



## Psych.E.In. MOOC 1

### Unit 7

#### 7.2. Returning home after an experience in an emergency camp

##### **When returning home,**

- Not always everything goes back to normal.
- Remember to express gratitude to those who have covered your usual responsibilities and expect to feel “out of sorts” for a while — the intensity and meaningfulness experienced during disaster work cannot be matched back home.

##### **When returning at work,**

- Though your presence may be highly valued in the field, you most likely will not receive the same level of appreciation by colleagues.
- It is important to foresee a phase of "reconstruction" also for people who have worked in an emergency.
- Foresee work on strengthening our abilities to cope with the critical situations you have just experienced to increase the sense of effectiveness.
- Some follow-up questions could be helpful to discuss with your team.

Recommend the following four questions:

- “How are things since the debriefing?”
- “Is anyone stuck on any particular part of the incident?”
- “How have things been on your own (or-off duty time)? “
- “What else do you feel you might need to get you past this particularly bad event?”

Additional questions for discussion:



- “What, if any, changes have you noticed in your work habits since the disaster?”
- “How has the disaster affected your personal relationships?”
- “What stress management strategies have you used?”
- “Which stress management techniques work for you?”
- “Which ones don’t?”
- “Has this experience resulted in any positive changes in your professional or personal life?”

Source: Young, B. H., Ford, J. D., Ruzek, J. I., Friedman, M. J., & Gusman, F. D. (1998). Disaster mental health services: A guidebook for clinicians and administrators. National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Pag.137

Mitchell, J. T., & Dyregrov, A. (1993). Traumatic stress in disaster workers and emergency personnel. In *International handbook of traumatic stress syndromes* (pp. 905-914). Springer, Boston, MA