

FIGHTING THE FIRE

Film Review

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Fighting the Fire has an accurate and meaningful message concerning the effects a career as a first responder has on an individual. What this film reveals is the real life of a firefighter.

During my years of service, I have personally witnessed similar things to those revealed in this film. As I begin my career in the field, one of the first incidents I was a part of involved an eight year old boy who was struck by a vehicle while riding his bicycle. I helped perform CPR on this child all the way to the hospital and to the operating room. Sadly, he didn't survive.

My children were about the same age at that time and this incident troubled me for many days. I eventually decided that I had to either resign from the fire service or learn how to dismiss these incidents from my mind as quickly as possible. I decided to learn how to think and imagine positive things, like watching ocean waves blast the rocks, the view of a starry skies on the clear night, going on a camping trip with my family - things like that, until the thoughts of the previously witness trauma subsided.

Firefighters/police are typically reluctant to talk about their struggles with these issues for fear of being harassed or ridiculed of by their peers, so they keep it to themselves. And yes, many choose to self-medicate with drugs or alcohol. Another common problem is the ease of becoming hardened to tragedy. You tend to lose what should be sympathy and/or empathy for the day to day struggles of other, including your own family.

My hope is that this film will encourage others who struggle with these problems to see they are not alone. There are support groups available and other helpful coping methods.

It is my belief that Fighting the Fire will be helpful for firefighters and police officers to realize these types of incidents are going to occur, whether they are there or not. This will allow them to remember that a career as a responder provides a rewarding opportunity to serve and make a positive difference in the lives of people in their community.