



To the spouse of an agent/officer:

Your spouse has been involved in what is known as a critical incident (an event that has the potential to cause unusually strong emotional, cognitive, physical, and psychological reactions in your spouse). Because of this, he/she may undergo significant emotional mood-swings, physical changes such as diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, constipation, irregular heart rates, high blood pressure, vision impairment, auditory changes, and many other physical problems. He/she will need someone to talk to, someone to cry on, someone to “vent” with, and generally someone to just be a friend. By spending time with your spouse and showing your concern for their well-being, you can help them recover more quickly. Attached is a sheet that will help you communicate with your spouse during this awkward time. You may not know what to say or do. Just being available and not making judgmental remarks (“I would have..., You should have...”) will help more than you may think.

I realize you, as the spouse, are going through many of these same changes. You may even be looking to your spouse for support. While you are seeking help from your spouse (maybe you think they can handle this because of training), they are seeking your support and comfort. For now, your spouse may need more than you can give. If this appears to be the case, please call me.

Also, if you or your spouse have any symptoms of being suicidal, call me immediately. Some of these signs are: Using the word “suicide” in any conversation; Suddenly talking about “death”, “being gone”, “checking out”, etc.; Suddenly giving personal items away to friends/family; discussions of a will; abnormally playing with their gun; and any action you may think is very abnormal and dangerous.

There is help available. Your pastor is certainly willing to talk to you, a good friend, other officers’ spouses, and support groups. Please know that you can call me any time of day or night for immediate help. My cell phone number is 601-955-0055. You don’t have to go through this event alone, we can help.

Know that I love you, I care about you, and I’m praying for you. I feel the same toward your spouse.

Sincerely,

Tim Rutledge, Founder and Director: LEAPS

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