



Chasing Death

Kirk E. Mittelman, M.Ed.,
NREMT-P

Retired Captain, Eagle Mountain
And All Around Good Guy!

Intended Outcomes

- Discuss the need to recognize the stressors of death
- Recognize the affects of death on Public Safety personnel
- Recognize the affects of death on families
- Discuss methods to deal with death of a close family member
- Discuss methods to teach dealing with personal death and dying issues

Time To Dance



Will I Really Use This Information?

- Come On You Really Have To Ask!
 - Family
 - Friends
 - Co-worker



Where Were You?



- When you learned of death for the first time?
- When you were part of your first death scene?
- When you realized that death is part of living?
- When 911 happened?

What Do You Remember?

- From that day?
- From that week?
- How long did you think about it?
- Were you related to the deceased?
- Was it a stranger?



Have You Ever Thought?

- How long will I live?
- What happens when I die?
- When I get old I hope I die!
- How are my parents dealing with death?
- I have seen too much death!



Attitudes Toward Death 1 of 3

- Attitudes toward death have changed with society.
 - Life expectancy has increased.
 - Family mobility may mean less support for grieving people.
 - Television influence
 - Internet influence



Attitudes Toward Death 2 of 3

- Death at home happens less often today
 - Rest Homes
 - Accident Scenes
- Loved ones no longer are kept in the home
 - Familiarity with death is less likely



Attitudes Toward Death ^{3 of 3}

- Death is something we all have to face.
- To Deliver Appropriate Care We All Must Come To Grips With Death



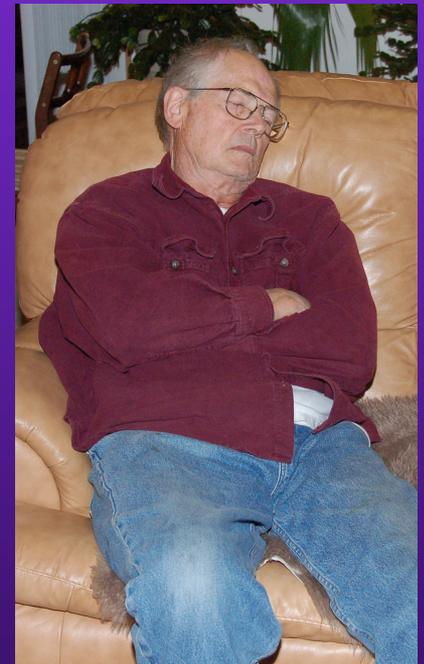
Our Strength Is Our WEAKNESS

- We face death everyday
- We are told it will be OK
- We are told to not show emotions
- Our Job is tough enough, then we make fun of those who grieve



Stressors We Deal With

- Death is part of living
- Our parents are getting older
- Working in a small community
- Too many work/call hours
- Not enough calls
- Time to complain and THINK!



Have You Become Callus?

- To Death?
- To Live?
- To Protect Yourself?
- To Protect The Ones You Love?



