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Non-professional trauma debriefers in the workplace : individual and organisational antecedents and consequences of their experiences

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approach to adopt, given the unique context of the present study, the number of trauma debriefers in the study would have been strongly compromised. This, in turn, would have had a negative impact on the statistical analyses which could have been legitimately utilised in the quantitative phase of the present study.

As will be shown in the subsequent sections, qualitative and quantitative research designs have a number of inherent limitations. While it is essential to view the findings of the present study within the context of these limitations it is also most important to note that the present author specifically adopted a research design involving triangulation. The aim of adopting a triangulated research design was to: enable confirmation of qualitative and quantitative data; elaborate analysis through the provision of richer detail; and initiate new ideas of thinking through attention to apparent paradoxes (Wilson & Hutchinson, 1991).

Sample characteristics

One of the unique features of the present study is its exploration of issues related to secondary traumatic stress in the workplace context. The sample of non-professional workplace trauma debriefers in this study allowed for the investigation of factors affecting and being affected by the experience of trauma debriefing, which have not been specifically explored before but have certainly been alluded to in the existing literature. However, while this may be seen as one of the positive attributes of this study it can also be viewed as one of its inherent limitations. This is due to the fact that the results of the present study may not be generalised to other populations of trauma counsellors. Future studies utilising the same or similar methodology but on different samples of trauma workers will determine the generalisability of the current study's findings.

A further limitation of the current study relates to the voluntary nature of subjects' participation in the study. Problems related to the use of volunteer samples are well

documented in the literature (Kerlinger, 1986; Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1991). For instance, Kerlinger (1986) states that the self-selection of subjects allows for the potential influence of extraneous variables to occur on the research variables. Accordingly, there are specific reasons why some respondents will agree to participate, while others decline and it is these reasons that may have an impact on the research variables under investigation. Therefore, the present study's findings, especially those related to the incidence of reported secondary traumatic stress, must be seen within these limitations. This study clearly does not account for the levels of secondary traumatic stress that may potentially be experienced by debriefers who did not participate in the study or by debriefers who have withdrawn from the trauma programme.

Limitations pertaining to present study's sample size also need to be noted. While the total sample size is adequate for the types of statistical analyses undertaken in the quantitative phase of this study, questions can be raised when focussing on the sub-samples. Given the voluntary nature of the participation in the present study, the researcher could not ensure sub-samples of equal size. The sample of trauma debriefers from Organisation 3 was considerably smaller than those of Organisations 1 and 2. As indicated wherever appropriate, the findings related to trauma debriefers in Organisation 3 should therefore always be viewed within the limitations inherent in the relatively small sample size. This limitation relates directly to another regarding the procedure followed during the sampling process. The present author had to rely on the goodwill and expertise of three different trauma programme co-ordinators in three different organisations. As such, direct access to trauma debriefers was not always possible which may well have had an impact on the response rate in the different organisations.

Measuring instruments

Quantitative study. One of the challenging aspects in undertaking this study, was the fact that the relevant theory is still in the development phase. Accordingly, even 'ess progress

has been made in the development and refinement of valid standardised instruments for the measurement of secondary traumatic stress as it applies to trauma counsellors. The theory pertaining to the potential experience of secondary traumatic stress by this group of trauma workers, certainly does identify a number of trends in terms of the deleterious consequences of this type of work. However, the measuring instruments currently being developed in this field tend to have different foci. As such, the present author used two instruments currently in their development phase, namely, the Compassion Fatigue and Satisfaction Scale (Stamm & Figley, 1997) and the Silencing Response Scale (Baranowsky, personal communication, April 4, 1997; 1998). These scales have been specifically developed to investigate the incidence of secondary traumatic stress (as manifested in various forms), in counsellors involved in full-time trauma work. As such, the suitability of these instruments to the present study's sample of non-professional part-time trauma debriefers in the workplace may well be seen as an inherent limitation of this study.

In the present study, these scales were found to have adequate internal reliability. However, the construct validity of these scales remains an area requiring attention. Furthermore, the current author identified a number of problems associated with the items in these scales. For instance, item 11 of the Silencing Response Scale was not understood by any of the trauma debriefers in the pilot-study of this research. As such, this item was omitted from the data analysis of the trauma debriefers' responses in the present study as findings related to this measure need to be viewed within this context. Similarly, a number of semantic problems were identified in the Compassion Fatigue and Satisfaction Scale. These were related mainly to temporal issues and may well reflect the lack of precision in definitions and theoretical conceptualistions of secondary traumatic stress.

The present author, in consultation with B. H. Stamm (personal communication,

September 10, 1997) made the necessary changes to these items so as to ensure standardisation in terms of their temporal characteristics. Furthermore, Wilson (1998), in her study conducted under the supervision of the present author, identified a number of other problems regarding the ambiguity of the item contents of this scale. For instance, subjects in her study found item, "I thought that I need to work through a traumatic experience in my life." as being ambiguous and results in confusion if a person believes they have done this already and the issue therefore no longer requires 'working through'. Also, subjects in Wilson's study were found to have difficulty in responding to the item "I feel little compassion towards most of my co-workers." when they reported always feeling compassion towards their co-workers.

Another problem associated with the use of instruments in their experimental phase of development is that of appropriate norms. The results pertaining to the compassion fatigue and burnout sub-scales of the Compassion Fatigue and Satisfaction Scale were interpreted according to the manner suggested by Figley (1995). Similarly, debriefers' scores on the Silencing Response Scale were interpreted according to the suggestions made by Baranowsky (1998). However, the development of population specific norms remains an ongoing challenge in the development process of this instrument and the present study's findings in relation to these constructs should be seen within this limitation.

A further problem associated with the measurement instruments adopted in the quantitative phase of the present study relates to the Likert-type rating scales in each of the instruments. These types of measuring instruments all have the inherent limitations associated with different aspects of rating bias, such as, the central tendency bias (Kerlinger, 1986).

Qualitative study. Data in the qualitative phase of the present study was collected by using focussed interviews. Problems associated with qualitative research are easily identifiable. For instance, the inherent subjective nature of the data collected may be considered a strength

but is more often considered a limitation. Calder encapsulates this sentiment by stating that, "There is concern about the subjectivity of the technique and a feeling that any given result might have been different with different respondents, a different moderator, or even, a different setting." (1977, p.351).

