

With care for yourself and everyone

▶ **Psychosocial support at the workplace in war and post-war times**

Psychological first aid

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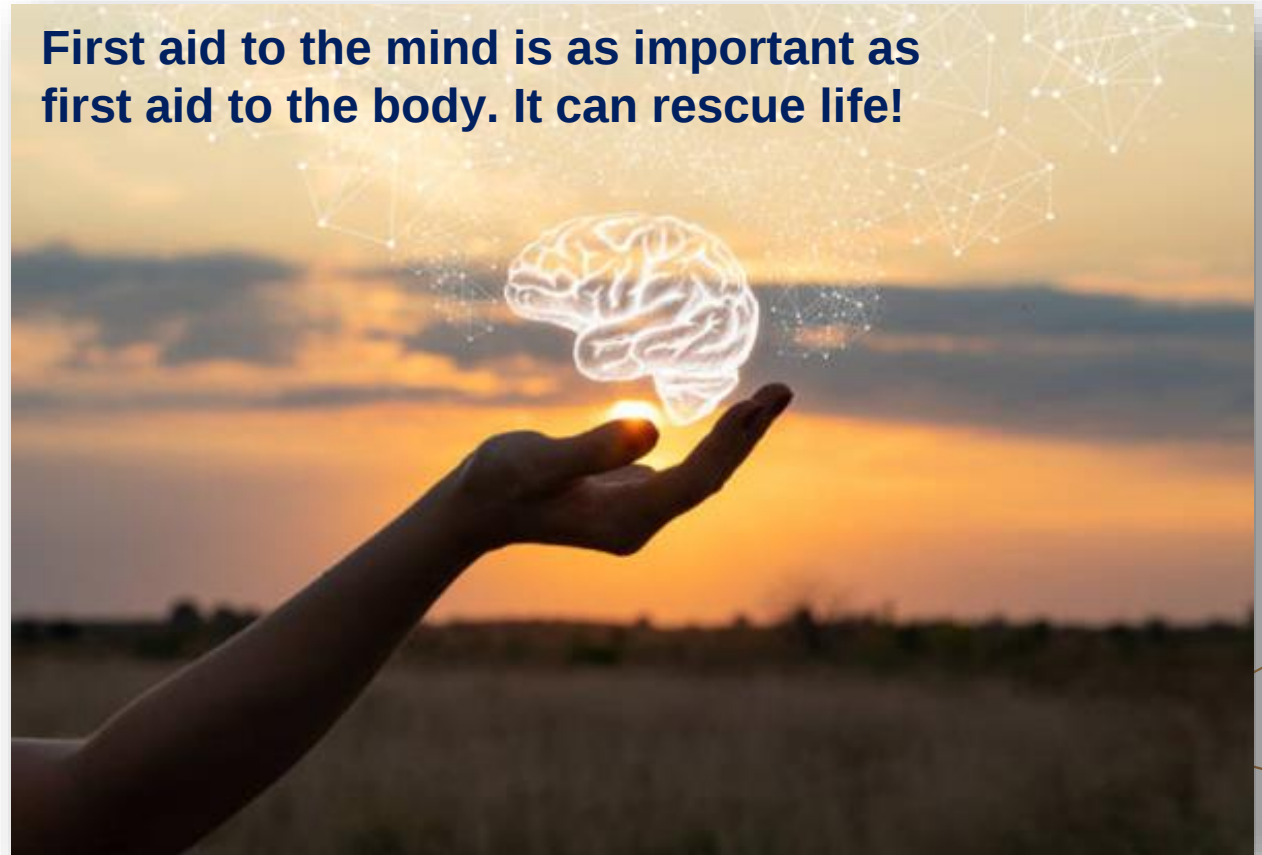
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► **Psychological first aid (PFA):**
conditions, principles and basic skills



**What do you think once you hear:
“psychological first aid”?**

**First aid to the mind is as important as
first aid to the body. It can rescue life!**



Psychological first aid (PFA)

