



RESILIENT RESPONDERS

Psychological Resilience and Support for Personnel in Charge after Natural
Disasters

RESILIENT RESPONDERS CURRICULUM

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CONTENTS

1. MODULE 1: PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE TRAINING	9
1.1 Module Overview:	9
1.2 Learning Outcomes:	9
1.3 Session Outline and Key Topics:	9
1.4 Module Conclusion (5 minutes):	12
1.5 Knowledge Check (5 minutes):	13
1.6 Materials for Classroom Delivery:	13
1.7 Trainer's Guidelines and Tips:	13
1.8 Post-Module Follow-Up Suggestions:	14
1.9 Certificate of Completion:	14
2. MODULE 2: STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES	15
2.1 Module Overview:	15
2.2 Learning Outcomes:	16
2.3 Session Outline and Key Topics:	16
2.4 Module Conclusion (5 minutes):	19
2.5 Knowledge Check (5 minutes):	20
2.6 Materials for Classroom Delivery:	20
2.7 Trainer's Guidelines and Tips:	20
2.8 Post-Module Follow-Up Suggestions:	21
2.9 Certificate of Completion:	21
3. MODULE 3: PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID (PFA) AND TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE	22
3.1 Module Overview:	22
3.2 Learning Outcomes:	23
3.3 Session Outline and Key Topics:	23
3.4 Module Conclusion (5 minutes):	26
3.5 Knowledge Check (5 minutes):	27
3.6 Materials for Classroom Delivery:	27
3.7 Trainer's Guidelines and Tips:	28
3.8 Post-Module Follow-Up Suggestions:	28
3.9 Certificate of Completion:	28
4. MODULE 4: CRISIS COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION	30
4.1 Module Overview:	30
4.2 Learning Outcomes:	30
4.3 Session Outline and Key Topics:	30
4.4 Module Conclusion (5 minutes):	34
4.5 Knowledge Check (5 minutes):	34
4.6 Materials for Classroom Delivery:	35
4.7 Trainer's Guidelines and Tips:	35
4.8 Post-Module Follow-Up Suggestions:	36
4.9 Certificate of Completion:	36
5. MODULE 5: LEADERSHIP AND TEAM COORDINATION IN EMERGENCIES	37
5.1 Module Overview:	38
5.2 Learning Outcomes:	38

5.3	Session Outline and Key Topics:	38
5.4	Module Conclusion (5 minutes):	41
5.5	Knowledge Check (5 minutes):	42
5.6	Materials for Classroom Delivery:	42
5.7	Trainer's Guidelines and Tips:	43
5.8	Post-Module Follow-Up Suggestions:	43
5.9	Certificate of Completion:	43
6.	MODULE 6: POST-DISASTER MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SYSTEMS	45
6.1	Module Overview:	45
6.2	Learning Outcomes:	45
6.3	Session Outline and Key Topics:	45
6.4	Module Conclusion (5 minutes):	49
6.5	Knowledge Check (5 minutes):	49
6.6	Materials for Classroom Delivery:	50
6.7	Trainer's Guidelines and Tips:	50
6.8	Post-Module Follow-Up Suggestions:	51
6.9	Certificate of Completion:	51

INTRODUCTION

The **RESILIENT RESPONDERS Curriculum** is a comprehensive training framework designed to enhance the psychological resilience, communication competencies, leadership capabilities, and overall well-being of disaster response personnel. Developed through a rigorous, evidence-based approach, this curriculum aims to address the distinct challenges encountered by individuals and teams operating in high-stress emergency contexts.

Purpose and Scope

The primary objective of this curriculum is to equip disaster responders with the essential knowledge, practical skills, and coping mechanisms necessary to navigate the multifaceted demands of crisis situations. The training content is grounded in established psychological and organizational theories, offering a structured approach to building resilience, managing stress, and fostering effective leadership within emergency response teams.

Target Audience

The **RESILIENT RESPONDERS Curriculum** is designed to address the training needs of a diverse group of professionals and volunteers involved in disaster response operations. The program is tailored to enhance the competencies of individuals and teams operating in high-pressure environments, ensuring they are equipped with the skills necessary to manage psychological challenges, support peers, and lead effectively during crises. The primary target groups include:

- **First Responders:** Professionals directly engaged in emergency operations, including paramedics, firefighters, search and rescue personnel, and law enforcement officers. This group faces acute stressors during crises and requires skills to maintain psychological resilience, manage trauma, and support affected individuals effectively.
- **Team Leaders and Supervisors:** Individuals responsible for managing response teams and coordinating emergency operations. This audience requires advanced competencies in leadership, decision-making, team coordination, and stress management to maintain team cohesion and operational efficiency under pressure.
- **Peer Supporters and Mental Health First Aiders:** Personnel providing psychological first aid and emotional support to responders and survivors. This group benefits from training in trauma-informed care, active listening, and

effective referral practices to ensure that those in distress receive appropriate support.

- **Community Crisis Responders and Volunteers:** Individuals supporting disaster-affected communities, often without formal training in crisis management. This group requires foundational skills in stress management, psychological first aid, and communication to effectively contribute to response efforts while protecting their own well-being.

The curriculum adopts an inclusive approach, recognizing the varied backgrounds and experience levels of participants. Each module incorporates scalable content suitable for both frontline practitioners and leadership-level personnel, fostering a comprehensive learning environment that promotes peer learning, collaboration, and skill development across diverse roles.

Curriculum Structure

The **RESILIENT RESPONDERS Curriculum** comprises six meticulously developed modules, each focusing on a critical domain of disaster response and psychological resilience. The modular design allows for flexible implementation, enabling participants to engage with the material as a complete program or through individual modules tailored to specific learning objectives. The curriculum is structured for **face-to-face classroom delivery**, integrating a blend of theoretical instruction, interactive discussions, scenario-based simulations, and self-reflection activities to optimize knowledge retention and practical application.

The six modules are as follows:

- **Module 1: *Psychological Resilience Training*** – Developing foundational skills in adaptive thinking, self-awareness, and team-based resilience strategies.
- **Module 2: *Stress Management Techniques*** – Providing practical tools for managing stress, preventing burnout, and developing effective recovery plans.
- **Module 3: *Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Trauma-Informed Care*** – Equipping participants with skills to offer immediate emotional support and apply trauma-informed care principles.
- **Module 4: *Crisis Communication and Conflict Resolution*** – Enhancing competencies in active listening, de-escalation techniques, and effective digital crisis communication.
- **Module 5: *Leadership and Team Coordination in Emergencies*** – Building leadership resilience, decision-making skills, and team coordination strategies under pressure.

- **Module 6: *Post-Disaster Mental Health Support Systems*** – Establishing sustainable peer support networks, conducting debriefing sessions, and integrating professional referral pathways.

Key Pedagogical Features

The curriculum is distinguished by its academic rigor, practical relevance, and participant-centered approach, incorporating the following features:

- **Experiential Learning:** Integration of real-life case studies, role-plays, and scenario-based problem-solving exercises.
- **Peer Learning and Collaboration:** Group activities and discussion-based learning to facilitate knowledge sharing and collective problem-solving.
- **Evidence-Based Content:** Alignment with current research in psychology, organizational behavior, and trauma-informed care practices.
- **Modular and Flexible Design:** Adaptable structure allowing standalone module delivery or comprehensive program implementation.
- **Classroom-Ready Materials:** Provision of comprehensive teaching aids, including lesson plans, handouts, and assessment tools, tailored for in-person instruction.

Certification and Competency Development

Participants who successfully complete each module, including the associated assessments and reflective exercises, will be awarded a **Certificate of Completion**, recognizing their competencies in crisis response and psychological resilience. The curriculum is designed to contribute to participants' continuous professional development (CPD), enhancing their capacity to respond effectively to complex and high-pressure emergency situations.

The **RESILIENT RESPONDERS Curriculum** represents an essential contribution to the professional training landscape for disaster response personnel. By integrating theoretical knowledge with practical application, the curriculum prepares responders to address the psychological, communicative, and organizational challenges inherent in crisis scenarios. This structured educational framework is intended to strengthen individual and collective resilience, thereby contributing to more effective, coordinated, and compassionate disaster response operations.

MODULE 1: PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE TRAINING

A. Module Overview

This module equips disaster responders with skills to manage stress, adapt under pressure, and build resilience individually and within teams. Through interactive activities, participants learn to apply adaptive thinking techniques and recognize their personal strengths.

B. Key Words

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| ■ Resilience | ■ Emotional | ■ Problem-Solving |
| ■ Adaptive Thinking | Regulation | ■ Team Support |
| | ■ Stress Management | ■ Mindfulness |
| | ■ Self-Awareness | ■ Coping Strategies |

C. Learning Outcomes

- Understand the concept and importance of psychological resilience.
- Apply techniques such as cognitive reframing and the STOP method.
- Identify personal resilience strengths and coping strategies.
- Promote team resilience through peer support and collaboration.

D. Key Topics and Content Outline

- **Understanding Resilience:** Definition, importance, and characteristics.
- **Adaptive Thinking Techniques:** STOP technique and cognitive reframing.
- **Recognizing Personal Strengths:** Self-awareness and coping mechanisms.
- **Team-Based Resilience:** Promoting peer support and teamwork.

E. Interactive Activities

- **Group Brainstorm on Resilience:** Share personal definitions of resilience.
- **STOP Technique Practice:** Apply the method in crisis scenarios.
- **Personal Strengths Self-Assessment:** Identify and discuss personal coping strengths.
- **Team Problem-Solving Challenge:** Collaboratively allocate emergency resources.

