WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS & DE-ESCALATION
• Jim Kubinski – Bureau Chief of E.M.S.
• Naperville Fire Department
• EMT – Paramedic
• Firefighter
• Chief Fire Officer - OSFM
HOW WE GOT TO WHERE WE ARE

• Police Department C.I.T. Program
• Fire Department Mental Health Incident Count
• City Employees MUST come across people experiencing a crisis
• City Employees MUST know someone with a mental health diagnosis
• Mental Health diagnoses come with a STIGMA
HOW CAN WE PREPARE OUR MOST VALUABLE ASSET......THE HUMAN RESOURCE?

• Identification of Mental Health Illnesses
• Awareness of Mental Health Illnesses
• Potential Solutions to Mental Health Crisis Situations

DAP - Data
Assess
Plan
MENTAL HEALTH STATISTICS

• What percentage of adults (18+) have a diagnosable mental disorder?
  • 1 in 4 (25%) (World Health Organization)

• Mental Illnesses are more common than what 3 other disease types? (US Surgeon General’s Report)
  Cancer
  Diabetes
  Heart disease

What percentage of Americans with a mental illness live among us and lead productive lives?
• More than 67% (National Mental Health Association)
MENTAL HEALTH STATISTICS

• Naperville Fire Department Mental Health Incident Responses

• 15,600 Incidents in 2019
• 10,000 of those incidents were for E.M.S. Incidents
• 1,000 E.M.S. incidents included a Mental Health issue.

• 10% of all EMS incidents were mental health related.
MENTAL ILLNESS AND THE IMPACT ON YOU

• What variances of mental illness have you encountered in your personal and/or professional life?

  • How did you handle it?

  • What was the end result?
IDENTIFYING MENTAL ILLNESSES

- Mental Illness is an abnormal alteration in thinking, mood, or behavior.
  - Can cause distress and impaired functioning
  - Can lead to difficulty with social, personal, and occupational situations.

- The Mental Health Continuum ranges from healthy to ill.
  - The level of function within this continuum includes the capability of performing Activities of Daily Living.
  - An increase in impairment(s) will lead to a decreased level of function
MAJOR MENTAL ILLNESSES

• Anxiety Disorders/Panic Disorders
• Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
• Depression
• Bi-Polar Disorder
• Schizophrenia
• PTSD (not just for war veterans or public safety personnel)

***When measuring signs and symptoms of mental illness, it is important to recognize the duration, intensity, and frequency***
BI-POLAR DISORDERS

https://youtu.be/h5aSa4tmVNM
WE BASED THE ENTIRE TRAINING ON THIS SIMPLE CONCEPT

- **Behavior Influences Behavior**

  - The concept that behaviors and attitudes of people impact behaviors and attitudes of those who need help and vice versa.

  - If you aren’t aware of the possibility that behavior is impacted by Precipitating Factors, your supportive responses are limited and you may miss opportunities to decelerate behavior through meaningful limit setting.
PLAN

• Statements to avoid
  • “Calm down”
  • “I understand”
  • “You shouldn’t”

THERE IS MORE THAN ONE WAY TO TREAT A PATIENT. PARAMEDICS ARE SKILL DRIVEN AND MENTAL HEALTH CALLS REQUIRE LESS SKILL BASED MEDICINE AND MORE VERBAL COMMUNICATION. MUST BE EMPATHETIC WITHOUT COMING ACROSS AS “FAKE”.
PLAN

• Maintain Situational Awareness

• Be calm and Alert

• Keep distance and know Escape/Exits

• Be alert for changes in cues of Mental Health Illness
Communication is an interactive phenomenon which involves words, behaviors, and context

- Verbal Components: content of speech
- Process of Speech: Rate, Tone, Volume, Voice
- Control your Body Language and Vocabulary
PLAN

• Non-Verbal Components of Communication
  • Stance
  • Gestures
  • Eye Movements
  • Facial Expressions
PLAN

• Under stress, non-verbal communication becomes dominant
  • Verbal communication accounts for 7% of information communicated
  • Tone and Volume account for 38% of information communicated
  • Body Language accounts for 55% of information communicated
PLAN

• Explain All Actions

• Avoid sudden or quick movements (announce your movements step by step)

• Explain Policy (Rules your following)

• Inform them of the consequences of not following your directives

Even using these cues.....the way the message is delivered is extremely important. “We can do this the easy way or the hard way” (BAD)
PLAN

• Never take anything personally (EVER)
• Always keep your professionalism in mind
• A person with mental illness is in a medical crisis
• Common Sense, while not guaranteed to work, is one of the most effective tools in your tool box
PLAN

• 1 in 4 people suffer from a mental health condition. We have almost 200 people that work at NFD.

• Look for changes in your partner and don’t be afraid to SAY SOMETHING.

• Your mental health and wellness after ANY incident is important and there are many resources available to you.
  • E.A.P.
  • EACH OTHER!!!!!