

The Exposure of Athletic Trainers to Critical Incidents and Traumatic Events and the Need for Peer-to-Peer Support in the Aftermath

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Conflict of Interest Disclosure

- The views expressed in these slides and today's discussion are mine.
- My views may not be the same as the views of my company's clients or my colleagues.
- Participants must use discretion when using the information contained in this presentation

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this presentation participants will be able to:

1. Describe the affects of traumatic events and critical incidents on athletic trainers and other caregivers.
2. Recognize the signs and the behavioral changes that may take place after being exposed to a traumatic event and the need for intervention.
3. Summarize the role of a peer-to-peer support intervention and how to activate a peer-to-peer/CSIM team if needed.



**A normal day in
the life.....**



And then...



What is a critical incident?

A critical (or traumatic) incident is any event outside the usual realm human experience that is **markedly distressing (e.g. evokes reactions of intense fear, helplessness, horror, etc.) Such critical incidents usually involve the perceived threat to one's physical integrity or the physical integrity of someone else. Most importantly, critical incidents are determined by how they undermine a person's sense of safety, security and competency in the world. This results in a form of psychiatric injury, also called traumatic impact or traumatic stress.**

Events that would constitute a critical incident are not the same for everyone

Things that affect how someone responds to disturbing or traumatic events:

- **Nature of incident**
- **Personality type**
- **Level and nature of training**
- **Experience-professional and personal**
- **Individual responses to situations**
- **Nature of incident**
- **The personal component-**



Larger scale events:

- **Fires**
- **Floods**
- **Earthquakes**
- **Hurricanes**
- **Tornadoes**
- **Multiple injury/fatality accidents**
- **Large scale environmental pollution**
- **Terrorism**
- **Acts of war**
- **Child related traumatic events**
- **Homicides in the community**
- **High publicity crimes of violence or sex**
- **Community disasters**
- **Being an emergency worker/first responder in critical incidents and disasters (Police, Fire, EMS etc.)'**

Smaller scale crises

(The things we are more likely to deal with)

- **Automobile accident, or any accident involving serious injury and/or property damage**
- **Sudden or unexpected death of a relative, friend or colleague**
- **Child abuse and/or injury or death of a child**
- **Sexual assault/abuse**
- **Psychological/emotional abuse**
- **Industrial accidents involving serious injuries or fatalities**
- **Robbery and violent crimes**
- **Domestic violence**
- **Suicide or attempted suicide**
- **Homicide(s)**
- **Line of duty death or injury among emergency/law enforcement personnel**

Smaller scale crises

(The things the AT is more likely to see on a regular basis)

- **Emotional and psychological effects of significant injury to oneself or a teammate.**
- **“Life Crises” such as:**
 - **Personal or family illness**
 - **Break-ups**
 - **Trouble in school**
 - **Social issues**
- **“Sport Crises” such as:**
 - **Getting cut from a team**
 - **Playing time**
 - **Problems with the coach**
 - **Problems with teammates.**
- **Coaches and/or other staff issues:**
 - **Team related problems**
 - **Problems with parents**
 - **Personal problems (i.e. health, family, etc.)**



**WE ARE
TRAINED TO
HANDLE
THINGS LIKE**



But no one ever told us how to deal with the aftermath



What the literature says about the value of CISM and peer-to-peer support

SUPPORT

- Many studies report that it is an effective crisis intervention tool.
- Anecdotal and perception reports indicate that recipients of PFA and CISM interventions believe it to be helpful.
- Peer support appears to be helpful in processing traumatic events.
- Evidence of positive personal changes and behaviors after participating in peer support
- PFA and CISM provides a mechanism to identify need for additional mental health services or support.
- PFA suitable for a wide range of traumatic incidents
- PFA strategies are suitable for use by mental health professionals and lay responders.
- Helps minimize effects of the traumatic event.
- Some level of support and/or intervention may be required after witnessing an athletic injury

What the literature says about the value of CISM and peer-to-peer support

QUESTIONS

- Research to document effectiveness affected by critiques of scientific rigor, but there is no evidence to withhold its use
- Criticisms of studies reporting effectiveness of CISM and peer-support identify potential issues with study design and study rigor.

Have You Been Affected by Someone Else's Traumatic Event?

Vicarious trauma can happen to anyone. Those who are at particular risk include people who witness (directly or indirectly through the media) accidents, assaults or natural disasters; family or friends of loved ones who are affected by military actions; humanitarian workers; journalists; clergy; first responders such as police or firefighters; and health care workers including counselors.

Why?

Unlike “regular” trauma, when the threat comes from the outside such as an injury, near drowning, or assault, the threat in vicarious trauma comes from within. There are several sources of threat when you witness or hear about another person’s traumatic event. These include:

- your body’s reaction to horror**
- your body’s reaction to shock when you learn that something bad happened to someone good or innocent**
- your sense of helplessness when you think that what you can do for another is not enough to alleviate their pain**

Who Is At Risk of Vicarious Trauma?



Even me!

Some factors that influence whether you will experience vicarious trauma include:

- The degree to which you are emotionally connected to the other person who is hurt or frightened.
- Your ability to nurture yourself through self-care, rest, and play
- Your ability to engage in a supportive community
- Your personal trauma history
- Your perception of how much your actions help those in need

Cirque du Soleil acrobat falls on head during Brisbane show

Updated 28 Nov 2016

Brisbane-based Cirque Du Soleil acrobat and former Olympic gymnast Lisa Skinner has escaped serious injury after falling and landing on her head during a show in Brisbane.

Trenton Catholic trainer revives Riverside boys soccer player on the field

September 12, 2016

H.S. boys soccer: Quick response saves life of Glen Rock's Jake McMahon

NOVEMBER 27, 2013

**Why not?
Can it happen to me?
Sometimes all ends well**

Two New Jersey Athletic Trainers Team Up to Save the Life of a Spectator

On January 30, 2015, David Csillan, Head Athletic Trainer with Ewing High School and Tammy Osterhout, Assistant Athletic Trainer with Rancocas Valley High School were taking in their respective team's game at the Jeff Coney Classic Tournament.

N.J. high school wrestler revived on mat with defibrillator

January, 4, 2017

Moeller athletic trainer uses AED to save lacrosse player's life

Tuesday, May 17th 2016

Cirque du Soleil employee dies in San Francisco

November 30, 2016

Former Summit High (TN) athlete killed in Alabama car crash

MONDAY, DECEMBER 5TH 2016

Woman Charged In DWI Death Of Brookfield Athlete Out On Bail

11/12/2016

NCCC athlete fatality in Friday crash

Monday, November 21, 2016

Centennial High athlete killed in accident

November 23, 2016

Can it happen to me?

Benedict College Remembering Athlete Killed in Hit-And-Run

Dec 4, 2016

BU STUDENT DEATH: Police seek info on hit-and-run

December 3, 2016

Morton High School linebacker killed in wreck

November 20, 2016

2016-17 Fatalities to date (that we're aware of...) 98

Garden City Community College student killed in Finney County accident

Dec. 5, 2016

Driver killed in wrong-way crash was Bridgewater State student

Nov 28, 2016

Teen arraigned on manslaughter charge in fatal Weymouth crash

Posted Nov 23, 2016

Lubbock-Cooper mourning the loss of athletic trainer killed in crash

Nov 08, 2016

How about here is District 4

2016-17

**D4 Critical incidents to date
(that we're aware of...)**

Total incidents -19

Total deaths- 15

Athlete Deaths 13

Staff Deaths 3

Spectator Death-1



GREAT LAKES
ATHLETIC TRAINERS ASSOCIATION

The logo for the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) is displayed in a light blue color. It features the letters 'NATA' in a large, bold, sans-serif font. A stylized figure of an athlete in motion is positioned between the 'T' and 'A'.