F. Trainer Tips

- Encourage open sharing and active listening during group discussions.
- Provide real-life examples of resilience from past disasters.
- Give constructive feedback during role-plays.

G. Additional Resources

- PDF Guide: 'Quick Tips for Building Resilience'
- Video: 'How Resilient Responders Overcome Challenges'
- Toolkit: Link to a mental health and wellness resource library
- Printed handouts: "STOP Technique Guide," "Self-Assessment Worksheet"
- Scenario cards for role-plays

1. MODULE 1: PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE TRAINING

1.1 Module Overview:

This module develops participants' psychological resilience skills, enabling them to effectively handle stress and challenges during disaster response. Through interactive discussions, group activities, and self-reflection exercises, participants will learn individual and team-based resilience strategies for maintaining well-being and performance under pressure.

- **Objective:** Build foundational resilience skills for disaster response.
- **Target Audience:** Disaster responders, team leaders, and support staff.
- **Delivery Method:** Face-to-face classroom session (printed handouts, group discussions, and role-play activities).
- **Class Duration:** 90 minutes
- **Classroom Setup:** Arrange tables for group work (8–10 participants per group).

1.2 Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- **Define** psychological resilience and explain its importance.
- **Apply** adaptive thinking techniques to manage stress.
- **Identify** personal resilience strengths through self-reflection.
- **Demonstrate** teamwork skills that promote resilience in groups.

1.3 Session Outline and Key Topics:

The session is divided into **4 parts**, with time allocated for each topic and activity.

A. Understanding Resilience (15 minutes)

- **Definition of Resilience:**
Resilience is the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties and adapt well in the face of adversity, trauma, or stress.
- **Why is Resilience Important in Crisis Response?**
 1. **Maintains Decision-Making Under Pressure:** Helps responders stay clear-headed during chaotic situations.
 2. **Prevents Burnout:** Reduces the impact of emotional exhaustion from long-term crisis exposure.
 3. **Speeds Recovery:** Promotes faster emotional and psychological healing post-crisis.
- **Key Characteristics of Resilient Responders:**
 - Adaptability: Adjusting quickly to changing circumstances.
 - Emotional Regulation: Managing strong emotions effectively.
 - Problem-Solving Skills: Finding solutions under pressure.
 - Optimism: Maintaining a positive outlook during adversity.

Classroom Activity: Group Brainstorm (5 minutes)

- **Step 1:** Ask participants, *“What does resilience mean to you?”* and write responses on a flip chart.
- **Step 2:** In pairs, participants share personal experiences when they demonstrated resilience.
- **Trainer Note:** Encourage participants to identify both professional and personal experiences.

B. Building Adaptive Thinking (20 minutes)

- **What is Adaptive Thinking?**
Adaptive thinking is the ability to shift thoughts and behaviors quickly to respond to changing situations effectively.
- **Techniques for Adaptive Thinking:**
 1. **Cognitive Reframing:**

- Definition: Changing how you interpret a situation to reduce stress.
- Example: Instead of saying, “This is impossible,” say, “This is a challenge, but I can break it down step-by-step.”
- 2. **STOP Technique:** A practical tool for handling high-pressure situations.
 - **S (Stop):** Pause and recognize what’s happening.
 - **T (Take a Breath):** Slow down your breathing to calm your body.
 - **O (Observe):** What are your thoughts, feelings, and surroundings?
 - **P (Proceed):** Choose the best response, not the fastest reaction.
- 3. **Turning Stress into a Signal:**
 - View stress as a helpful signal that your body is preparing for action.
 - Use the energy from stress to focus rather than freeze.

Classroom Activity: Partner Reframing Practice (10 minutes)

- **Step 1:** Distribute the printed “Reframing Worksheet” with three stressful scenarios.
Example Scenario:
“You are in charge of supplies during an emergency, but there are not enough blankets for everyone. People are upset. What is your initial thought?”
- **Step 2:** In pairs, participants apply the STOP technique and reframe their initial thoughts into constructive solutions.
- **Step 3:** Volunteers share their reframed responses with the class.
- **Trainer Note:** Emphasize that adaptive thinking is a skill developed through practice.

C. Recognizing Personal Resilience Strengths (20 minutes)

- **Why Knowing Your Strengths Builds Resilience:**
Self-awareness allows individuals to use their best skills when under pressure and know when to seek support.
- **Types of Coping Mechanisms:**
 - **Positive Coping Strategies:** Problem-solving, seeking peer support, practicing mindfulness.

- **Negative Coping Strategies:** Avoiding problems, withdrawing from others, or unhealthy habits.

Classroom Activity: Self-Reflection Exercise (10 minutes)

- **Step 1:** Distribute the “Resilience Strengths Self-Assessment” handout. Participants individually answer questions like:
 - *What are your strongest coping skills under pressure?*
 - *How do you usually recover after a tough situation?*
 - *What role do you often play in a team during a crisis (e.g., decision-maker, supporter, communicator)?*
- **Step 2:** In small groups (4–5 participants), each participant shares one strength they discovered about themselves.
- **Trainer Note:** Normalize different styles of resilience and emphasize that everyone brings unique strengths to a team.

D. Team-Based Resilience (15 minutes)

- **Why Team Resilience Matters:**
 - **Stronger Together:** Collective resilience helps teams navigate complex crises.
 - **Emotional Safety Net:** Teams that trust each other can handle stress more effectively.
 - **Better Decision-Making:** Collaborative problem-solving leads to better outcomes.
- **Elements of Team-Based Resilience:**
 0. **Effective Communication:** Use active listening and clarify roles within the team.
 1. **Peer Support:** Check in with colleagues and share emotional loads.
 2. **Collective Problem-Solving:** Make decisions collaboratively under pressure.
 3. **Celebrating Successes:** Acknowledge team achievements, even small ones.

Classroom Activity: Team Problem-Solving Challenge (10 minutes)

- **Scenario:** A severe storm has caused road closures, and your team has limited food and medical supplies to distribute. How will you prioritize who gets aid first?
- **Step 1:** Each group of 4–6 participants has 5 minutes to create a quick response plan.
- **Step 2:** Groups present their solutions in 2 minutes each.
- **Discussion Point:** Highlight how teams made decisions, resolved disagreements, and assigned roles under pressure.
- **Trainer Note:** Emphasize teamwork behaviors that contributed to success, such as active listening and cooperation.

1.4 Module Conclusion (5 minutes):

- **Key Takeaways:**
 - ✓ Resilience is built through self-awareness, adaptive thinking, and teamwork.
 - ✓ Techniques like the STOP method and reframing can improve adaptive thinking.
 - ✓ Knowing personal strengths and working together as a team enhances resilience during crises.
- **Final Reflection Activity:**
Distribute the “My Resilience Action Plan” template. Participants write down:
 - One new resilience technique I will practice is: _____
 - One strength I will use during future crises is: _____
 - One way I will support my team’s resilience is: _____
- Collect reflections and offer participants the option to share their commitments voluntarily.

1.5 Knowledge Check (5 minutes):

Conduct a brief **verbal quiz** to review key concepts, or distribute a **printed multiple-choice quiz**.

Quiz Questions Example:

1. What is the first step of the STOP technique? (Answer: Stop)
2. Name one characteristic of a resilient responder. (Answer: Emotional regulation, adaptability, or problem-solving)
3. What is cognitive reframing? (Answer: Changing the way we view a situation to reduce stress)

4. *Why is team-based resilience important? (Answer: It helps teams navigate crises through collaboration and mutual support)*
5. *What is one positive coping strategy for resilience? (Answer: Seeking peer support)*

1.6 Materials for Classroom Delivery:

- **Printed Handouts:**
 - “Reframing Worksheet” (with 3 scenarios)
 - “Resilience Strengths Self-Assessment”
 - “My Resilience Action Plan” Template
 - “STOP Technique Guide”
- **Classroom Tools:**
 - Flip chart or whiteboard and markers
- **Suggested Classroom Setup:**
 - Arrange tables for groups of 8–10 participants.
 - Leave space for role-playing activities or group presentations.

1.7 Trainer’s Guidelines and Tips:

- **Time Management:** Use a timer to ensure activities fit within the allocated time.
- **Facilitation Style:** Create an open environment, encouraging participants to share experiences without judgment.
- **Group Dynamics:** Mix participants into diverse groups to promote cross-experience learning.
- **Wrap-Up:** Conclude with a summary of key points and emphasize the importance of practicing resilience daily.

1.8 Post-Module Follow-Up Suggestions:

- **Peer Practice Groups:** Encourage participants to practice STOP techniques together during breaks or meetings.
- **Weekly Reflection Journal:** Suggest that participants journal one situation per week where they applied a resilience skill.
- **Team Check-Ins:** Advise leaders to conduct brief resilience check-ins during team meetings.

1.9 Certificate of Completion:

Participants receive a **certificate of completion** upon successfully passing the knowledge check.

MODULE 2: STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

A. Module Overview

This module provides disaster responders with practical tools to manage stress effectively, prevent burnout, and maintain well-being during and after crisis situations. Participants engage in hands-on exercises to develop immediate and long-term stress management strategies.

B. Key Words

Stress Relief	Emotional	Relaxation
Burnout Prevention	Well-being	Techniques
Coping Mechanisms	Self-Care	Long-Term
	Recovery Plans	Resilience

C. Learning Outcomes

- Recognize common signs and sources of stress.
- Apply immediate stress relief techniques (e.g., Box Breathing, Grounding).
- Develop personal and team-level stress recovery plans.
- Identify and implement burnout prevention strategies.

