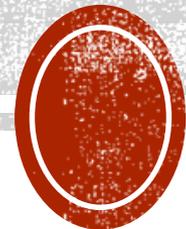


**SUPPORTING  
NEIGHBORS &  
YOURSELVES  
FOLLOWING A  
TRAUMATIC  
EVENT**

Rossmoor  
Counseling  
Services

Jill Meyers, LMFT



- Rossmoor Counseling provides short-term psychotherapy, education/support groups, mediation services and resources to residents, free of charge
- Team of Licensed Clinical Social Workers/Marriage and Family Therapist - Master's Degrees in counseling psychology & licensed through the State
- Host informative events such as Optimal Wellness Speaker Series, Women's & Men's Conferences, Health Fairs, etc.
- Presentations to Rossmoor clubs, new resident orientations and special events with clubs and organizations
- On-going professional training and improvement of services based on community needs

## INTRODUCTION

Rossmoor Counseling  
Team:

Penny Reed, LCSW – Clinic  
Supervisor

Florence Clifton, Admin.

Jasmine Hajyan, LCSW

Jill Meyers, LMFT



# INTENTION OF THIS TALK

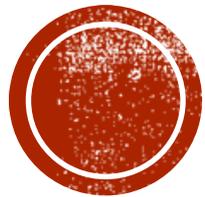
- The intention of this talk is to help prepare you to recognize *behavioral and emotional responses* in your neighbors and yourself, following a traumatic event, such as a natural disaster
- Basic practice - brief exercises & role play
- Learning AIM - inoculation of stress
- Empowerment for preparation & planning



# ASSUMPTIONS

- Entry Coordinators have a unique and special role in the community they reside; your intentions are for the greater good of the community in which you live and that you know the limitations of your role
- We assume that you will contact other emergency medical services (EMS) for serious medical, emotional or life-threatening situations
- Additional information regarding the response protocol for local agencies is available through CERT/County/State
- We assume that some emotional and physical responses may present immediately or may occur days, weeks or months later – refer to appropriate professionals in all cases





**THIS IS *NOT* A TRAINING ON MENTAL HEALTH  
ASSESSMENTS, TREATMENT, OR DIAGNOSIS  
*PLEASE:* WHEN IN DOUBT,  
REFER TO MEDICAL AND PSYCHIATRIC  
PROFESSIONALS**

