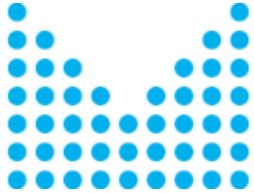


MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR
OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Crisis, Disaster and Trauma Psychology

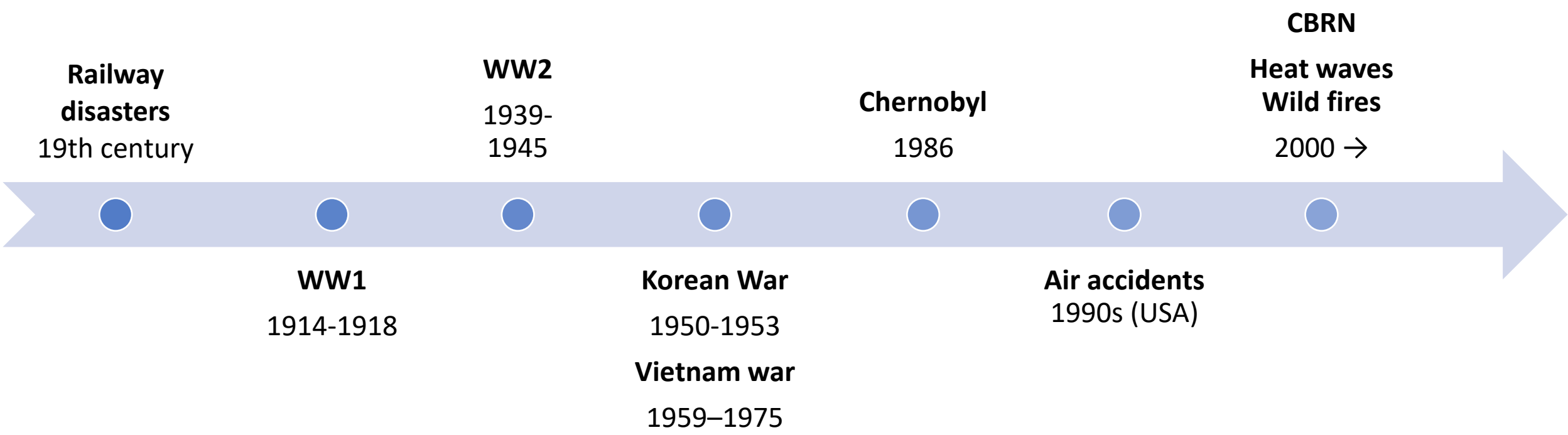
Development of the field: history, present, trends

