

CLINICAL AND COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

August 20-21, 2018 Singapore

The emotional impact caused by a traumatic event and the process of second victimization in forest firefighters**Jaime Senabre**

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The forest fire extinguishing services sometimes face critical situations that can suppose a traumatic experience capable of generating a deep discomfort in the interveners, such as the loss of companions during the work of extinction, burns caused by the fire, the emotional impact in situations of entrapment, etc. This type of negative events can provoke fear and feelings of terror in the victims, as well as invisible emotional scars, difficult to erase and of complex approach. An inadequate assistance to this type of professionals, affected by a critical incident of these characteristics can originate various processes of victimization, causing a psychological damage characterized by pain, anger, indignation, guilt, fear, awe, intense re-experimentation of what was lived, physiological and psychological hyperactivation, apathy, helplessness, feeling of loss of control, insecurity and avoidance behaviors. The absence of empathy and sensitivity of the staff that attends to the victims, together with a lack of information and a mismatch between the expected and received treatment can cause a negative feeling in the firefighters affected by the traumatic incident, capable of initiating a process of revictimization called second victimization. In this work, concepts such as traumatic experience, traumatic event, psychological damage and second victimization are addressed. Likewise, the conditioning factors of the emotional impact (external and internal), the objectives of the psychological help work and the basic skills to develop it are pointed out. Also, the phases through which the forest firefighters go when they suffer a revictimization are indicated. Finally, some guidelines are offered on what to do to avoid a second victimization.

Biography

Jaime Senabre is a Psychologist and Master in Psychopathology and Health. He has completed Doctoral studies in the Department of Personality, Evaluation and Psychological Treatment of the UNED, related to Stress and the Immune System, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Mobbing. He is a Chief of Brigade in the Forest Fire Service of the Generalitat Valenciana, with more than 20 years of experience. With multidisciplinary training at the Master's level in areas such as occupational health and safety, emergency management, sport psychology, human resources management, mediation, conflict resolution and coaching. As a Psychologist, he collaborates with several private clinical centers, also with several companies and institutions in the area of training in psychology in emergencies and human resources management. He is Professor at the University of Valencia in the Master in intervention and operational coordination in emergencies and catastrophes and other postgraduate courses on emergencies. He is the Director and President of the International Scientific -Professional Committee of the National Symposium on Forest Fires (SINIF). He is part of the Editorial Board of several international scientific journals and published numerous articles on forest fires, stress, psychosocial risks and emotional trauma, mainly in relation to emergency services and natural disasters. He is also a Member of the Spanish Society for the Study of Anxiety and Stress (SEAS) and the Spanish Association of Clinical Psychology and Psychopathology (AEPCP).

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