



ONE MINUTE SERIES #1

Dear First Responder, Medical & Mental Health Professional,

What is Psychological First Aid?

Global statistics tell us that most people will experience a traumatic event at least once in their lifetime. After people encounter unexpected death, loss, severe injury, or perceived danger to themselves or others, they **react strongly** without any conscious effort to do so.

We see this happen regularly after house fires, car accidents, robberies, and other common but highly traumatic incidents. **Major changes can immediately occur** to a traumatized person's **mood, mind, or body**. People in this situation may become confused, catatonic, shocked, enraged, anxious, paralyzed in disbelief, or display many other acute reactions.

This phenomenon is sometimes called "**Acute Stress Reaction**". These **powerful symptoms** generally decrease over a few hours or days, making it an "acute" way that people "react" to such **unbelievable, frightening, or agonizing events**.

Regardless of whether people react to trauma events with any of the symptoms described above, most people will appreciate being offered support to help them restore a **feeling of calm or safety, build resiliency**, or simply **let them feel that they are not alone** in their life's darkest hour.

How can we help?

Experts recommend that we help people in such scenarios by offering them **Psychological First Aid**.

Psychological First Aid or "PFA" is a **set of unique methods used to calm or support people** who have just experienced a traumatic event. Unlike therapy which is given formally by a trained clinician in a therapy office at a predetermined time, PFA can be given by anybody adequately trained in Psychological First Aid. **PFA can be given anywhere, at any time, and to anybody**, regardless of the type of traumatic event that they experienced.

Many types of professionals regularly encounter tragedy and traumatic events in their line of work, such as medical staff, **First Responders**, Chaplains, Mental Health Workers, Educators, and others. By training in Psychological First Aid, professionals such as these can **offer immediate psychological aid** to the traumatized people they frequently encounter in their line of work, making a profound impact and touching lives.

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