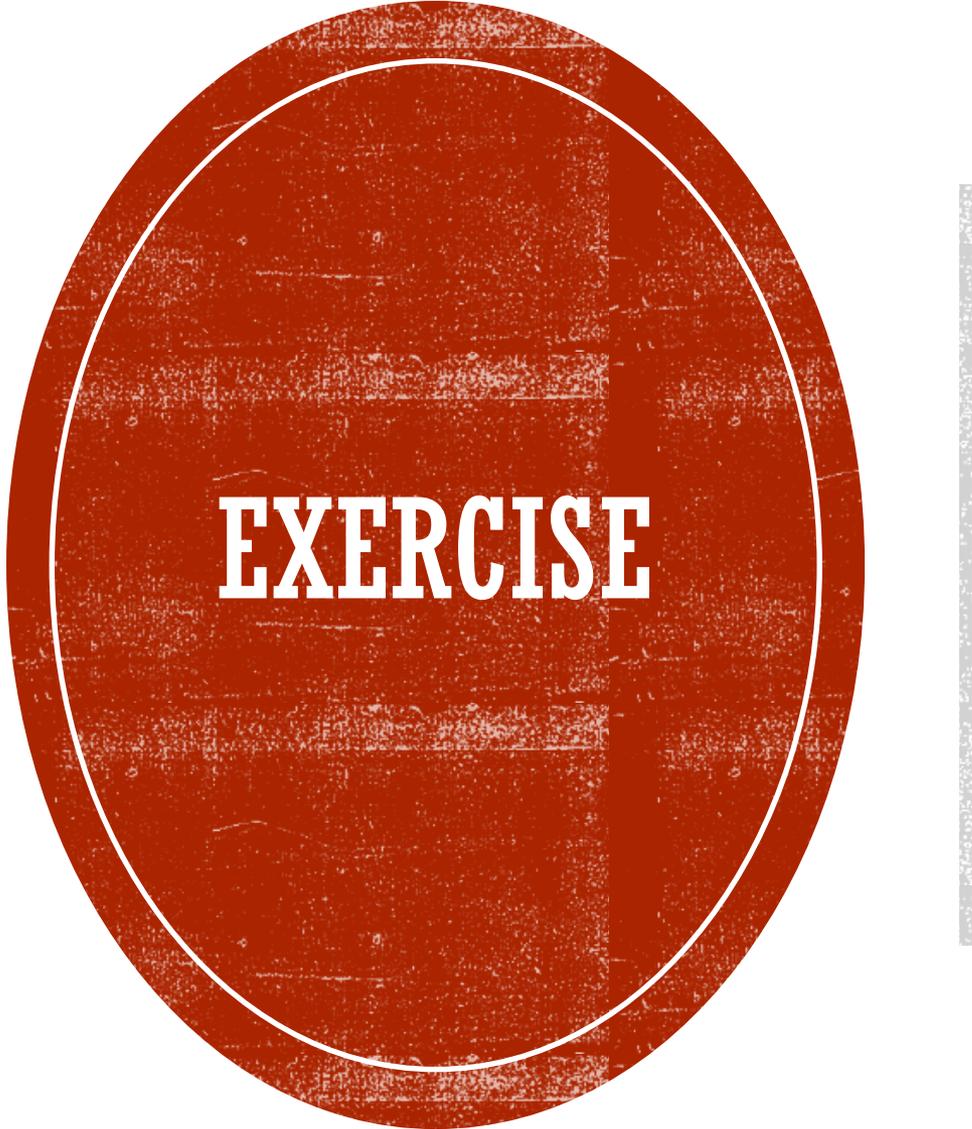


**STOP / BREATHE**

**OBSERVE / SOFTEN**

**PROCEED**





**EXERCISE**

**ANTICIPATE**

**IDENTIFY**

**MANAGE**

**A**

**I**

**M**



# STRESS INOCULATION – “AIM”

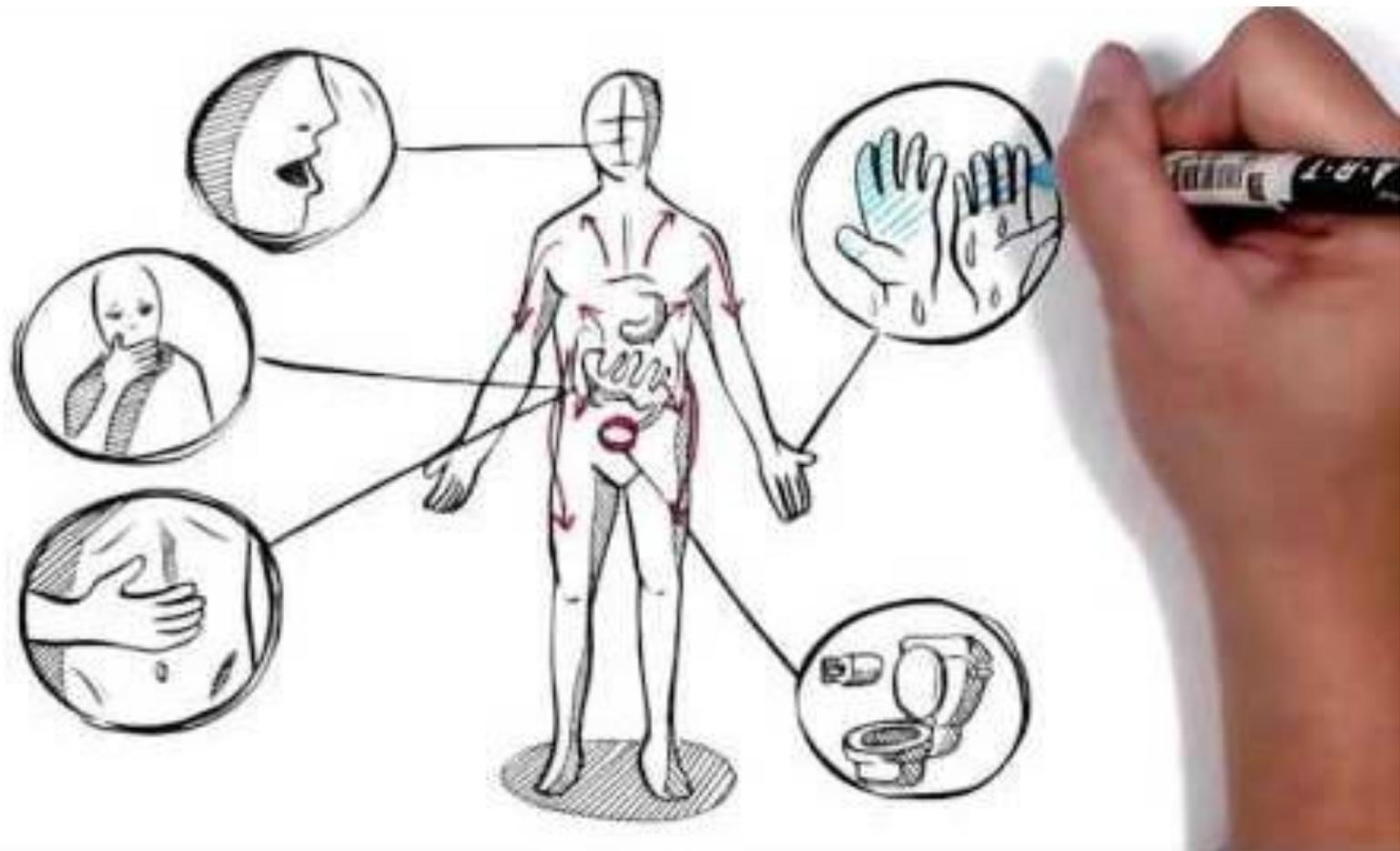
- **Anticipate** that you (*others*) will be feeling worried or anxious – normal responses to a possible life-threatening situation.
- **Identify** what the specific physical feelings associated with anxiety are and whether there are any frightening thoughts that are adding to the fear
- **Manage** your responses using controlled breathing and self-talk so that you can stay as calm as possible and can focus on the practical tasks that need attention



# **POSSIBLE PHYSICAL RESPONSES FOLLOWING A TRAUMATIC EVENT**

- Shallow/rapid breathing
- Rapid heart rate
- Chest pain/tightness
- Sweaty or cold/clammy
- Unable to move
- Shaking/rapid movements
- Aches and pains
- Nausea, dizziness
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Decreased immunity







# POSSIBLE EMOTIONAL RESPONSES

- Sadness/Crying
- Flat affect – “shut down”
- Anxious or on-edge
- Irritable/angry
- Labile moods – “Jekyll/Hyde”
- Overwhelmed or indecisive
- Feeling alone/helpless
- Isolating/depression
- Worsened pre-existing mental or emotional health problems



# POSSIBLE BEHAVIORAL RESPONSES

Eating more or less than usual

- Sleeping too much or too little
- Withdrawing from others
- Procrastinating or neglecting responsibilities
- Using alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs to cope
- Nervous habits (e.g. nail biting, pacing)



# POSSIBLE COGNITIVE CHANGES FOLLOWING TRAUMA

- Memory problems
- Inability to concentrate
- Poor judgment/insight
- Increased pessimism or suspiciousness
- Anxious or racing thoughts
- Decreased ability to process information quickly