So we endeavored to find
out what the membership
thinks

NATIONAL ATHLETIC TRAINERS' ASSOCIATION
HEALTH CARE FOR LIFE & SPORT



We conducted a member survey on Peer-support

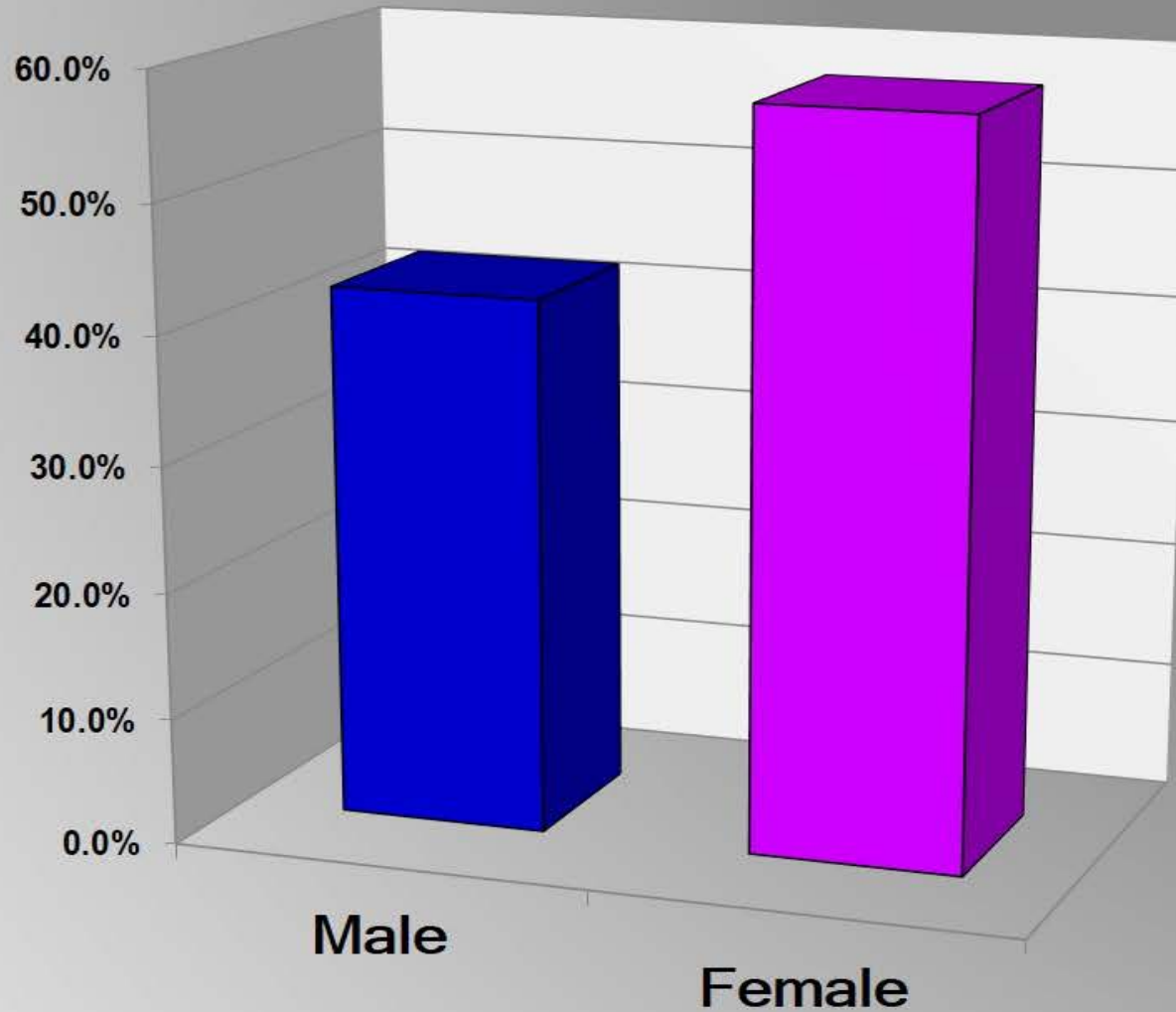
- Invitations to participate in the on-line survey were sent to the 25,773 certified/licensed athletic trainer members of the NATA who had not previously opted out of receiving surveys.
- There were 5,642 respondents to the survey-yielding a **22%** response rate.



Demographics

- The following participant information was collected:
 - Gender
 - Age range
 - NATA district

