

## **1.7 Critical Incident Stress**

Doing first aid or resuscitation can be traumatic. People involved can be in pain or emotional. Patients may not recover, can get worse, or even die. As a rescuer, you may second-guess your actions; especially if it something that was not expected, or was beyond your scope of training.

Critical Incident Stress is a NATURAL body reaction that is experienced by over 80% of rescuers within 24 hours of dealing with a critical (life-threatening) incident.

If the symptoms become ongoing, it becomes Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

### **Physical Effects**

- Nausea, diarrhea, weight loss
- Dizziness, weakness, sweating
- Headaches and pain

### **Cognitive Effects**

- Memory loss
- Difficulty making decisions

### **Emotional Effects**

- Anxiety, irritability
- Guilt, anger, fear, grief
- Depression, flashbacks, mood swings

### **Behavioral Effects**

- Drugs/Alcohol
- Withdrawing from friends or
- Difficulty being alone