

OHSU PSU Fall Symposium 2022



Emotional First Aid Skills

12/9/2022



About the Presenter

- CEO/Executive Director
- Master National Trainer
- COO TIP National
- 30 Years with TIP



WHAT IS TIP?

- Volunteer group of *specially trained* citizens
- Providing emotional and practical support *immediately* following a crisis event
- Activated to respond on-scene by first responders
- Responding to the “*daily disasters*” in people’s lives



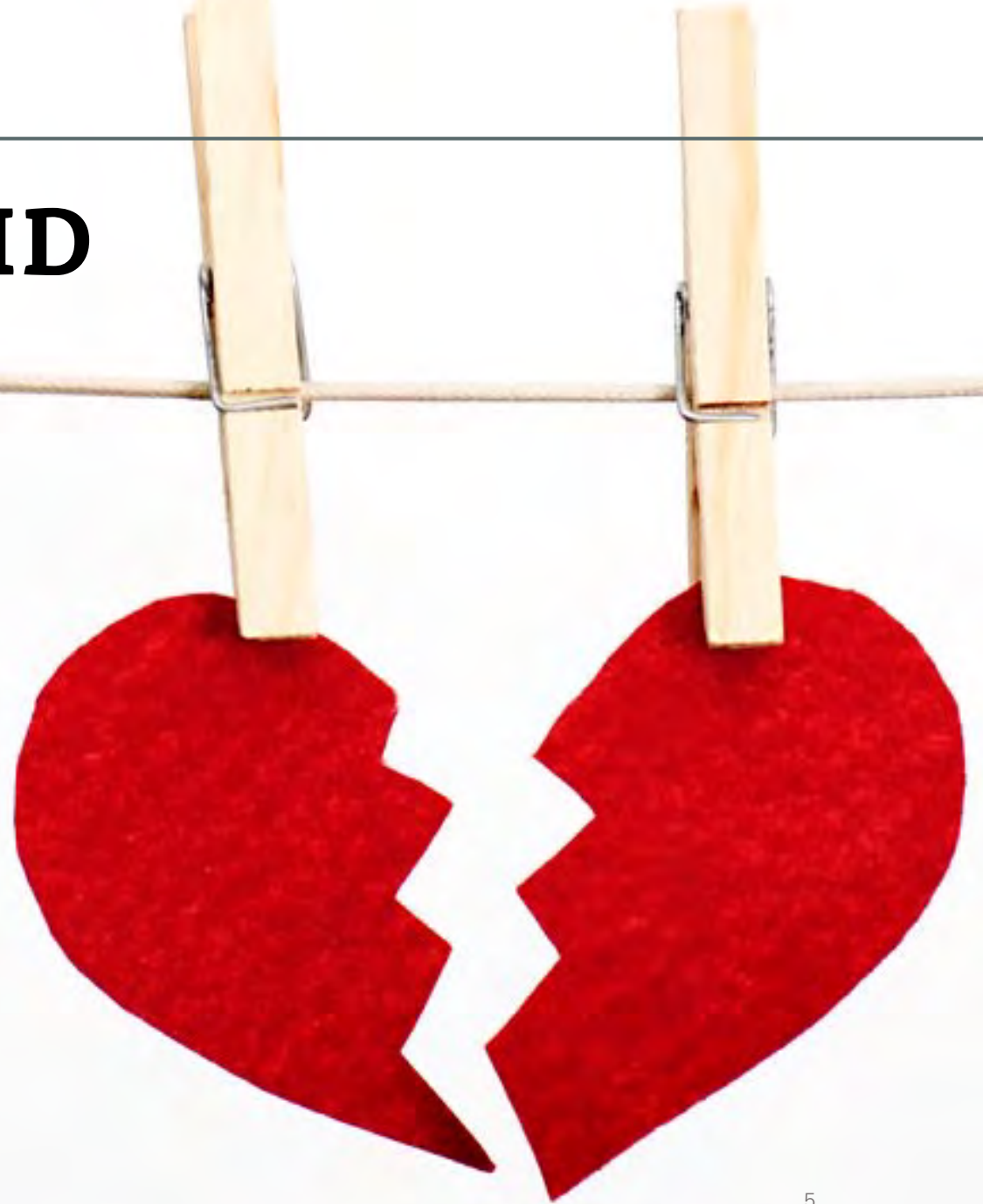
A photograph of an elderly man with grey hair, wearing a red long-sleeved shirt, looking down with his hand to his face in a moment of distress. A person wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt and glasses is seen from the side, with their hand resting on the man's shoulder in a comforting gesture. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with gravel and some greenery.