- is an evidence-based approach to provision of the psychosocial first **support** to a person **during and after** a traumatic event in order to **stabilize the person emotionally** and refer him/her to specialized assistance **resources**

**PFA is NOT counselling
and NOT
psychotherapy!**



*“More often, I examined people thoroughly not because I suspected some disease but because I knew: **a thorough examination and talk** comfort patients”.*

Morten Rostrup – emergency physician from Norway working in Kharkiv

Caring for others: preparation (checklist)

- ▶ **What emotional state I'm in, how much ready am I to help my colleagues?**
- ▶ **Do I know what emotional and physical responses a person can have in crisis situations, and how to react correctly in an “acute stress” situation?**
- ▶ **Do I know what to do, what to say, and how to react in a situation when a person needs psychological first aid?**
- ▶ **Is there a room at the workplace where I can talk to a person quietly?**
- ▶ **Do I have information about crisis centres and contacts of experts able to render specialized aid?**



Conditions for provision of psychological first aid

WHO needs it?

Everyone in need of support
experiences anxiety, panic, fear,
nervous tremor, hysterics,
aggression, stupor...

Not everyone who has
experienced a traumatic event
needs PFA



WHERE to talk?

Wherever is safe, ensuring
confidentiality

WHEN to help?

During or after a crisis
event

Principles of psychological first aid

LOOK!

- ▶ **Assess safety level**
- ▶ **Assess the person's needs**
- ▶ **Identify signs of distress**

REFER!

Do no harm!

- ▶ **Adhere to ethical behaviour principles** (respect for personal security and human rights, confidentiality)
- ▶ **Use basic skills of effective communication:** eye contact, active listening, empathy
- ▶ **Provide contacts of a centre/specialist if the person needs professional medical, psychological or social aid** (ensure access to services)
- ▶ **Help connect with relatives**

LISTEN!

- ▶ **Listen attentively and learn the person's priority needs and substance of concern**

What **SHOULD NOT BE DONE** during PFA?



- ▶ **force a person to tell his/her story**
- ▶ **interrupt, hasten, look at your watch, talk fast and tough**
- ▶ **touch the person, hug him/her if you are not sure that this is acceptable**
- ▶ **judge the person's actions or feelings**
- ▶ **use complicated terms, "be smart"**
- ▶ **tell other people's stories**
- ▶ **complain to the person of your own problems and experiences**
- ▶ **give promises**
- ▶ **deprive the person of the feeling that he/she is able to care for him/herself**

What **should/should not** be said during PFA to calm down, soothe and support a person?

1) I understand you

2) Everything will be alright

3) I am impressed by the way you held on... (coped with...)

5) You should not think so

6) Time heals

8) Don't panic

4) I am near, you are not alone

7) I sympathize with you

9) We can just sit in silence for a while

12) I don't know an answer but I can listen

10) Can I help you with something?

11) Don't cry

Check your answers on the next slide

A question to the group. What **should/should not** be said during PFA to calm down, soothe and support a person?

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What IS NOT part of PFA?

- 1) Providing help unobtrusively
- 2) Assessing priority needs and problems
- 3) Questioning on what has happened
- 4) Psychotherapeutic counselling
- 5) Establishing a diagnosis
- 6) Listening without forcing a person to talk
- 7) Soothing and calming down people, showing empathy
- 8) Consulting with a psychologist
- 9) Assisting to refer to a specialist (specialists)
- 10) Protecting a person from further harm

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When does a person need professional aid?

- ▶ Feeling nervous or anxious for most of the time
- ▶ Thinking of causing harm to him/herself or others
- ▶ Being unable to sleep normally for a week or more
- ▶ Being unable to concentrate on work and disoriented
- ▶ Having problems with psychoactive substance use
- ▶ Falling down on the ceiling (hiding under the table) without any real threat
- ▶ Being unable to cope with loss (of near and dear ones and/or housing or job)
- ▶ Having experienced violent actions and needing help from a specialist (specialists)





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“Towards safe, healthy and declared work in Ukraine”



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TOGETHER

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