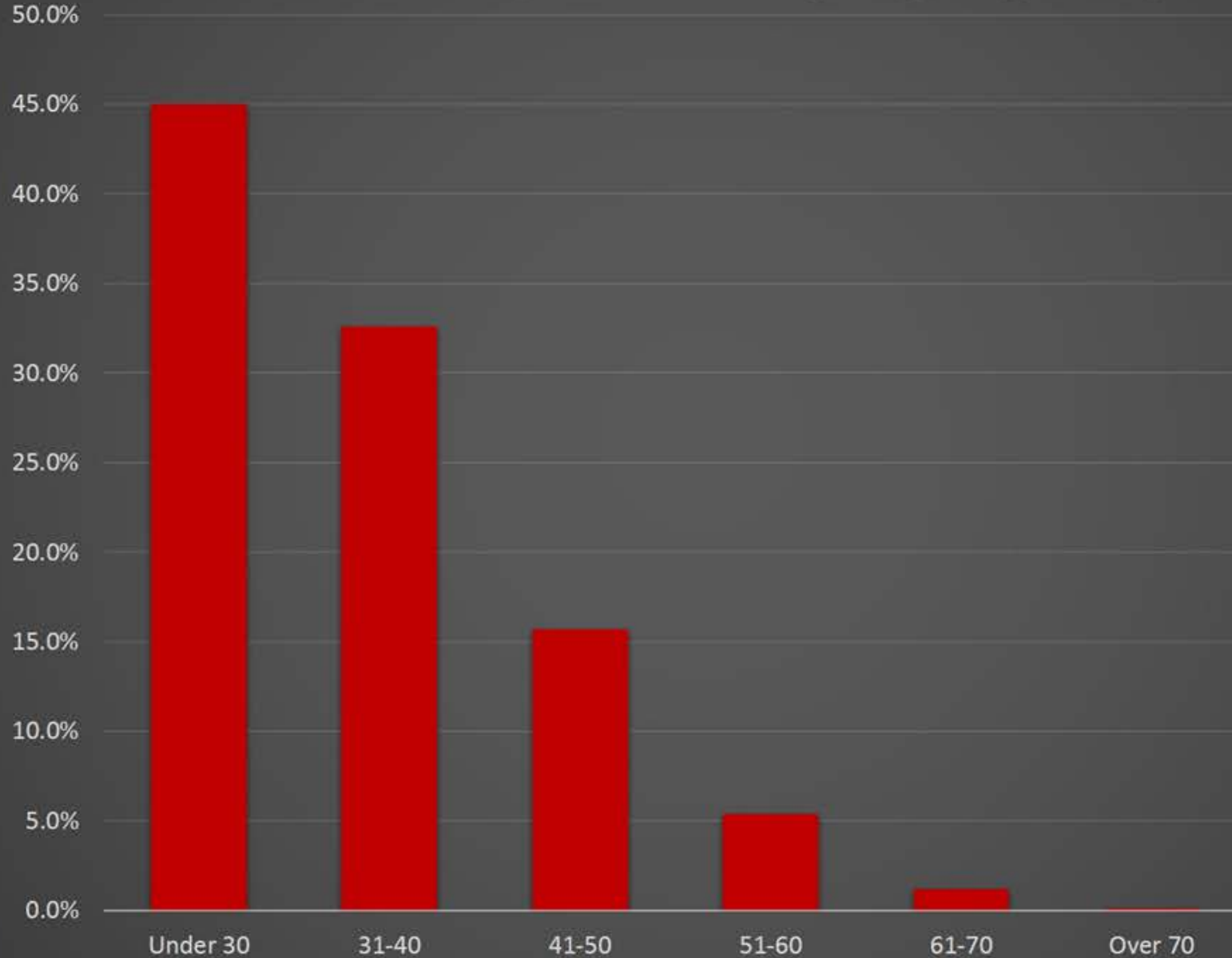
Responses by Gender



answered question	5089
skipped question	553

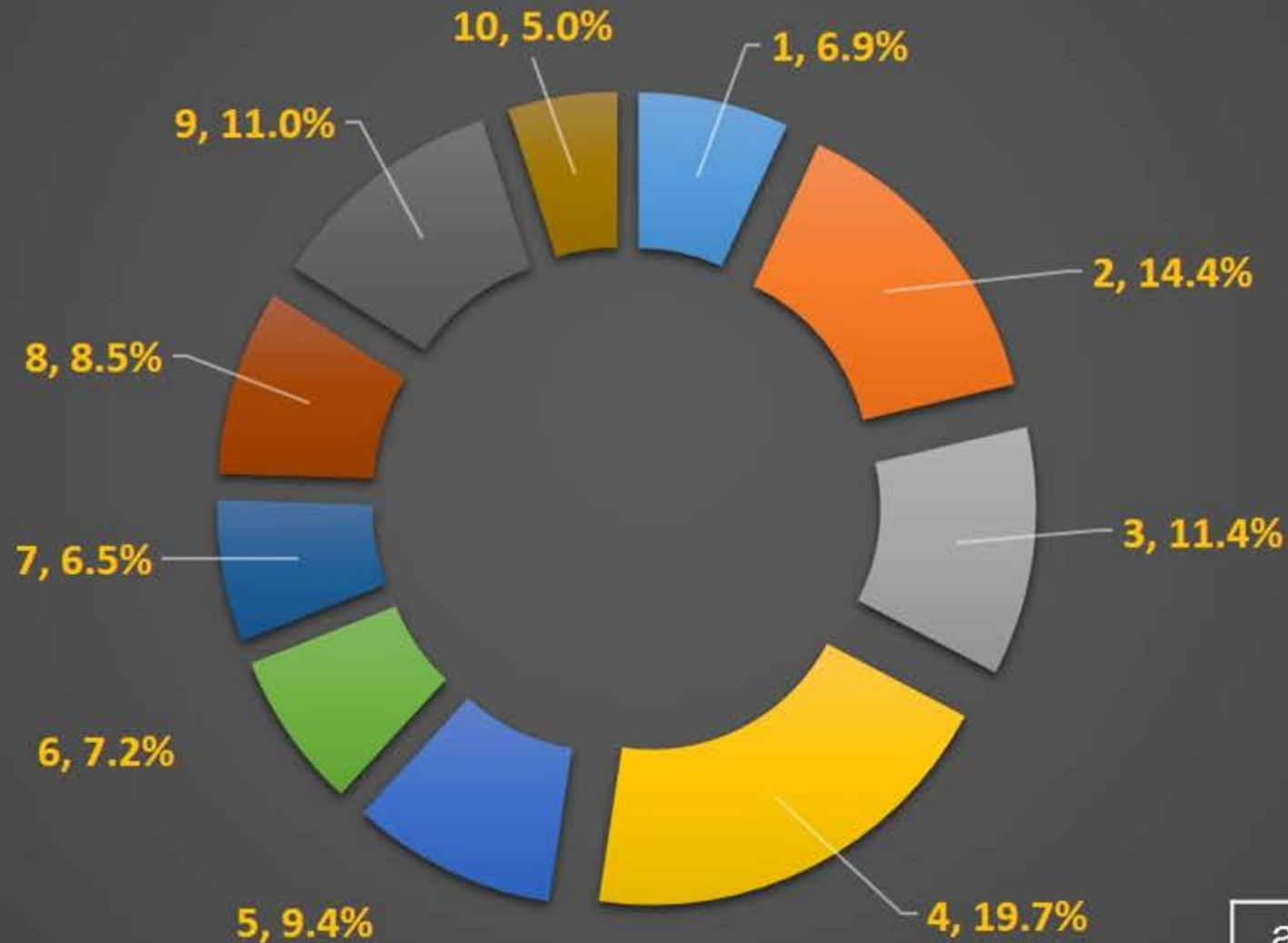


Responses by age groups



answered question	5103
skipped question	539

Responses by NATA District



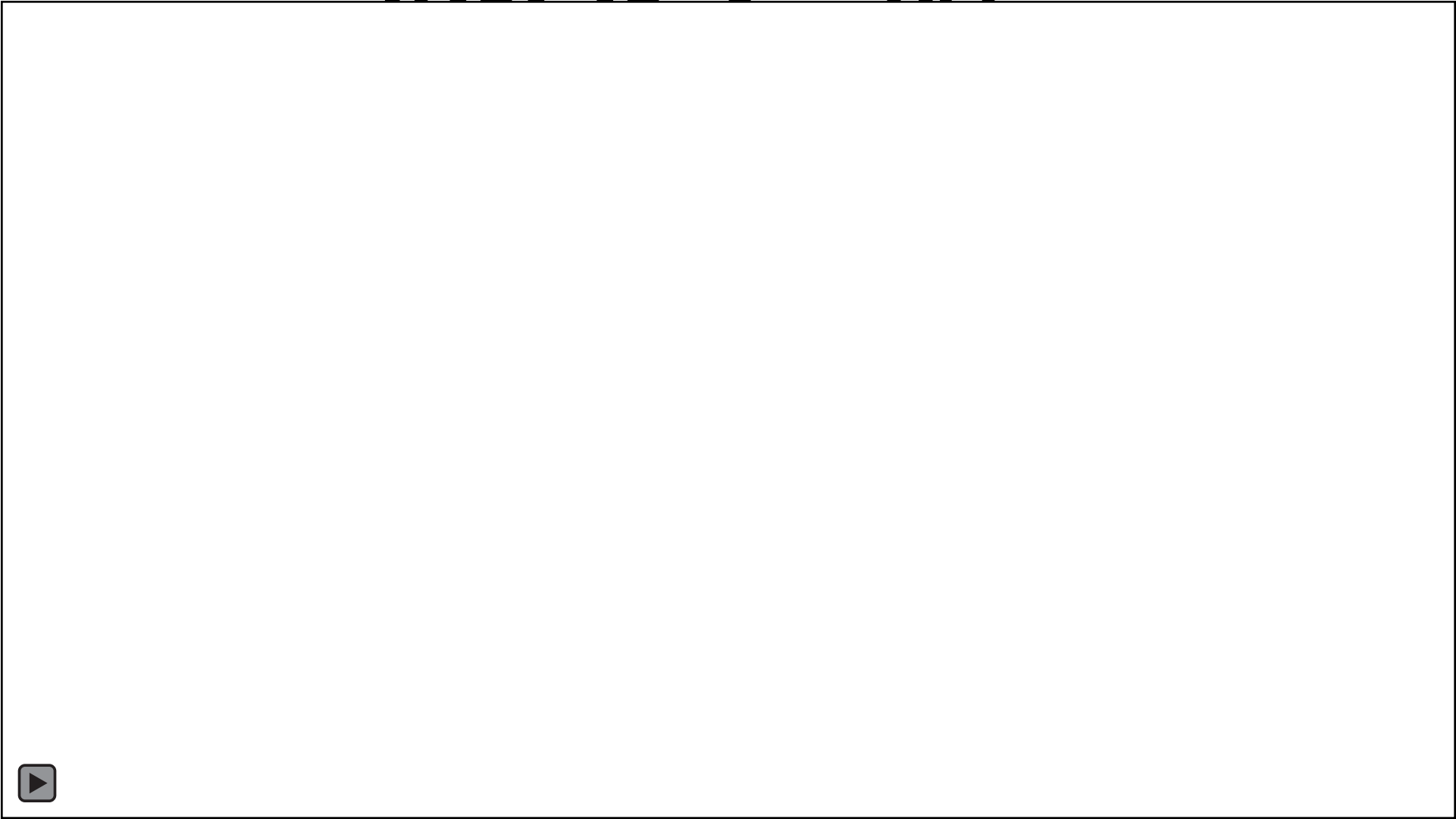
answered question	4991
skipped question	651

How are Athletic Trainers Impacted by Critical Incidents?

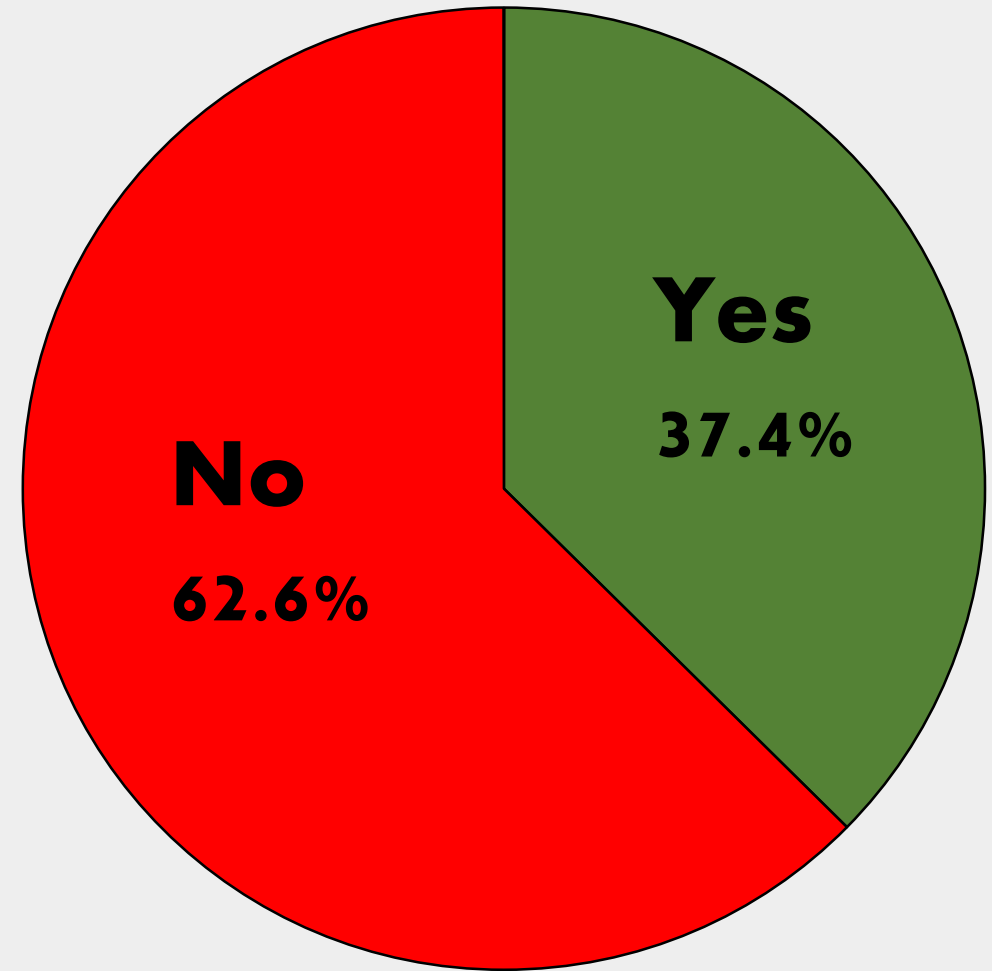


"STRESS"

THE CONFUSION CREATED WHEN
ONE'S MIND OVERRIDES THE
BODY'S BASIC DESIRE TO CHOKE
THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS OUT OF
SOMEBODY WHO DESPERATELY
NEEDS IT !