Do You Laugh



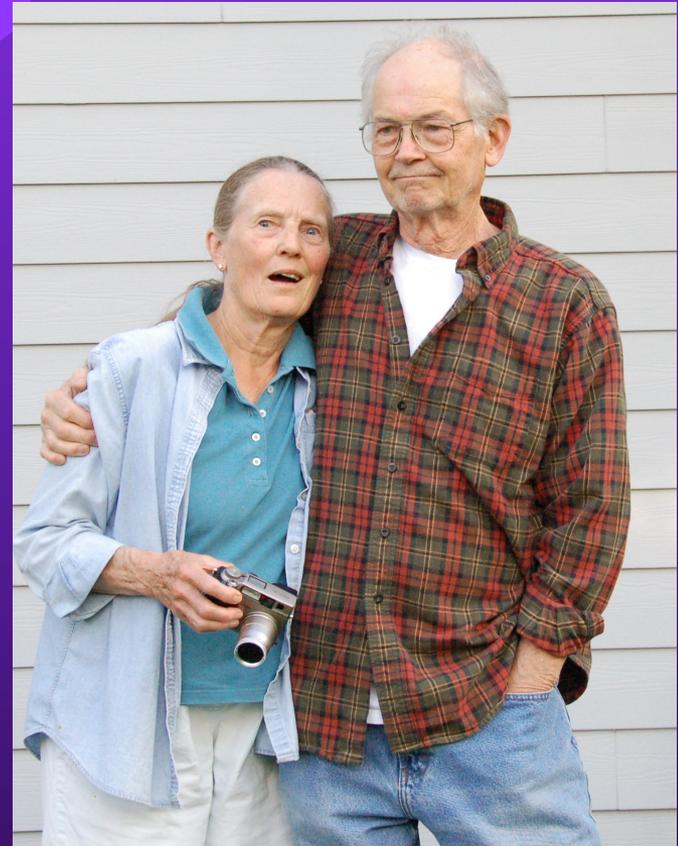
- At death scenes?
- In the face of death?
- Instead of crying on calls?
- Welcome to EMS and Public Safety

Sometimes We Don't Know What To Say!



What Can We Learn

- Who Is That Special Person In Your Life?
- What happens if they are suddenly ill?
- What happens if they are suddenly injured?



How Did You Feel?

- Like HHHELL!
 - Helpless
 - Hapless
 - Hammered
 - Empty
 - Longing to have done more
 - Left Behind



But I Handle Death Regularly

- Yes
- Then why do we not deal with those close to us when they die?
- When I think about my loved ones I am scared for them



How Does Death Affect Us?

- We may be callus, but....
- We are no different from our patients
 - We need to grieve
 - We need to ponder
 - We need closure



It's Very Affective

- We are affected by death
- Even though we chase it at work
- What are the signs to look for?



What Does It Feel Like?

- Guilt
- Helplessness
- Constant Anxiety
- Concentration Issues
- Can't Decide
- Irritable
- Anorexia
- Comfort Foods
- Alcohol/Drugs
- Interest In Job
- Failing Interest In Sex

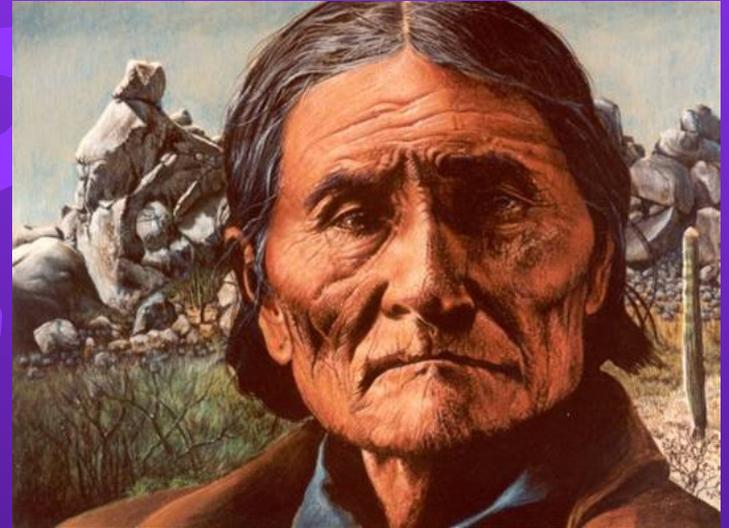
What Influences Our Reactions?