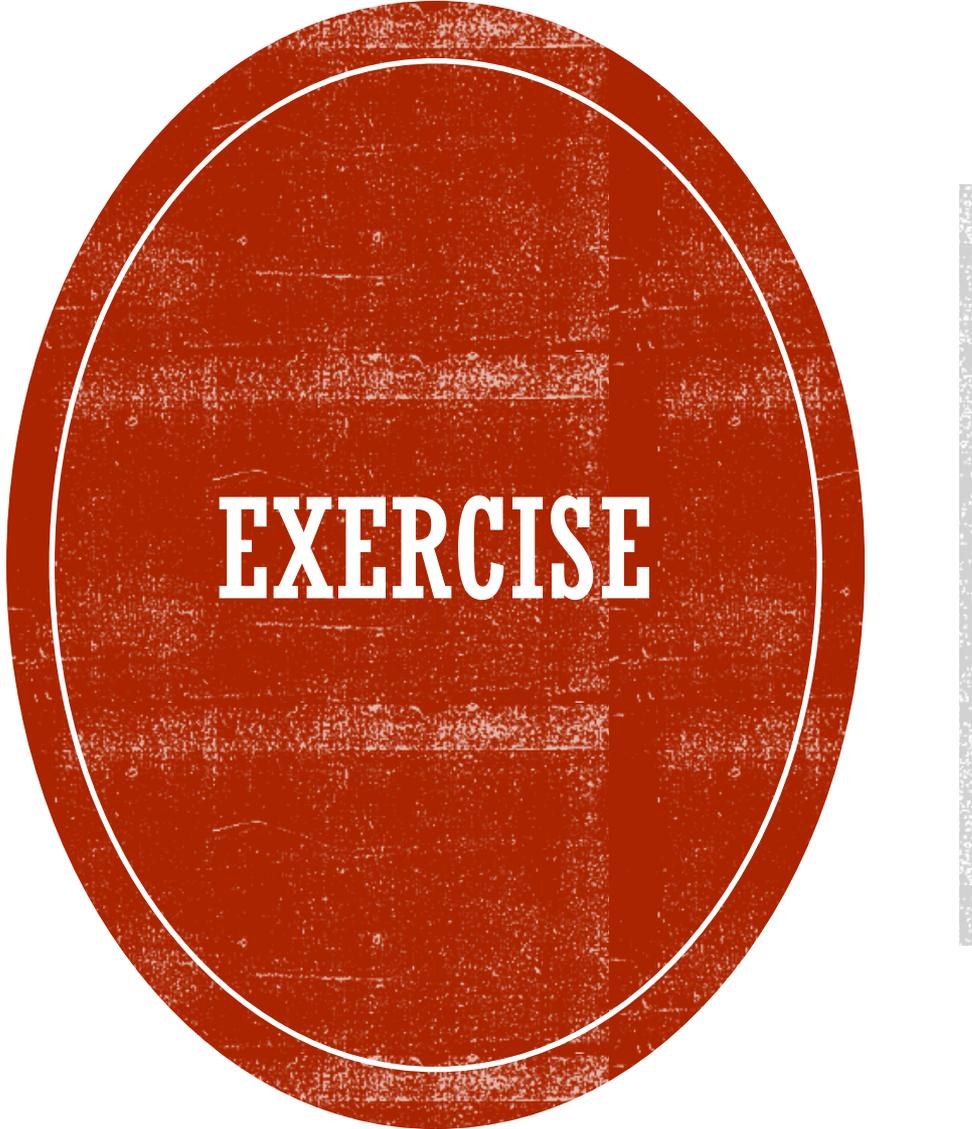


**STOP / BREATHE**

**OBSERVE / SOFTEN**

**PROCEED**





**EXERCISE**

# RESPONDING TO STRESS RESPONSES



Observe/Assess for safety and possible responses



Open-ended questioning – confirm *their* experience



Validation - reflection and acknowledgement



Normalize – ‘It makes sense that you’d feel that way’