MISSION

"Our citizen volunteers provide emotional first aid to survivors of tragedy in order to ease their immediate suffering and facilitate their healing and long-term recovery."

EMOTIONAL FIRST AID

A set of *life skills* used by *lay citizens* and *emergency responders* to provide the support a person who is *emotionally* shocked needs *immediately* following a crisis event.



SURVIVOR'S EXPERIENCE

- Alone and abandoned
- Confused
- Overwhelmed
- Picked on - too many decisions to make
- Unable to take the "next" step
 - *Emotional paralysis*



THE PROBLEM

- Person is all alone
 - First responders have a job to do
 - Hard to get information
 - Anguished waiting
- Helping friends (unhelpful helpers)
 - Try to provide a quick fix



Mr. or Mrs. Fix-It

“I can fix that!”

- Close your lips
- Open your teeth with lips closed
- Put your tongue through your teeth
- Gently bite down



When a Tragic Event Occurs; We hit “RECORD” on Our Memory Tape

- Primary Occurrence –
IMMEDIATELY
 - Heard
 - Saw
 - Felt
- Secondary Experiences –
FIRST FEW HOURS
 - Heard
 - Saw
 - Did
 - Felt





Second Injury vs. Healing Memories

How a survivor is treated *immediately* following the event makes a great difference in whether he will be haunted by a *second injury* or whether he will be soothed by a *healing memory*.



