Steps to Mental Health First Aid: Correctional Officers

Approach the Individual

Assess the situation.

- Does the person seem at risk of harming themselves?
- Approach them as an equal.
- Respect their privacy. Determine an appropriate setting.



3

Give support and information

- Support the individual after they have shared their experiences.
- Provide them with hope, and useful facts.



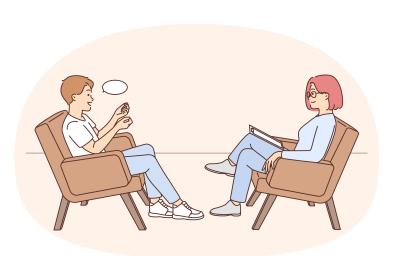
2 Assess and Assist with any Crisis

- Listen to the individual's concerns, and help when needed.
- Practice empathy for them.
- Try to be accepting, regardless of your feelings.
- Uphold confidentiality. Their information is personal.

Fact

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Correctional officers often face significant challenges, and traumatic events, with many experiencing high rates of major depressive disorders (37%), anxiety (49%), and suicidal thoughts (35.2%) compared to the general population (Flumo et al., 2024).



Encourage appropriate professional help

- The earlier someone gets professional help, the better their chances of recovery.
- Offer to help them find resources.

5 Encourage other supports

- Help to identify personal support systems.
- Promote local resources, and community programs.
- Personalize a mental and physical help plan.

"...from taking this course and reading all the material, it allowed me to open up, and learn about myself..." (Flumo et al., 2024)



Want to know more? Read the research:

Flumo, R., Valera, P., Malarkey, S., & Acevedo, S. (2024). Improving the mental health and well-being of correctional officers through mental health first aid training. *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology, 39*(1), 131-140. <u>https://doi.org/10.1007/s11896-023-09620-3</u>

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