D. Key Topics and Content Outline

- **Understanding Stress:** Types (acute, chronic) and common symptoms (physical, emotional, cognitive).
- **Immediate Stress Relief Techniques:** Box Breathing, 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding technique, and positive self-talk.
- **Burnout Prevention Strategies:** Work-life boundaries, peer support, microbreaks, and regular debriefing.
- **Developing Stress Recovery Plans:** Physical, emotional, and cognitive recovery techniques.

E. Interactive Activities

- **Guided Breathing Exercise:** Practice Box Breathing for immediate stress relief.

- **Burnout Warning Signs Checklist:** Complete a self-assessment and share insights in pairs.
- **Peer Discussion Circle:** Discuss personal coping mechanisms with the group.
- **Create a Personal Stress Recovery Plan:** Develop and share recovery strategies in small teams.

F. Trainer Tips

- Use a calm and supportive tone when guiding breathing exercises.
- Share real-life examples of burnout prevention strategies from disaster response teams.
- Emphasize the importance of peer support and self-care.

G. Additional Resources

- PDF Guide: *'Quick Stress-Relief Techniques for Responders'*
- Video: *'Understanding Burnout and How to Prevent It'*
- Self-Care Toolkit: Techniques for managing secondary trauma
- Printed handouts: “Box Breathing Guide,” “Burnout Warning Signs Checklist,” and “My Stress Recovery Plan” template

2. MODULE 2: STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

2.1 Module Overview:

This module equips participants with practical techniques to manage stress effectively during and after disaster response operations. The session combines self-reflection exercises, group activities, and real-life simulations to help participants recognize, prevent, and recover from stress.

- **Objective:** Provide practical tools for managing stress, preventing burnout, and sustaining long-term resilience.
- **Target Audience:** Disaster responders, team leaders, and support staff.
- **Delivery Method:** Face-to-face classroom session (printed handouts, group discussions, and role-play activities).
- **Class Duration:** 90 minutes
- **Classroom Setup:** Tables arranged for group discussions (8–10 participants per group).

2.2 Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- **Recognize** common signs and sources of stress in disaster response.
- **Apply** immediate stress relief techniques (e.g., breathing exercises and grounding techniques).
- **Identify** personal and team-level strategies for burnout prevention.
- **Develop** personal stress recovery plans to maintain long-term resilience.

2.3 Session Outline and Key Topics:

The session is divided into **4 parts**, with time allocated for each topic and activity.

A. Understanding Stress and Its Impact (15 minutes)

- **Definition of Stress:**
Stress is the body's response to any demand or challenge. It can be both positive (motivating) and negative (overwhelming).
- **Types of Stress:**
 1. **Acute Stress:** Short-term stress that occurs in response to immediate threats.
 2. **Chronic Stress:** Long-term stress resulting from ongoing challenges.
- **Common Sources of Stress for Responders:**
 - High-pressure situations (e.g., disaster scenes)
 - Long working hours without breaks
 - Witnessing trauma and loss
 - Balancing professional and personal life
 - Team conflicts or unclear roles
- **Signs and Symptoms of Stress:**
 - **Physical Signs:** Fatigue, headaches, rapid heartbeat, difficulty sleeping
 - **Emotional Signs:** Irritability, anxiety, sadness
 - **Behavioral Signs:** Withdrawal, outbursts, substance misuse

- **Cognitive Signs:** Difficulty concentrating, indecisiveness

Classroom Activity: Stress Signal Identification (5 minutes)

- **Step 1:** Trainer reads aloud a scenario:
"During a disaster relief mission, you feel tense, can't sleep, and start avoiding your teammates."
- **Step 2:** Ask participants:
 - *What type of stress is this (acute or chronic)?*
 - *What signs are present (physical, emotional, behavioral, or cognitive)?*
- **Step 3:** Write responses on the flip chart under each stress category.

B. Immediate Stress Relief Techniques (20 minutes)

- **What Are Immediate Stress Relief Techniques?** Methods that reduce tension quickly and help responders maintain composure under pressure.
- **Key Techniques:**
 1. **Box Breathing Exercise (4-4-4-4):**
 - Inhale through your nose for 4 seconds
 - Hold your breath for 4 seconds
 - Exhale slowly for 4 seconds
 - Hold for 4 seconds
 - Repeat for 2 minutes
 2. **5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique:** A sensory exercise to reduce anxiety:
 - **5:** Things you can see
 - **4:** Things you can touch
 - **3:** Things you can hear
 - **2:** Things you can smell
 - **1:** Thing you can taste
 3. **Positive Self-Talk:** Replace negative thoughts with encouraging statements.
 - Instead of "I can't handle this," say "I am doing my best in a tough situation."

Classroom Activity: Stress Relief Practice (10 minutes)

- **Step 1:** Guide participants through a 2-minute Box Breathing session using a timer.
- **Step 2:** Pair participants for a role-play:
 - One participant simulates being in a stressful situation.
 - The other guides them through the 5-4-3-2-1 technique.
- **Step 3:** Collect feedback:
 - *How did you feel before and after the breathing exercise?*
 - *Which technique felt most effective for you?*

C. Burnout Prevention Strategies (20 minutes)

- **What is Burnout?**
Burnout is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged and excessive stress.
- **Signs of Burnout:**
 - Constant fatigue
 - Loss of motivation
 - Feeling detached from work
 - Reduced performance
- **Common Causes of Burnout in Disaster Response Teams:**
 - Long working hours without rest
 - Emotional strain from witnessing trauma
 - Role ambiguity or conflicts within the team
 - Lack of recognition for efforts
- **Burnout Prevention Techniques:**
 0. **Work-Life Boundaries:** Set limits and take breaks during shifts.
 1. **Peer Support:** Check in with teammates and provide emotional support.
 2. **Microbreaks:** Take 5-minute breaks every hour to recharge.
 3. **Exercise and Nutrition:** Stay physically active and hydrated.
 4. **Restorative Sleep:** Develop healthy sleeping habits.
 5. **Seeking Help Early:** Report early signs of burnout to supervisors.

Classroom Activity: Burnout Warning Signs (10 minutes)

- **Step 1:** Distribute the “Burnout Checklist” handout. Participants tick off which signs they’ve experienced in the past month.
- **Step 2:** In pairs, participants share one coping strategy they use to prevent burnout.
- **Step 3:** Trainer facilitates a brief discussion and lists additional strategies on the whiteboard.

D. Developing Personal Stress Recovery Plans (20 minutes)

- **What is a Stress Recovery Plan?**
A personalized plan that outlines steps for physical, emotional, and mental recovery after experiencing stress.
- **Key Components of a Recovery Plan:**
 1. **Physical Recovery:** Rest, hydration, balanced meals, and gentle exercise.
 2. **Emotional Recovery:** Talking to a peer, journaling feelings, or engaging in hobbies.
 3. **Cognitive Recovery:** Relaxing the mind through reading, puzzles, or music.
 4. **Social Support:** Reconnecting with family, friends, or a support group.
 5. **Time for Self-Care:** Scheduling personal time to recharge.

Classroom Activity: My Stress Recovery Plan (10 minutes)

- **Step 1:** Distribute the “My Stress Recovery Plan” handout. Participants fill out:
 - *What physical activities help you recover from stress?*
 - *Who can you reach out to for support after a difficult situation?*
 - *What self-care habits will you practice regularly?*
- **Step 2:** Invite volunteers to share their top strategies with the group.

2.4 Module Conclusion (5 minutes):

- **Key Takeaways:**
 - Stress is a natural response to crisis situations but can be managed effectively.
 - Immediate techniques like **Box Breathing** and **Grounding** help reduce stress quickly.

- **Burnout prevention** requires self-awareness, breaks, and peer support.
- A **personalized Stress Recovery Plan** is essential for long-term resilience.
- **Final Reflection:**
Participants complete their “Stress Recovery Plan” and write down:

0. *One technique I will practice regularly:* _____
1. *One way I will support my peers to prevent burnout:* _____
2. *One action I will take after a stressful event:* _____

2.5 Knowledge Check (5 minutes):

- Conduct a **verbal quiz** or distribute a **printed multiple-choice quiz** to review key concepts.

Quiz Questions Example:

1. *Name one immediate stress relief technique. (Answer: Box Breathing or 5-4-3-2-1 Technique)*
2. *What is burnout? (Answer: Emotional exhaustion from prolonged stress)*
3. *Give an example of a physical recovery method after stress. (Answer: Rest, hydration, or gentle exercise)*
4. *Why is peer support important in burnout prevention? (Answer: It provides emotional support and reduces isolation)*

2.6 Materials for Classroom Delivery:

- **Printed Handouts:**
 - “Burnout Warning Signs Checklist”
 - “5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique Guide”
 - “Box Breathing Exercise Guide”
 - “My Stress Recovery Plan” Template
- **Classroom Tools:**
 - Whiteboard or flip chart and markers
 - Timer for activities
- **Classroom Setup:**
 - Arrange tables for groups of 8–10 participants.

- Leave space for role-playing activities.

2.7 Trainer's Guidelines and Tips:

- **Time Management:** Use a timer to ensure each section is completed within the allotted time.
- **Group Participation:** Encourage participants to share real-life experiences but ensure a safe and supportive environment.
- **Activity Emphasis:** Prioritize experiential learning through group discussions and role-play.
- **Wrap-Up:** Summarize key points and encourage participants to practice techniques regularly.

2.8 Post-Module Follow-Up Suggestions:

- **Weekly Practice:** Encourage participants to practice Box Breathing for 2 minutes daily.
- **Peer Check-Ins:** Advise teams to hold weekly burnout check-ins using the "Burnout Checklist."
- **Self-Reflection Journals:** Recommend participants track their stress management techniques for one month.

2.9 Certificate of Completion:

Participants receive a **certificate of completion** upon successfully passing the knowledge check.