Štěpán Vymětal, Czech Republic

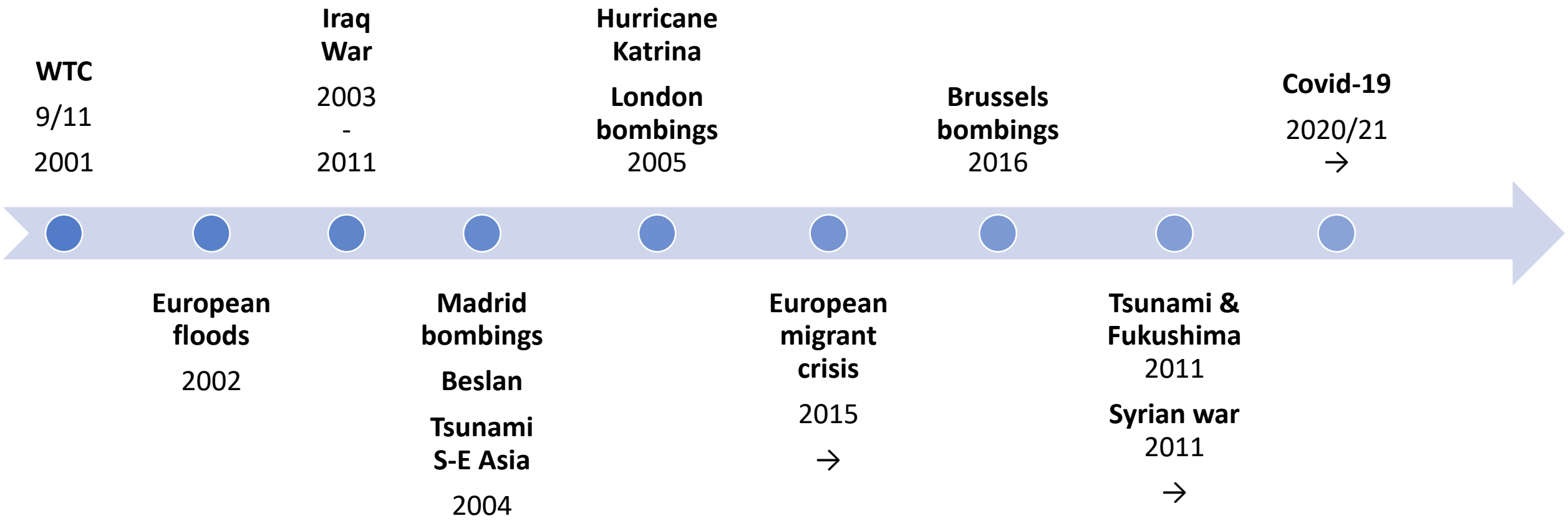
Content

- Historical development
- Resources
- Definition
- Organizations
- International cooperation - professional networks
- Standards, trends, applied practice
- Pandemic experience and challenges
- The future of the field

Historic development in the 20th century



21st century



Post-traumatic symptoms in the 19th century

- Railway spine (Erichsen's disease)
- Traumatic neurosis (Oppenheim)
- Hysteria/conversion disorder (Charcot)

WW1

- Military psychiatry
- “Shell-shock” (1917, Mayers)
- “War neurosis”

WW2

- Military psychology & psychological warfare, behaviour in shelters & during bombing
- Combat stress

→”Gross stress reaction“

- Posttraumatic consequences
- Trauma among survivors
- Long term consequences
- Transmission of trauma…

https://www.mylondon.news/news/nostalgia/gallery/remarkable-pictures-london-underground-being-17483057
https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/apocalypse-dresden-february-1945

The Vietnam War

- post-Vietnam syndrome
- long-term symptoms of trauma
- chronic and delayed PTSD
- PTSD (from 1980)

https://www.military-history.org/feature/modern-articles/the-vietnam-war.htm

Terrorist attacks

- WTC 9/11
- Beslan 2005, etc.
- Impact on the community
- Collective trauma
- PTSD research
- Rescuers
- Voices of victims of terrorism

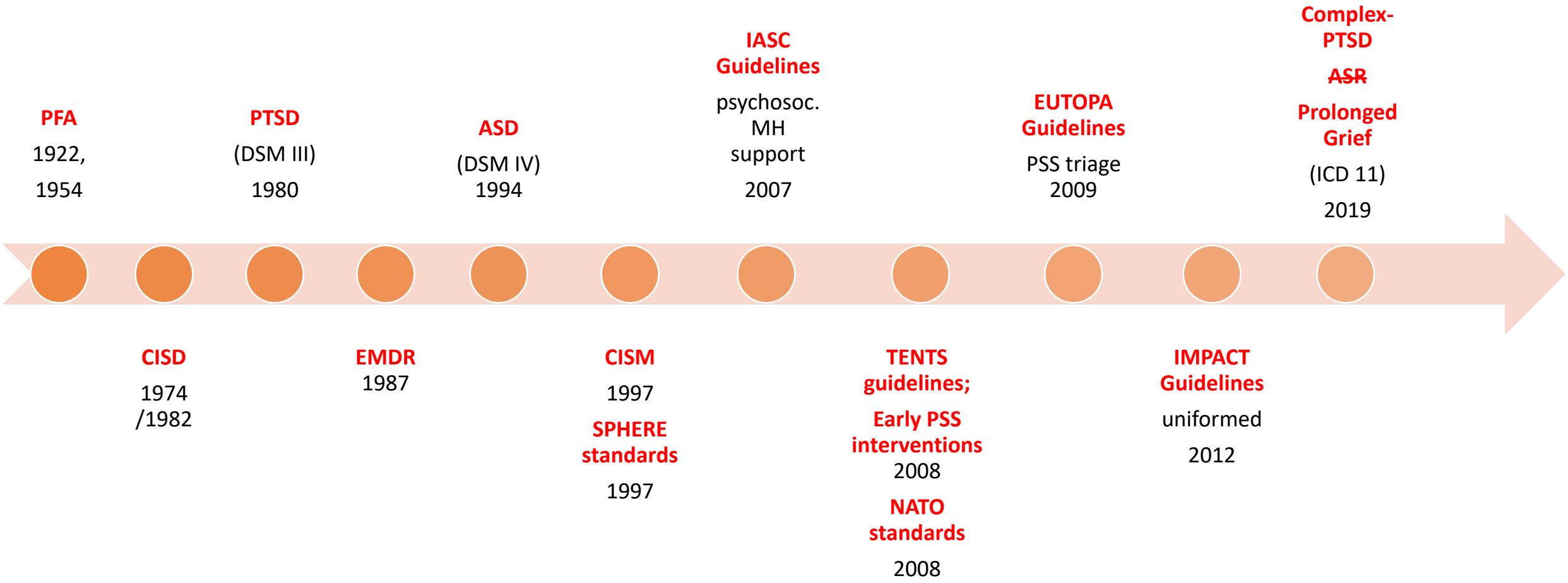
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tribute_in_Light
https://www.britannica.com/event/Beslan-school-attack