**Have you ever been
impacted by the
fatality of an athlete,
coach, colleague or
other individual in
your professional life?**



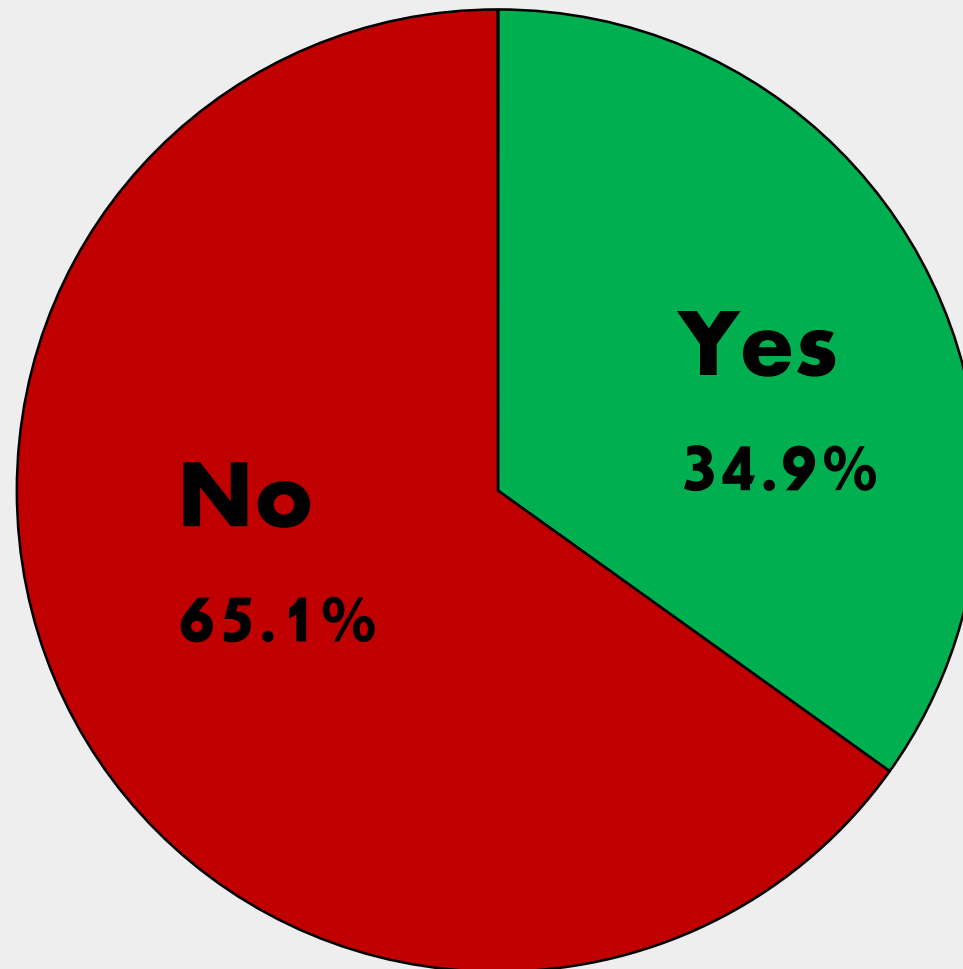
answered question	5637
skipped question	5

**What do
Athletic Trainers
do to deal with
Critical
Incidents?**

**It's time
to push the
panic button!**

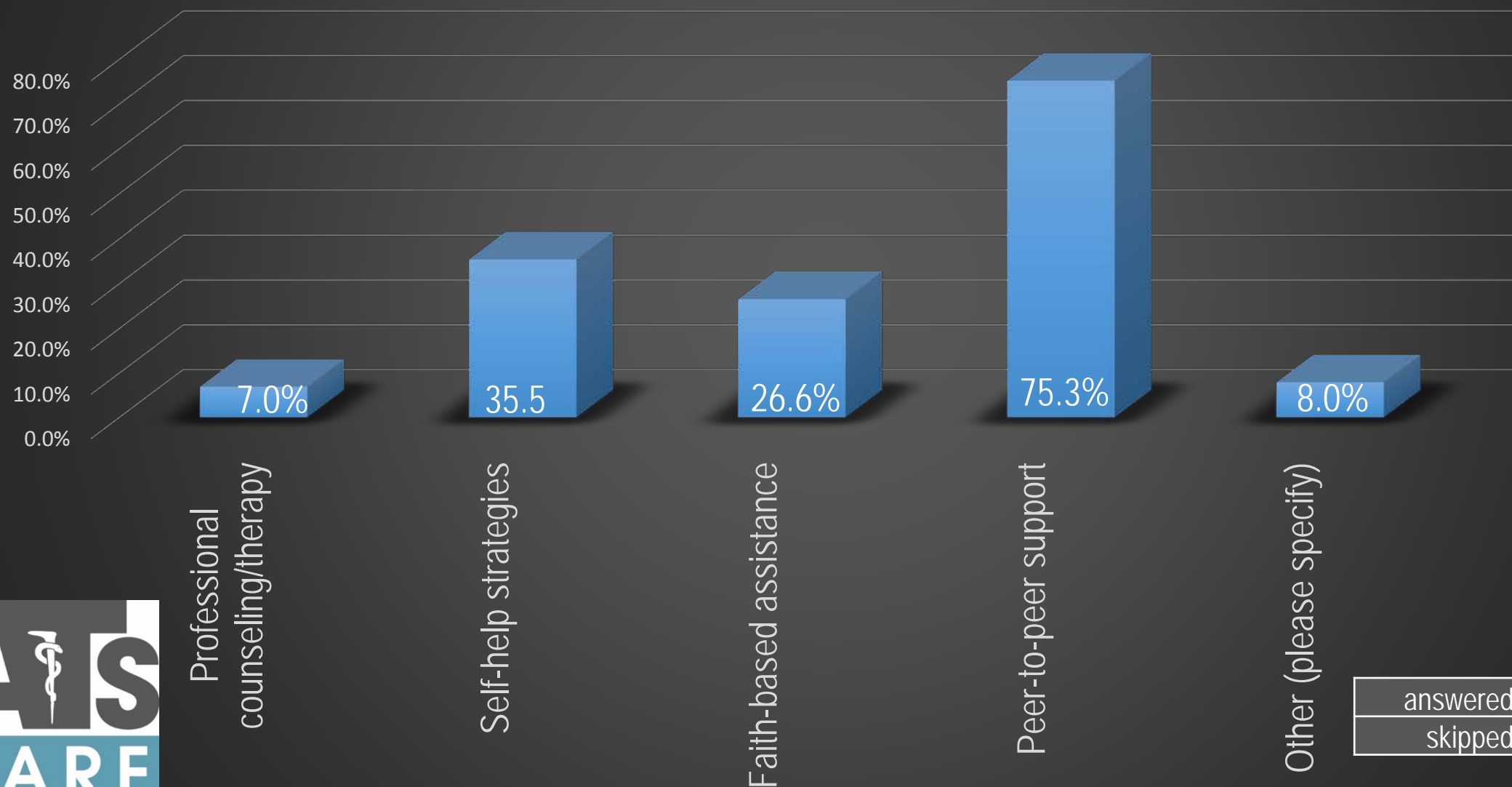


Have you ever been involved in a catastrophic injury (such as c-spine injury) of an athlete?

