

# The American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress

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## APPLICATION & EXAMINATION FOR CERTIFICATION IN ACUTE TRAUMATIC STRESS MANAGEMENT (ATSM)<sup>™</sup>

This application will be treated as confidential by The American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress, Inc. However, applicants who meet the criteria for Certification, and pass the examination, will be identified in *The International Registry of the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress*<sup>™</sup>, the association's official directory and referral network. The registry is available in bound copy and can also be accessed directly on the Internet at [www.atism.org](http://www.atism.org) or [www.traumatic-stress.org](http://www.traumatic-stress.org)

If an applicant is unsuccessful in meeting the criteria for Certification in Acute Traumatic Stress Management (ATSM) or passing the examination, the applicant will be informed as to the reason for denial. The applicant will be given a second opportunity to provide additional supportive documentation, if needed, and/or a second opportunity to take the examination (revised version). This application reevaluation and/or reexamination will be offered at no additional charge. Moreover, if an applicant is unsuccessful with the second opportunity, the Academy will refund the full fee required for the application/examination process.

In order for The American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress to consider you for Certification, you must be a Member of the Academy in good standing and:

- complete this application in its entirety,
- complete the Examination for Certification in Acute Traumatic Stress Management (ATSM),
- sign the declaration, and
- enclose one time payment of \$225 for review of your application and examination.  
Please note that your first year Membership dues payment with the Academy will be waived and you will be entered as a Member of The American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress.

Enclosed is my check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ or please charge \$\_\_\_\_\_ to my  VISA  American Express  MasterCard  Discover Card

Account No. \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### I. INFORMATION

PLEASE PRINT

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name First Name M.I. Title (Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address City State Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Telephone Office Telephone(s) Fax Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail Address Highest Educational Degree Years of Experience in Field

\_\_\_\_\_  
Profession (e.g., Police Officer, EMS, Firefighter, Nurse, etc.):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Area(s) of Interest/Specialization (e.g., Critical Care, Critical Incident Stress Management, Counseling, etc.):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: REVIEWER ID: \_\_\_\_\_ STATUS CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PHOTOCOPY THIS APPLICATION & EXAMINATION  
AND FAX OR MAIL TO THE ACADEMY'S ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES FOR PROCESSING

	YES	NO
Have you ever been convicted of a felony?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you ever been disciplined for any type of unethical or illegal conduct?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has your professional license/certification ever been revoked, suspended or limited?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there action pending to revoke, suspend, or limit your professional license/certification?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there any action pending related to your professional practice?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you ever voluntarily surrendered your license/certification?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you abuse alcohol or other substances?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you ever been denied professional liability insurance or has your insurance ever been canceled or denied renewal?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**II. EXAMINATION**

Carefully place an **X** over your choices from the examination following this page.

1. a b c d e	11. a b c d e	21. a b c d e	31. a b c d e
2. a b c d e	12. a b c d e	22. a b c d e	32. a b c d e
3. a b c d e	13. a b c d e	23. a b c d e	33. a b c d e
4. a b c d e	14. a b c d e	24. a b c d e	34. a b c d e
5. a b c d e	15. a b c d e	25. a b c d e	35. a b c d e
6. a b c d e	16. a b c d e	26. a b c d e	36. a b c d e
7. a b c d e	17. a b c d e	27. a b c d e	37. a b c d e
8. a b c d e	18. a b c d e	28. a b c d e	38. a b c d e
9. a b c d e	19. a b c d e	29. a b c d e	39. a b c d e
10. a b c d e	20. a b c d e	30. a b c d e	40. a b c d e

**III. DECLARATION**

As part of the requirements for achieving **Certification in Acute Traumatic Stress Management (ATSM)**, it is necessary that all applicants sign the following statement:

I hereby certify that all information provided in this application packet is accurate and complete. Furthermore, I certify that I personally completed the enclosed **Examination for Certification in Acute Traumatic Stress Management (ATSM)** and that I received no direct assistance from others. I understand that this Certification aims to identify individuals with extensive knowledge of **Acute Traumatic Stress Management (ATSM)**.