Assessment of basic needs & support system





**STOP / BREATHE**

**OBSERVE / SOFTEN**

**PROCEED**





**HOW'D IT GO?**



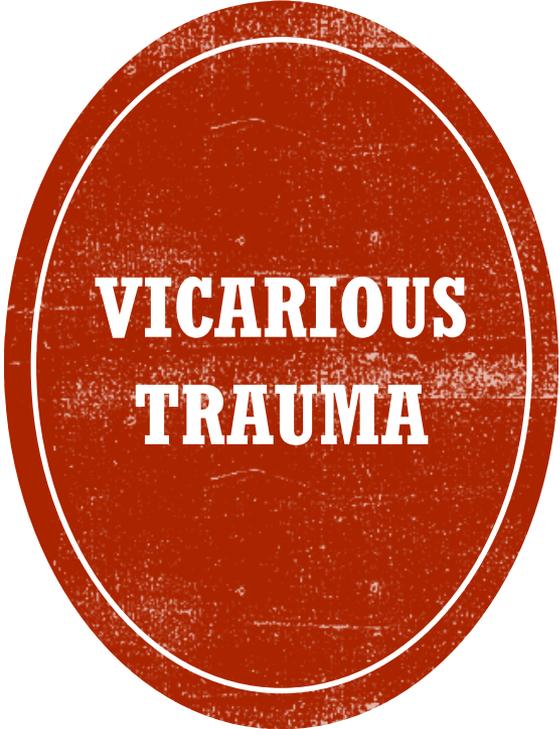
# **COPING STRATEGIES TO DO AND SHARE**

- Connect with others
- Engage your senses
- Increasing your physical activity level
- Get rest/sleep/nutrition
- Take medications as prescribed
- Engage in relaxing activities/hobbies
- Treat yourself gently
- Healthy boundaries

# EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR HELPERS/ENTRY COORDINATORS

- Celebrate the small victories
- Applaud your efforts – *“I’m doing the best I can”*
- Forgive yourself and others for imperfections
- Accept that some situations are out of our control
- Ask for specific help that you need from others
- Involve family members, friends and/or services
- Say “Yes” when someone offers to help
- Refer to professionals when possible





## **VICARIOUS TRAUMA**

- You have much less energy
- You neglect your own needs
- Your life revolves around others needs, but it gives you little satisfaction
- It seems like you catch every cold or flu that's going around
- You're increasingly impatient and irritable
- Your self-care strategies aren't helping
- You feel helpless and hopeless



**KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
PRACTICE  
SELF-CARE**



# PREPARATION IMPROVES OUTCOME



ROSSMOOR  
WALNUT CREEK

## Resident Emergency/Disaster Information (REDI)

### Knowing what to do is the best type of preparation and IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

#### Why Prepare?

The outlook for recovery from a disaster often depends on your planning and preparation. While we all hope that such occurrences never happen, it has been shown time and time again that those who have prepared are best able to recover. Emergency services and government agencies may not be able to respond to your needs immediately, and you need to be ready to care for yourself here in Rossmoor.

#### Know What to Do

In the event of a disaster/emergency it's important to know what to do. Learn and understand what types of disasters/emergencies you are most likely to encounter and what you need. While each person is unique, you can take steps to prepare by evaluating personal needs and making a plan that fits those needs. For earthquake preparedness, see page 31 of the Rossmoor phone book.

#### Make a Plan

The first step is to consider how a disaster/emergency might affect your individual needs. Plan to make it on your own, for seven days. It's possible that you will not have access to a medical facility or even a drugstore. It is crucial that you think about what kinds of resources you use on a daily basis and what you might do if those resources are limited or not available. It's also important to keep a list of emergency contacts that live out of the area.