Considering the focussed interviews specifically, even though a structured interview schedule was utilised, Kerlinger (1986) warns that structured interviews are still not as uniform as they may seem as the same question may well have different meanings for different people. Factors such as social desirability constraints are inherent to all self-report measures. Accordingly, respondents may respond in the way they think the researcher would like to have them respond, rather than responding in accordance with their true thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Related to this limitation of structured interviews, are the potential experimenter effects which may occur. Thus, respondents may consciously or unconsciously react to cues provided by the researcher in his/her non-verbal and verbal behaviours (Neale & Liebert, 1986).

Furthermore, while the nature and depth of the data obtained from the interviews in the present study may be questioned, it is important to note that these interviews were specifically not undertaken within a phenomenological paradigm. Certainly, the latter approach may well have provided richer material regarding some of the aspects explored in the interviews. However, the aim of the interviews in this study was to explore further issues arising from the quantitative phase of the study, and to elicit trends regarding debriefers' experiences of a number of personal and organisational issues.

Data analysis

In the quantitative phase of the present study, moderated multiple regressions were used in order to explore the potential moderating influences of sense of coherence and social

support. This form of data analysis is appropriate within this context (Baron & Kenny, 1986). However, the fact that inconsistent results emerged regarding the moderating effects of these variables, should also be viewed within the limitations associated with moderated multiple regressions. Aguinis and Stone-Romero (1997) emphasise that moderating effects of substantial magnitude may go undetected should the power implications of both the main and interactive effects of the variables not be considered. McClelland and Judd (1993) note that while interaction effects are frequently found in experimental studies, field researchers encounter considerable difficulty in detecting theorized moderated effects. These authors cite reasons for this, including, differences in measurement error and use of non-linear scales. They elaborate further and argue that the identification of statistically reliable interaction effects which explain a significant proportion of the variation of the dependent variable will remain difficult unless field researchers can select, over sample, or control the levels of the predictor variables. Despite these limitations of moderated multiple regressions as used in field research, McClelland and Judd conclude by stating that "This does not mean that researchers should not seek interactions in such conditions, however, they should be aware that the odds are against them." (p.388).

In the qualitative phase of the present study, thematic content analysis was used to analyse the interview data. Thematic content analysis has been criticised for being descriptive, subjective and impressionistic in nature (Sommer & Sommer, 1980). In order to overcome these limitations to a certain extent, in the present study more than one researcher was used to analyse a random, representative sample of the interview data. The results were then compared so as to identify any significant differences on the themes.

In concluding this section on the limitations inherent in the present study, it should once again be noted that a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies was

explicitly adopted in order to overcome some of the problems inherent in each of these approaches.

Theoretical Implications

The area of secondary traumatic stress has only recently received the attention of researchers and practitioners in the broader field of psychotraumatology. As would be expected in a specific area of a field of study that is in its infancy, much of the existing material in this regard is descriptive. Very few published empirical studies are available to verify these descriptive explanations of secondary traumatic stress. The majority of the work that has been undertaken in this area focusses on the potential experience of secondary traumatic stress by first line emergency workers. Far less attention has been given to counsellors involved in trauma work. The need for research in the area of secondary traumatic stress as it applies to trauma counsellors has been identified by numerous authors. In addition, the aspects related to the experience of trauma within the context of the workplace are under-explored in the literature. The present research has aimed to address these issues. The fact that the current state of knowledge in this field is in its infancy, has proved to be particularly challenging in undertaking this research study and has also resulted in a number of theoretical implications.

The findings in this study have to a large extent supported the various models which have been proposed to explain the nature and dynamics of secondary traumatic stress. For instance, the present study's findings strongly support Figley's model of trauma transmission. More specifically, debriefers in the present study reported strong feelings of self efficacy and role satisfaction which are identified by Figley as being key ingredients in the prevention of the onset of compassion fatigue. Another important factor in this model pertains to the trauma counsellor's ability to disengage from the helping process. Trauma debriefers in the present study were involved in debriefing on a part-time basis and this structurally imposed limit on

their debriefing involvement may well have contributed to their ability to successfully disengage from the process.

Trauma debiefers in the present study did, to a certain extent, display the traditional symptoms of secondary traumatic stress. However, in the qualitative phase of the study, debriefers were found to only experience these symptoms in the short term. This may well then be seen to provide support for debriefers in the present study experiencing symptoms associated with Acute Stress Disorder (ASD). However, these symptoms were not found to disrupt debriefers' social or occupational functioning and therefore did not qualify for diagnosis as ASD (Koopman, et al., 1995). However, debriefers did report more long lasting changes in their cognitive schemata and this then may be seen as supporting the ideas postulated by McCann and Pearlman (1990)

A further theoretical implication of the present study is its explicit focus on the concept of role satisfaction experienced by debriefers involved in trauma work. Some writers have made passing reference to their findings regarding their subjects' perceived role satisfaction in the trauma counselling context, but this aspect of their experiences has not received significant attention. The current study focussed specifically on role satisfaction in attempting to obtain a thorough understanding of the experiences of trauma debriefers. As was clearly evident in this study's findings, role satisfaction emerged as playing a significant part in how debriefers responded to the debriefing process, in general. Role satisfaction was certainly a significant contributor to the relatively low levels of secondary traumatic stress reported in the present study. As such, it is strongly recommended that issues related to role satisfaction be formally integrated into the research design of future studies investigating the nature and dynamics of secondary traumatic stress.

Authors such as Dutton and Rubinstein (1995), Beaton and Murphy (1995) and Kleber

and Brom (1992), emphasise the potential influence of personality disposition and social support, in the understanding of the nature of secondary traumatic stress. The present study has refined this assertion by specifically exploring the moderating and main effects models pertaining to the role of these variables in the experience of secondary traumatic stress. Personality disposition, as manifested in debriefers' Sense of Coherence, was found to be a variable with consistent main effects on the indicators of secondary traumatic stress. A similar trend emerged when focussing on the role of social support in the relationship between workplace trauma debriefers' experiences and the indicators of secondary traumatic stress. However, social support was found to have a consistent moderating effect on the relationship between workplace trauma debriefers' experiences and key work attitudes.