I agree to abide by the Academy's Code of Ethical & Professional Standards and agree to hold harmless The American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress, Inc. its officers, consultants and employees for any misrepresentation of my credentials and for any malpractice on my part either willful or through negligent conduct, recklessness, and gross misconduct and for all claims, loss, damage, judgment or expense. I understand that The American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress does not practice medicine or psychology or provide direct or indirect patient/client care. Furthermore, I understand that **Certification in Acute Traumatic Stress Management (ATSM)** does not attest to my ability to treat survivors of traumatic events.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# The American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress®

## EXAMINATION FOR CERTIFICATION IN ACUTE TRAUMATIC STRESS MANAGEMENT (ATSM)

PLEASE SELECT THE BEST CHOICE FOR THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND PLACE YOUR ANSWER ON THE PRECEDING PAGE.

1. Which of the following is true concerning Acute Traumatic Stress Management (ATSM)?
  - a) It is a goal-directed process delivered within the framework of a *facilitative* or *helping attitudinal climate*.
  - b) It aims to “jump-start” an individual’s coping and problem-solving abilities.
  - c) It seeks to stabilize acute symptoms of traumatic stress and stimulate healthy, adaptive functioning.
  - d) It may increase the likelihood of an individual pursuing mental health intervention, if need be, in the future.
  - e) all of the above
  
2. According to the ATSM model, upon arrival at the scene of a traumatic event you should first assess the victim’s airway, breathing and circulation.
  - a) True
  - b) False
  
3. Which of the following interventions was/were developed specifically to address the emergent psychological needs of individuals *during* traumatic exposure?
  - a) “Demobilization”
  - b) “Defusings”
  - c) Critical Incident Stress Debriefing
  - d) Acute Traumatic Stress Management
  - e) c and d
  
4. The implementation of a *Traumatic Stress Response Protocol*, within the framework of well-established emergency response procedures, will better address the needs of the “whole person.”
  - a) True
  - b) False
  
5. Once you have identified an individual with whom you will implement ATSM, you should
  - a) introduce yourself and state your title and/or position.
  - b) introduce yourself by name, but avoid using threatening titles and/or positions.
  - c) attempt to move the individual away from the stressor if he is medically cleared.
  - d) a and c
  - e) b and c

6. Which of the following are “high risk” indicators for acute traumatic stress reactions and chronic stress disorders?
- a) the severity of the event itself
  - b) substance involvement
  - c) history of mental illness
  - d) b and c
  - e) all of the above
7. Acute Traumatic Stress Management (ATSM) focuses on helping people in the aftermath of a tragedy.
- a) True
  - b) False
8. Acute Traumatic Stress Management (ATSM)
- a) was developed primarily for one-on-one interventions
  - b) may be applied with several individuals or even a small group of individuals
  - c) is a comprehensive crisis response plan
  - d) a and b
  - e) all of the above
9. When notifying survivors of the death of a family member, the choice of words used to present this information is very important. The appropriate word to use is:
- a) Expired
  - b) Past away
  - c) Died
  - d) Succumbed
  - e) all of the above
10. Which of the following is the most acceptable reason for not taking a death notification assignment?
- a) Your lack of experience with making death notifications
  - b) Your having experienced a recent significant loss in your life
  - c) Your limited training in grief, and traumatic stress reactions
  - d) Your limited training in ATSM
  - e) None of the above

11. Acute Traumatic Stress Management (ATSM) was developed primarily to address severe traumatic stress reactions.
  - a) True
  - b) False
  
12. Acute Traumatic Stress Management (ATSM) is best described as a
  - a) comprehensive crisis response plan
  - b) multifaceted disaster response plan
  - c) practical approach to “psychological first-aid” introduced in the aftermath of a tragedy
  - d) critical incident stress debriefing process
  - e) none of the above
  