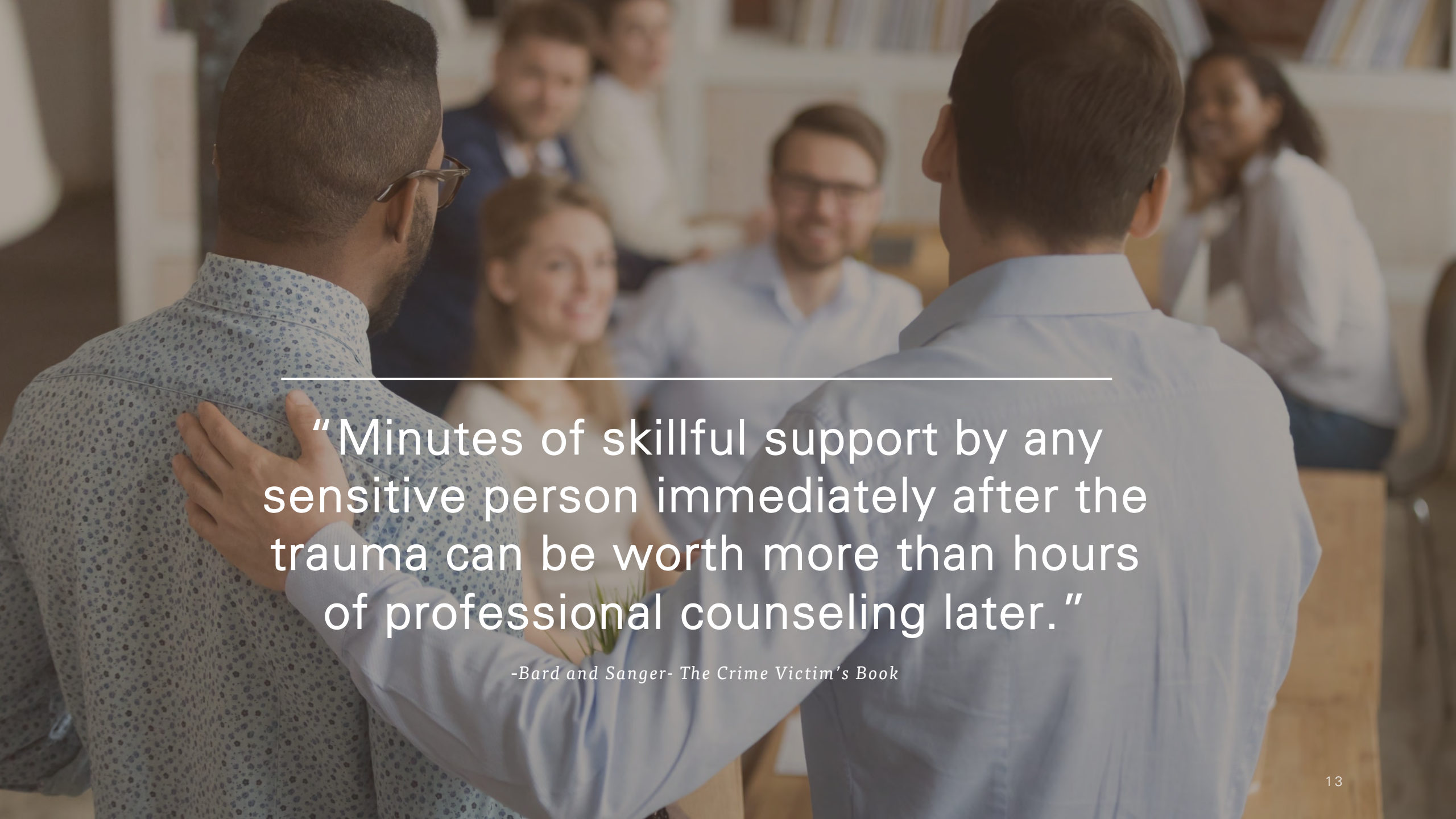
EXAMPLES OF A SECOND INJURY

- *"I will never forget them carrying my baby out of the house like a football"*
- *"No one told me what was happening"*
- *"People said the most hurtful things"*
- *"I couldn't understand a word the doctor said"*
- *"The firefighters were laughing and high-fiving each other. Are they glad my house burned down?"*



HEALING MEMORY

- *"I will forever be grateful that I was able to touch David before the funeral home took him"*
- *"I will never forget your soothing voice in the background"*
- *"I knew I was not alone and that made a big difference"*

A photograph of a group of people in a meeting or workshop. In the foreground, a man with glasses and a patterned shirt is seen from the back, with a hand resting on his shoulder. Another man in a light blue shirt is also seen from the back, looking towards the group. In the background, several other people are seated and smiling. The image has a warm, slightly blurred aesthetic.

“Minutes of skillful support by any sensitive person immediately after the trauma can be worth more than hours of professional counseling later.”

