ABSTRACT

TITLE:	A Firefighters Personal Case Study of an Explosion from a Trauma Perspective
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ABSTRACT: On February 22, 2007, an explosion tore through the Le Rendezvous restaurant injuring nine firefighters three of whom spent a night in the hospital. Being one of the three firefighters that spent the night and reflecting on how the event shaped me, my interest in a relatively new field of psychology dealing with trauma was born. Remembering what happened to me from the very second that the explosion occurred, to the moment I realized half of my body was being buried by rubble, then to the chaotic ambulance ride to the hospital, and finally being consoled by friends and family makes for a perfect case study from a personal view point. Every day, people experience traumatic and emotional events. The intensity of an event can affect every person differently and can lead to the development of psychological disorders. Examples of some traumatic events are car accidents, natural and manmade disasters, unexpected death of a loved one and so on. Emotional events can come in a positive manner like child birth or a marriage but it is the negative events like witnessing someone in distress that brands a lasting effect in an individual's brain. The physiology of trauma suggests that certain areas of the brain in the temporal lobe are where a majority of the recording for these events occur. When a stimulus acts on an individual reminding them of the event, anxiety and stress may be caused. Two different methods of memory enable a person to reflect on where and what happened. If not dealt with properly and thought about, traumatic and emotional events can lead individuals to develop anxiety disorders as well as substance abuse to numb the effects that the event has on them. Many different methods have been developed in order to help individuals, in particular first responders, in dealing with traumatic and emotional events. CISD is the most widely used method to get first responders to deal with what they witnessed. Beyond dealing with the event "in house", therapists have developed other methods on the basis of positive psychology to help individuals cope. Through my experience I have analyzed everything mentioned and exactly how it affected me throughout the year since the incident.