



# PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID

*Indian Red Cross Society*



# **SECTIONS**

## **M.1**

Definition of  
psychological  
first aid

## **M.2**

Traumatic  
crisis

## **M.3**

How do I  
provide  
(psychological)  
first aid?

# WHAT IS PHYSCOLOGICAL FIRST AID?

01

The SPHERE (2011) and IASC (2007) have described psychological first aid (PFA) as a way to show kindness and provide help to someone who is in distress.

02

Psychological first aid helps individuals bounce back from crises by respecting their independence, dignity, and coping mechanisms. It supports their recovery and helps them deal with difficult events or situations..



# PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID

## INCLUDES

**1**

Providing practical care and support, respecting boundaries.

**2**

Helping with basic needs like food, water, and information.

**3**

Listening actively without pressuring them to talk.

**4**

Offering comfort, promoting calmness, and ensuring safety

# TRAUMATIC CRISIS

Traumatic crisis is caused by sudden, intense incidents like

- accidents
- natural disasters
- serious illness
- violence
- suicide(attempt)
- etc,

It produces a significant emotional shock that temporarily overwhelms the individual.



# PHASES OF TRAUMATIC CRISIS



The traumatic crisis follows a pattern of four phases:

**1**

Shock  
Phase

**2**

Reaction  
Phase

**3**

Processing  
Phase

**4**

Reorientation  
Phase

# SHOCK PHASE

Immediate after the event, person may deny or behave in a mechanical or agitated way.

The shock phase may include:

- denial
- emotional shutdown
- feeling strange
- shouting, crying



# REACTION PHASE

The immediate danger is over.  
The person will slowly face the  
tragic incident and try to  
understand what has happened..

The reaction phase may include:

- fear and anxiety,
- self-accusations
- sleeplessness and loss of appetite
- nausea and physical symptoms





# PROCESSING PHASE

Person begins to understand and accept the incident, analyzes personal identity, and faces changes caused by the crisis.

The processing phase may include:

- problems with memory and concentration
- irritability
- withdrawal from social relationships



# REORIENTATION PHASE

Crisis is over, person can live with what happened, experiences occasional pain but also joy and confidence in life.

Reminder of the incident can still trigger heavy thoughts, anxiety, and other symptoms.



**HOW DO I  
PROVIDE  
(PSYCHOLOGICAL)  
FIRST AID?**



- Provide life-saving first aid to limit physical injuries as a top priority.
- Behave calmly to have a soothing effect on the affected individuals.
- Listen to the affected person and let them vent their experiences without judgment.





- Consider basic topics when providing help, such as gathering personal belongings and ensuring someone can care for them.
- Use physical contact to create a sense of security and allow the person to have a good cry if needed.

- Protect the affected person from inquisitive onlookers and ensure they are not left alone.
- Provide psychological first aid to both physically and psychologically injured individuals.
- Take care of yourself and your own well-being while helping others.