Beaton and Murphy (1995) make reference to the importance of also considering organisational factors in the potential experience of work-induced secondary traumatic stress. The present study makes a unique contribution in this regard, by explicitly focussing on organisational factors which have the potential to impact on workplace trauma debriefers' experiences. The adoption of Nadler and Tushman's (1981) congruency model for the analysis of organisational behaviour proved to be particularly valuable in identifying the specific components to have a potential impact within this context. In addition, this model proved useful in facilitating the integration of the complex results which emerged from this study. The development of the Workplace Trauma Debriefers' Scale formed a key part in being able to operationalise the concepts inherent in the Nadler and Tushman model. The approach adopted in the present study may, therefore, be of considerable use to other researchers interested in the area of work-induced secondary traumatic stress. This is particularly the case if one considers the term 'organisation' in its broadest sense and this approach would therefore be applicable to other investigations into the experience of trauma in various organisational settings.

Practical Implications

The findings of the present study have a number of practical implications regarding the strategy of introducing trauma intervention programmes in organisational settings. Given the frequent incidents of violence being experienced in workplace settings within the South African context in particular, the introduction of these type of organisation based trauma interventions may well increase. The congruence model of organisational behaviour adopted in the present study highlights the notion that the success of any such intervention is clearly dependent on the interaction between a number of formal and informal organisational and individual factors. The practical implications emerging from this are outlined accordingly.

* The present study has considerable implications for the selection of debriefers in similar contexts. It would seem that the use of Antonovsky's scale measuring Sense of Coherence would be a valuable contributor to the selection process. A strong Sense of Coherence has certainly been shown to contribute to the low secondary traumatic stress currently reportedly experienced by debriefers.

* Exploring issues related to whether debriefers have been exposed to other traumatic incidents in their lives would also be useful. More importantly, though, would be the need to explore <u>how</u> debriefers have coped with these incidents. This is due to the fact that this prior exposure to traumatic events can have the effect of increasing a person's resiliency, as well as facilitating a person's ability to empathise with others in the debriefing context. Conversely, this previous exposure to traumatic events may result in the person's increased vulnerability to the potentially deleterious consequences of trauma work.

* Related to the previous two points, is the issue of social support. It would seem vitally important to explore prospective debriefers' resources available to them in this regard. Specific attention should be given to prospective debriefers' perceived support available to

them from their managers as this may minimise the potential for role conflict to occur.

* Prospective debriefers' motivation for volunteering to participate in the trauma programme is another area warranting investigation in the selection phase. Formal recognition for their involvement should not be a motive. Instead a willingness to want to help others would seem to be a key factor in the positive evaluation of debriefers' experiences.

* Issues related to the adoption of an additional work role also need to be explored when selecting prospective debriefers. The feasibility for debriefers to be able to reschedule their full-time work commitments is particularly important so as to minimise the potential experience of role conflict. Related to this issue, is the importance of establishing an effective debriefing duty roster so as to ensure that debriefers can plan their time accordingly. In addition, this would assist in spreading the debriefing 'load' and would therefore help to prevent same debriefers being used too frequently.

* The perceived effectiveness of the training received by debriefers has been shown in the present study to play a vital role in the debriefers' feelings of competency in the debriefin context. Also, debriefers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the training has been found to contribute significantly to the overall satisfaction debriefers experience in their debriefing roles. As such, it is crucial that the trauma programme co-ordinator, in consultation with experts in the field, monitors the effectiveness of the skills training provided to debriefers on a regular basis. There should be close contact with debriefers to identify particular problems they may be encountering in the debriefing sessions so as to ensure that the skills training is needs-based and appropriate.

* Although debriefers in the present study seemed to find inherent satisfaction in the debriefing process, the commitment of key stakeholders to the debriefing process certainly had the potential to enhance or detract from this role satisfaction. The need for effective and

continuous communication with key stakeholders regarding the role of the trauma intervention programme is therefore evident. The ongoing marketing of the trauma programme should therefore form a key area of responsibility for the trauma programme co-ordinator.

* All the above factors rely heavily on the trauma programme co-ordination strategy adopted in an organisation. The trauma programme co-ordinator therefore plays a critical role in the effectiveness of the above components of the trauma programme and therefore ultimately the effectiveness of the service being provided to employees in need. Given the complexity of the components of the trauma programme in an organisational setting, it would seem highly unlikely that effective co-ordination can be achieved by an individual alone. Instead, it would seem that a team of appropriate people would be in a better position to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of all aspects to do with the trauma debriefing programme.

Concluding Remarks

The present study has aimed to provide a thorough exploration of the factors influencing and being influenced by the experience of trauma debriefing in the workplace. In general, it was found that debriefers in the present study did not experience secondary traumatic stress. Using a congruence model of organisational behaviour, the interdependence between a number of both individual-related and organisational-related factors was identified as contributing to this outcome. It essential to note at this point, that the focus of the present study has explicitly and deliberately been on the helpers. In order to fully evaluate the impact of trauma debriefing interventions in organisational settings, the effectiveness of the intervention as perceived by those on the receiving end of the service needs to be explored. The adoption of a congruency model of organisational behaviour may also be of considerable value to researchers wishing to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the experience of trauma by victims in workplace settings. Lastly, any strategy that aims to deal with the

increasingly frequent incidents of violence- induced trauma in organisational settings, should explicitly adopt a multidimensional approach. As such strategies should aim to contribute to combatting crime in the broader community as well as taking every step to ensure the safety of their employees, over and above trauma debriefing interventions as focussed on in this study.

