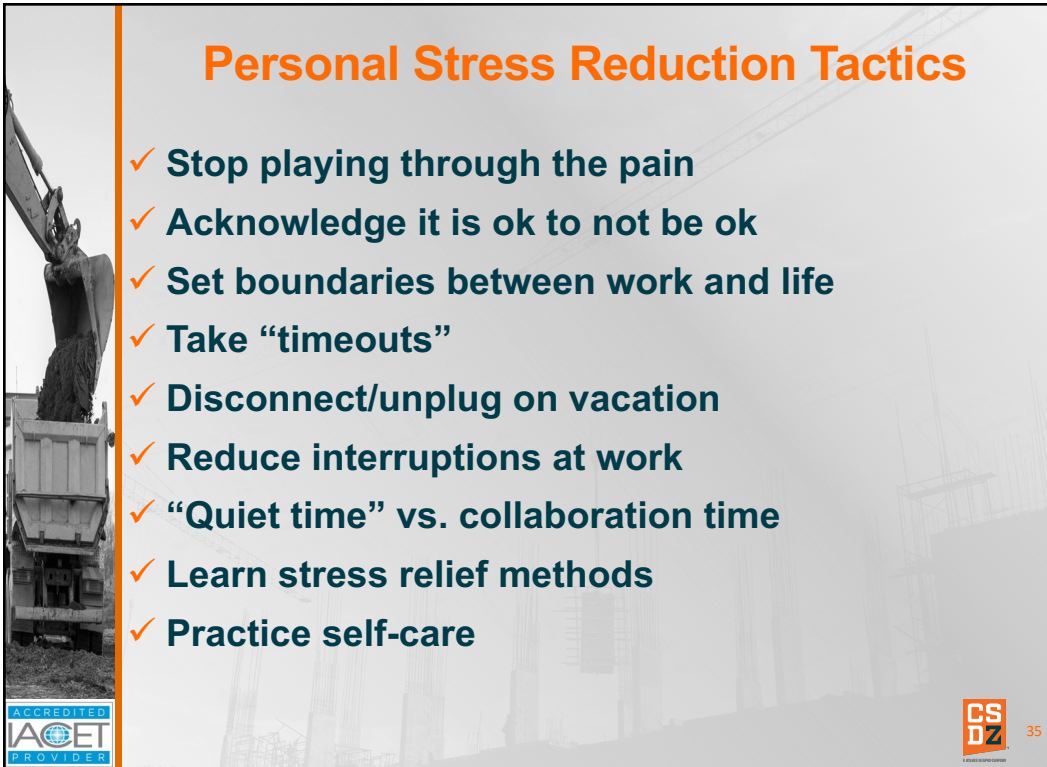
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This slide has a background image of a construction site. The title "Readiness & Resilience" is centered in a bold, orange font. Below the title is a list of five bullet points, each preceded by a checkmark. On the left side, there is a vertical strip showing a close-up of a construction excavator's arm and bucket. In the bottom left corner, there is a logo for "ACCREDITED IACET PROVIDER". In the bottom right corner, there is a logo for "CS DZ" with the number "34" next to it.

Readiness & Resilience

- ✓ Our job as leaders is to be ready
- ✓ Enhance your awareness and embrace the reality that a crisis can develop
- ✓ Remain calm, breathe, focus, be mindful
- ✓ Commit fully to overcoming the adversity
- ✓ Reflect and reorganize