-Bard and Sanger- The Crime Victim's Book

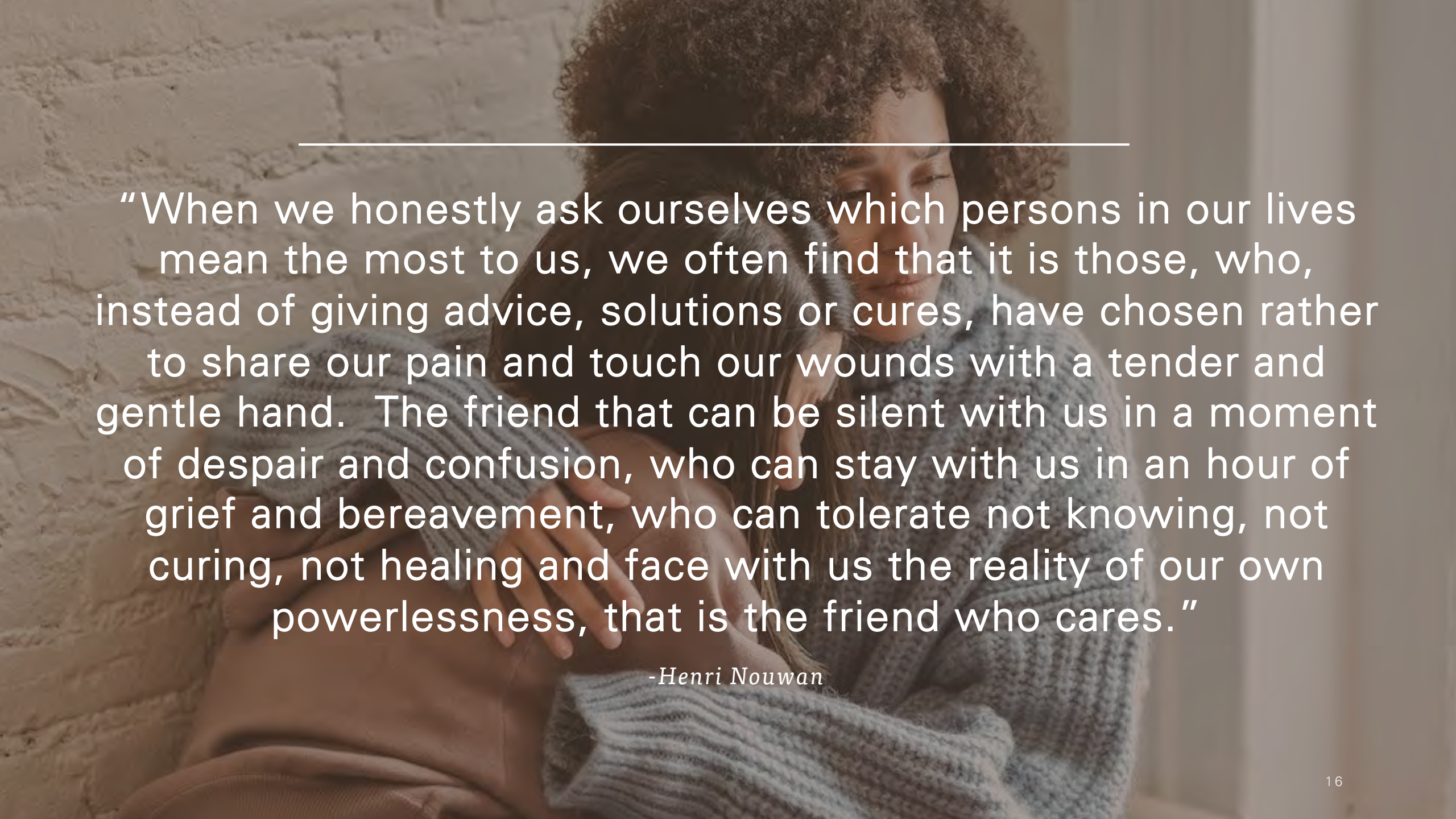
5 Common Needs	5 EFA Skills
Caring Presence	Reaching Out
Protection	Protecting
Information	Reassuring
A Plan	Organizing
Strength	Reinforcing

Experientially valid from thousands of TIP Calls.

REACHING OUT

- Caring vs. Curing
- Fixing it vs. Being there
 - “Kara” means to grieve with
 - Being with to share pain
 - Listening to his pain
 - Tolerating the helplessness



A photograph of a woman with curly hair hugging a child from behind. The woman is wearing a grey sweater and the child is wearing a brown shirt. They are in front of a textured wall. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark brown rectangle containing white text.

“When we honestly ask ourselves which persons in our lives mean the most to us, we often find that it is those, who, instead of giving advice, solutions or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a tender and gentle hand. The friend that can be silent with us in a moment of despair and confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing and face with us the reality of our own powerlessness, that is the friend who cares.”