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APPENDIX A

Suggested Distinctions Between the Diagnostic Criteria for Primary and Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder

Primary	Secondary
A. Stressor :	A. Stressor :
Experienced an event outside the range of usual human experiences that would be markedly distressing to almost anyone; an event such as :	Experienced an event outside the range of usual human experiences that would be markedly distressing to almost anyone; an event such as :
1. Serious threat to self.	1. Serious threat to traumatized person (TP)
2. Sudden destruction of one's environs	2. Sudden destruction of TP's environs
B. Reexperiencing Trauma Event	B. Reexperiencing Trauma Event
1. Recollections of event	1. Recollections of event/TP
2. Dreams of event	2. Dreams of event/TP
3. Sudden reexperiencing of event	3. Sudden reexperiencing of event/TP
4. Distress of reminders of event	4. Reminders of TP/event distressing
C. Avoidance/Numbing of Reminders	C. Avoidance/Numbing of Reminders of Event
1. Efforts to avoid thoughts/feelings	1. Efforts to avoid thoughts/feelings
2. Efforts to avoidactivities/situations	2. Efforts to avoid activities/situations
3. Psychogenic amnesia	3. Psychogenic amnesia
4. Diminished interest in activities	4. Diminished interest in activities
5. Detatchment/estrangement from others	5. Detatchment/estrangement from others
6. Diminished affect	6. Diminished affect
7. Sense of foreshortened future	7. Sense of foreshortened future
D. Persistant arousal	D. Persistant arousal
1. Difficulty falling/staying asleep	1. Difficulty falling/staying asleep
2. Irritability or outbursts of anger	2. Irritability or outbursts of anger
3. Difficulty concentrating	3. Difficulty concentrating
4. Hypervigilance for self	4. Hypervigilance for TP
5. Exaggerated startle response	5. Exaggerated startle response
6. Physiologic reactivity to cues	6. Physiologic reactivity to cues
(Symptoms under one month duration are considered normal, acute, crisis-related reactions. Those not manifesting symptoms until six months or more following th ent are delayed PTSD or STD.)	

APPENDIX B

Department of Psychology

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

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10 September 1997

Dear

I am a lecturer in the Psychology Department of the University of the Witwatersrand and am currently conducting research for my PhD under the supervisio. of Dr Merle Friedman. The focus of my study is the exploration of the personal and organisational factors affecting, and being affected by, the experience of being a trauma debriefer in the workplace. It is hoped that this research will contribute to the understanding of trauma and its implications in organisational settings. Equally importantly, the findings of this study aim to assist organisations in the ongoing monitoring and refinement of trauma debriefing interventions in the workplace.

I have been given the support and permission of the trauma programme co-ordinator in your organisation to request you to participate in this study. The validity of this study depends on obtaining a large and representative number of responses from trauma debriefers in organisations. Thus, it would be greatly appreciated if you would complete the attached questionnaire which should take about 30 minutes of your time.

Please note that this is an independent project and **participation is voluntary**. Your responses will remain **totally confidential** and no person in your organisation will have access to your completed questionnaire. Feedback to your organisation will be in the form of trends only and your trauma programme co-ordinator will be encouraged to make the findings accessible to all trauma debriefers in your organisation. In order to further ensure **anonymity** you will note that you are not required to provide your name anywhere on the questionnaire..

Once you have completed the questionnaire, please return it to me in the self-addressed envelope provided. It would be appreciated if you could return the completed questionnaire to me by no later than **Friday 26 September 1997**.

I look forward to your response and thank you in anticipation of your participation.

Yours sincerely

Karen Ortlepp

Dr Merle Friedman
Supervisor

QUESTIONNAIRE

Questions appear on both sides of each page

Please take care to complete the questionnaire fully

SECTION A

1. Gender: Male ( ) Female ( )

2. Age: ( ) years ( ) months

3. Home language:
   - English ( )
   - Afrikaans ( )
   - Zulu ( )
   - Sotho ( )
   - Tswana ( )
   - Other ( )

4. Marital status:
   - Married ( )
   - Single ( )
   - Divorced ( )
   - Steady relationship ( )
   - Widowed ( )

5. Highest educational qualification:
   - Matric ( )
   - Diploma ( )
   - Bachelor's degree ( )
   - Post-graduate degree/diploma ( )

6. Number of children:

7. Job title (designation):

8. Job status:
   - Senior management ( )
   - Middle management ( )
   - Junior management ( )
   - Supervisory ( )
   - Clerical ( )
   - Administrative ( )

9. Length of service with this organisation: ( )years ( )months

10. Region/Province:

11. The following questions ask you about any traumatic experience(s) you may have had. Place an "X" in the box which applies to you, either YES or NO. If you can remember the approximate date on which you experienced any of these incident(s) please specify this.

EXPERIENCE	YES	NO	DATE
1. Has anyone ever taken something from you by force or threat of force, such as in a robbery, mugging, or hold-up?			
2. Has anyone ever beaten you up or attacked you?			
3. Has anyone ever made you have sex by using force or threatening to harm you?			
4. Have you ever been in a motor accident serious enough to cause injury to one or more passengers?			
5. Has a loved one ever died of an accident , homicide, or suicide?			
6. Have you ever suffered injury or property damage because of a fire, severe weather, or a natural or manmade disaster			
7. Have you ever been forced to evacuate from your home?			

SECTION B

Debriefing Details

1. How long have you been a trauma debriefer in this organisation?
( ) years ( ) months

2. How many trauma refreshers have you attended?

3. Besides the trauma refreshers, have you attended any additional training which may be useful in trauma debriefing?
Yes ( ) No ( )

If "yes" please provide details:

4. Are you currently involved in the trauma debriefing programme?
Yes ( ) No ( )

5. Approximately, how many debriefing incidents have you facilitated? ( )

6. Approximately, how many people in total did this involve? ( )

7. How many people do you think you can successfully debrief following a trauma incident? ( )

8. When was the last time you were involved in a debriefing? ( ) ago

9. In your experience as a trauma debriefer in this organisation have you been involved in a debriefing where a death had occurred in the trauma incident ?
Yes ( ) No ( )

10. In your experience as a trauma debriefer in this organisation have you been involved in a debriefing where someone was seriously injured in the trauma incident?
Yes ( ) No ( )

For the rest of this section of the questionnaire please use an 'X" to mark the statement which shows how you generally feel about the following aspects of your experience as a trauma debriefer in this organisation.

Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers for any aspect of this questionnaire so please respond openly and honestly indicating how you feel and not how you think you should feel.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Uncertain or Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
1. I am happy with the way in which I was selected as a trauma debriefer					
2. My manager is committed to the trauma debriefing programme.					
3. My normal workload has been negatively affected by my trauma debriefing responsibilities					
4. I do not find my role as a trauma debriefer personally rewarding					
5. I am committed to the trauma debriefing programme					
6. There are clear policies and guidelines to assist me in my role as a trauma debriefer 7. My experience as a debriefer has enhanced my interpersonal skills in other situations					
8. I do not know why I was selected as a trauma debriefer					
9. The trauma debriefing training course did not equip me with the essential skills necessary to facilitate the debriefing sessions					
10. The trauma debriefing programme is not being effectively co-ordinated in this organisation					
11. My contributions to the trauma debriefing programme are appreciated and acknowledged by : * Top (senior) management					
12. * My manager					

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Uncertain or Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
13. * My colleagues					
14. * The employees involved in the traumatic incidents					
15. * The manager of employees involved in traumatic incidents					
16. * The trauma debriefing programme co-ordinator					
17. My manager gives me adequate support to carry out my role as a debriefer					
18. I am able to make myself available to meet the time commitments involved in debriefing					
19. I regret becoming involved in the trauma debriefing programme					
20. It was explained to me clearly why I was selected as a trauma debriefer.					
21. The trauma debriefing training course equipped me to deal with my own emotional responses to the debriefing sessions					
22. The trauma debriefing programme is being effectively monitored / reviewed in this organisation					
23. I do not feel adequately compensated by the organisation for my contributions to the trauma debriefing programme					
24. My opinion of this organisation has been negatively affected by my involvement in the trauma debriefing programme					

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Uncertain or Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
25. My job status (job level) has a negative impact on my role in a debriefing session					
26. The restructuring in this organisation has had a negative impact on my role as a debriefer					
27. The managers of employees involved in traumatic incidents are committed to the trauma debriefing programme					
28. I think other factors should be taken into consideration before selecting trauma debriefers					
29. I feel guilty when I am unable to respond to a debriefing request					
30. The trauma debriefing training course equipped me to deal with people who were emotionally distressed by the traumatic incident					
31. I have experienced personal growth as a result of my involvement in the trauma debriefing programme.					
32. I am not given adequate physical resources (eg. rooms) to be effective in my role as a trauma debriefer					
33. I possess the right qualities for a trauma debriefer					
34. The trauma debriefing training course did not equip me to deal with people who were resistant to participating in the debriefing process					
35. I have adequate access to a debriefer after debriefing in an incident					

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Uncertain or Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
36. My contributions as a trauma debriefer are not appreciated in this organisation					
37. Senior management in this organisation is committed to the trauma debriefing programme					
38. My usual workload has been increased as a result of my trauma debriefing role					
39. I find it personally satisfying to be able to help others who have experienced a traumatic incident					
40. When dealing with a debriefing, I have adequate authority to perform my debriefing function effectively					
41. The managers of employees involved in traumatic incidents give me adequate support to carry out my role as a debriefer					
42. My experience as a debriefer has enhanced my coping strategies in other situations					
43. The requirements of trauma debriefing are within my capabilities					
44. The trauma debriefing training course equipped me to deal with people who have experienced multiple traumatic incidents (e.g. numerous bank robberies)					
45. I am satisfied with the debriefing I receive after being involved in a debriefing					
46. I recognise the value of my work as a debriefer.					
47. The trauma programme co-ordinator is committed to the trauma debriefing programme					

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Uncertain or Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
48. I know what my responsibilities are in the debriefing situation					
49. In my role as a debriefer, I feel that I make a contribution to dealing with the difficulties facing South Africa					
50. I have acquired new skills and knowledge as a result of my involvement in trauma debriefing					
51. My involvement in the trauma debriefing programme has increased my commitment to this organisation					
52. I am uncertain about my role in a debriefing session					
53. My involvement in the trauma debriefing programme has increased the contribution I make to this organisation					
54. I feel guilty when I have to request time off from my manager when responding to a debriefing request					
55. I find myself getting emotionally involved when debriefing					
56. My expectations of trauma debriefing have been met					
57. My level of commitment to debriefing has decreased since I began working on the trauma debriefer programme					
58. I have difficulty functioning in my job after being involved in a debriefing					
59. All in all, I feel that I am a successful and effective debriefer					

Are there any other factors affecting your role as a debriefer in this organisation? If yes, please elaborate:

SECTION C

The following questions ask about people in your environment who may provide you with help or support ***following a debriefing***. Firstly, please look at each question and decide if it applied to you. Never, Sometimes, Often, Or, Always. Place an "X" in the brackets next to the response which is most appropriate to you. Secondly, indicate who gave you the support by placing an "X" in the appropriate bracket.

1. Whenever you want to talk, how often is there someone willing to listen?

   never ( ) sometimes ( ) often ( ) always ( )

2. Who is willing to listen?

   mother ( ) father ( ) spouse/partner ( ) friend ( ) colleague ( )
   debriefer "buddy" ( ) your own debriefer/trauma programme co-ordinator ( )
   manager ( ) subordinates ( ) other ( )

3. Do you want to talk to someone after you have been debriefing?

   never ( ) sometimes ( ) often ( ) always ( )

4. Who do you want to talk to after you have been debriefing?

   mother ( ) father ( ) spouse/partner ( ) friend ( ) colleague ( )
   debriefer "buddy" ( ) your own debriefer/ trauma programme co-ordinator ( )
   manager ( ) subordinates ( ) other ( )

5. Are you able to talk about your thoughts and feelings?

   never ( ) sometimes ( ) often ( ) always ( )

6. Who are you able to talk with?

   mother ( ) father ( ) spouse/partner ( ) friend ( ) colleague ( )
   debriefer "buddy" ( ) your own debriefer/trauma programme co-ordinator ( )
   manager ( ) subordinates ( ) other ( )

7. Are people sympathetic and supportive ?

   never ( ) sometimes ( ) often ( ) always ( )

8. Who is sympathetic and supportive?

mother ( ) father ( ) spouse/partner ( ) friend ( ) colleague ( )
debriefer "buddy" ( ) your own debriefer/trauma programme co-ordinator ( )
manager ( ) subordinates.( ) other ( )

9. Are people helpful in a practical sort of way?

never ( ) sometimes ( ) often ( ) always ( )

10. Who is helpful?

mother ( ) father ( ) spouse/partner ( ) friend ( ) colleague ( )
debriefer "buddy"( ) your own debriefer/trauma programme co-ordinator ( )
manager ( ) subordinates ( ) other ( )