#### To get involved in Rossmoor's disaster and emergency preparedness efforts contact any of the following resident preparedness organizations/groups:

Emergency Preparedness Organization (EPO)  
Entry Coordinators  
Map Your Neighborhood (MYN)  
CB and FRS Radio Networks  
Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)  
Crisis Response Spiritual Support Team (CRSST)



Review and renew your plan annually

#### Establish a Safe Meeting Place

Establish a meeting place for you, your family and neighbors a safe distance from your building and away from objects that may fall. This is where everyone meets in the event of a disaster/emergency to check on each other. It also prevents you and others from wandering around the neighborhood looking for one another, or worse, being tempted to re-enter an unsafe building.

#### Staying Put

Whether you are at home or elsewhere, in most situations it's simply best to stay where you are and avoid the uncertainty of where you might go and the risk of impassable roads. Consider what you can do to safely shelter-in-place and not leave your home or your area, unless evacuated.

#### Evacuation

It is unlikely a mass evacuation of Rossmoor will be necessary. However, if one is ordered, local law enforcement will be in charge and provide instructions and it is critical that you follow the directions provided by law enforcement. You may be ordered to evacuate your manor/building and if so you will be told where to go.

#### Get a Disaster/Emergency Kit

A disaster/emergency kit is simply a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency. Assemble your kit now, in advance of an emergency. Think about the basics for survival - food, water, and any life-sustaining items you require, e.g. medications. Store your kit in an easily accessible place. Remember to keep a pair of sturdy shoes, clothes and a flashlight next to or under your bed in case something happens at night. On the other side of this sheet are the basic items recommended, but you can add other items that are unique to your needs. Build your own kit, or purchase a premade kit.

Once your family is prepared, it is time to look to your neighbors. In times of disaster your neighbors will probably be the first ones available to come to your aid or who may need your aid. Find out before disaster strikes what resources you share and how you can work together for the good of one another.

## If you know what to do, you will be prepared

### Basic Disaster/Emergency Kit

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for five-seven days, for drinking and sanitation.
- Food, at least a five-day supply of non-perishable food and a can opener if kit contains canned food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and flashlight
- Extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Cash in small denominations
- Blanket or sleeping bag
- Toiletries, garbage bags and plastic bucket for personal hygiene and sanitation
- Emergency contact list
- Supplies for your pet including pet food and extra water

### Include Medications/Medical Supplies

If you take medications, be sure you have what you need to last at least a week and also keep a copy of your prescriptions and dosages. Rossmoor's Evac Pac program can help you organize your medications. Talk to your medical or in-home care providers about their disaster/emergency plans and about on-going medical treatments. If you use electric powered medical equipment, be sure to have back-up battery power.



The Golden Rain Foundation has an Emergency Operations Plan that will be activated in the event of a disaster, such as a major earthquake. The purpose of this plan is to establish a system for coordinating preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation of disasters and emergencies in Rossmoor. The plan is not disaster/emergency specific, role specific, or resident specific. Instead, it provides overall

guidance and establishes a general plan for the Golden Rain Foundation's response to disasters/emergencies. It focuses on how the Foundation will develop and prepare a response structure and how the Foundation will coordinate its response with residents and other response groups. The plan develops guidelines for coordination with the City of Walnut Creek.

### Additional Disaster/Emergency Information Resources Websites:

[http://www.walnut-creek.org/services/city/emergency\\_preparedness/](http://www.walnut-creek.org/services/city/emergency_preparedness/)  
<http://www.calema.ca.gov/Pages/default.aspx>  
<http://www.ready.gov/>  
<http://www.redcross.org/prepare>  
<http://72hours.org/>



GRF: 1-15-14

***“ PROPER PLANNING  
PREVENTS POOR  
PERFORMANCE ”***



**Thank you for your time!**

**Rossmoor Counseling  
Services**

**(925) 988-7750**