MODULE 3: PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID (PFA) AND TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

A. Module Overview

This module trains participants to provide immediate emotional and psychological support using Psychological First Aid (PFA) principles and trauma-informed care techniques. The focus is on offering practical support, managing secondary trauma, and understanding when to refer individuals to professional help.

B. Key Words

📖 Psychological First Aid (PFA)
📖 Trauma-Informed Care

📖 Active Listening
📖 Empathy
📖 Crisis Response

📖 Cultural Sensitivity
📖 Secondary Trauma
📖 Support Networks

C. Learning Outcomes

- Explain the principles of PFA: *Look, Listen, Link*.
- Provide trauma-informed care with empathy and sensitivity.
- Recognize and manage secondary trauma.
- Differentiate between peer support and professional counseling and make appropriate referrals.

D. Key Topics and Content Outline

- **Psychological First Aid (PFA):** Principles and step-by-step approach (*Look, Listen, Link*).
- **Trauma-Informed Care:** Five principles – *Safety, Trust, Peer Support, Empowerment, Cultural Sensitivity*.
- **Managing Secondary Trauma:** Identifying signs and using coping strategies.
- **Peer Support vs. Professional Counseling:** When and how to refer someone to professional support.

E. Interactive Activities

- **PFA Role-Play:** Practice “Look, Listen, Link” in a simulated crisis conversation.
- **Trauma-Informed Scenarios:** Discuss how to apply trauma-informed principles in different crisis situations.
- **Peer Support Circle:** Practice empathetic listening and supportive responses.
- **Referral Practice Exercise:** Simulate a referral to professional services using a provided scenario.

F. Trainer Tips

- Foster a safe and supportive learning environment during role-plays.
- Offer debriefing time after emotional exercises.
- Emphasize the difference between *supporting* and *fixing* during PFA practice.
- Remind participants that PFA is not therapy but a first response.

G. Additional Resources

- PDF Guide: '*PFA Quick Reference Sheet*'
- Video: '*Best Practices for Trauma-Informed Care*'

- Self-Care Toolkit: Techniques for managing secondary trauma
- Printed handouts: “PFA Principles Guide,” “Trauma-Informed Care Overview,” “Peer Support vs. Professional Counseling” comparison
- Scenario cards for role-plays

3. MODULE 3: PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID (PFA) AND TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

3.1 Module Overview:

This module trains participants to provide immediate emotional and psychological support to individuals affected by crises. The session combines role-play, group discussions, and scenario-based exercises to help participants apply Psychological First Aid (PFA) techniques and trauma-informed care principles.

- **Objective:** Equip participants with skills to deliver PFA and apply trauma-informed care in crisis situations.
- **Target Audience:** Disaster responders, first aiders, team leaders, and support staff.
- **Delivery Method:** Face-to-face classroom session (printed handouts, role-plays, and group discussions).
- **Class Duration:** 90 minutes
- **Classroom Setup:** Tables arranged for group discussions (8–10 participants per group).

3.2 Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- **Define** Psychological First Aid (PFA) and explain its importance in crisis response.
- **Apply** the core action principles of PFA: *Look, Listen, and Link*.
- **Incorporate** trauma-informed care principles when supporting distressed individuals.
- **Manage** secondary trauma and protect their own well-being.

3.3 Session Outline and Key Topics:

The session is divided into **4 parts**, with time allocated for each topic and activity.

A. Introduction to Psychological First Aid (PFA) (15 minutes)

- **What is Psychological First Aid (PFA)?**

Psychological First Aid is a humane, supportive, and practical response to someone who is suffering and may need help. It involves comforting people, assessing their needs, and helping them access support.

- **Why is PFA Important?**

1. **Reduces Distress:** Provides immediate emotional relief.
2. **Promotes Recovery:** Helps people feel supported and safe.
3. **Prevents Further Harm:** Reduces the risk of long-term psychological trauma.
4. **Builds Connection:** Provides a bridge to further services if needed.

- **When to Use PFA:**

- Immediately after disasters or traumatic events.
- During search and rescue operations.
- In shelters, hospitals, or community centers.

The Three Action Principles of PFA:

1. **LOOK:** Check for immediate safety and assess the situation.
 - Identify people in urgent need of help.
 - Observe for signs of distress (e.g., crying, shaking, or confusion).
 - Ensure the area is safe for yourself and others.
2. **LISTEN:** Approach people respectfully and help them feel calm.
 - Use **active listening** techniques (open body language, nodding, eye contact).
 - **Acknowledge emotions:** “It’s okay to feel this way.”
 - Let people share their experiences without interrupting or judging.
3. **LINK:** Connect people with appropriate services and social support.
 - Provide information about available resources (e.g., shelters, medical services).
 - Encourage people to contact family or friends.
 - Follow up if possible to ensure they received help.

Classroom Activity: PFA Group Role-Play (10 minutes)

- **Step 1:** Distribute PFA role-play cards (each with a different scenario).
Example Scenario: A woman is sitting alone at a shelter, crying softly. She appears disoriented and is refusing food.
- **Step 2:** In groups of three, assign roles: **Responder, Survivor, and Observer.**
 - The **Responder** practices PFA using the **LOOK, LISTEN, and LINK** principles.
 - The **Survivor** reacts naturally to the situation.
 - The **Observer** provides feedback on the responder's approach.
- **Step 3:** Rotate roles after 5 minutes.
- **Trainer Debrief:** Gather the class and discuss:
 - *What techniques worked well?*
 - *How did the survivor feel during the interaction?*
 - *What would you do differently next time?*

B. Trauma-Informed Care Principles (20 minutes)

- **What is Trauma-Informed Care (TIC)?**
Trauma-Informed Care recognizes the widespread impact of trauma and promotes environments of healing and recovery.
- **The Five Core Principles of Trauma-Informed Care:**
 1. **Safety:** Create a physically and emotionally safe environment.
 2. **Trust and Transparency:** Be honest, explain what you are doing, and respect boundaries.
 3. **Peer Support:** Encourage connection and peer support.
 4. **Empowerment and Choice:** Allow survivors to make their own decisions.
 5. **Cultural Sensitivity:** Respect and adapt to cultural differences in expressing distress and seeking help.

Classroom Activity: Trauma-Informed Scenarios (10 minutes)

- **Step 1:** Trainer presents two short scenarios:
 1. *A distressed mother refuses to leave her child's side after a building collapse.*
 2. *A man becomes agitated when asked to move to a different area of the shelter.*
- **Step 2:** In small groups, participants answer:

- *How can you apply trauma-informed principles in this situation?*
- *What could you say to provide support without causing further distress?*
- **Step 3:** Groups share their responses, and the trainer highlights effective approaches using the 5 TIC principles.

C. Managing Secondary Trauma (15 minutes)

- **What is Secondary Trauma (Compassion Fatigue)?**
Secondary trauma occurs when responders experience emotional distress from helping others in crisis.
- **Common Signs of Secondary Trauma:**
 - Emotional: Feeling numb, irritable, or hopeless
 - Physical: Headaches, fatigue, or trouble sleeping
 - Behavioral: Avoiding certain situations or becoming withdrawn
- **Strategies to Manage Secondary Trauma:**
 0. **Peer Debriefing:** Discussing difficult experiences with colleagues.
 1. **Self-Care Practices:** Regular sleep, exercise, and proper nutrition.
 2. **Mindfulness Techniques:** Breathing exercises and grounding techniques.
 3. **Setting Boundaries:** Limiting exposure to distressing scenes when possible.
 4. **Seeking Professional Support:** Contacting counselors when needed.

Classroom Activity: Peer Support Circle (5 minutes)

- **Step 1:** Form a circle and ask participants:
“When you are emotionally drained after helping others, what self-care method works best for you?”
- **Step 2:** Each participant briefly shares one self-care practice.
- **Step 3:** Trainer writes responses on the flip chart to create a collective self-care resource list.

D. Cultural Sensitivity in PFA (10 minutes)

- **Why Cultural Sensitivity is Important:**

Cultural beliefs influence how people express distress and seek help. Responders should respect these differences to avoid causing harm.

- **Principles of Culturally Sensitive PFA:**

- **Active Listening Without Judgment:** Allow survivors to express emotions in their own way.
- **Inclusive Language:** Avoid assumptions or stereotypes.
- **Awareness of Non-Verbal Communication:** Respect cultural norms around personal space, eye contact, and touch.
- **Collaboration:** When possible, involve community leaders or cultural mediators.

Classroom Activity: Cross-Cultural Role-Play (5 minutes)

- **Step 1:** Trainer presents a scenario where a survivor from a different cultural background is unwilling to speak to responders.
- **Step 2:** Participants discuss in pairs:
 - *How would you approach this survivor respectfully?*
 - *What questions could you ask to better understand their needs?*
- **Step 3:** Trainer highlights key cultural considerations from participant responses.

3.4 Module Conclusion (5 minutes):

- **Key Takeaways:**

- Psychological First Aid involves three key steps: **LOOK, LISTEN, LINK.**
- Trauma-informed care is based on **safety, trust, peer support, empowerment, and cultural sensitivity.**
- Secondary trauma is common for responders and can be managed through self-care and peer support.
- Culturally sensitive approaches ensure effective support for all survivors.

- **Final Reflection Activity:**

Participants complete their “PFA Action Plan” worksheet with answers to:

0. One PFA technique I will use in my next response is: _____
1. One trauma-informed principle I will prioritize is: _____

2. One self-care action I will commit to is: _____

3.5 Knowledge Check (5 minutes):

- Conduct a **verbal quiz** or distribute a **printed multiple-choice quiz** to review key concepts.