11. Do people you expect to be supportive make you feel worse at any time?

never ( ) sometimes ( ) often ( ) always.( )

12. Who makes you feel worse?

mother ( ) father ( ) spouse/partner ( ) friend ( ) colleague ( )
debriefer "buddy"( ) your own debriefer/trauma programme co-ordinator ( )
manager ( ) subordinates ( ) other ( )

13. Overall, are you satisfied with the support you receive after debriefing?

never ( ) sometimes ( ) often ( ) always ( )

SECTION D

Here is a series of questions relating to various aspects of our lives. Each question has seven possible answers. Please put a cross in the box which expresses your answer, with numbers 1 and 7 being the extreme answers. If the words under 1 are right for you, put a cross in box 1; if the words under 7 are right for you, put a cross in box seven. If you feel differently, put a cross in the box which best expresses your feeling. Please only give one answer to each question.

1. When you talk to people do you have the feeling that they don't understand you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never have this feeling						Always have this feeling

2. In the past, when you had to do something which depended upon cooperation with others, did you have the feeling that it:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Surely wouldn't get done						Surely would get done

3. Think of the people with whom you come into contact daily, aside from the ones to whom you feel closest. How well do you know most of them?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
You feel that they're strangers						You know them very well

4. Do you have the feeling that you don't really care about what goes on around you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very seldom or never						Very often

5. Has it happened in the past that you were surprised by the behaviour of people whom you thought you knew well?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never happened						Always happened

6. Has it happened that people whom you counted on disappointed you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never happened						Always happened

7. Life is:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Full of interest						Completely routine

8. Until now your life has had:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
No clear goals or no purpose at all						Very clear goals and purpose

9. Do you have a feeling that you're being treated unfairly?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very often						Very seldom or never

10. In the last ten years your life has been:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Full of changes without your knowing what will happen next						Completely consistent and clear

11. Most of the things you do in the future will probably be:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Completely fascinating						Deadly boring

12. Do you have a feeling that you are in an unfamiliar situation and don't know what to do?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very often						Very seldom or never

13. What best describes how you see life:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

One can always find a solution to painful things in life

There is no solution to painful things in life

14. When you think about your life, you very often:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Feel how good it is to be alive

Ask yourself why you exist at all

15. When you face a difficult problem, the choice of a solution is:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Always confusing and hard to find

Always completely clear

16. Doing the things you do every day is:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

A source of deep pleasure and satisfaction

A source of pain and boredom

17. Your life in the future will probably be.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Full of changes without your knowing what will happen next

Completely consistent and clear

18. When something unpleasant happened in the past your tendency was:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To "eat yourself up" about it						To say "ok, that's that, I have to live with it" and go on

19. Do you have very mixed-up feelings and ideas?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very often						Very seldom or never

20. When you do something that gives you a good feeling:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It's certain that you'll go on feeling good						It's certain that something will happen to spoil the feeling

21. Does it happen that you have feelings inside you that you would rather not feel?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very often						Very seldom or never

22. You anticipate that your personal life in the future will be :

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally without meaning or purpose						Full of meaning and purpose

23. Do you think that there will always be people whom you'll be able to count on in the future

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
You're certain there will be						You doubt there will be

24. Does it happen that you have the feeling that you don't know exactly what's about to happen?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very often						Very seldom or never

25. Many people - even those with a strong character - sometimes feel like losers in certain situations. How often have you felt this way in the past?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never						Very often

26. When something happened, have you generally found that:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
You over-estimated or under-estimated its importance						You saw things in the right perspective

27. When you think of difficulties you are likely to face in important aspects of your life, do you have the feeling that:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
You will always succeed in over-coming the difficulties						You won't succeed in overcoming the difficulties

28. How often do you have the feeling that there's little meaning in the things you do in your daily life?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very often						Very seldom or never

29. How often do you have feelings that you're not sure you can keep under control?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very often						Very seldom or never

SECTION E

Listed below are a series of statements that represent possible feelings that people might have about the organisation for which they work. With respect to your own feelings about the particular organisation for which you are now working, please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking one of the alternatives next to each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organisation be successful					
2. I talk about this organisation to my friends as a great organisation to work for.					
3. I feel very little loyalty to this organisation					
4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organisation					
5. I find that my values and the organisation's are very similar.					

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation					
7. I could just as well be working for a different organisation as long as the type of work was similar.					
8. This organisation really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.					
9. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organisation					
10. I am extremely glad that I chose this organisation to work for rather than others I was considering at the time I joined					
11. There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organisation indefinitely.					
12. Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organisation's policies on important matters relating to its employees					
13. I really care about the fate of this organisation					
14. For me this is the best of all possible organisations for which to work.					
15. Deciding to work for this organisation was a definite mistake on my part.					

SECTION F

Please indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you feel about the following aspects of your job at the present moment.

	Extremely, Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Unsure	Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
1. The physical work conditions.					
2. The freedom to choose your own method of working					
3. Your fellow workers.					
4. The recognition you get for good work.					
5. Your immediate boss.					
6. The amount of responsibility you are given.					
7. Your rate of pay.					
8. Your opportunities to use your abilities.					
9. Industrial relations between management and workers in your company					
10. Your chance of promotion.					
11. The way your company is managed.					
12. The attention paid to suggestions you make.					
13. Your hours of work.					
14. The amount of variety in your job					
15. Your job security.					
16. How satisfied are you with your job in general?					

SECTION G

Being a trauma debriefer puts you in direct contact with other people's lives. As you probably have experienced, your compassion for the people you debrief has both positive and negative aspects. On the negative side, some debriefers find that they may feel fatigued or tired and worn out as a result of their work. On the positive side, many debriefers find that they have a great deal of satisfaction in being able to help people who have been through a traumatic incident. We are interested in how you experience your debriefing, both its satisfying and its fatiguing aspects. Consider each of the following characteristic about you and your current situation. Write in the number for the best response. Please try to answer all items honestly so that your **responses reflect how you really feel and not how you think you should feel.**

0= Not at All	1= Rarely	2= At Times	3= Not Sure	4= Often	5= Very Often

ITEMS ABOUT YOU

---------- 1. I am happy.