-Henri Nouwan

REACHING OUT

- The Caring Position
- Right Words
 - I'm so sorry
 - What happened?
 - Then what happened?
 - This must be difficult for you
 - It sounds like you feel.....
 - I don't know what to say
 - It's OK to feel.....



REACHING OUT

- **Wrong Words**

- I know how you feel
- Don't cry
- Calm down
- You don't want to do that
- It will be better tomorrow
- Don't feel
- Call me if you need me
- Time will heal
- God needed another angel in heaven
- God has a plan



REACHING OUT

- Acknowledge vs. Discount
- Acknowledge forgotten victims
- Give permission to cry
- Allow individual reactions
- Don't be afraid of grief
- Silence



PROTECTING

A photograph of two people standing under a large, dark, patterned umbrella. The person on the left is wearing a dark jacket and a red skirt. The person on the right is wearing a red hooded raincoat and a light-colored skirt. They are standing in front of a blurred green background, possibly trees or foliage. The overall mood is somber and protective.

- Being forgetful
- 'Helpers'
- Media
- Impulsiveness
- What is happening around them

REASSURING

- Acknowledge need for information
 - “I understand” vs. “You don’t want to do that” or “NO!”
- Be an information advocate
- Provide information fit for victim
- Provide comprehensive information
- Normalize
- Predict the process
- Expand the story
- Let them see

A stack of papers and a pen. The stack consists of several sheets of white paper and several sheets of brown paper. A silver pen with a gold-colored tip is resting on the top sheet of white paper. The background is a solid light beige color.

ORGANIZING

- Acknowledge
- Step back to plan
- Make a list of demands
- Prioritize
- Helping partners
- Before we leave
- To do list

REINFORCING

- Sources of Strength
 - Pets
 - Stuffed animals
 - God
 - Rituals
 - Humor
 - Rescue efforts



REINFORCING

- How to reinforce
 - Listen
 - Advocate
 - Protect
 - Respect rituals
 - Support positive thinking
 - Reminisce



When to Use Emotional First Aid in the Workplace

EXAMPLES

- Death of an employee
- Death of an employee's spouse/child
- Health diagnosis of employee
- Legal or criminal issues of an employee

How to Practice EFA in the Workplace

- Who is affected?
- Who ELSE could be affected?
- What is their job? Where do they sit?
- Human Resources & Benefits
- Information Sharing
 - When
 - How
 - What
- Compassion

DEATH NOTIFICATION

- Private place
- Caring attitude
- Clear information
- By knowledgeable person
- Quick

DEATH NOTIFICATION



- Say the 'D' word
- *Dead or Died*
 - Not "expired"
 - Not "passed on"
 - Not "We lost Grandma"

DEATH NOTIFICATION



- Good Notification:

“I’m afraid I have some bad news. Rebecca died in a car accident today. I am very sorry.”

- Bad Notification:

- “We worked on Bob for over an hour. We got the heartbeat back 2 times; but failed in the end. I am sorry.”

SAYING GOODBYE

- Saying good-bye at the scene of a tragedy is often a great gift to the survivor
- Advocate for your client to have the chance
- Prepare them for what they will see
- Offer to accompany them
- Expect and accept grief



HELPING TO SAY GOODBYE

- Use present tense
- Normalize
- Use names
- Encourage touch
- Help with personal touches
 - Lock of hair
- Protect
- Improvise





BODY REMOVAL

- Protect from lifting and zipping
- Personalize removal
- Tell them how loved one is being treated
- Allow them to accompany to transport vehicle
- Check what cleanup needs to be done
 - *“If it is wet and not yours; DON’T TOUCH IT!”*

SIMPLE, BUT NOT EASY

- Get yourself out of the way
- Be flexible
- Care vs. cure
- Endure helplessness
- Go beyond differences and stereotypes
- Take care of yourself



TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

- Drink plenty of water and extra rest
- Completely detach when possible
- Engage in activities you can control and which you enjoy
- Let others take care of you!
- Watch alcohol consumption
- Turn off the TV... and limit other screen time.
 - Don't watch media coverage of the event

THANK YOU!



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