TACOMA PIERCE COUNTY CHAPLAINCY

POLICE & FIRE CHAPLAINS

ABOUT PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA

WHAT IS TRAUMA?

Trauma is a wound. Psychological trauma is a wound inflicted to the mind as a result of a traumatic event and it often prompts an emotional or behavioral response. A traumatic event could be losing something or someone of significance, surviving a natural disaster or being involved in a violent incident. It is important to understand that people may perceive the same event differently, which means that an event may seem ordinary to one person but may be traumatic for another. It is also important to recognize that trauma can be acute, resulting from a single event and it can also result from repeated exposure to stressful events. Another form of trauma is vicarious trauma, which can be experienced by those who are in close contact with someone who has been traumatized, such as a family member, a witness, or a caregiver.

HOW DOES TRAUMA IMPACT A PERSON?

Traumatic events leave an imprint on our brains, and that imprint can cause short-term and long-term reactions in a person. While reactions may vary, many people will re-experience the event via memories, flashbacks or nightmares. These can be vivid, frequent, and sometimes difficult to control. Another common reaction is increased feelings of anxiety or fear. Other reactions can be physical, such as digestive problems, fatigue or hyperarousal. There are a number of emotional and physical responses to trauma, but these are some of the most common. Left unresolved, psychological trauma can manifest itself in the form of other health problems.

HOW DOES A PERSON RECOVER FROM A TRAUMATIC EVENT?

First, it is important to understand that experiencing unpleasant and unwelcomed reactions after a traumatic event is normal and to be expected. These reactions are normal responses to abnormal events. We all have different life experiences and we develop different coping skills. Some people will see reactions naturally start to subside in a short period of time while others may experience prolonged reactions to the event. A common fear is that a person will develop PTSD after a traumatic event. You should know that PTSD is not automatic. In fact, research shows that many who experience psychological trauma can recover without clinical treatment. Studies have also shown a correlation with PTSD and avoidance behaviors, which means that it is best to avoid ignoring or suppressing your thoughts and feelings. To help maintain your mental health, connect with trusted people in your life and discuss your thoughts and feelings. Stick to your routines whenever possible. If reactions become prolonged, severe or start to interfere with your everyday life, it may be an indication that professional help is needed, but there are many effective treatments available and recovery ***is*** possible. We would be happy to help you find a therapist that is right for you. Recovery from trauma cannot be rushed; however, taking healthy steps in the right direction as soon as possible can make a big difference. We are here to help you create a plan that will build resilience & promote recovery growth. Pain may be inevitable in life, but together we can minimize suffering.

CONTACT US

Please know that if you have questions, concerns or just need someone to talk to, we are here for you. We also welcome your feedback on our service. Contact us any time using the information below or this QR code.

PHONE: 253-564-7848 EMAIL: info@TacomaPierceChaplaincy.com WEB: www.TacomaPierceChaplaincy.com