Large-scale natural disasters

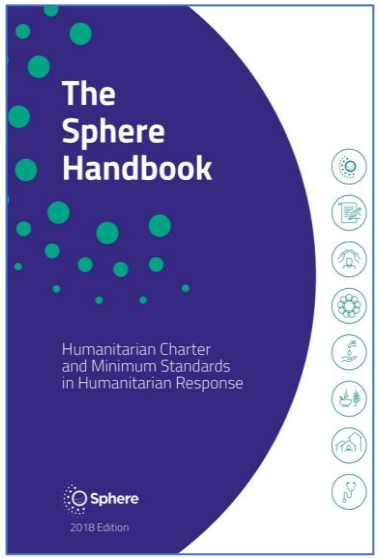
- Earthquakes, hurricanes, floods
- Tsunami 2004, 2011
- Heat waves
- Wild fires
- Etc.

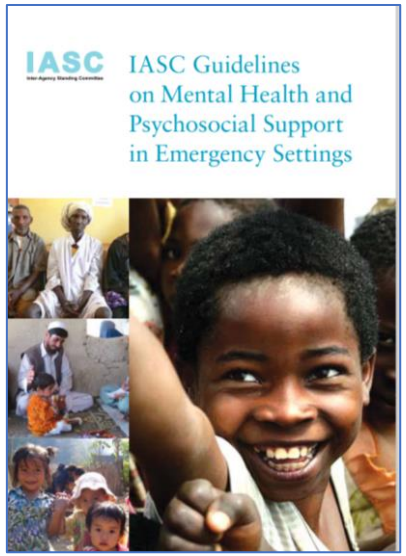
www.srilankaguardian.org/2014/12/remembering-tsunami-disaster-10-years.html

