

# Basic Overview

- Military produces highly trained men and women
- These individuals had HUGE responsibilities while deployed and return to no jobs or relatively trivial responsibilities in comparison
- Service members are our family members, neighbors, friends, co-workers, patients
  - Thousands upon thousands have served in the military
- **All** who have served come home changed
  - For a few individuals these changes can be debilitating and life-altering
- This module explores positive ways Clergy and Faith Groups can respond to the challenges post-deployment

# Challenges in Returning Home

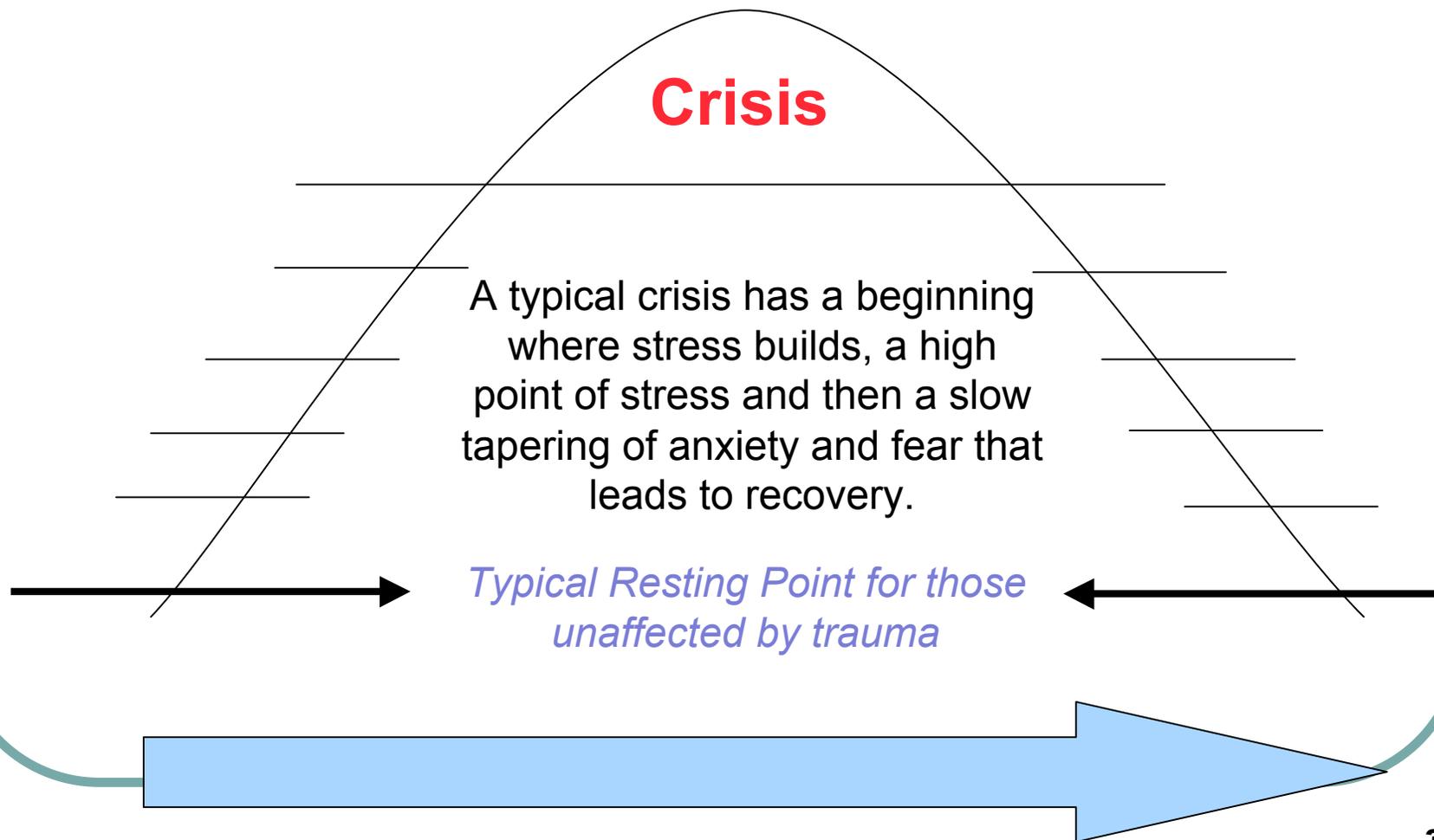
Returning home is disorienting and can represent a significant change of and perhaps an absence of social community, structure, order, mission, purpose and predictability for the returning service member

The enormity of the war experience can shatter the individual's basic sense of safety and basic understanding of the meaning of life as they knew it