- Socioeconomic background
- Alcohol/substance abuse
- Medication
- Age
- Chronic diseases



More Influences

- Pain For Loved One
- Fear Due To Knowledge
- Dependency On Victim
- Guilt



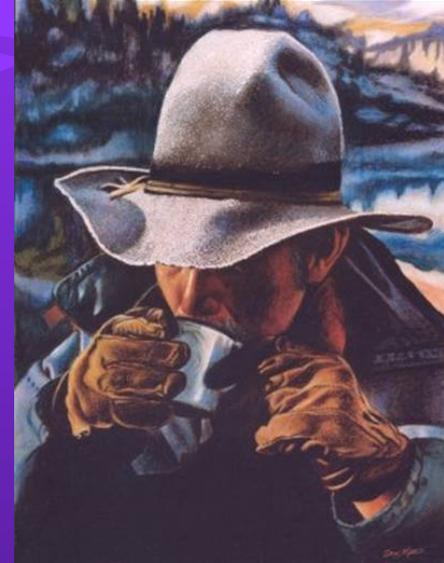
Timing Is Never Good

- Suicide
- Homicide
- Natural Death
- Accidental Death



You Are Correct...

- Life isn't fair...
- But Remember...



“Fair is where your Grandmother sold
Jams and Jellies”

Chief Rand Andrus, EMFD

How Can I Deal With My Family

- Don't Hide
- Go slow to Go Fast
 - Remember your family may not have your background
- AND...SCREAM



Do You Wish You Could Scream?

- S • Share Thoughts & Be Honest
- C • Cry to let go
- R • Remember/Reflect
- E • Enliven to Live
- A • Acknowledge Death & Terminal Illness
- M • Memories, So You Never Forget