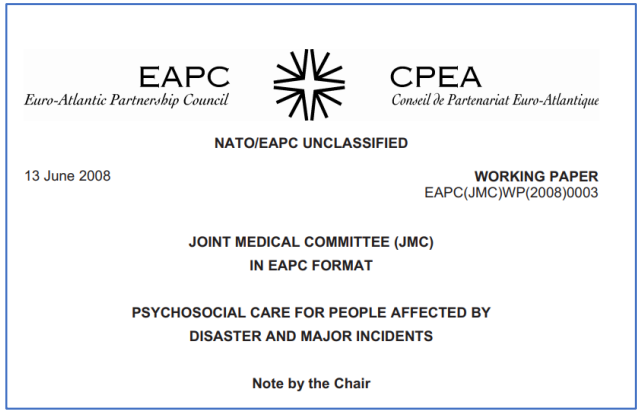
Development of methods & procedures

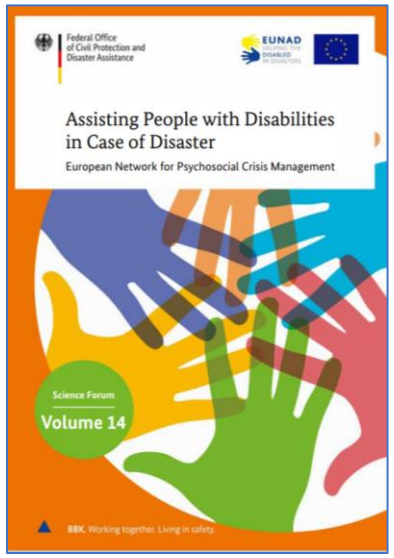


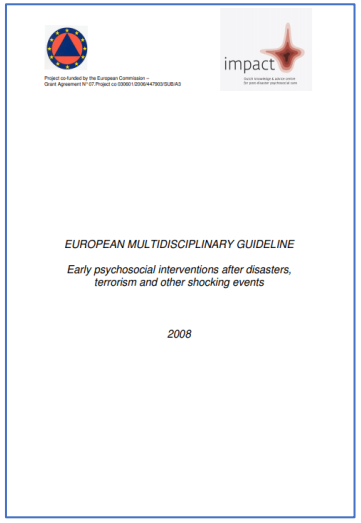
Guidelines & standards

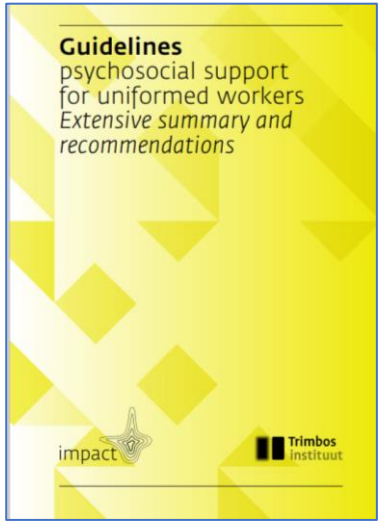


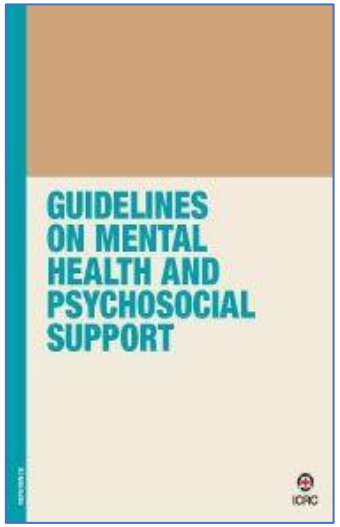


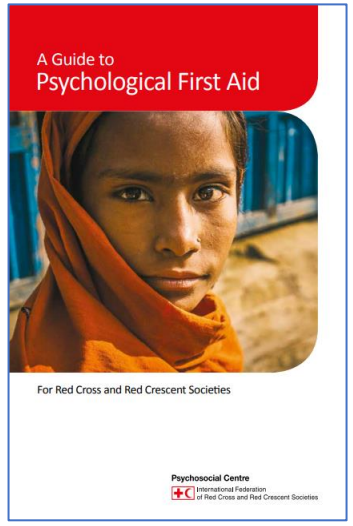








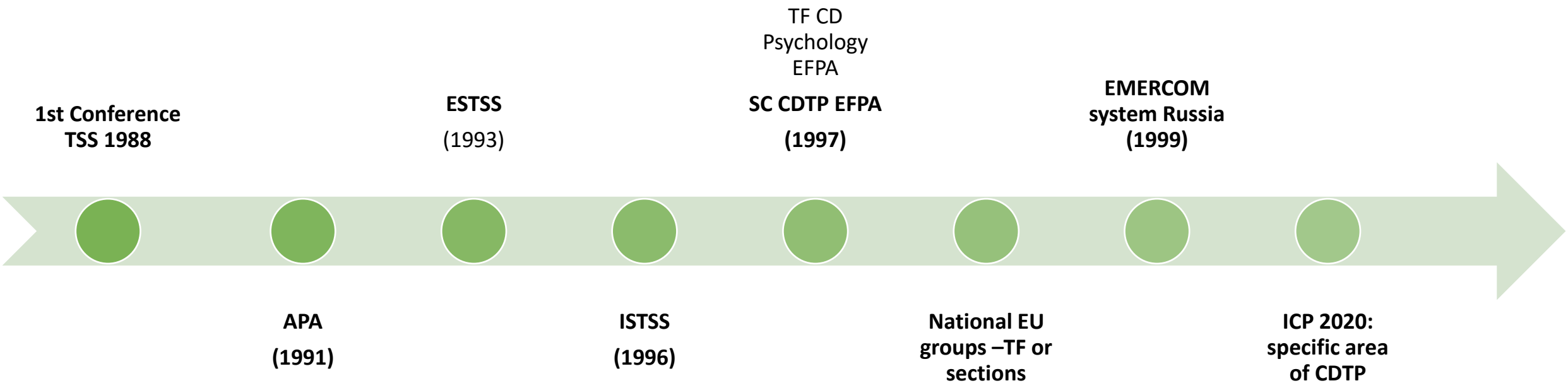




Psychological interventions

- PFA
- Psychological debriefing (CISD, CISM)
- TF CBT
- EMDR
- Somatic experience
- Psychoeduction
- Psychorelaxation methods, Art therapy
- Community-Based Interventions

Organisational development of CDT Psychology



Current concept of CDT Psychology

- past 30 yrs – impact on the civilian population

A) Day to day crisis and traumas

B) Mass incidents and disasters

Current topics: terrorist attacks, DVI, radicalisation, resilience, vulnerable groups, mass gatherings, evacuation, migration, CBRN…

CDT Psychology = independent branch about 20 yrs.

Resources

- Interdisciplinary cooperation
- Applied discipline
- Forensic, Clinical, Social, Military, Intercultural psychology…
- Medicine, Crisis management, Security science, Media studies, ICT …

Paradigm shifts in CDTP

1) Passive victim → Creative, flexible, **active survivor**
2) Symptoms & disorders → **Coping, resilience**, post-traumatic growth
3) Treatment of consequences → **Prevention** of impact and reinforcement of resilience
4) Isolated individual → Member of social **groups and communities**
5) Individual intervention → Strengthening **community resilience**