13. The “Imprint of Horror” refers to
  - a) Seeing particularly gruesome events
  - b) Hearing people screaming
  - c) Smelling burning flesh
  - d) Touching an open wound
  - e) all of the above
  
14. If you find yourself feeling emotionally overwhelmed while providing ATSM
  - a) it is okay to acknowledge the impact the event is having on you as a human being.
  - b) you should make every effort to avoid self-disclosure of specific, personal information.
  - c) remind yourself that it is okay not to be okay
  - d) a and b
  - e) all of the above
  
15. The ATSM model suggests that there will likely be times when you should address acute traumatic stress reactions prior to addressing medical needs.
  - a) True
  - b) False
  
16. “Linking With” another person
  - a) is inappropriate and must be avoided at all costs.
  - b) is appropriate as long as the event is over and you have the permission of your immediate supervisor.
  - c) should be kept between you and the survivor.
  - d) refers to the potential to identify personally with the victim.
  - e) c and d

17. According to the authors of this publication, intervention during a traumatic event may not necessarily fall neatly into a linear progression of stages. Thus, you should be flexible given the presenting circumstances at hand.
- a) True
  - b) False
18. According to *Acute Traumatic Stress Management*, what specific strategies may be utilized to connect with particularly challenging, emotionally distraught, individuals?
- a) Distraction, Disruption, Distension, Decision and Direction
  - b) Disruption, Distension, Differentiation, Decision and Direction
  - c) Diffusion, Distortion, Distraction, Decision and Direction
  - d) Distraction, Disruption, Diffusion, Decision and Direction
  - e) none of the above
19. During a traumatic event, confidentiality can rarely be maintained due to the unpredictability of a crisis.
- a) True
  - b) False
20. In working with a *young* child who has been exposed to a traumatic event
- a) it is okay to hold and cuddle the child
  - b) reassure the child that he is safe—if in fact he is.
  - c) separate the child, as quickly as possible, from all stressors—including emotionally overwhelmed adults.
  - d) b and c
  - e) all of the above
21. The establishment of a *Facilitative* or *Helping Attitudinal Climate* is perhaps most critical during which of the following stages in the ATSM process
- a) Mechanism of Injury Stage
  - b) Fact Gathering Stage
  - c) Grounding Stage
  - d) Connecting Stage
  - e) Support Stage
22. During the Observation and Identification Stage, we form an initial impression of the patient and begin to understand the nature of an individual's exposure to a traumatic event.
- a) True
  - b) False

23. The ATSM model refers to the “Five Ds.” These strategies were developed to evaluate the potential for self-destructive behavior.
- a) True
  - b) False
24. During which stage of the ATSM process do we typically focus on the facts surrounding the event?
- a) Mechanism of Injury Stage
  - b) Fact Gathering Stage
  - c) Grounding Stage
  - d) Connecting Stage
  - e) Support Stage
25. Reviewing the facts, as well as the individual’s behavioral and physiological response, will often stimulate thoughts and feelings.
- a) True
  - b) False
26. After addressing medical needs, initiating a connection and beginning a grounding process with a 12 year-old boy who was struck by a car while riding his bicycle, a paramedic moved the youngster to a waiting ambulance. While in the bus, the medic supported the boy while he “told his story,” describing his pain as well as his feelings of fear. The medic then gradually began to normalize the boy’s experience by suggesting that it would be painful and scary for almost anyone. According to the ATSM model, what would be the next likely step?
- a) Consider the Mechanism of Injury
  - b) Develop a *Facilitative* or *Helping Attitudinal Climate*
  - c) Assure the child that everything will turn out okay
  - d) Prepare the boy for the future
  - e) a and d
27. When you become empathic, you may likely become a part of the problem and fall prey to becoming “secondarily victimized” yourself. You will invest considerable energy *experiencing* another person’s pain and suffering. You will no longer remain grounded and functional, and your decision-making abilities will likely become clouded.
- a) True
  - b) False