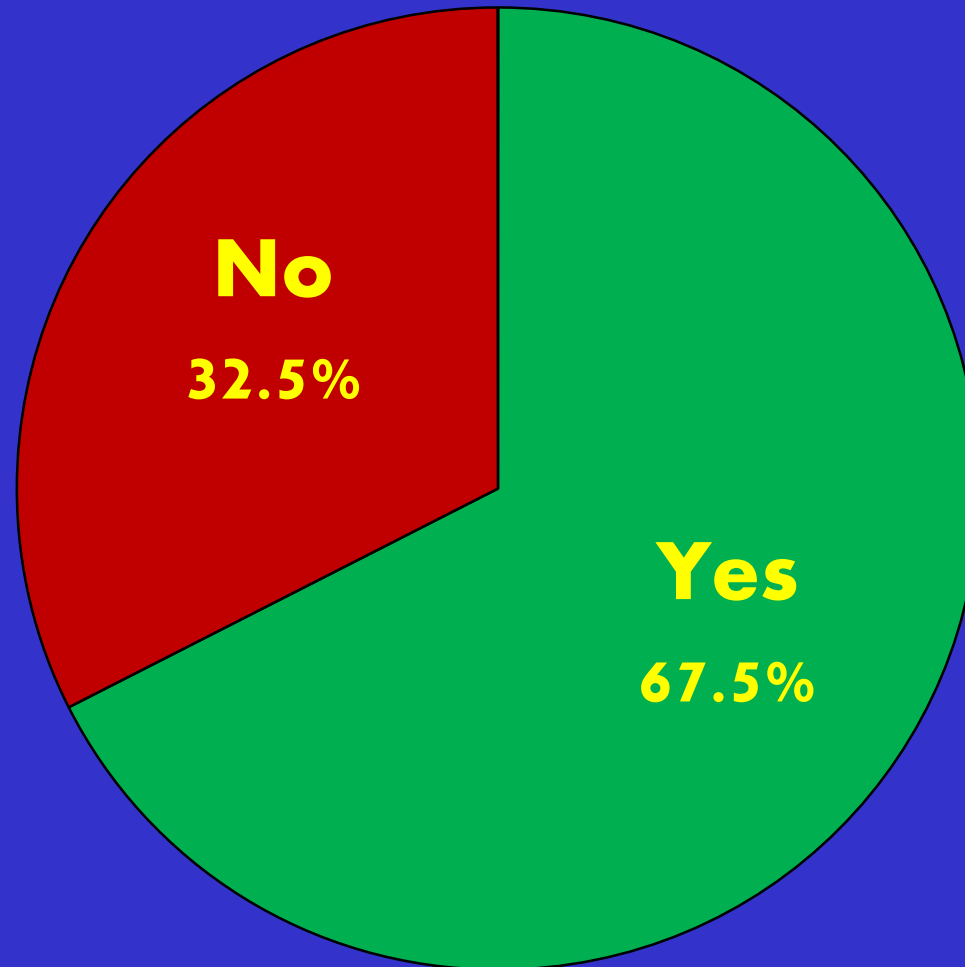


answered question	5568
skipped question	74

What did you find most helpful when dealing with the aftermath of the incident?

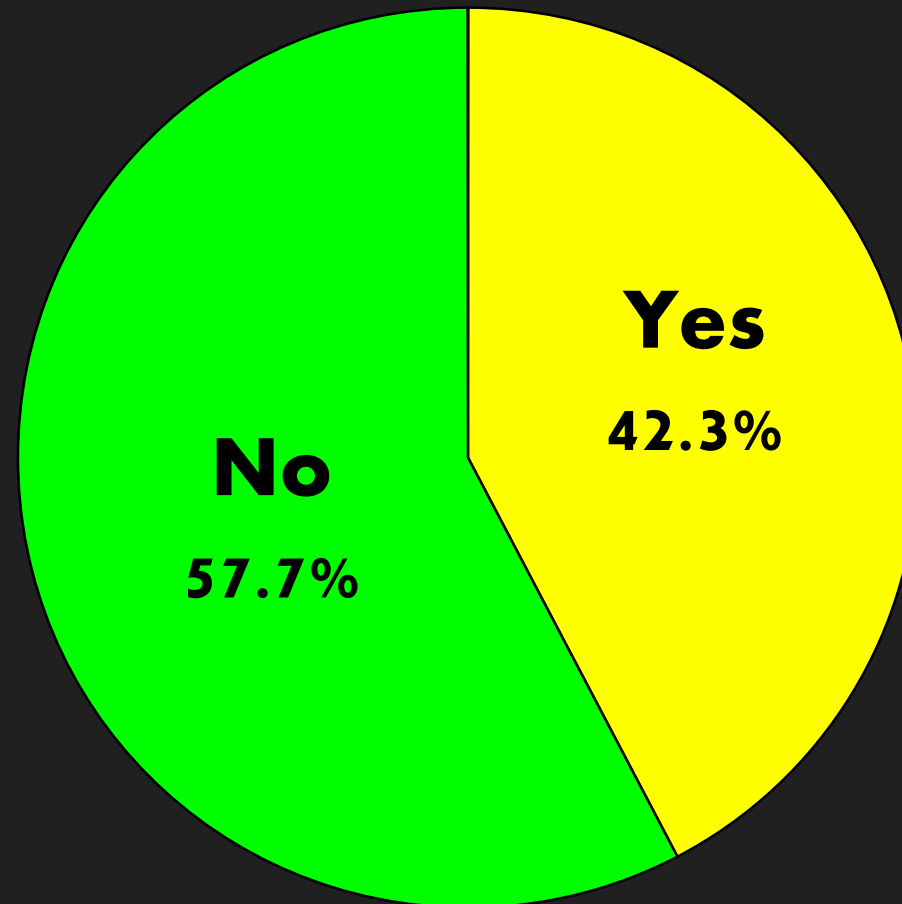


Do you know of another AT in your state who has experienced a catastrophic incident or death in their employment setting?