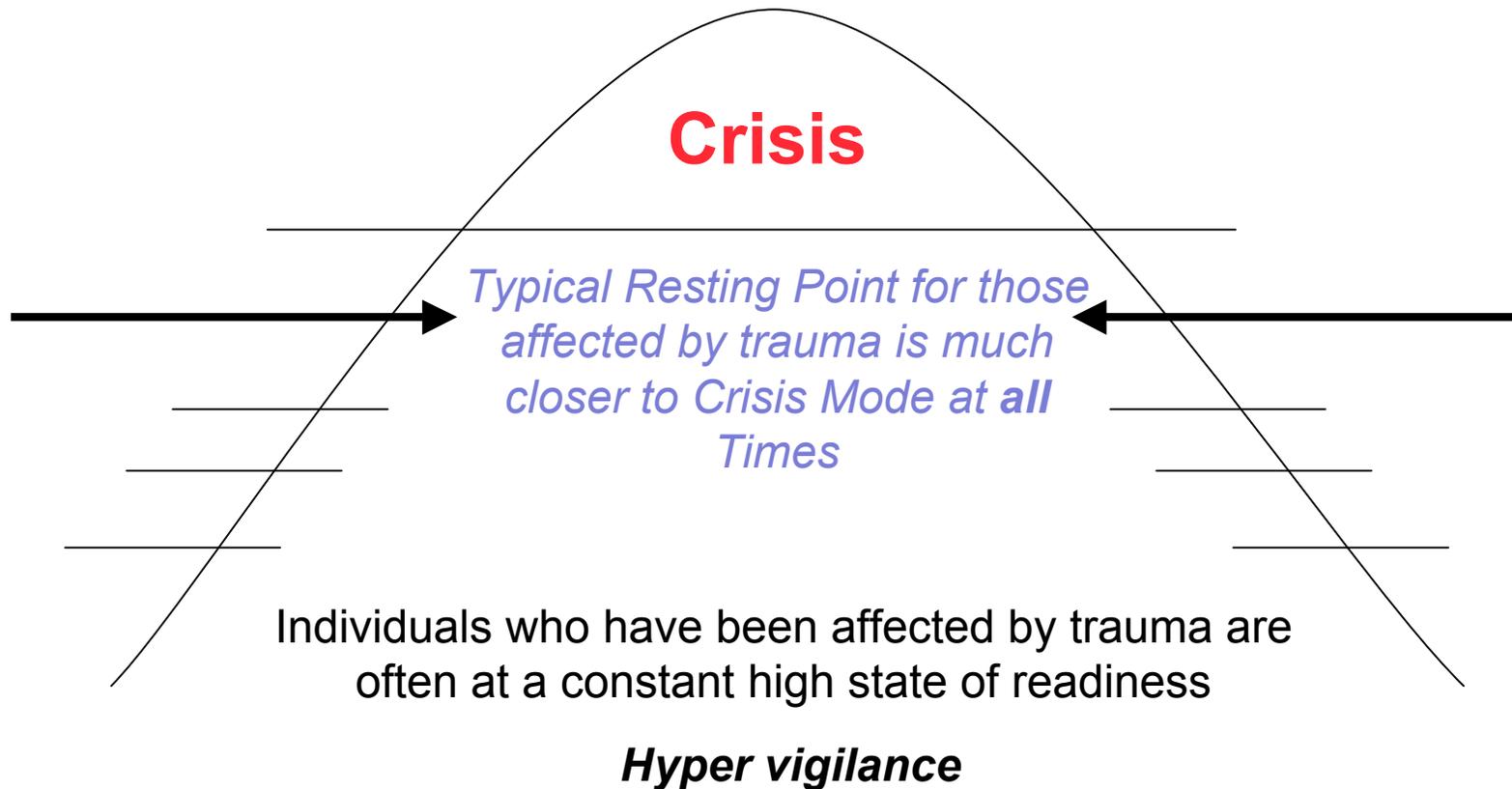
In addition, the returning soldier's family are not the same as they were before deployment to war

Re-adjustment and "re-setting" after the crisis of trauma can be complicated and difficult

# Typical Crisis Cycle



# Abbreviated Crisis Cycle After Trauma



# Re-setting for Civilian Life

Upon returning from war, individuals must “re-set” themselves for civilian life

Re-setting includes:

- Grief and transition processing
- Un-learning (or re-learning) basic skills such as defensive driving rather than offensive driving
- Re-developing community support systems

See <http://www.battlemind.org>

# Trauma Definitions

**Trauma:** Injury whether emotionally or physically inflicted. An experience that is emotionally painful, distressful or shocking and which may result in lasting mental and physical effects.

Psychiatric trauma is essentially a normal response to an extreme event

Trauma reactions upon returning from war are *normal* reactions to the abnormal circumstances of war

# Definition - PTSD

**Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** is an anxiety disorder that can develop after exposure to one or more terrifying events that threatened or caused grave physical harm (to self or other)

This is a specific psychiatric disorder in which a cluster of symptoms occurs beyond one month after someone experiences a traumatic event

Non-mental health care providers (pastors included) should never assume this *medical diagnosis* or proffer it to individuals as stigmatization, distancing and inappropriate over-identification can occur