28. Which of the following is not an example of an empathic response/statement?
- a) "You seem scared and alone right now."
  - b) "It's like you just can't stop playing the tape of the accident over and over in your head."
  - c) "I feel so sorry for you. How can I help?"
  - d) "Help me understand what you're thinking. It seems like you're frustrated with us."
  - e) all of the above
29. Following an automobile accident, a paramedic stated to an injured passenger, "If I'm hearing you correctly, it sounds like the pain is primarily in your right shoulder." This is an example of
- a) an empathic statement
  - b) a sympathetic statement
  - c) a patronizing statement
  - d) a confounding statement
  - e) b and d
30. The primary purpose of the "Normalization Stage" is to begin to educate the individual who is experiencing traumatic stress to know that he is not alone, that he is a normal person trying to cope with an abnormal event—that his experience is perhaps his mind's attempt to "make sense of the senseless."
- a) True
  - b) False
31. The applicability and efficacy of ATSM may be influenced by a number of critical factors. Which of the following should be considered?
- a) characteristics that are unique to the emergency responder's profession
  - b) characteristics of the traumatic event.
  - c) characteristics of the individuals that are served
  - d) b and c
  - e) all of the above
32. The alcohol/substance involved individual presents a challenge to emergency responders. Efforts to implement ATSM will likely be confounded by the influence of the substance itself. It is generally not advisable to
- a) make physical contact
  - b) speak in a warm calming tone
  - c) avoid loud noises and bright lights
  - d) approach the person with another emergency responder standing by
  - e) a and d

33. Working with depressed, self-destructive and potentially suicidal individuals presents a challenge for the emergency responder. Which of the following is true?
- a) People who talk about suicide typically do not commit suicide.
  - b) You must determine if the individual is truly at-risk of harming himself.
  - c) Alcohol and other substances may increase the likelihood of self-destructive behavior.
  - d) a and b
  - e) none of the above
34. Which of the following is the earliest reaction typically observed in grieving individuals?
- a) Yearning and Searching
  - b) Shock
  - c) Insomnia
  - d) Disorganization
  - e) none of the above
35. The “ATSM Field Pack” refers specifically to the
- a) “Tools of the trade” that you should bring when you are called to a traumatic event.
  - b) “Tools of the trade” that you should bring when you are called to any event.
  - c) items that may prove to be helpful for those who are addressing the emergent psychological needs of others during traumatic exposure.
  - d) most essential medical equipment aimed at the preservation of life
  - e) none of the above
36. Traumatic stress reactions may lead to Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). In these cases, people may experience recurrent and intrusive distressing recollections of the event, distressing dreams, flashbacks, difficulty concentrating, hypervigilance, an exaggerated startle response, and a host of avoidance behaviors.
- a) True
  - b) False
37. Which of the following interventions were developed to help people after disengagement from a crisis— following a traumatic experience?
- a) Demobilization and Defusing
  - b) Critical Incident Stress Debriefing
  - c) Acute Traumatic Stress Management
  - d) a and b
  - e) b and c

38. Generally, as the severity of a traumatic event increases, so does the level of traumatic stress.
- a) True
  - b) False
39. You are assigned to make a death notification to the parents of a teenage boy. After gaining access to the home and making the notification, the mother of the boy begins to scream and cry out his name. She appears to be hyperventilating and out of control. She does not respond to your partner's efforts to calm her. The most appropriate ATSM technique to use in this situation is:
- a) Disruption
  - b) Distraction
  - c) Diffusion
  - d) Disengagement
  - e) b and d
40. A *facilitative or helping attitudinal climate* is a necessary, and oftentimes sufficient, component in supporting an individual and in mitigating acute traumatic stress reactions during traumatic exposure.
- a) True
  - b) False