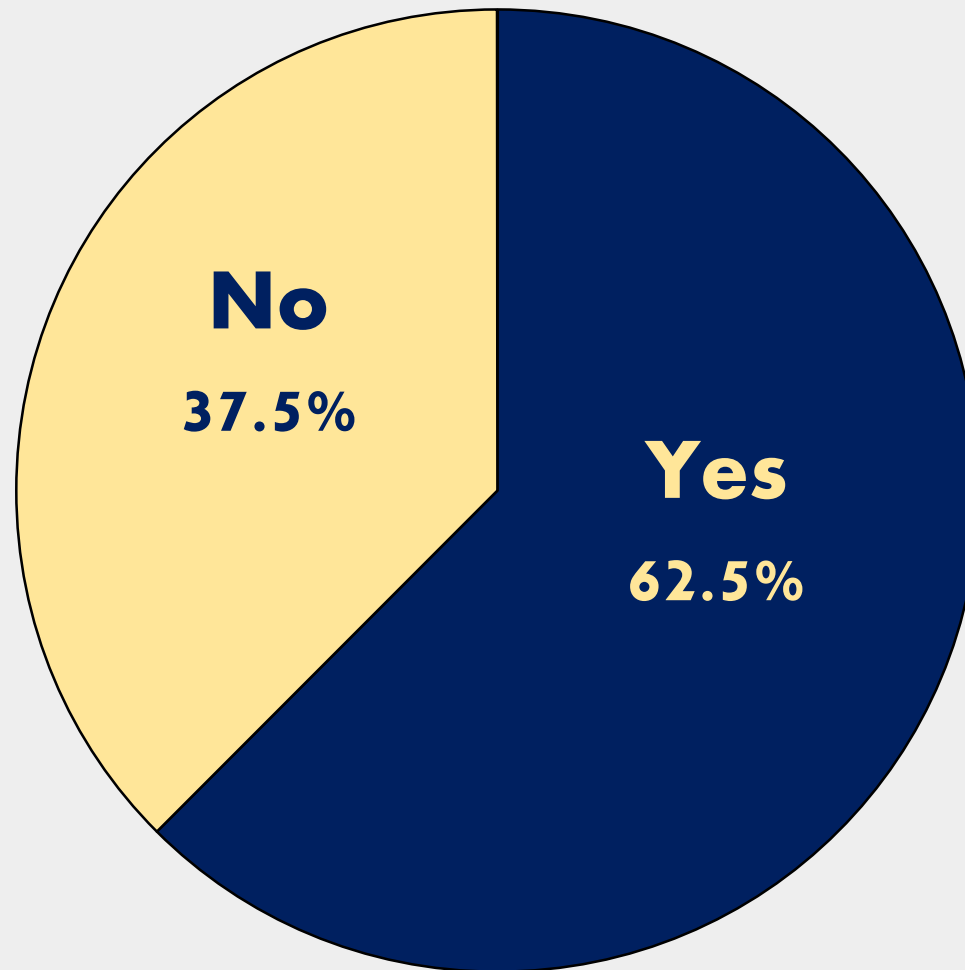


answered question	5523
skipped question	119

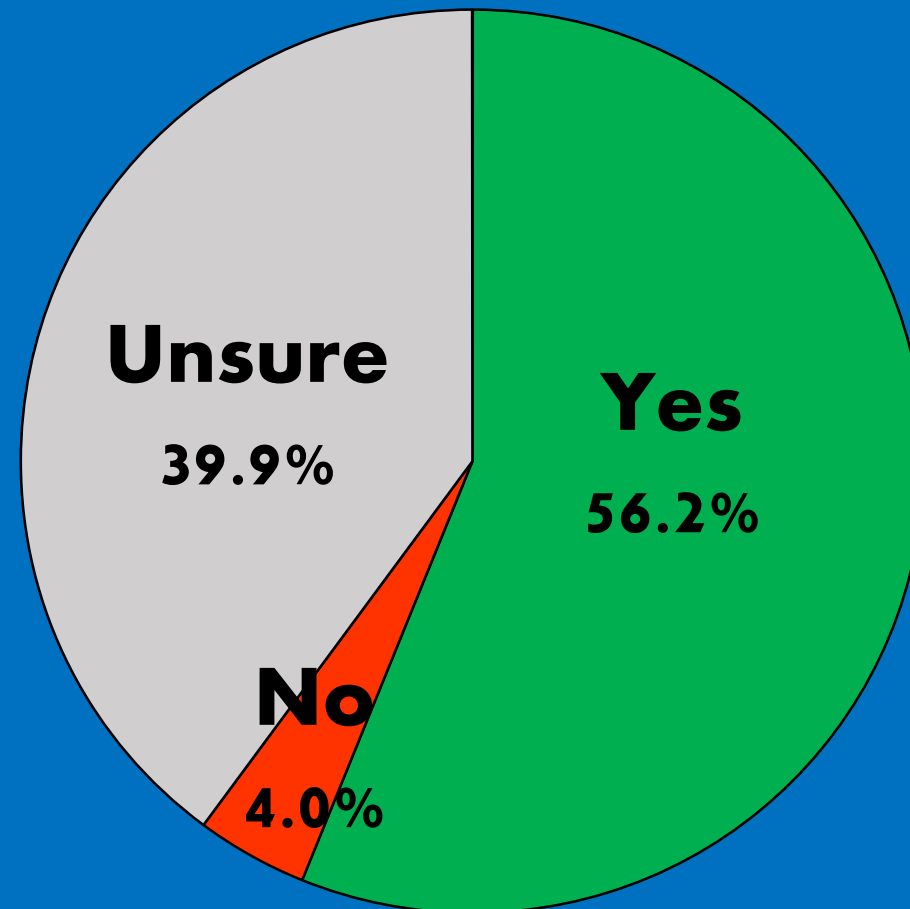
Does your institution have a procedure in place to deal with the initial psychological impact on ATs/department staff following a catastrophic incident/death?



Does your institution provide peer support in the aftermath of a catastrophic incident/death?

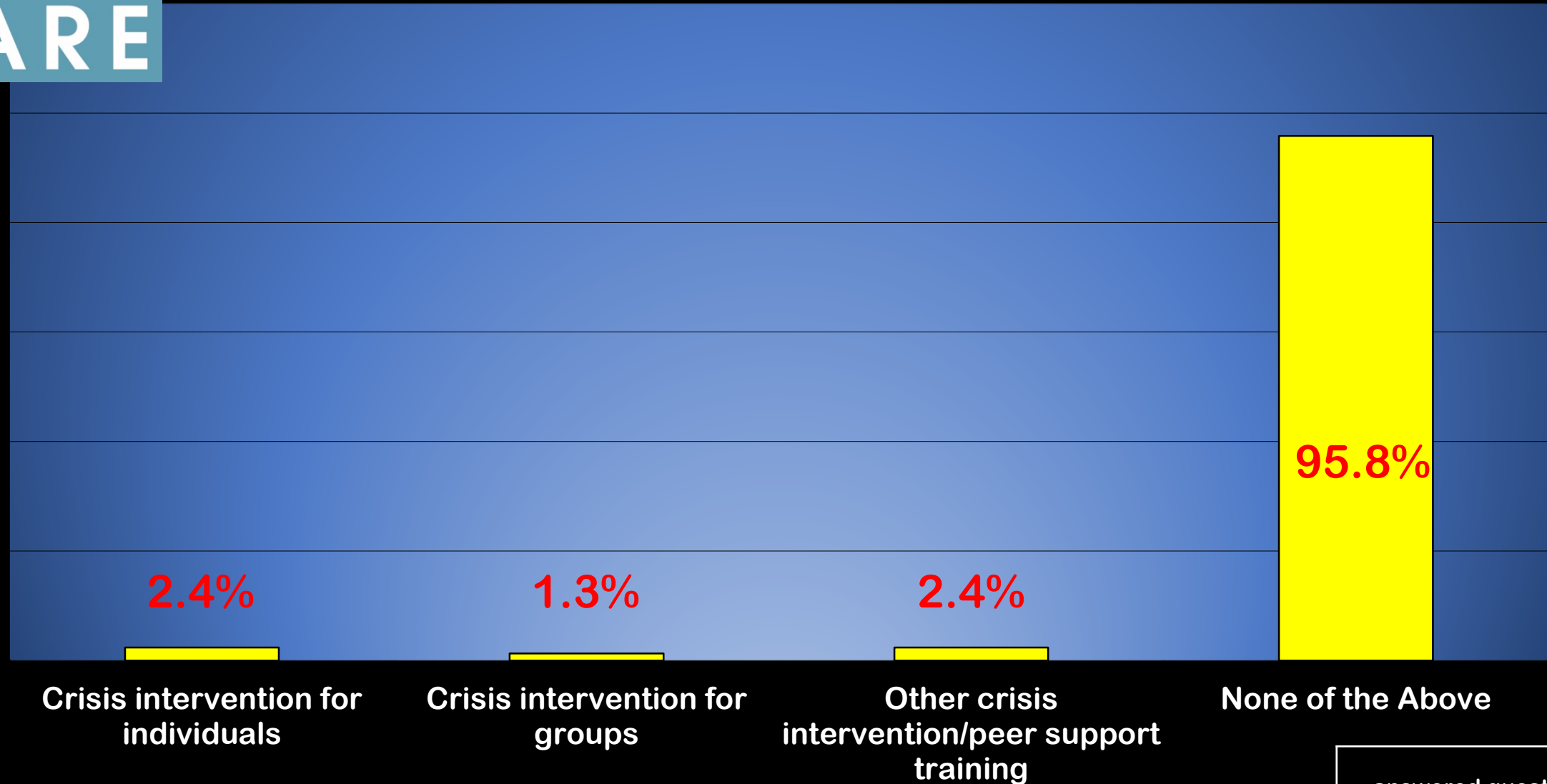


**Would you utilize a peer-to-peer support program
provided by ATs to help you deal with the psychological
and emotional responses to a catastrophic
incident/death?**



answered question	5334
skipped question	308

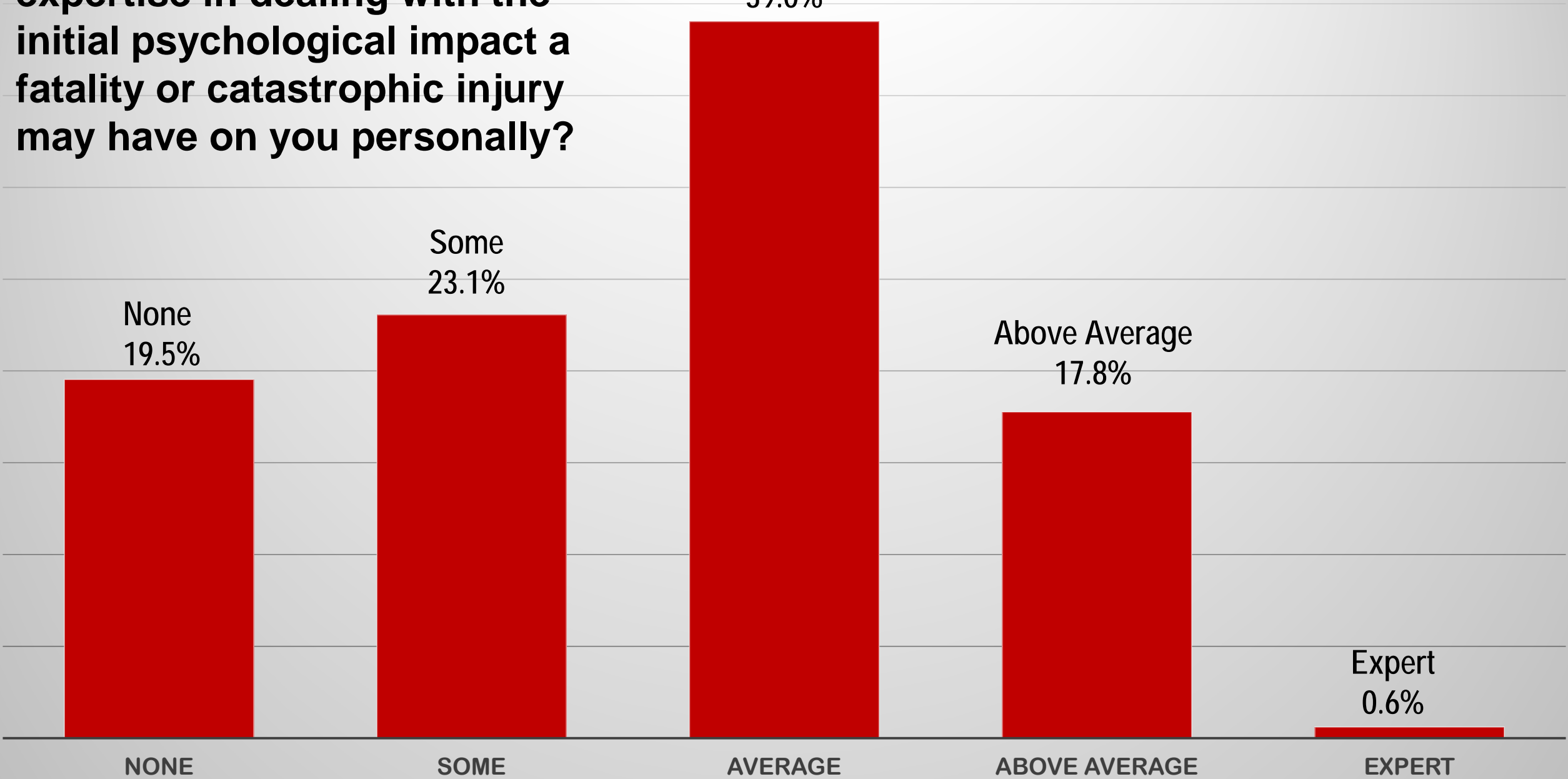
Do you currently hold certification or training ? (Select all that apply)