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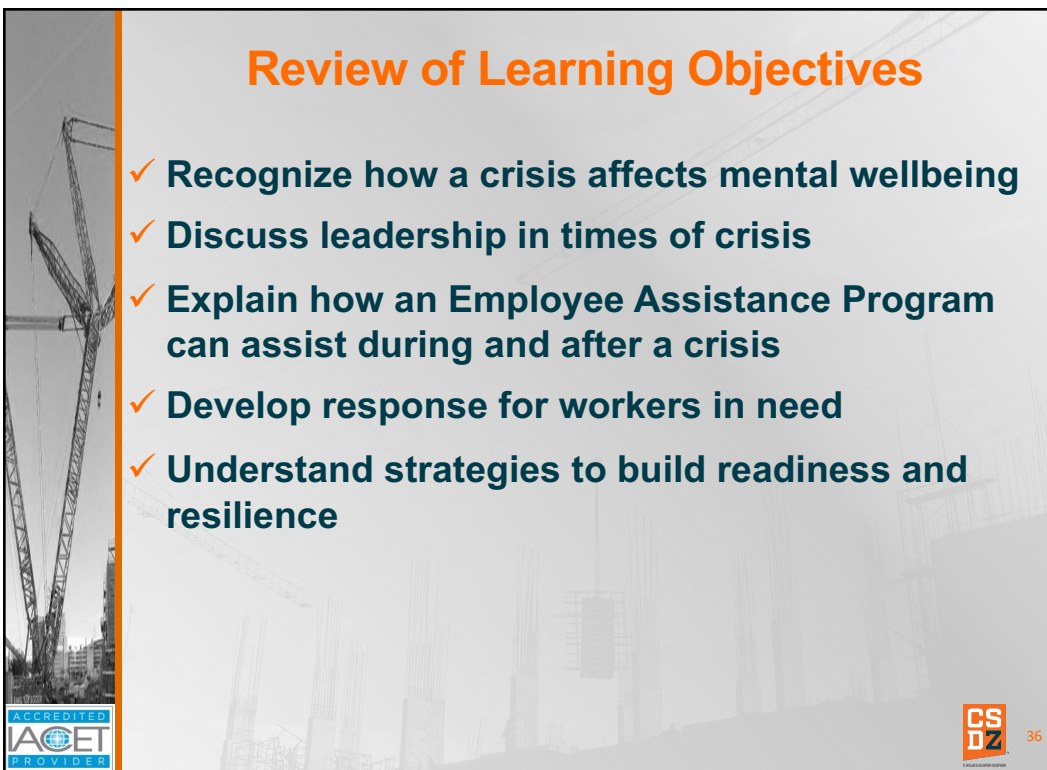


Personal Stress Reduction Tactics

- ✓ Stop playing through the pain
- ✓ Acknowledge it is ok to not be ok
- ✓ Set boundaries between work and life
- ✓ Take “timeouts”
- ✓ Disconnect/unplug on vacation
- ✓ Reduce interruptions at work
- ✓ “Quiet time” vs. collaboration time
- ✓ Learn stress relief methods
- ✓ Practice self-care

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Review of Learning Objectives

- ✓ Recognize how a crisis affects mental wellbeing
- ✓ Discuss leadership in times of crisis
- ✓ Explain how an Employee Assistance Program can assist during and after a crisis
- ✓ Develop response for workers in need
- ✓ Understand strategies to build readiness and resilience

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Thank you!

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Appendix – Additional Resources



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Crisis Hotlines



**SUICIDE
PREVENTION
LIFELINE**
1-800-273-TALK (8255)



CRISIS TEXT LINE |

Type: **HELP** or **CONNECT**
to 741-741



**Veterans
Crisis Line**
1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**



**NATIONAL
HELPLINE**
SAMHSA 1-800-662-HELP (4357)



Disaster Distress Helpline
Call or Text 1-800-985-5990 || disasterdistress.samhsa.gov



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Building a Caring Culture Whitepaper



**BUILDING A
CARING
CULTURE**

ADDRESSING MENTAL
HEALTH IN THE
WORKPLACE

Whitepaper authored by
Holmes Murphy, CSDZ and MindWise Innovations.

Download: https://think.holmesmurphy.com/WC-WP-Building-A-Caring-Culture_Brochure--Form-v3.html



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Crisis Management: The Critical Human Element



**Crisis Management: The
Critical Human Element**

Building Profits; May/June 2021

<https://cfma.org/articles/crisis-management-the-critical-human-element>




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Leading a Company in the Aftermath of a Suicide Loss



Building Profits; Nov/Dec 2019

<https://cfma.org/articles/leading-a-company-in-the-aftermath-of-a-suicide-loss>




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