

FIGHTING THE FIRE

Film Review

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As a long-time dispatch professional, I can say with confidence that *Fighting the Fire* does an excellent job at illustrating the stress of the job, both one-time incidents and a cumulative career of constant critical incident stress. It's not easy to saddle up every day and get back on the job, especially when it follows difficult calls.

The film's depiction of dispatch procedures and dispatcher stress is very accurate. I have taken calls where I have listened as people die on the phone. The different coping methods people use to self-medicate or treat their issues are counterproductive at best, destructive at worst, and it usually flows from one extreme to the other.

Sadly, I experienced the loss of a fellow dispatcher and coworker who took their own life due to a combination of personal demons, stress, and PTSD. The effects on family, friends, and coworkers cannot be overstated and it compounds itself the longer it goes on. In order for one to move forward, Post Critical Incident Seminars, job specific counseling, support groups, and therapy are vital pieces of dealing with PTSD.

Fighting the Fire serves as a compelling illustration of just how far a person can go when suffering the effects of critical incident stress. It is a must-see for heroes working on the front line and their families and friends who love and support them.