Quiz Questions Example:

1. Which of the following is NOT a PFA action principle?
 - A) Look
 - B) Listen
 - C) Link
 - D) Advise (Answer: D)
2. Which principle of trauma-informed care focuses on giving survivors choices?
 - A) Empowerment ☒
 - B) Trust
 - C) Safety
 - D) Peer Support
3. What is secondary trauma?
 - A) Stress caused by helping others in distress ☒
 - B) A minor injury
 - C) Trauma from a previous accident
 - D) A physical illness
4. Name one technique to manage secondary trauma: (Answer: Peer debriefing, self-care, mindfulness, or setting boundaries)
5. Why is cultural sensitivity important in PFA?
(Answer: It ensures survivors feel respected and understood according to their cultural norms.)

3.6 Materials for Classroom Delivery:

- **Printed Handouts:**
 - “PFA Action Principles: Look, Listen, Link”
 - “5 Principles of Trauma-Informed Care”

- “Signs of Secondary Trauma”
- “PFA Action Plan” Template
- **Classroom Tools:**
 - Flip chart or whiteboard and markers
 - Scenario role-play cards
 - Timer for activities
- **Classroom Setup:**
 - Arrange tables for groups of 4–6 participants.
 - Allow open space for role-playing and peer circles.

3.7 Trainer’s Guidelines and Tips:

- **Time Management:** Use a timer for activities to ensure a balanced session.
- **Group Participation:** Create a supportive environment where participants feel safe sharing.
- **Emotional Safety:** Acknowledge that discussing trauma may be emotional. Offer breaks if needed.
- **Wrap-Up:** End with a positive reminder that helping others starts with taking care of yourself.

3.8 Post-Module Follow-Up Suggestions:

- **Peer Practice Groups:** Encourage participants to meet monthly to practice PFA skills.
- **Reflection Journals:** Recommend keeping a journal of PFA experiences.
- **Team Check-Ins:** Encourage regular team debriefings to reduce secondary trauma.

3.9 Certificate of Completion:

Participants receive a **certificate of completion** upon successfully passing the knowledge check.

MODULE 4: CRISIS COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

A. Module Overview

This module trains participants to communicate effectively during crises, manage conflicts under pressure, and use digital and face-to-face strategies to promote team cohesion. Participants practice active listening, de-escalation techniques, and digital crisis messaging through real-life scenarios and role-plays.

B. Key Words

■ Crisis Communication	■ Digital Communication	■ Misinformation Management
■ Active Listening	■ De-Escalation Techniques	■ Team Coordination
■ Conflict Resolution		■ Communication Channels

C. Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate active listening and empathetic communication during crises.
- Apply de-escalation techniques to manage high-pressure situations.
- Resolve conflicts effectively using appropriate resolution styles.
- Utilize digital platforms for clear and effective crisis communication.

D. Key Topics and Content Outline

- **Empathy and Active Listening:** Techniques for understanding and validating emotions.
- **De-Escalation Techniques:** Strategies to reduce tension and prevent conflicts.
- **Conflict Resolution Styles:** Thomas-Kilmann conflict resolution model (*Competing, Collaborating, Compromising, Avoiding, Accommodating*).
- **Digital Crisis Communication:** Best practices for virtual updates and crisis messaging.

E. Interactive Activities

- **Active Listening Role-Play:** Practice responding to a distressed colleague with empathy and active listening techniques.
- **De-Escalation Simulation:** Handle an agitated individual in a crisis scenario using calming techniques.
- **Conflict Resolution Challenge:** Resolve a simulated team conflict using one of the conflict resolution styles.
- **Crisis Messaging Exercise:** Draft a clear, reassuring digital message for a crisis update.

F. Trainer Tips

- Use real-life examples of successful crisis communication to illustrate techniques.
- Model empathy and calmness during simulations.
- Provide constructive feedback, focusing on communication style and clarity.
- Emphasize the importance of digital communication etiquette during crises.

G. Additional Resources

- PDF Guide: *'Quick Tips for Effective Crisis Communication'*
- Video: *'The Power of Active Listening in Emergencies'*
- Checklist: *'Digital Crisis Communication Best Practices'*
- Printed handouts: “Active Listening Techniques,” “De-Escalation Strategies,” “Conflict Resolution Styles,” and “Digital Crisis Communication Tips”
- Scenario cards for role-plays

4. MODULE 4: CRISIS COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

4.1 Module Overview:

This module trains participants to communicate effectively during crises, resolve conflicts under pressure, and use digital and face-to-face communication strategies in high-stakes situations. Through interactive simulations, group discussions, and role-plays, participants will develop skills to manage difficult conversations, prevent misunderstandings, and promote team cohesion during emergencies.

- **Objective:** Provide participants with practical skills for crisis communication, de-escalation, and conflict resolution.
- **Target Audience:** Disaster responders, team leaders, and crisis coordinators.
- **Delivery Method:** Face-to-face classroom session (printed handouts, role-plays, and group discussions).
- **Class Duration:** 90 minutes
- **Classroom Setup:** Tables arranged for group discussions (8–10 participants per group).

4.2 Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- **Demonstrate** active listening and empathetic communication skills during crises.
- **Apply** de-escalation techniques to manage tense situations.
- **Resolve** conflicts effectively within crisis response teams.

- **Utilize** digital platforms for rapid and clear crisis communication.

4.3 Session Outline and Key Topics:

The session is divided into **4 parts**, with time allocated for each topic and activity.

A. Empathy and Active Listening (15 minutes)

- **What is Active Listening?**
Active listening is a communication technique where the listener fully concentrates, understands, and responds thoughtfully to the speaker.
- **The 3 Key Elements of Active Listening:**
 1. **Verbal Cues:** Paraphrasing, reflecting feelings, and asking clarifying questions.
 2. **Non-Verbal Cues:** Maintaining eye contact, using appropriate facial expressions, and nodding.
 3. **Emotional Attunement:** Showing empathy and understanding the speaker's emotions.
- **Empathy in Crisis Communication:**
 - **Empathy** means understanding and sharing the feelings of others without judgment.
 - Simple phrases that convey empathy:
 - "That sounds very difficult for you."
 - "I can see how upset you are."
 - "Thank you for sharing how you feel."

Classroom Activity: Active Listening Practice (5 minutes)

- **Step 1:** Participants pair up and take turns speaking for 2 minutes about a stressful experience (e.g., being late for an important event).
- **Step 2:** The listener must practice:
 - **Paraphrasing:** "So, you felt frustrated because you were stuck in traffic and couldn't make the meeting on time."
 - **Reflecting Emotion:** "It sounds like you felt anxious and helpless."
- **Step 3:** Switch roles after 2 minutes.
- **Trainer Debrief:** Ask participants:
 - *How did it feel to be truly listened to?*

- *What was the hardest part of listening without interrupting?*

B. De-Escalation Techniques for Crisis Situations (20 minutes)

- **What is De-Escalation?**

De-escalation is the process of calming a tense situation to prevent conflict from escalating further.

- **Common Causes of Escalation During Crises:**

- Fear or panic
- Frustration and confusion
- Lack of information
- Perceived disrespect

- **Five Key Techniques for De-Escalation:**

0. **Stay Calm:** Use a steady, low, and clear voice.
1. **Acknowledge Feelings:** Validate emotions without judgment.
 - Example: "I can see that you are upset. I'm here to help."
2. **Give Space:** Maintain an appropriate physical distance.
3. **Offer Choices:** Provide simple options to empower the individual.
 - Example: "Would you like to sit or stand while we talk?"
4. **Avoid Triggers:** Do not argue or use threatening body language.

Classroom Activity: De-Escalation Role-Play (10 minutes)

- **Step 1:** Distribute de-escalation scenario cards.
Example Scenario: A distressed individual is shouting and accusing the team of not providing enough food supplies at a shelter.
- **Step 2:** In groups of three, assign roles: **Responder, Individual in Crisis, and Observer.**
 - The **Responder** applies de-escalation techniques.
 - The **Individual in Crisis** reacts naturally.
 - The **Observer** provides feedback using the de-escalation checklist.
- **Step 3:** Rotate roles after 5 minutes.
- **Trainer Debrief:** Ask the group:
 - *Which de-escalation techniques were most effective?*
 - *How did the individual's behavior change during the interaction?*

C. Conflict Resolution Strategies (20 minutes)

- **What is Conflict Resolution?**

Conflict resolution is the process of resolving disagreements **constructively** and respectfully.

- **Common Causes of Conflict During Crisis Response:**

- Role confusion or overlapping responsibilities
- Differences in priorities (e.g., resource allocation)
- Miscommunication or lack of communication
- Cultural misunderstandings

The Five Conflict Resolution Styles (Thomas-Kilmann Model):

Style	When to Use
Competing: Assertive, win-lose approach.	In emergencies where quick decisions are needed.
Collaborating: Find a win-win solution.	When both parties' needs are important.
Compromising: Find a middle ground.	When a quick, temporary solution is acceptable.
Avoiding: Withdraw from the conflict.	When the issue is minor or time is needed to cool off.
Accommodating: Yield to others' needs.	When maintaining harmony is more important than winning.

The Conflict Resolution Process (5 Steps):

1. **Identify the Problem:** Clearly define the issue.
2. **Understand Perspectives:** Let all parties explain their views without interruption.
3. **Generate Options:** Brainstorm solutions together.
4. **Agree on a Solution:** Find a mutually acceptable resolution.
5. **Follow Up:** Ensure the resolution is working.

