

THE CHIRON WAY



*Character
Integrity
=
Courageous
Choices*

CHIRON CENTER, INC. - Choices

How do those in the field of public safety maintain their sanity when they are chronically exposed to the consequences of hate, rage, ignorance, and apathy? What makes it possible to maintain a healthy body when carcinogen exposure through firefighting increases the risk for cancer up to 100%? Who is responsible to safeguard the heart of a 21 year old kid who has already attended 527 memorials in his young career as an Army Chaplain's Assistant? What happens to the souls of personnel in the High-Tech Crimes Task Force who are required to catalogue thousands of images and view endless hours of brain-searing video of the most horrific, literally unimaginable violations to children?

Chronic exposure to acute trauma significantly affects those who place themselves in harm's way in service of others. The stats are daunting: emergency room nurses are up to 3.5 times more likely to be addicted to drugs and alcohol; heart disease and cancer are astronomically high in the firefighting community; military personnel are more likely to die by suicide (currently, over 24 deaths per day) than by enemy fire; and for every one law enforcement officer who dies in the line of duty, three or more will complete suicide. Emergency and social services personnel have incredibly high rates of divorce; drug and alcohol misuse/abuse; family and relationship dysfunction; depression and anxiety disorders (including PTSD); and other behavioral health issues.

Yet, you will never encounter a more resilient, dedicated, passionate, and honorable group of hard working men and women.

These core traits and values are what allow them – *us* – to take on the tasks and responsibilities that our community members cannot even fathom – others can delegate these unimaginable experiences, trusting that we will be there for them in their time of terror and need. Until such time, they only want to hear about our work at a distance through “reality” TV shows, newsfeed articles, or at the movies. Frequently, we wish we had that option as well...it would be nice to be able to choose what trauma comes our way; but in this line of work, we voluntarily relinquish our freedom to choose, and respond to whomever, whatever, and whenever our assistance is needed – with integrity, courage, professionalism, respect, and compassion. For the majority of us, our work is not a “job,” it is an expression of our core ideals and it is near impossible for us to imagine doing anything else. Yet, all too frequently, our work also makes us sick. It has become excruciatingly clear that for those of us who place ourselves in harm's way in service of others, our capacity for resiliency, health, and quality of life is gravely challenged by our chosen contact with vast human suffering.

This is why Chiron Center, Inc. was created.

The goal of Chiron (*kī'rōn'*) is to create a national network of behavioral health and resilience resources solely dedicated to empowering front line responders; and by extension, providing deeply enhanced care and support to all those impacted by trauma and serious loss. These peer-based, professionally-informed resources will serve to eradicate the stigma related to behavioral health support as we integrate, evolve, and disseminate best practice education, training, and services that are “common sense,” practical, and easily accessible by all members of the first responder community, their families, and our society.

Chiron has the ambition of changing how the world understands and manages the affects of trauma, and how those who are called to do this essential work explore and integrate the great gifts and challenges of our choice to serve - mind, body, heart, and soul...

Chiron Center, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Our mission is to provide behavioral health education, support, and resources designed to maximize the professional excellence and overall quality of life of those who place themselves in harm's way in service of others. For more information, visit our websites: www.ChironCenter.org, www.ChironCRT.org, & www.ChironStillStanding.org

