



# Chapter 3 – Supporting the Staff

## PFA-Postgroup Activities for staff

Follow-up activities after the termination of each session and of the designed group intervention is of main concern

1. The availability of the conductors represents a continue resource for the members as a person of reference that can also detect their upcoming needs.
2. After the closure of the group, co-conductors need debriefing with each other as well as participation in other support group for conductors and staff
3. Countertransference must be recognized by the conductors and worked through/analyzed. All aspects of the traumatic event induce strong countertransference reactions
4. Conductors' self-care must not be unevaluated. Time for rest and relaxation is a necessity, and, sometimes, psychological support too
5. Evaluation using formal or informal assessment of the effectiveness of the intervention is recommended



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- **Reducing staff members' perception of stigma** is essential for fostering their behavior to seek help and psychological support. Raising awareness of mental health issues can be achieved by explaining that it is normal to have this kind of feelings after a traumatic event, and that it is not a shame seeking psychological help. Hearing a colleague talking openly about a previous personal experience during a similar situation, about feeling traumatized and needing support, also helps in reducing stigma
- **Psychosocial training:** during a traumatic event, informal intervention by people who are living or working or are simply present at the incident, alongside with professional rescuers, plays an important role during first aid intervention. So, it is important to provide those people with information about: trauma and its effects, cumulative effects of stress, how to recognize signs or symptoms of psychological distress in themselves and in others, how to seek for psychological help, and how to refer someone who needs psychological support
- **Psychoeducational training** could be incorporated into a pre-existing training that an organization already runs for their employees. Methods of such training can be delivered: in-person, via educational leaflets, online, in discussion modules, through role playing scenarios and demonstration groups. Training sessions are more helpful and fruitful when delivered in an interactive format and when encouraging active participation. Training should be ongoing, aiming to reinforce and refresh learning processes at regular intervals