Classroom Activity: Conflict Resolution Simulation (10 minutes)

- **Scenario:** Two team members argue over who should distribute water supplies first — to families with children or to the elderly.
- **Step 1:** Form small groups and assign roles: **Team Leader, Team Member 1, and Team Member 2.**

- **Step 2:** The group attempts to resolve the conflict using one of the conflict resolution styles.
- **Step 3:** Each group presents their solution and explains why they chose their resolution style.
- **Trainer Debrief:** Discuss which resolution styles were most appropriate for the scenario.

D. Digital Crisis Communication (10 minutes)

- **The Role of Digital Communication During Crises:**
Digital platforms, such as messaging apps and social media, are essential for real-time updates, coordination, and public information sharing during crises.
- **Best Practices for Effective Digital Crisis Communication:**
 1. **Use Clear and Concise Language:** Share essential information using short, simple sentences.
 2. **Confirm Information Before Sharing:** Avoid spreading unverified details.
 3. **Maintain Professionalism:** Keep a calm and respectful tone, even in urgent situations.
 4. **Manage Misinformation:** Quickly correct false information and rumors.
 5. **Crisis Messaging Strategies:** Use reassuring language to reduce panic (e.g., "Stay calm. Help is on the way.").

Classroom Activity: Crisis Messaging Simulation (5 minutes)

- **Step 1:** Provide participants with a crisis scenario:
Example Scenario: There is a sudden power outage at a shelter, and rumors are spreading that supplies are running out.
- **Step 2:** Participants draft a **brief message (50 words max)** to be posted on a community board or announced via loudspeaker.
- **Step 3:** Volunteers read their messages aloud.
- **Trainer Feedback:** Highlight messages that are:
 - Clear and concise
 - Reassuring
 - Free of misinformation

4.4 Module Conclusion (5 minutes):

- **Key Takeaways:**

- **Active listening** and **empathy** build trust and reduce panic.
- **De-escalation techniques** can prevent situations from escalating into conflicts.
- Different **conflict resolution styles** are suitable for different crisis scenarios.
- **Digital crisis communication** must be clear, concise, and verified.
- **Final Reflection Activity:**
Participants complete the “Crisis Communication Action Plan” worksheet with answers to:

0. *One active listening technique I will use in my next response is:*

1. *One de-escalation strategy I found most helpful was:* _____

2. *One way I will improve my digital crisis messaging is:* _____

4.5 Knowledge Check (5 minutes):

- Conduct a **verbal quiz** or distribute a **printed multiple-choice quiz** to review key concepts.

Quiz Questions Example:

1. *Which of the following is NOT a key element of active listening?*
 - A) Eye contact
 - B) Interrupting frequently (Answer: B)
 - C) Paraphrasing
 - D) Reflecting emotions
2. *What is the first step of de-escalation in a crisis?*
 - A) Give orders
 - B) Stay calm ✓
 - C) Argue back
 - D) Walk away
3. *Which conflict resolution style seeks a middle ground?*
 - A) Competing
 - B) Compromising ✓
 - C) Avoiding

- D) Accommodating
- 4. *What is a key rule for digital crisis communication?*
(Answer: Confirm information before sharing)
- 5. *Why should misinformation be corrected quickly during a crisis?*
(Answer: To prevent panic and confusion)

4.6 Materials for Classroom Delivery:

- **Printed Handouts:**
 - “Active Listening Techniques” Guide
 - “De-Escalation Strategies Checklist”
 - “Conflict Resolution Styles Overview”
 - “Digital Crisis Communication Best Practices”
 - “Crisis Communication Action Plan” Template
- **Classroom Tools:**
 - Flip chart or whiteboard and markers
 - Scenario role-play cards
 - Timer for activities
- **Classroom Setup:**
 - Arrange tables for groups of 4–6 participants.
 - Leave open space for role-playing and group presentations.

4.7 Trainer’s Guidelines and Tips:

- **Time Management:** Use a timer for activities to ensure a balanced session.
- **Encourage Participation:** Rotate roles so everyone practices speaking and listening.
- **Use Real-Life Examples:** Share stories from past crisis responses to illustrate techniques.
- **Emphasize Teamwork:** Stress that effective communication reduces misunderstandings during emergencies.
- **Provide Constructive Feedback:** Focus on participants' strengths and suggest improvements where needed.

4.8 Post-Module Follow-Up Suggestions:

- **Peer Practice Circles:** Encourage participants to meet monthly and practice de-escalation role-plays.
- **Daily Listening Exercises:** Suggest participants apply active listening techniques in their personal and professional lives.
- **Crisis Messaging Board:** Create a space where participants can share examples of effective crisis communication.

4.9 Certificate of Completion:

Participants receive a **certificate of completion** upon successfully passing the knowledge check.

MODULE 5: LEADERSHIP AND TEAM COORDINATION IN EMERGENCIES

A. Module Overview

This module develops participants' leadership skills and teaches effective team coordination strategies for emergency situations. Through role-plays and group challenges, participants practice making decisions under pressure, managing team dynamics, and supporting remote teams.

B. Key Words

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| 📖 Leadership | 📖 Emotional | 📖 Team Cohesion |
| 📖 Team Management | Intelligence | 📖 Stress Recognition |
| 📖 Decision-Making | 📖 Remote Teams | 📖 Crisis Response |

C. Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate leadership resilience and decision-making under pressure.
- Coordinate team roles and responsibilities effectively during a crisis.
- Identify and address signs of team stress.
- Manage remote or virtual teams during large-scale operations.

D. Key Topics and Content Outline

- **Leadership Resilience:** Traits of resilient leaders and decision-making techniques (PAUSE Technique).
- **Team Coordination Strategies:** Role clarity, communication protocols, and contingency planning.

- **Recognizing and Managing Team Stress:** Signs of burnout and intervention techniques.
- **Managing Remote Teams:** Best practices for leading virtual teams effectively.

E. Interactive Activities

- **Leadership Simulation:** Practice decision-making under pressure using the PAUSE Technique (*Perceive, Analyze, Understand Risks, Select, Execute*).
- **Team Coordination Challenge:** Collaboratively allocate resources during an emergency scenario.
- **Stress Management Role-Play:** Practice addressing signs of team burnout in a peer.
- **Remote Team Messaging Exercise:** Draft a concise digital message for a remote team update.

F. Trainer Tips

- Encourage participants to share their real-life leadership experiences.
- Provide constructive feedback on decision-making strategies.
- Model calm, clear communication during group simulations.
- Emphasize empathy when discussing team stress and burnout management.

G. Additional Resources

- PDF Guide: *'Quick Leadership Tips for Crisis Response'*
- Video: *'How to Manage Remote Teams Effectively'*
- Checklist: *'Signs of Team Stress and How to Respond'*
- Printed handouts: "PAUSE Technique Guide," "Team Coordination Checklist," and "Signs of Team Stress"
- Scenario cards for simulations

5. MODULE 5: LEADERSHIP AND TEAM COORDINATION IN EMERGENCIES

5.1 Module Overview:

This module equips participants with essential leadership and team coordination skills for emergency situations. Through role-plays, group discussions, and problem-solving exercises, participants will learn how to lead under pressure, foster team resilience, and address team stress effectively. The focus is on leadership

behaviors that promote clear communication, coordination, and emotional well-being within teams during crises.

- **Objective:** Develop participants' leadership and team management skills for effective crisis response.
- **Target Audience:** Disaster response leaders, supervisors, and team coordinators.
- **Delivery Method:** Face-to-face classroom session (printed handouts, group discussions, and scenario-based simulations).
- **Class Duration:** 90 minutes
- **Classroom Setup:** Tables arranged for group work (8–10 participants per group).

5.2 Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- **Demonstrate** effective leadership behaviors during emergency situations.
- **Coordinate** team roles and responsibilities clearly under pressure.
- **Identify and address** signs of stress in their teams.
- **Manage** remote or virtual teams effectively during large-scale operations.

5.3 Session Outline and Key Topics:

The session is divided into **4 parts**, with time allocated for each topic and activity.

A. Leadership Resilience and Decision-Making Under Pressure (20 minutes)

- **What is Leadership Resilience?**
Leadership resilience is the ability to maintain composure, make effective decisions, and inspire confidence under extreme pressure.
- **Key Traits of Resilient Leaders:**
 1. **Emotional Intelligence:** Recognizing and regulating emotions in oneself and others.
 2. **Decisiveness:** Making quick, clear, and informed decisions.
 3. **Optimism:** Maintaining a positive outlook and motivating the team.
 4. **Accountability:** Taking responsibility for decisions and actions.
 5. **Adaptability:** Adjusting strategies in response to changing situations.
- **The “PAUSE” Technique for Crisis Decision-Making:**
 - **Perceive:** Assess the situation quickly.

- **Analyze:** Weigh options based on available information.
- **Understand Risks:** Identify potential consequences.
- **Select:** Choose the best action.
- **Execute:** Implement the decision promptly.

Classroom Activity: Leadership Under Pressure Simulation (10 minutes)

- **Scenario:** *A flood has cut off access to a remote village, and survivors need immediate aid. Supplies are limited. You are the team leader. Decide how to allocate resources and whom to send for help.*
- **Step 1:** Form groups of 4 participants (**Leader**, **Assistant**, **Notetaker**, and **Observer**).
- **Step 2:** The **Leader** makes decisions under a 3-minute time limit while the team provides input.
- **Step 3:** The **Observer** notes the leader's use of the PAUSE technique.
- **Debrief Questions:**
 - *How did the leader handle pressure?*
 - *Did the leader involve the team effectively?*
 - *What could have been done differently?*

B. Team Coordination Strategies (20 minutes)

- **Why is Team Coordination Critical in Crises?**
 Poor coordination leads to confusion, delays, and duplication of efforts. Effective coordination ensures everyone knows their role and acts together efficiently.
- **Core Elements of Effective Team Coordination:**
 1. **Role Clarity:** Clearly define tasks and responsibilities.
 2. **Situation Reports (SitReps):** Provide regular updates on progress and challenges.
 3. **Communication Protocols:** Use standard codes or messages for clarity.
 4. **Decision-Making Framework:** Establish who makes final decisions.
 5. **Contingency Planning:** Have backup plans for likely disruptions.