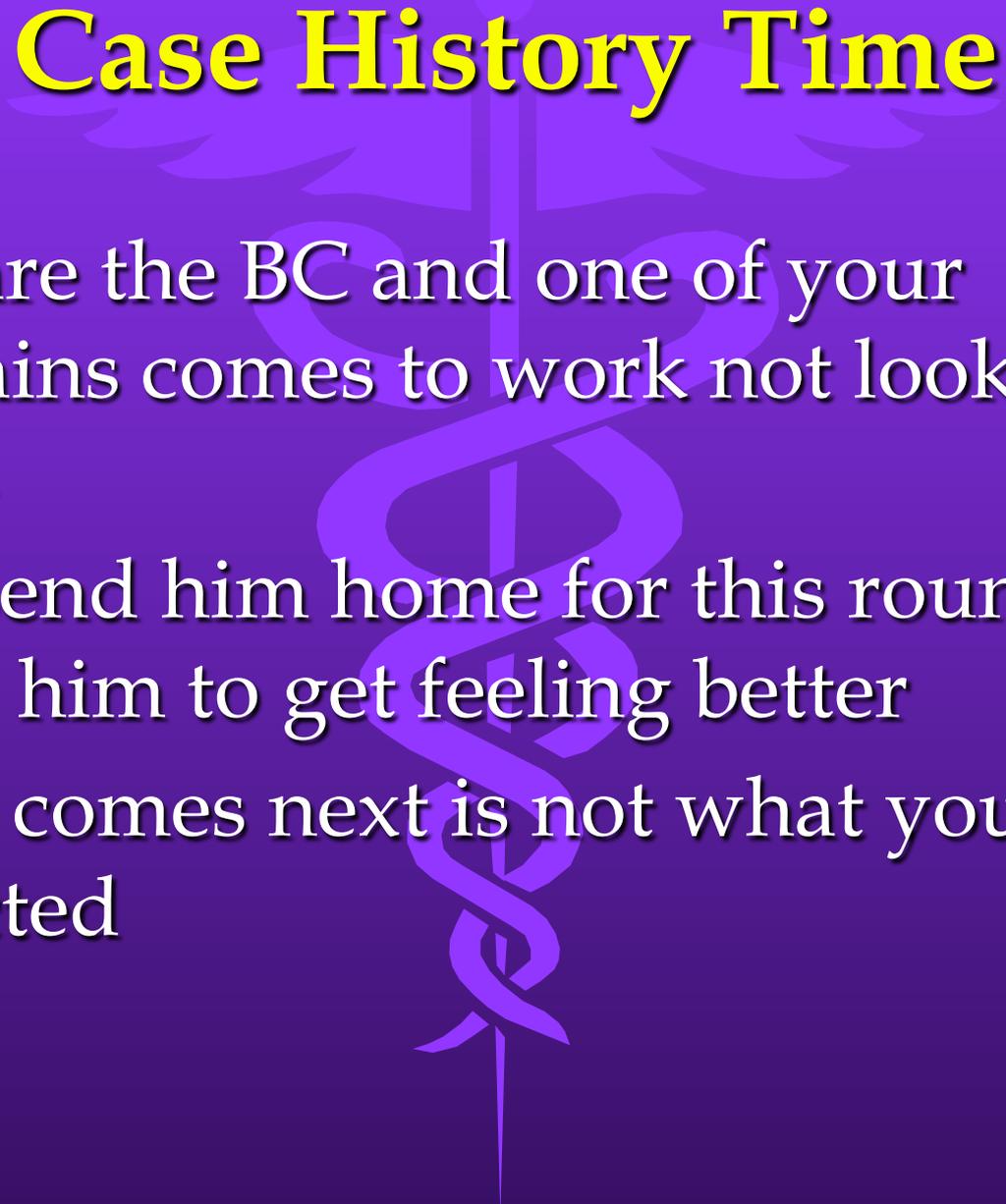


Suicide Hits Close To Home

- Who knew or knows someone?
- What were the warning signs?
- What could we have done?



Case History Time



- You are the BC and one of your Captains comes to work not looking good.
- You send him home for this round to allow him to get feeling better
- What comes next is not what you expected

We Are Not Immune

- The real victims of suicide are?

Milton Linford Dalley
Springville, Utah
1969 - 2008

...beloved husband, father, son and brother, returned to Father unexpectedly on Friday October 31st 2008...Lin v servant in all aspects of his life. Not only did he save many lives as a member of the Provo Fire Department, he served his church, community and most of all his family. The devoted men who worked on Lin's crew at the fire department looked up to Lin and said that he lead by example, and as a friend. "He made a difference". ...



Suicide Can Hit You Hard

- Carl's Story
 - Drops off valuables
 - Gives keys to family
 - Gives instructions
 - Not seen again
 - Warning signs?



Allow Time To Grieve

1. **Denial:** “Not me”
2. **Anger:** “It’s your fault” or “why me”
3. **Bargaining:** “Ok but let me....”
4. **Depression:** “OK, but I haven’t...”
5. **Acceptance:** The simple “yes”, “OK, I’m not afraid”