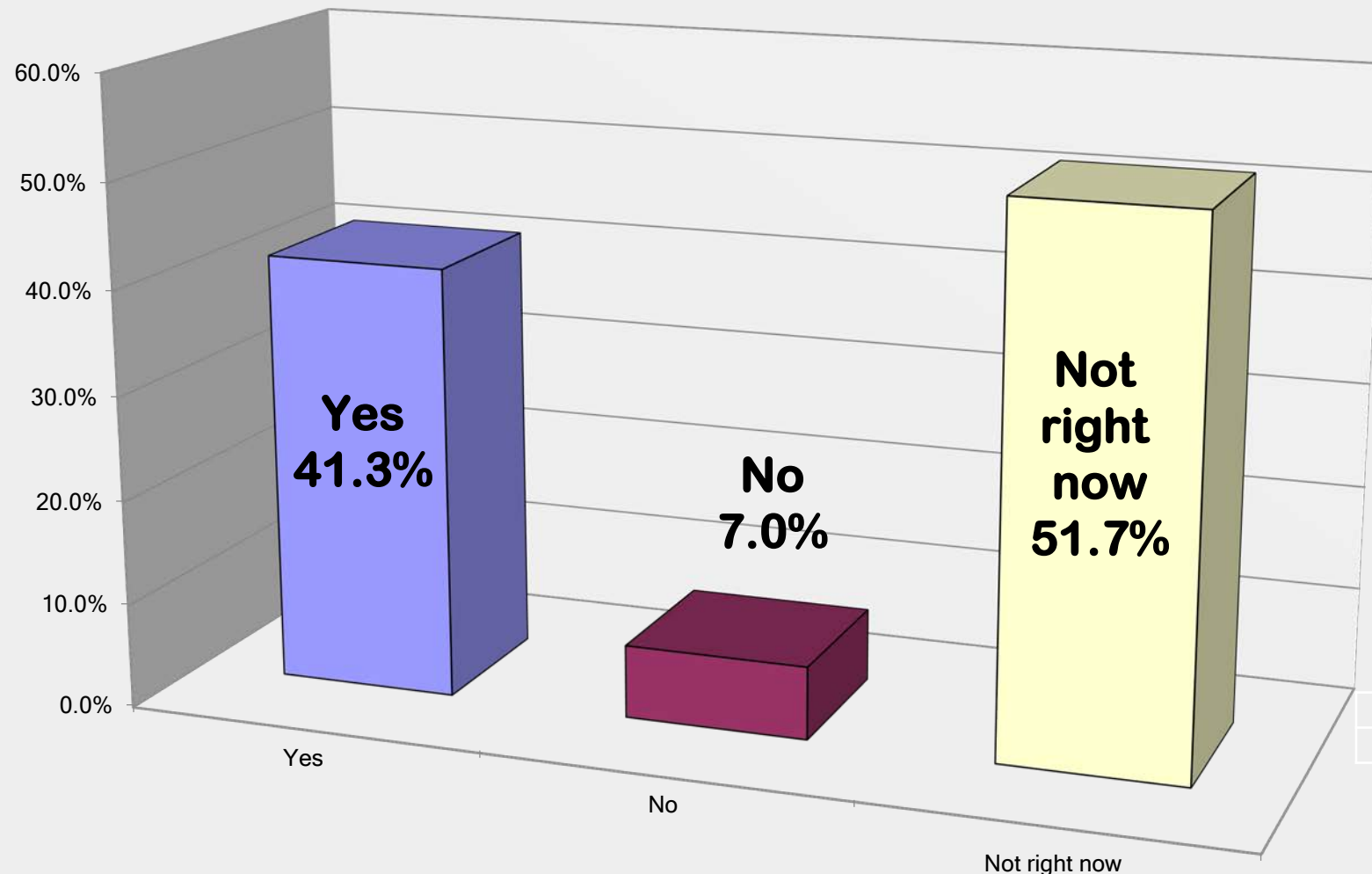
answered question	5311
skipped question	331

How would you rank your expertise in dealing with the initial psychological impact a fatality or catastrophic injury may have on you personally?

answered question	5278
skipped question	364



Are you interested in receiving training to provide other ATs with assistance and referrals to professionals who are able to help them understand and manage the personal impact a catastrophic injury/death has on them in a healthy and productive manner?



answered question	5266
skipped question	376

So....we analyzed the results and came to some conclusions



- **Something needs to be done to support Athletic Trainers when unexpected critical incidents happen.**
- **There is a need for a formalized program and support network.**
- **There is a need to train Athletic Trainers in peer-support and crisis intervention.**
- **There is a need for a coordinated peer-support network for our profession.**
- **Our answer was.....**

ATS

The logo consists of the letters 'ATS' in a bold, dark grey, sans-serif font. A white caduceus symbol, which is a staff with two snakes entwined and wings at the top, is positioned vertically through the center of the letter 'T'.

CARE

What is ATs Care?

The mission of ATs Care is to aid athletic trainers in the aftermath of a catastrophic incident or death occurring to one or more of their athletes or colleagues by establishing a peer-to-peer-system to assist, monitor, and encourage these individuals to seek initial support through state or regional athletic training care teams.

The ATs Care program is in place to provide the following resources:

- Education for athletic trainers about CISM, post-traumatic stress and their effects both in the workplace and in one's personal life.
- Psychological and emotional support to athletic trainers through on-scene support, demobilization intervention, post-incident defusing or one-on-one interaction.
- A network of athletic trainers trained in CISM and psychological first-aid to serve as a resource for Athletic Trainer CISM teams.

CORE PRINCIPLES OF



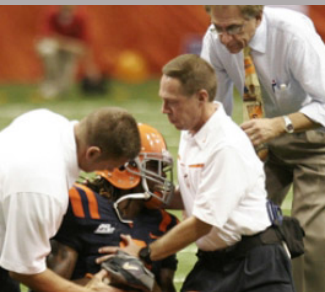
- Commitment to confidentiality
- Rapid response to appropriate requests for support.
- Emphasis on the importance of providing peer support services using athletic trainers.
- Education and support services in keeping with ICISF guidelines.
- ATs Care is able to provide and support immediate crisis intervention. ATs Care is not intended to replace professional counseling or mental health services.



Who is ATs Care?



The ATs Care Committee is comprised of athletic trainers who have been specially trained in Crisis Intervention and Stress Management techniques and who work in conjunction with Mental Health Professionals who specialize in providing support to healthcare professionals.



What happens when I may need someone to talk to?

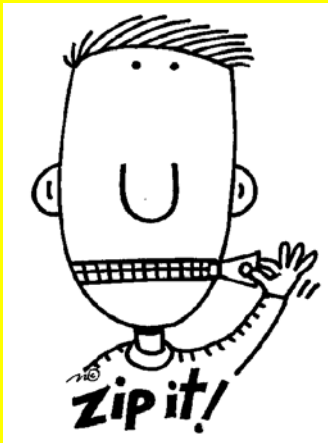
- Many times ATs Care or your local CISM team becomes aware of an incident involving an AT via
 - a phone call from a colleague
 - a Google alert
 - the news
- A member of the peer-support team will usually reach out to the affected AT and/or AT staff to inform them of the peer-support program and offer their assistance.
- If the involved AT wishes to utilize peer-support services, then additional communication continues.

What if something happens to one of my friends tomorrow? What should I do?

- Take a breath and collect your thoughts
- Make sure he/she is safe
- Encourage them to be sure their basic needs are met, like eating and sleeping
- Acknowledge their situation
- LISTEN

Consider getting trained in how to assist others in crisis?