Classroom Activity: Team Coordination Challenge (10 minutes)

- **Scenario:** *A fire has broken out near a refugee camp. The team must coordinate the evacuation of 200 people, ensuring safety and accountability.*
- **Step 1:** Participants split into teams of 5, with assigned roles: **Team Leader, Logistics Officer, Communications Officer, Security Officer, and Medical Officer.**
- **Step 2:** Each team has 5 minutes to create an action plan and 2 minutes to present it.
- **Step 3:** Trainer provides feedback on:
 - **Clarity of Roles:** Were responsibilities well-defined?
 - **Communication Effectiveness:** Did the team exchange critical information clearly?
 - **Team Cohesion:** Did the team collaborate effectively under pressure?

C. Recognizing and Addressing Team Stress (20 minutes)

- **Why is Stress Detection Important for Leaders?**
Stress reduces team effectiveness and increases errors during critical operations. Leaders must recognize signs early and act to prevent burnout.
- **Common Signs of Stress in Teams:**
 1. **Behavioral Signs:** Increased conflicts, absenteeism, or isolation.
 2. **Emotional Signs:** Irritability, anxiety, or sudden mood swings.
 3. **Cognitive Signs:** Difficulty concentrating or making decisions.
 4. **Physical Signs:** Fatigue, headaches, or frequent illnesses.
- **Leader Actions to Manage Team Stress:**
 1. **Conduct Regular Check-Ins:** Ask team members how they feel.
 2. **Rotate Roles:** Give people breaks from high-pressure tasks.
 3. **Promote Peer Support:** Encourage teammates to help one another.
 4. **Acknowledge Contributions:** Recognize hard work publicly.
 5. **Offer Support Resources:** Provide access to counseling or rest facilities.

Classroom Activity: Stress Response Scenarios (10 minutes)

- **Scenario:** *During a 72-hour search operation, a team member begins showing signs of stress (irritability, frequent mistakes, and withdrawal).*
- **Step 1:** In groups of 3, participants role-play:
 - **Team Leader:** Addresses the stressed team member.
 - **Team Member:** Expresses their feelings.
 - **Observer:** Provides feedback on the leader's response.
- **Step 2:** Trainer facilitates a class discussion:
 - *What did the leader do well?*

- *How could the leader better support the team member?*

D. Managing Remote and Virtual Teams (10 minutes)

- **The Challenge of Remote Teams in Emergencies:**
Remote teams often experience communication breakdowns, isolation, and reduced collaboration. Effective leadership is critical to maintain team cohesion.
- **Best Practices for Remote Team Management:**
 1. **Set Clear Expectations:** Define roles, deadlines, and communication protocols.
 2. **Regular Check-Ins:** Schedule brief daily meetings to review progress and address concerns.
 3. **Use Multiple Communication Channels:** Combine voice, video, and text-based communication.
 4. **Create a Buddy System:** Pair team members for mutual support.
 5. **Monitor Well-Being:** Watch for signs of digital fatigue or burnout.

Classroom Activity: Remote Team Coordination Exercise (5 minutes)

- **Scenario:** *You are leading a virtual team handling supply deliveries for flood survivors. Some team members are late submitting reports, causing delays.*
- **Step 1:** Participants draft a short message (1 minute) to the team that is:
 - **Clear and Concise:** Sets expectations without blame.
 - **Supportive:** Offers help to those facing challenges.
 - **Action-Oriented:** Specifies what needs to happen next.
- **Step 2:** Volunteers read their messages aloud, and the class discusses which message best combines clarity, support, and urgency.

5.4 Module Conclusion (5 minutes):

- **Key Takeaways:**
 - Effective leadership requires resilience, clear decision-making, and empathy.
 - Strong team coordination relies on clear roles, communication, and shared decision-making.
 - Leaders must identify and address team stress promptly.

- Remote teams require structured communication and regular check-ins.
- **Final Reflection Activity:**
Participants complete their “Leadership Action Plan” worksheet with answers to:

0. *One leadership trait I will practice in my next crisis is:* _____
1. *One team coordination technique I found most valuable was:*

2. *One strategy I will use to manage team stress is:* _____
3. *One way I will support a remote team effectively is:* _____

5.5 Knowledge Check (5 minutes):

- Conduct a **verbal quiz** or distribute a **printed multiple-choice quiz** to review key concepts.

Quiz Questions Example:

1. *Which of the following is NOT a trait of resilient leaders?*
 - A) Decisiveness
 - B) Emotional intelligence
 - C) Avoiding feedback ✓
 - D) Adaptability
2. *What is the first step of the PAUSE technique in decision-making?*
 - A) Proceed
 - B) Perceive ✓
 - C) Analyze
 - D) Execute
3. *What is a sign of team stress that leaders should monitor?*
 - A) Increased focus
 - B) Difficulty concentrating ✓
 - C) Improved morale
 - D) Enhanced productivity
4. *Which is a best practice for managing remote teams?*
 - A) Ignoring time zone differences

- B) Scheduling regular check-ins ✓
- C) Using only emails for communication
- D) Avoiding feedback

5.6 Materials for Classroom Delivery:

- **Printed Handouts:**
 - “PAUSE Technique for Crisis Decision-Making”
 - “Team Coordination Checklist”
 - “Signs of Team Stress” Guide
 - “Best Practices for Managing Remote Teams”
 - “Leadership Action Plan” Template
- **Classroom Tools:**
 - Flip chart or whiteboard and markers
 - Scenario role-play cards
 - Timer for activities
- **Classroom Setup:**
 - Arrange tables for groups of 4–6 participants.
 - Provide open space for role-plays and team simulations.

5.7 Trainer’s Guidelines and Tips:

- **Time Management:** Stick to time limits for discussions and role-plays.
- **Encourage Participation:** Rotate roles to ensure everyone practices leadership.
- **Use Real-Life Examples:** Share case studies from past emergency responses.
- **Promote Constructive Feedback:** Focus on improvement, not criticism.
- **Highlight Leadership Behaviors:** Emphasize listening, empathy, and decisiveness.

5.8 Post-Module Follow-Up Suggestions:

- **Peer Leadership Circles:** Create small groups for ongoing leadership practice.

- **Team Check-In Practice:** Encourage participants to conduct regular check-ins within their teams.
- **Journaling:** Recommend that participants journal their experiences leading during stressful situations.
- **Mentorship Program:** Connect experienced leaders with new responders for guidance and support.

5.9 Certificate of Completion:

Participants receive a **certificate of completion** upon successfully passing the knowledge check.

MODULE 6: POST-DISASTER MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SYSTEMS

A. Module Overview

This module equips participants with the knowledge and skills to establish and sustain post-disaster mental health support systems, such as peer support networks and debriefing sessions. The session covers strategies for promoting long-term psychological well-being for disaster responders and affected communities.

B. Key Words

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Peer Support | Trauma Recovery | Long-Term Support |
| Mental Health | Professional | Crisis Intervention |
| Debriefing | Counseling | Support Networks |

C. Learning Outcomes

- Develop structured peer support networks for disaster responders.
- Conduct effective debriefing sessions to promote mental well-being.
- Differentiate between peer support and professional counseling.
- Design sustainable post-disaster mental health support systems.

D. Key Topics and Content Outline

- **Peer Support Networks:** Core components of a successful peer support program.
- **Debriefing Sessions:** Five-step model for structured post-crisis debriefing.
- **Peer Support vs. Professional Counseling:** Differences and referral protocols.
- **Sustainable Mental Health Support Systems:** Using the CARE framework (*Consistency, Accessibility, Resources, Evaluation*).

E. Interactive Activities

- **Peer Support Role-Play:** Practice one-on-one peer support conversations using active listening techniques.
- **Debriefing Simulation:** Facilitate a mock debriefing session using the five-step model (*Introduction, Description, Reaction, Learning, Closure*).
- **Referral Practice:** Simulate a conversation to refer a peer to professional counseling.
- **Sustainability Planning Workshop:** Develop a mental health support system plan using the CARE framework.

F. Trainer Tips

- Create a safe space for participants to practice peer support conversations.
- Offer debriefing time after emotionally charged simulations.
- Emphasize that peer support is about listening, not solving problems.
- Provide guidance on making sensitive and appropriate professional referrals.

G. Additional Resources

- PDF Guide: '*Building Effective Peer Support Networks*'
- Video: '*Conducting Psychological Debriefing Sessions*'
- Checklist: '*Signs to Refer a Peer for Professional Counseling*'
- Printed handouts: "Peer Support Guidelines," "5-Step Debriefing Model," "CARE Framework Overview"
- Scenario cards for role-plays

6. MODULE 6: POST-DISASTER MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SYSTEMS

6.1 Module Overview:

This module trains participants to establish and sustain post-disaster mental health support systems, such as peer support networks and debriefing sessions. The session covers strategies for promoting long-term psychological well-being for disaster responders and affected communities. Participants will also learn how to differentiate between peer support and professional counseling and create sustainable support structures within their teams.

- **Objective:** Equip participants with tools to build, maintain, and sustain mental health support systems for disaster responders and survivors.
- **Target Audience:** Disaster response leaders, peer supporters, team coordinators, and mental health first aiders.