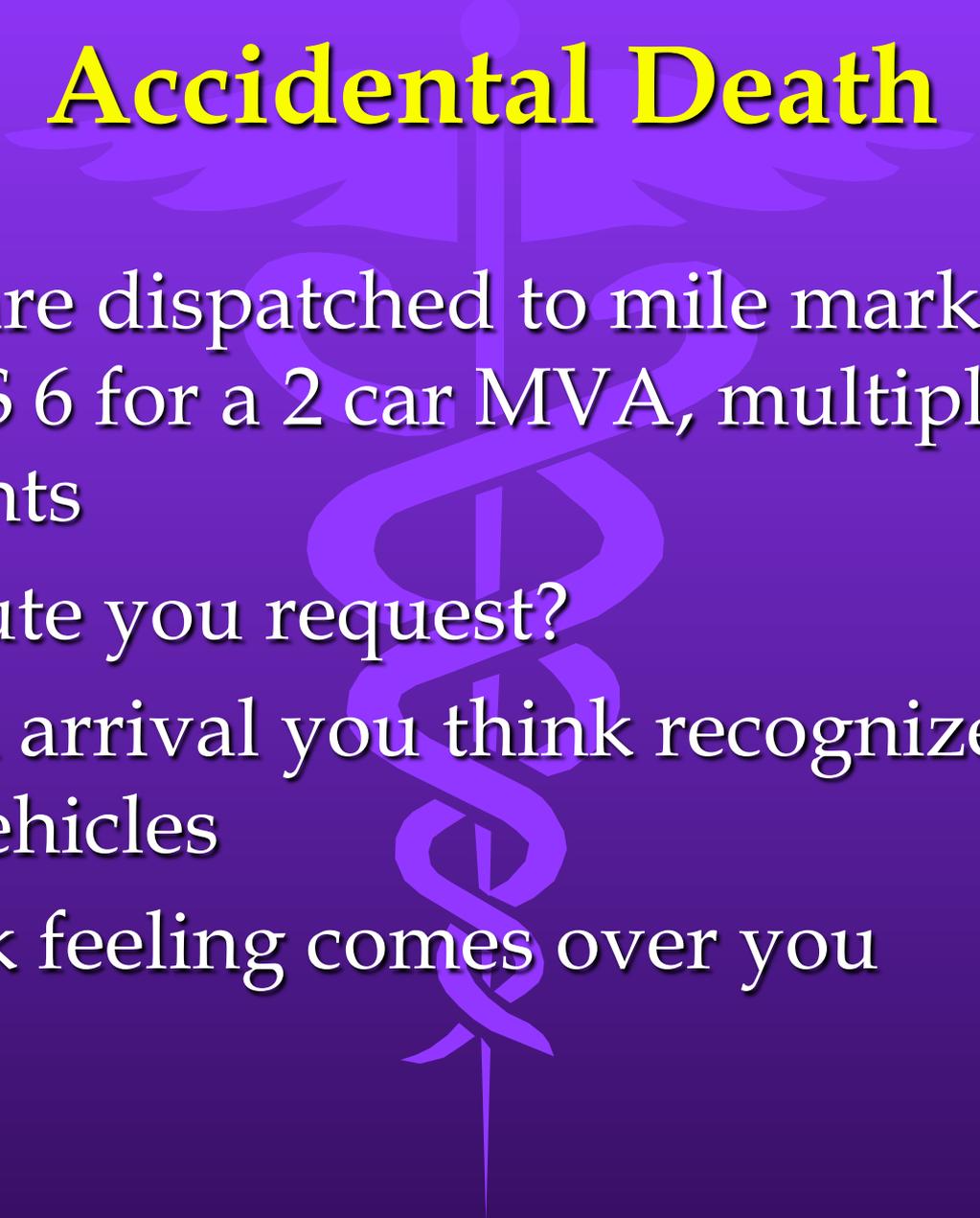


It's Natural To Grieve

- The Five Stages In Homer's World



Accidental Death



- You are dispatched to mile marker 320 on US 6 for a 2 car MVA, multiple patients
- Enroute you request?
- Upon arrival you think recognize one of the vehicles
- A sick feeling comes over you

Accidental Death

- The sick feeling is confirmed when approach the vehicles
- One vehicle has a DUI driver, who has minor injuries
- The other vehicle is your daughter's...



How Would You...

- React?
- Can You Do Your Job On This Call?
- How will this affect your future in EMS?



Handling Death

- Everyone has differing ways
- Get a foundation that is strong
 - Home
 - Body
 - Network
- Never be afraid to ask for help
- Never be afraid to let go



Prepare For Bad Times

- Healthy Habits
 - Food
 - Sleep
 - Immunizations
 - Exercise



Take Care Of #1

- Take time to heal
- Balance your time
- Date night
- Call your mom



Everyday You Touch Lives



A Little Review

- Life Is Short
- Live Everyday Like It May Be Your Last
- Bring Everyone Around You Up
- SMILE EVERYDAY

REMEMBER:

You Can Only CHANGE...

What You CONTROL



Thanks

- Kirk Mittelman
- (801)372-0928
- www.mtnebotraining.com
- Kmittelman@gmail.com