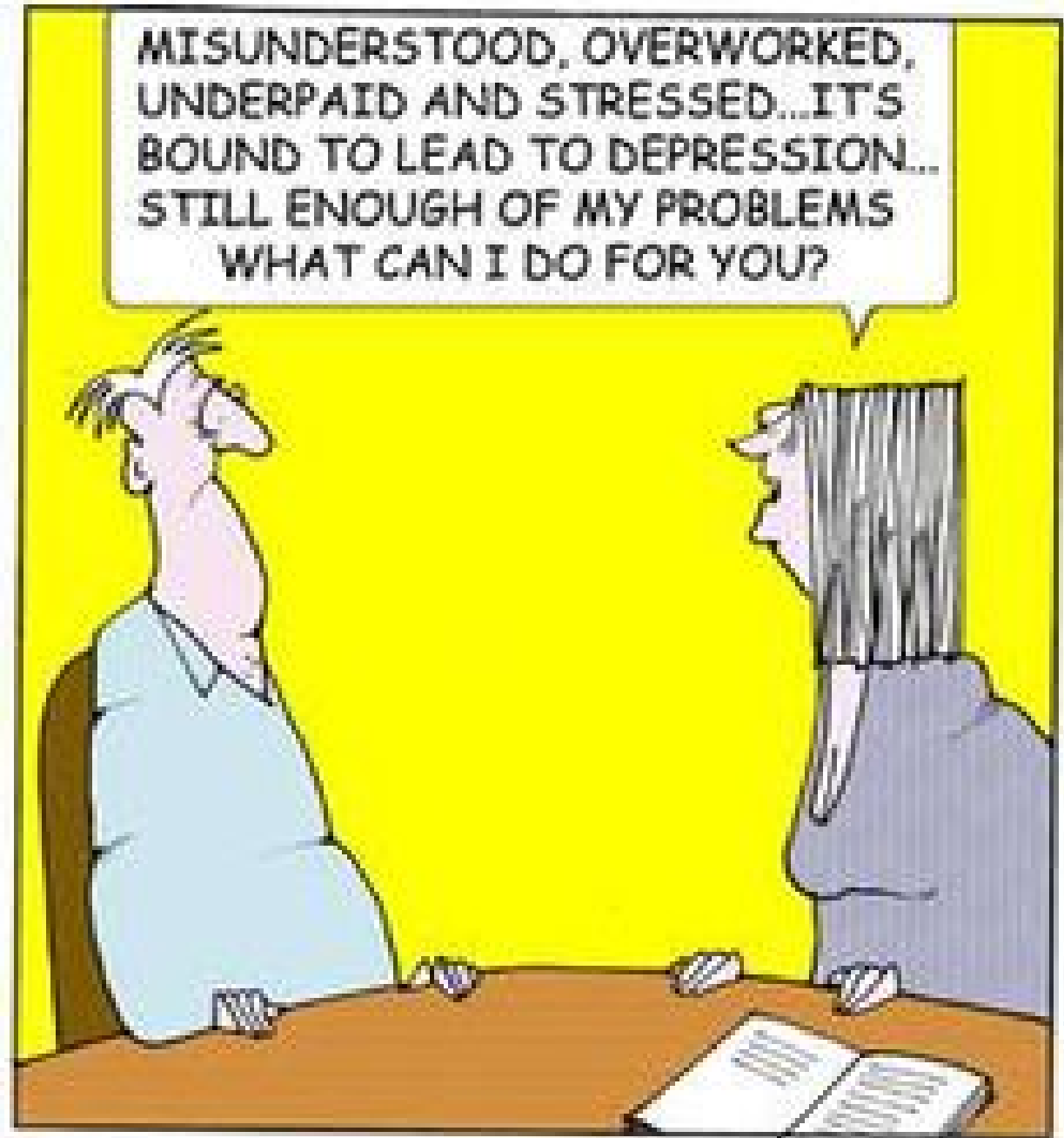
What is the hardest thing for an AT to do?



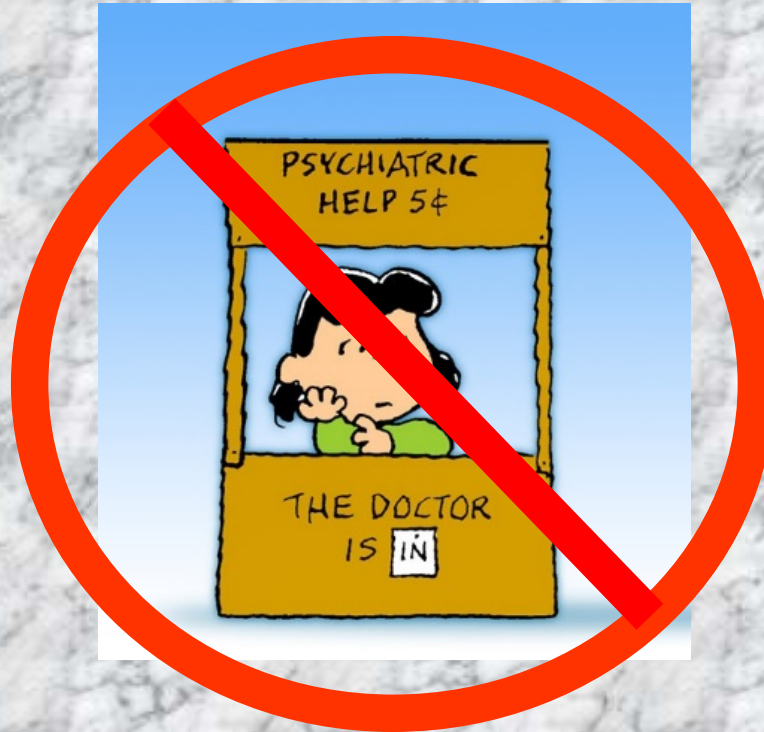
What NOT to do....

If a colleague comes to you to talk about a traumatic event or personal problem please don't:

- Say you know how they feel
- Tell them what they should have done
- Be dismissive of their response
- Tell them to forget about it
- Say things like "It's God's will."
- Be judgmental
- Overstep your training



What CISM-Peer Support is not.

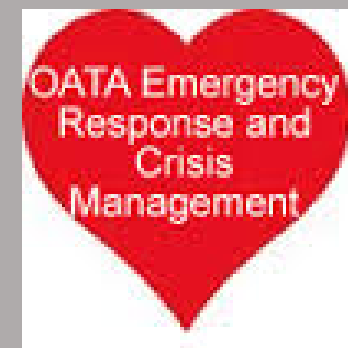


Crisis Intervention is NOT psychotherapy; rather, it is a specialized acute emergency mental health intervention which requires specialized training. As physical first aid is to surgery, crisis intervention is to psychotherapy. Thus, crisis intervention is sometimes called “psychological first aid”.



ATSNJ PEER SUPPORT GROUP

Peer-support and CISM Teams and Resources



MOM  MOM

You're caring for your special needs child; We care for YOU!

Peer support services for Moms of special needs children and adults



New Jersey

**Disaster Critical Incident
Stress Response**

-You were there for them

We are here *for you*



WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?



2017

- Informational sessions at all 9 District meetings.
- Training of core ATs Care committee members in CISM for individuals and groups.
- Formulation of policies and procedures for the CISM team.
- Complete a plan for education and training for the membership.
- ICISF training at 2017 NATA Symposium in Houston- *Assisting Individuals in Crisis*.
- Development and implementation of a resource network for Athletic Training CISM teams at the district and state levels.
- Train a network of Athletic Trainer instructors in both individual and group CISM.
- Support local teams in providing peer support services using athletic trainers.
- Education and support services in keeping with ICISF guidelines.
- ATs Care is able to provide and support immediate crisis intervention. ATs Care is not intended to replace professional counseling or mental health services.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?



2018

- ICISF training at all 9 district meetings - *Assisting Individuals in Crisis.*
- Help to train and support district or state groups in formation of local CISM/Peer Support teams.
- Develop and deliver continuing education for Athletic Trainers on CISM/Peer Support related topics.

Special thanks goes to:

- The NATA Board of Directors for supporting this initiative.
- The NATA Membership for their interest and support.
- Jim Thornton, MA, ATC, CES for bringing the need for this program to the BOD.
- Tim Neal, MS, ATC for his background work, networking with mental health professionals and the ICISF.
- The ATs Care Committee Members for their drive and devotion.
- The International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) for their support.
- Rachael Oats, CAE, NATA Associate Executive Director for her work to make this a reality.
- and most of all, to **Katie Scott, MS, ATC**, NATA AT-in-Residence for all she does to support this program and the committee behind the scenes.

**Thank you for
your time and
attention.**

The greatest gift you can give to somebody is
your own personal development.

I used to say, 'If you will take care of me,
I will take care of you.'

Now I say, 'I will take care of me for you,
if you will take care of you for me.'

– Jim Rohn



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