**Common Stress Reactions**

**From Critical Incidents**



**“Critical Incident: Any situation faced by students or staff that causes them to experience unusually strong emotional reactions which have the ability to interfere with their ability to function or perform duties effectively. These are normal reactions that normal people have to abnormal events.”**

**Physical Reactions**

Gastro-intestinal discomfort Fatigue Rapid heart beat

Cramps Headaches Nausea

Breathing problems Chills Dizziness

Sweating Increased illnesses Chest pain

Impaired immune system Shock Tingling in limbs

**Emotional Reactions**

Disturbed thought Grief Guilt

Denial Fear Panic

Depression Apprehension Anxiety

Powerlessness Anger/rage Survivor guilt

Sadness Helplessness Overly sensitive

**Cognitive Reactions**

Lowered concentration Orientation Decision making

Memory Hyper-alertness Sleep problems

Nightmares Intrusive images Problem solving

Apathy Preoccupation with trauma or event

Perfectionism Thoughts of self-harm or harm to others

**Behavioral Reactions**

Startle easy Speech Restlessness

Avoidance Alcohol Outbursts

Appetite changes Withdrawal Hygiene

Blaming Irritability Moody

Accident proneness Nightmares

**Spiritual Reactions**

Questioning faith Anger Disassociation

Be aware of any of the above signs & symptoms. Continue to talk to others involved in the tragedy about your reactions; it will aid you and others. The debriefing/-fusing is merely the initial step in the process, providing “emotional first aid”. If there is a need for further debriefing sessions, one-on-one peer meetings, or any other type of support needed, please let your administration know and the SCRT team will follow up with you.