---------- 2 I find my life satisfying.

---------- 3. I have beliefs that sustain me.

---------- 4. I feel estranged from others.

---------- 5. I find that I learn new things from the people I debrief

---------- 6. I force myself to avoid certain thoughts or feelings that remind me of a frightening experience.

---------- 7. I find myself avoiding certain activities or situations because they remind me of a frightening experience.

---------- 8. I have gaps in my memory about frightening events.

---------- 9. I feel connected to others.

---------- 10. I have a calm disposition

---------- 11. I believe that I have a good balance between my work and my free time.

---------- 12. I have difficulty falling or staying asleep.

---------- 13. I have outbursts of anger or irritability with little provocation

-------- 14. I am the person I always wanted to be.

0= Not at All	1= Rarely	2= At Times	3= Not Sure	4= Often	5= Very Often

-------- 15. I startle easily

-------- 16. While working with a person who had experienced a traumatic incident I thought about violence against the perpetrator.

-------- 17. I am a sensitive person.

-------- 18. I have flashbacks connected to the people I have debriefed .

-------- 19. I have good peer support when I need to work through a highly stressful experience.

-------- 20. I have had first-hand experience with traumatic events in my adult life.

-------- 21. I have had first-hand experience with traumatic events in my childhood.

-------- 22. I think that I need to "work through" a traumatic experience in my life.

-------- 23. I think that I need more close friends.

-------- 24. I think that there is no one to talk with about highly stressful experiences.

-------- 25. I have concluded that I work too hard for my own good.

ITEMS ABOUT THE PEOPLE YOU HAVE DEBRIEFED

-------- 26. Working with the people I debrief brings me a great deal of satisfaction.

-------- 27. I feel invigorated after working with the people I debrief .

-------- 28. I am frightened of things a person I have debriefed has said or done to me.

-------- 29. I experience troubling dreams similar to a person I have debriefed .

-------- 30. Sometimes I have happy thoughts about the people I debrief and how I could help them.

---------31. I have experienced intrusive thoughts of sessions with especially difficult people I have debriefed.

-------- 32. I have suddenly and involuntarily recalled a frightening experience while working with a person I am debriefing.

0= Not at All	1= Rarely	2= At Times	3= Not Sure	4= Often	5= Very Often

-------- 33. I am pre-occupied with more than one person I have debriefed.

-------- 34. I am losing sleep over the traumatic experiences of a person I have debriefed.

-------- 35. I have joyful feelings about how I can help the people who have experienced traumatic incidents.

-------- 36. I think that I might have been "infected" by the traumatic stress of the people I have debriefed.

-------- 37. I think that I might have become positively "inoculated" by the traumatic stress of the people I have debriefed

-------- 38. I remind myself to be less concerned about the well being of the people I am debriefing.

-------- 39. I feel trapped by my work as a debriefer .

-------- 40. I have a sense of hopelessness associated with working with certain of the people I have debriefed

-------- 41. I feel "on edge" about various things and I attribute this to my debriefing work.

-------- 42. I wish that I could have avoided working with some of the people I have debriefed.

-------- 43. I find some people I have debriefed particularly enjoyable to work with.

-------- 44. I have been in danger working with some people I have debriefed.

-------- 45. I feel that some of the people I have debriefed dislike me personally.

ITEMS ABOUT BEING A DEBRIEFER AND YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT

-------- 46. I like my work as a debriefer.

-------- 47. I feel like I have the tools that I need to do my work as a debriefer.

-------- 48. I have felt weak, tired, run down as a result of my work as a debriefer.

-------- 49. I have felt depressed as a result of my work as a debriefer.

-------- 50. I have thoughts that I am a "success" as a debriefer.

0=Not at All	1= Rarely	2=At Times	3=Not Sure	4=Often	5=Very Often

-------- 51. I am unsuccessful at separating work from personal life.

-------- 52. I enjoy my fellow debriefers.

-------- 53. I depend on my fellow debriefers to help me when I need it.

-------- 54. My fellow debriefers can depend on me for help when they need it.

-------- 55. I trust my fellow debriefers.

-------- 56. I feel little compassion towards most of my fellow debriefers .

-------- 57. I am pleased with how I keep up with helping technology.

-------- 58. I feel I am working more for the money than for personal fulfilment.

-------- 59. Although I have to do paperwork that I don't like, I still have time to see the people I need to debrief .

-------- 60. I find it difficult separating my personal life from my work life.

-------- 61. I have a sense of worthlessness / disillusionment / resentment associated with my work as a debriefer.

-------- 62. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with helping techniques.

-------- 63. I have thoughts that I am a "failure" as a debriefer.

-------- 64. I have thoughts that I am not succeeding at achieving my life goals.

-------- 65. I have to deal with bureaucratic, unimportant tasks in my work as a debriefer.

-------- 66. I plan to continue debriefing for a long time.

SECTION H

This scale was developed to help debriefers identify certain struggles in their work. Choose the number that best reflects your experience using the following rating system, where "1" signifies "rarely or never" and "10" means "very often". Answer all items to the best of your ability.

1---------- 2 --------- 3 ---------- 4 ---------- 5 ---------- 6 -------- 7 ------- 8-------- 9 ----------
Rarely or never **Sometimes** **Always**

---------- 1. Are there times when you believe the person you are debriefing is repeating emotional issues you feel were ready covered?

---------- 2. Do you get angry with people you are debriefing?

---------- 3. Are there times when you react with sarcasm towards the person you are debriefing ?

---------- 4. Are there times when you fake interest?

---------- 5. Do you feel that listening to certain experiences of the person you are debriefing will not help?

---------- 6. Do you feel that letting the person you are debriefing talk about their trauma will hurt them?

---------- 7. Do you feel that listening to the person you are debriefing's experiences will hurt you.

---------- 8. Are there times that you blame the person you are debriefing for the bad things that have happened to them?

---------- 9. Are there times when you are unable to believe what the person you are debriefing is telling you because what they are describing seems overly traumatic?

---------- 10. Are there times when you feel numb, avoidant or apathetic before meeting with certain people you are debriefing ?

---------- 11. Do you consistently support certain people you are debriefing in avoiding important therapeutic material when time is not a constraint?

