

## *Episode 10 - RTI Series – After Physical Restraints*

This podcast episode is part four of a series addressing the use of physical restraints and interventions in response to extreme client behaviors, particularly in residential treatment settings. The previous episodes discussed the uncomfortable nature of these interventions and the necessity of their use for the safety of both staff and clients.

The focus of this final episode is on post-restraint procedures to protect staff from the traumatic effects of such incidents. After a physical hold, staff are advised to relax their muscles, engage in deep breathing, and attend to basic needs like drinking water. These self-care measures help counter the lingering stress chemicals in their system.

Debriefing is emphasized as a crucial step, occurring ideally before the shift ends. It involves clinically recounting the incident to overwrite traumatic memories with a calm recounting. Debriefing should be facilitated by a colleague or supervisor to be most effective.

Processing, which delves into emotions and thoughts before and after each behavior in the restraint sequence, can follow debriefing. This helps clients understand their actions and take responsibility for them. It helps staff to further overwrite traumatic memories of an incident with the memory of calmly talking about their emotional reactions and thoughts.

The podcast suggests various techniques for clients and staff, like relaxation, meditation, and mindfulness, to regain self-control and reduce trauma effects. These techniques are only truly effective when they are practiced in advance.

Furthermore, supporting and appreciating colleagues is highlighted for staff well-being. Expressing gratitude and providing opportunities for relaxation also reduces the damaging impact of stress.

The episode also touches on administrative reviews of incidents, which are stressful for staff. Anticipating emotional reactions, maintaining honesty, and adhering to strong values like respect, love, honesty, bravery, humility, wisdom, and integrity are recommended for resilience in such situations.

This episode emphasizes the importance of self-care, debriefing, and processing as essential tools for staff to cope with the emotional toll of physical restraints and protect themselves from trauma.