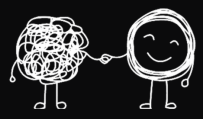

Silence Between Sirens

SILENCE BETWEEN SIRENS · FOR THE TEAM

AFTER A DIFFICULT JOB

What you might notice, what helps, and when to reach out.

What we see in this job does not end when the shift does. After a highly charged or traumatic incident, it is normal to feel affected, whether you were at the centre of it, on the radio, or picked it up afterwards. These are normal reactions to an abnormal event. For most of us, they ease with time and with the support of the people around us.

1 WHAT YOU MIGHT NOTICE

In the days and weeks that follow, some people notice:

- ↦ replaying the scene, or images and sounds coming back unexpectedly
- ↦ trouble sleeping, or vivid dreams
- ↦ feeling on edge, irritable or quick to anger
- ↦ feeling numb, flat or detached
- ↦ feeling fine, and then not
- ↦ guilt, or going over what could have been done differently
- ↦ tiredness, headaches or poor concentration
- ↦ wanting to avoid reminders, places or people

Some people notice none of this, and that is normal too. There is no right way to feel.

2 WHAT HELPS

- ↦ Talking to someone you trust, when you are ready: a colleague, a friend, family.
- ↦ Keeping to routines: eating, moving, sleeping as well as you can.
- ↦ Time with people who make you feel like yourself.
- ↦ Going easy on alcohol. It can blunt things for a night and make them worse over weeks.
- ↦ Being patient with yourself, and with each other.

3 LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER

We are often the first to notice when a colleague is not themselves. A quiet "are you alright after that job?" can make a real difference. Ask twice if the first answer is "I'm fine". Then listen.

4 WHEN TO REACH OUT FOR MORE

Speak to your supervisor, Occupational Health or your GP if:

- ↦ things are getting worse, or are not easing after about a month
- ↦ it is affecting your sleep, home life or work
- ↦ you are drinking more to cope
- ↦ you feel you cannot talk to anyone around you

You do not have to wait. Speaking up early is not weakness, and it does not have to wait until you are at breaking point. If you or a colleague have thoughts of suicide, or of not wanting to be here, talk to someone today. The services below are there day and night.

5 WHO YOU CAN TALK TO

Supervisor

TRiM / post-incident support

Occupational Health or Employee Assistance Programme

Federation or union representative

If you are struggling, you do not have to be at breaking point to reach out.

Samaritans	call 116 123, free, 24/7
Bluelight	text BLUELIGHT to 85258, free, 24/7
Emergency	call 999 if life is at risk

#NEVERALONE