- **Delivery Method:** Face-to-face classroom session (printed handouts, group discussions, role-plays, and scenario-based simulations).
- **Class Duration:** 90 minutes
- **Classroom Setup:** Tables arranged for group discussions (8–10 participants per group).

6.2 Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- **Establish** structured peer support networks for disaster responders.
- **Conduct** effective debriefing sessions to promote mental well-being.
- **Differentiate** between peer support and professional counseling.
- **Develop** sustainable mental health support systems within their organizations.

6.3 Session Outline and Key Topics:

The session is divided into **4 parts**, with time allocated for each topic and activity.

A. Structured Peer Support Networks (20 minutes)

- **What is Peer Support?**
Peer support is a system where individuals with shared experiences offer emotional and practical support to one another. In disaster response, peer support helps responders process trauma and prevent burnout.
- **Why Peer Support is Important:**
 1. **Reduces Isolation:** Provides a safe space for sharing experiences.
 2. **Promotes Emotional Well-Being:** Helps responders process their emotions.
 3. **Prevents Burnout:** Offers relief through mutual understanding.
 4. **Encourages Help-Seeking:** Reduces stigma around seeking support.
- **Core Components of a Peer Support Program:**
 1. **Safe Environment:** Establish confidentiality and trust.
 2. **Regular Check-Ins:** Conduct one-on-one or group sessions.
 3. **Training for Peer Supporters:** Provide listening and empathy skills training.
 4. **Referral Pathways:** Know when and how to connect peers to professional help.

Classroom Activity: Peer Support Role-Play (10 minutes)

- **Scenario:** *A fellow responder has just finished a 48-hour shift and seems withdrawn and irritable. You are their peer supporter. Engage them in a conversation.*
- **Step 1:** In pairs, one participant plays the **Peer Supporter**, and the other plays the **Responder**.
- **Step 2:** The Peer Supporter applies:
 - **Active Listening:** “I noticed you seem tired. Would you like to talk about it?”
 - **Empathy:** “That sounds really difficult. It’s okay to feel overwhelmed.”
 - **Supportive Silence:** Allow the peer time to respond without rushing.
- **Step 3:** Switch roles after 5 minutes.
- **Debrief:** Trainer leads a discussion:
 - *What felt most supportive during the conversation?*
 - *What would you do differently next time?*

B. Conducting Effective Debriefing Sessions (20 minutes)

- **What is a Debriefing Session?**
A debriefing session is a structured conversation held after a critical incident to help responders process their experiences and emotions. It is NOT therapy but a form of psychological first aid.
- **Types of Debriefing Sessions:**
 1. **Operational Debriefing:** Focuses on what happened and what can be improved.
 2. **Psychological Debriefing:** Focuses on emotional responses and well-being.
- **The 5-Step Debriefing Model:**
 1. **Introduction:** Explain the purpose and emphasize confidentiality.
 2. **Description:** Let participants share what happened in their own words.
 3. **Reaction:** Encourage participants to express their thoughts and feelings.
 4. **Learning:** Discuss what was learned and what could be done differently.
 5. **Closure:** Offer resources for further support and thank participants.

Classroom Activity: Debriefing Session Simulation (10 minutes)

- **Scenario:** *A search and rescue team has just returned from a collapsed building site where survivors were found and some casualties were recovered.*

- **Step 1:** Form groups of 4. Assign roles: **Facilitator, Responders (2), and Observer.**
- **Step 2:** The Facilitator leads a 5-minute debrief using the 5-step model.
- **Step 3:** The Observer provides feedback on:
 - **Was the session structured effectively?**
 - **Did the facilitator promote a safe and supportive environment?**
- **Trainer Debrief:** Highlight key learning points from each group.

C. Peer Support vs. Professional Counseling (15 minutes)

- **Differences Between Peer Support and Professional Counseling:**

Aspect	Peer Support	Professional Counseling
Focus	Emotional support from shared experiences	Treatment of psychological conditions
Provider	Trained peers (non-clinical)	Licensed mental health professionals
Setting	Informal (one-on-one or group)	Formal (individual or group therapy sessions)
Confidentiality	Strong but informal	Protected by legal and ethical standards
Goal	Providing comfort and a listening ear	Diagnosing and treating mental health issues

- **When to Refer to Professional Counseling:**
 - Persistent signs of trauma (nightmares, flashbacks, or emotional numbness).
 - Risk of self-harm or harm to others.
 - Substance abuse or other destructive behaviors.
 - Emotional distress that disrupts daily functioning.

Classroom Activity: Referral Practice (5 minutes)

- **Scenario:** *A colleague you are supporting breaks down and says, “I can’t sleep. I feel like I’m reliving the disaster every night.”*
- **Step 1:** In pairs, practice how to sensitively refer them to professional support:
 - “I’m here for you, and I think talking to a counselor could really help. Would you like me to help you find someone?”

- **Step 2:** Volunteers share their responses with the class.
- **Trainer Feedback:** Emphasize how to balance empathy with clear action.

D. Developing Sustainable Mental Health Support Systems (20 minutes)

- **Why Sustainability Matters:**
Mental health support should continue beyond the immediate crisis to promote long-term resilience and recovery.
- **Key Elements of Sustainable Support Systems:**
 1. **Peer Support Programs:** Establish regular group meetings and check-ins.
 2. **Ongoing Training:** Provide annual refresher courses for peer supporters.
 3. **Access to Professional Services:** Develop partnerships with counseling providers.
 4. **Wellness Resources:** Create and distribute mental health toolkits.
 5. **Organizational Buy-In:** Secure management support and allocate funding.
- **The “CARE” Framework for Sustainable Support:**
 - **Consistency:** Offer regular peer support meetings and debriefings.
 - **Accessibility:** Make services easy to access without stigma.
 - **Resources:** Provide toolkits, self-help guides, and contacts for professional help.
 - **Evaluation:** Regularly assess the effectiveness of support programs and make improvements.

Classroom Activity: Sustainability Action Planning (10 minutes)

- **Scenario:** *You are tasked with creating a sustainable mental health support system for your response team.*
- **Step 1:** In small groups, participants create a 5-point sustainability plan using the “CARE” framework.

Example Plan:

1. **Consistency:** Monthly peer support meetings.
2. **Accessibility:** 24/7 helpline for responders.
3. **Resources:** Provide a printed wellness toolkit.
4. **Evaluation:** Collect anonymous feedback quarterly.
5. **Organizational Buy-In:** Present findings to leadership.

- **Step 2:** Groups present their plans, and the trainer offers feedback on feasibility and impact.

6.4 Module Conclusion (5 minutes):

- **Key Takeaways:**

- Peer support is crucial for responder well-being and should be structured with regular check-ins.
- Debriefing sessions promote emotional processing and team learning.
- Peer support and professional counseling serve different roles; leaders must know when to refer.
- Sustainable mental health support requires consistent programs, accessible resources, and regular evaluation.

- **Final Reflection Activity:**

Participants complete their “Post-Disaster Support Action Plan” worksheet with answers to:

0. *One peer support technique I will use is:* _____
1. *One improvement I will make in our debriefing process is:*

2. *One step I will take to build a sustainable support system is:*

3. *One way I will promote mental health resources in my team is:*

6.5 Knowledge Check (5 minutes):

- Conduct a **verbal quiz** or distribute a **printed multiple-choice quiz** to review key concepts.

Quiz Questions Example:

1. *Which is NOT a core component of a peer support program?*
 - A) Confidentiality
 - B) Regular Check-Ins
 - C) Diagnosing trauma ✓
 - D) Referral pathways
2. *What is the primary focus of a debriefing session?*

- A) Conducting performance reviews
 - B) Processing emotional responses ✓
 - C) Allocating resources
 - D) Training new responders
3. *When should a peer supporter refer someone to professional counseling?*
- A) When they request it
 - B) If they mention suicidal thoughts ✓
 - C) Only after three meetings
 - D) Never
4. *What is the “CARE” framework used for?*
- A) Developing wellness toolkits
 - B) Creating sustainable support systems ✓
 - C) Conducting debriefings
 - D) Training peer supporters

6.6 Materials for Classroom Delivery:

- **Printed Handouts:**
 - “Peer Support Guidelines”
 - “5-Step Debriefing Model”
 - “Peer Support vs. Professional Counseling” Comparison Sheet
 - “CARE Framework for Sustainable Support” Guide
 - “Post-Disaster Support Action Plan” Template
- **Classroom Tools:**
 - Flip chart or whiteboard and markers
 - Role-play and scenario cards
 - Timer for activities
- **Classroom Setup:**
 - Arrange tables for groups of 4–6 participants.
 - Leave space for role-play and group presentations.

6.7 Trainer's Guidelines and Tips:

- **Time Management:** Use a timer for activities to ensure a balanced session.
- **Promote Psychological Safety:** Create an atmosphere where participants feel comfortable sharing experiences.
- **Provide Emotional Support:** Be ready to pause or debrief if participants become emotional during role-plays.
- **Focus on Practical Application:** Emphasize how these techniques can be implemented immediately in their teams.
- **Model Active Listening:** Demonstrate empathy and respect during discussions.

6.8 Post-Module Follow-Up Suggestions:

- **Establish Peer Support Groups:** Encourage participants to create peer support circles in their teams.
- **Offer Monthly Debriefing Practice:** Suggest regular practice sessions using the 5-step model.
- **Promote Mental Health Resources:** Distribute wellness toolkits and contact lists for professional support.
- **Conduct Annual Evaluations:** Recommend annual surveys to assess the effectiveness of peer support programs.

6.9 Certificate of Completion:

Participants receive a **certificate of completion** upon successfully passing the knowledge check.