---------- 12. Are there times when sessions do not seem to be going well or the person who you are debriefing's progress appears to be blocked?

---------- 13. You become negatively aroused when a person you are debriefing is angry with you.

---------- 14. Are there times when you cannot remember what a person you are debriefing has just said?

---------- 15. Are there times when you cannot focus on what the person you are debriefing is saying?

THE TIME AND EFFORT YOU HAVE PUT INTO COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.

THANK - YOU!

Please note that a further aspect of this study is to conduct focused groups in which issues arising from the results of the questionnaires will be discussed. I plan to run these groups in November. Should you be specifically interested in participating in a group please contact me at 716-2407. Additional debriefers will then be randomly selected and invited to participate in the group sessions.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Details of last debriefing

* When?

* How many people debriefed?

* Nature of the incident: Death? Serious injury?

* How many debriefings done previously?

2. How did the branch employees respond to your presence and the helping service you were offering?

* How did this make you feel?

3. How did you find the debriefing experience?

* What do you think you handled well?

* What aspects did you find difficult?

* What were some of your thoughts and feelings during the process?

* What were some of your thoughts and feelings afterwards?

4. What helped you to fulfil your debriefing responsibilities?

5. What hindered your ability to fulfil your debriefing responsibilities?

6. What could have been done to improve the debriefing process?

7. Were you debriefed after the incident?

* How did you find that experience?

* What was helpful?

* What was less helpful?

8. Did you do anything else that helped you deal with your experiences?

9. How did your manager respond to you being called out?

* What was helpful?

* What was less helpful

10. What are your views on the way the trauma programme is co-ordinated in this organisation?

* What is done particularly well?

* What could be improved?

11. How did the debriefing experience affect :

* your work?

How long did this continue?

* your home life?

How long did this continue?

12. How do you feel about debriefing in general?

13. Has your involvement with trauma debriefing affected how you view this organisation and your career here?

14. Has your debriefing experience resulted in you re-evaluating any of your views about life in general?

15. Will you be continuing in your role as a debriefer?

APPENDIX D

Department of Psychology

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

Private Bag 3, WITS 2050, South Africa • Telegrams: Univerand • Fax: (011) 339-2470 • Telephone: (011) 716-2405

8 August 1997

Dear

I am a lecturer in the Psychology Department of the University of the Witwatersrand and am currently conducting research for my PhD under the supervision of Dr Merle Friedman. The focus of my study is the exploration of the personal and organisational factors affecting, and being affected by, the experience of being a trauma debriefer in the workplace. Part of the study includes the development of the attached questionnaire. While the main study will take place in the banking sector, I need to administer the questionnaire to a small sample of debriefers who are operating in an organisational setting. As such, I am hereby requesting your assistance in this phase of the study.

Please note that your participation is **voluntary** and that your responses will remain **anonymous** as you are not required to provide your name on the questionnaire.

Should you be willing to assist me, I would appreciate you doing the following:

1. Complete the attached questionnaire as openly and honestly as possible (there are no right or wrong responses!).

2. Take careful note of how long it took you to complete the questionnaire.

3. As you work through the questions note *on the questionnaire itself* any questions that seem confusing, ambiguous, difficult or not relevant to you as a debriefer.

4. On completion of the questionnaire, note any suggestions for improvement.

5. Keep your completed questionnaire and bring it along for discussion to the meeting scheduled for: Date :
   Time :
   Venue :

Please note that at this meeting *you will not be required to reveal your responses* to the questions. Instead, your comments regarding the questionnaire will be the focus of our discussion.

Once the main study has been completed I will provide your organisation with a report on the general findings which will hopefully be of use in the effective monitoring of the trauma debriefing programme in your company.

I look forward to meeting you and thank you in anticipation of your participation.

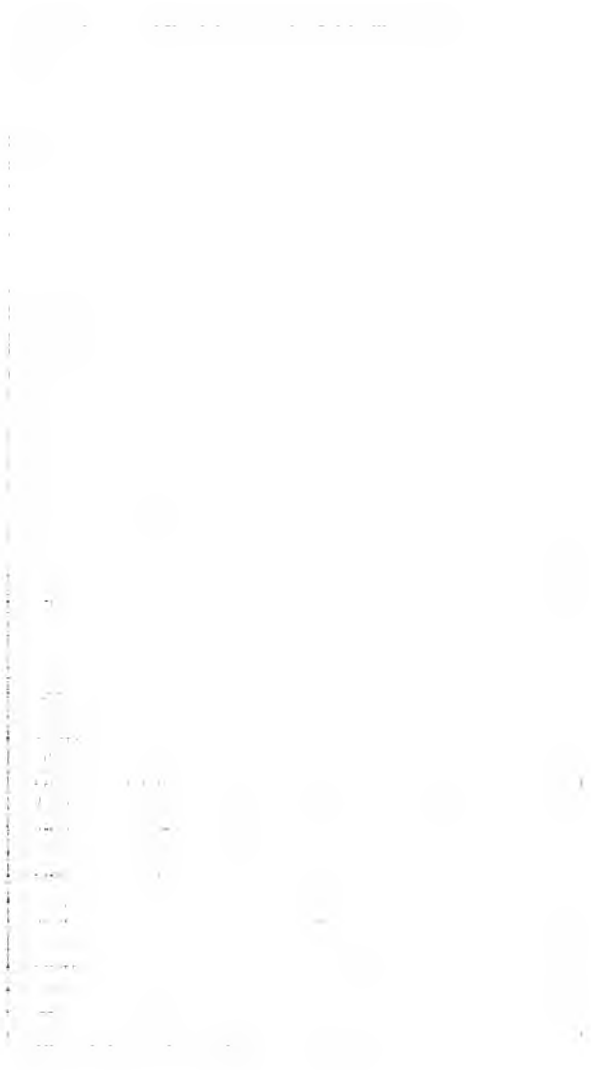
Yours sincerely

Karen Ortlepp

Dr Merle Friedman
Supervisor

APPENDIX E

APPENDIX F



Author: Ortlepp, Karen.
Name of thesis: Non-professional trauma debriefers in the workplace : individual and organisational antecedents and consequences of their experiences.

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