



*My View*

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## COMPASSION IN ACTION

Trauma is big these days! Researchers are researching it, the media is writing about it, professors are teaching about it, and students are majoring in it. All of this is a good thing.

One of the positive results of all this activity for TIP is that theories about trauma and what is helpful to survivors are confirming the importance of what we do. More and more research is finding that how survivors are treated in the immediate aftermath is key to their ability to heal.

While I welcome all the writing and intellectual activity regarding trauma, I am proud to be part of an organization on the front lines helping survivors of trauma. When emergency responders call, we don't question, don't talk, don't theorize...don't meet...we GO!

We certainly aren't the only organization on the front lines dedicated to helping survivors of trauma. There are therapists, programs, and organizations which are all doing good work. But I don't know another organization in this country which responds in the immediate aftermath of tragedy on such a comprehensive and systematic basis....."**Always Ready...Always There.**"

Over the years, I've had many people ask me: *"How does TIP provide this high performance service with volunteers?"*

When you think about it, that's a good question. Promising police officers, firefighters and healthcare professionals that we will respond to their requests 24/7, quickly and 100% of the time seems rather grandiose.

When I approached the first police department 30 years ago and made that promise, they smiled and nodded their heads. I only found out later that they were humoring me, and that they felt that there was no way we could fulfill the level of service we were promising. They were sure that we would fail and fade away. They were wrong.

How DO we do it? The TIP Model we put in place 30 years ago has proven to be "the secret sauce". The TIP Model has 5 components...

- > **HIGH STANDARDS:** We have set the bar high, and we invite everyone including our emergency partners to hold us accountable for our performance (we have no place to hide!).
- > **STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH PUBLIC SAFETY:** We spend lots of time forging partnerships and nurturing relationships with public safety agencies. They are the ones who give us access to survivors of tragedy, and they need to know us and trust us.
- > **VOLUNTEERS:** To fulfill our promise of quick and comprehensive on scene services, we need local citizen volunteers willing to step up and be TIP first responders. And they do!
- > **THE EXPERTISE:** TIP Volunteers who are called to emergency scenes are usually under the watchful gaze of a police officer, firefighter or nurse. If volunteers did not demonstrate the expertise they acquired in the Volunteer Training Academy, responders would not call us.
- > **LEADERSHIP:** Without strong leaders, our TIP volunteer responders would stop responding to the emotionally fiery scenes they respond to. They would "walk" and volunteer their time in any one of thousands of nonprofits available in their communities.

So the answer to that question “**How does TIP do it?**” is: we set high standards; we nurture strong relationships with responders; our personnel are citizen volunteers; we have the expertise necessary to do the job and we have great leaders. Most importantly when we are called upon to help...**we just do it!**

As I write this there is a TIP Volunteer somewhere dropping what she is doing and responding to a TIP Call. No talk...no questioning....no nonsense....**Compassion in Action.**

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