6) Clinical approach → **Community based approach & holistic approach & principles of preventive medicine**

Principle of preventive medicine

Multi-dimensional integrated community approach:

- Health promotion
- Disaster prevention
- Preparedness
- Mitigation

Preventive aspects = 6 ‘R’s:

- Readiness (Preparedness),
- Response (Immediate action),
- Relief (Sustained rescue work),
- Rehabilitation (Long term remedial measures using community resources),
- Recovery (Returning to normalcy)
- Resilience (Fostering).

APA Definition

Disaster psychology is a specialized domain of training, research, and service provision applied to individuals, communities, and nations exposed to a disaster.

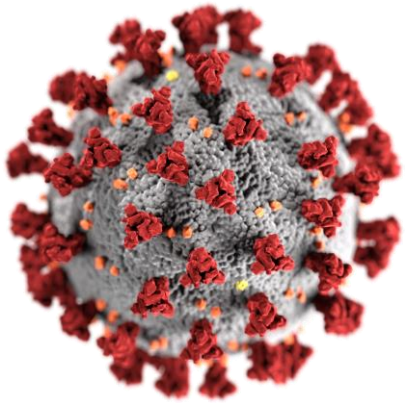
A key aim of practitioners in this area is to **reduce initial distress**, and foster short and long-term **adaptive functioning** following a disaster.

Definition of CDT Psychology

- Subject of CDTP= **individual/group/community within the context of a crisis and emergency event** (mass natural or man-made disasters & serious individual disasters)
- Emergency event with significant **psychotraumatising potential**.
- Reinforce **coping, recovery and resilience** on an individual, community and society-wide level.
- **Crisis cycle:** Prevention&Mitigation - Crisis Preparedness - Response - Recovery.
- Objective: **safety and security** & **resiliency and recovery** & **limit neg.** psychosocial effects.
- Disaster **planning, training, response.**
- Role of ΨΨ: direct services, psychosocial crisis management, training.

