



Low Impact Debriefing

*Is it possible that you may be retraumatizing your colleagues
or the people you debrief with by sharing too many graphic details?*

Who do you debrief with?

What do you debrief about?

When do you want to debrief?

Where do you debrief?

Why do you debrief?

1. Increased Self Awareness

Be mindful when debriefing and talking about the things you experience at work. Not everyone is as comfortable with knowing the details we know. We can become desensitized to the trauma we are exposed to daily.

2. Fair Warning

The people we debrief with can be prepared with their own coping strategies when given fair warning about what they are about the listen to. Without fair warning, they may be caught off guard and may be more susceptible to secondary or vicarious trauma as a result of repeat exposure to trauma stories.

3. Consent

Not everyone may be prepared to hear a trauma story or the details of your difficult day. They may already be going through a difficult time themselves. By asking for consent to debrief, you give the listener an opportunity to decline or postpone the debriefing. This will only help prevent further re-traumitization or compassion fatigue and promote a healthier supportive network.

4. Low Impact Disclosure

In most cases, the graphic details are not necessary in order to get the support and feedback we are looking for. Sometimes we want to share the details because we feel the listener won't truly understand our emotional reaction or our need to debrief otherwise. While it is important for the speaker to practice L.I.D. it is also important for the listener to control the intensity of the debriefing by speaking up when s/he feels the details are too graphic to emotionally process.

Reference: Francoise Mathieu, Compassion Fatigue Solutions Workbook