MH during the COVID-19 pandemic

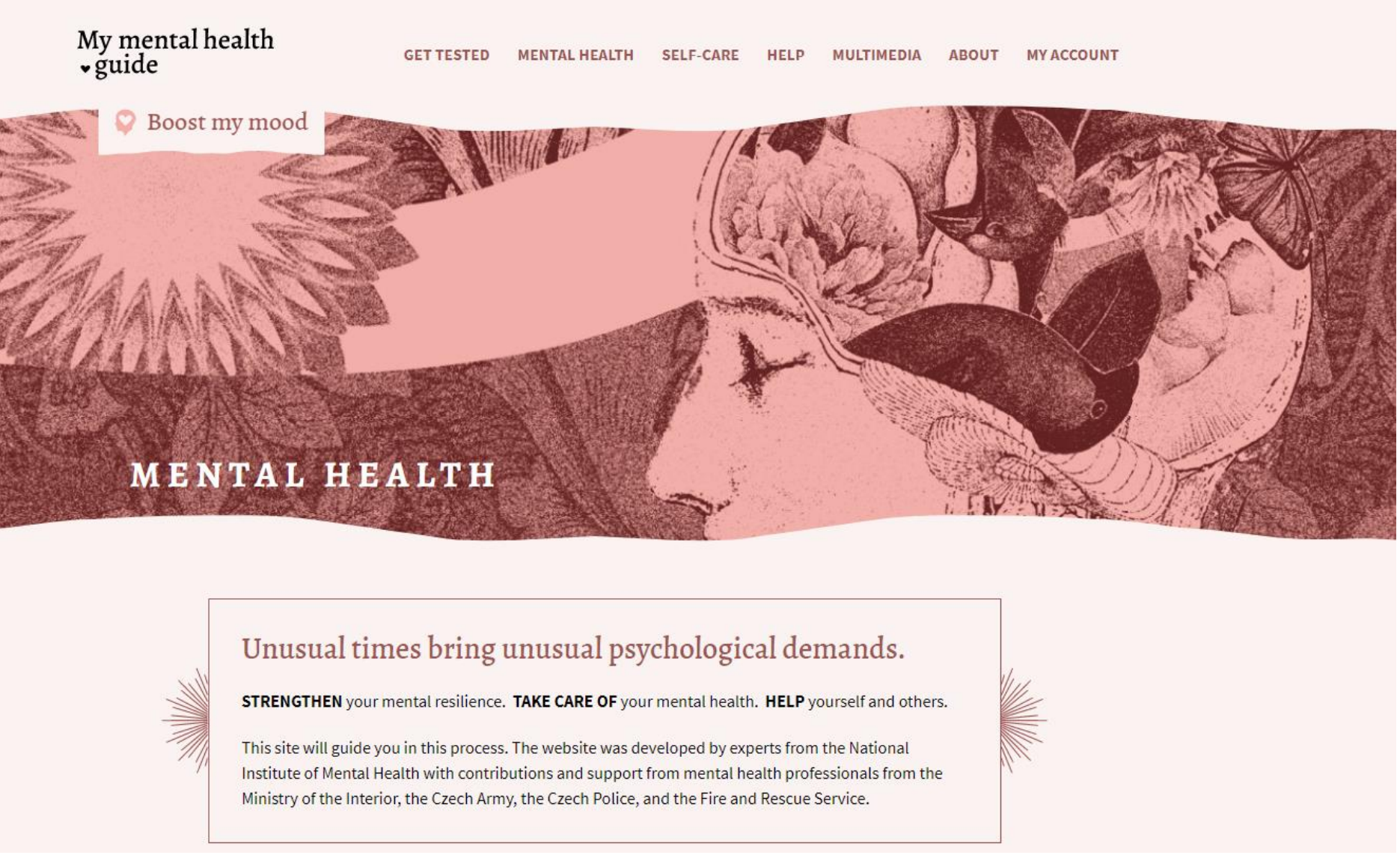
- Long term multifactorial distress
- Collective trauma
- Global impact
- MH symptoms
- Lessons learned
- Best Practice
- Innovations



Good practice
& challenges from Covid-19

- Prevention – intervention – mitigation
- Expert teams, crisis management, crisis preparedness
- Crisis and media communication
- Clinical work, psychotherapy, rehabilitation
- Resilience building
- Research and development
- Specific fields: children & young people, school & education, work, health & social care, frontlines workers, disabled people, the bereaved, long covid patients, people at risk of violence or radicalization.

Virtual assistance center (Czech good practice)



EN: https://www.mymentalhealth.guide RU: https://www.samopomo.ch CZ: https://www.opatruj.se

Conclusion
- the future of the field

- Participative community involvement
- Community based approach
- Support of MH and resilience of population
- From collective trauma to collective healing
- Research of resilience and coping
- Research of effectiveness of interventions and training
- New intervention methods and options
- Preparedness: climate changes
- Interdisciplinary and international cooperation

Thank you for your attention ☺

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