

Resiliency for First Responders

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The VINCIBLE Journey

- A product of the TPCA Officer Safety Committee
- Began distributing roll call training in 2015 (example in video)
- Started partnership with TMLIRP in 2016
- Resources are available to all police agencies whether or not they are members of TPCA or the Risk Pool
- Partnership continues to grow with VINCIBLE provided training being the next step in the process (see TPCA or TMLIRP training calendars)
 - Tactical Emergency Casualty Care (Officer Safety Committee)
 - Resilience Strategies for First Responders (Rick Randall)
 - Moving Right of Bang (Rick Randall)
- Risk Pool and Officer Safety Committee continue to work on advancing officer safety in the State of Texas



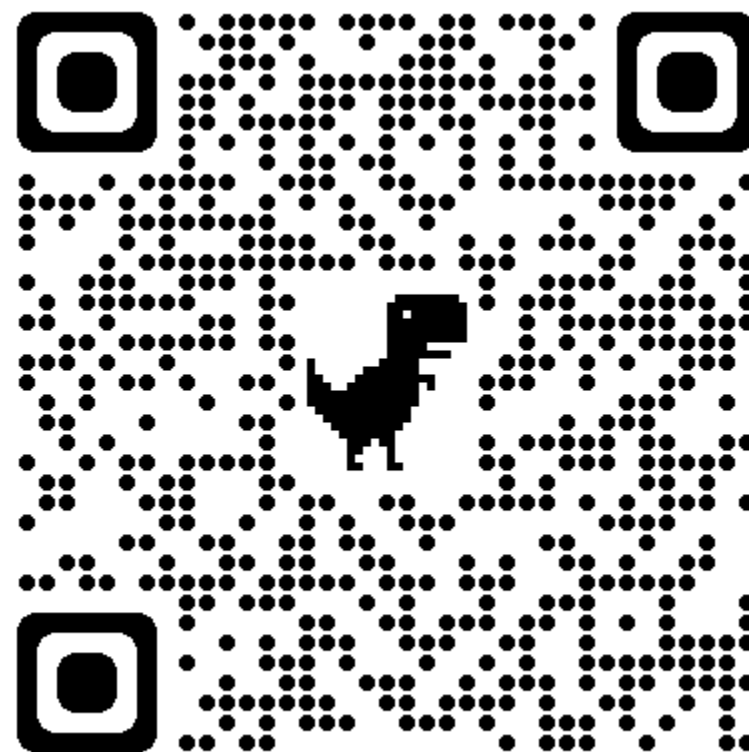
The Five Cornerstones



Texas Police Chiefs Association-VINCIBLE

- As many as 50% of officer deaths in some years can be attributed to behaviors that are controllable, including fitness, emergency driving, and the wearing of seat belts and body armor. How can police culture be invaded in a manner that will change risk-prone behaviors and ultimately reduce deaths and injuries? How can agencies remove the IN from INVINCIBLE and thereby remind their officers that they are VINCIBLE?
- The answer lies in the adoption of 5 Cornerstones: [Wear your Vest](#); [Wear your Belt](#); [Watch your Speed](#); [Stay Fit](#); and [540](#). These cornerstones are communicated through weekly roll call trainings created and communicated by the Texas Police Chiefs Association (TPCA) Officer Safety Committee. They support Best Practices and require agencies to consider tactics in addition to policies and procedures. The program is free for participating Texas agencies.





ICE BREAKER QUESTIONS

- **WHAT IS THE TOTAL YEARS OF EXPERIENCE?**
- **WHAT IS THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE YOU HAVE EVER RECEIVED ABOUT YOUR CAREER?**
- **HOW DO YOU WANT TO BE REMEMBERED?**





Why This Class?

Stress plays a significant role in the health and well-being of first responders.

Stress impacts performance and achievement in many areas of our lives.

This class focuses on understanding the physiological and psychological bases of stress as a precursor to learning strategies to regulate your response to stress for optimum performance.



Our Objectives

- **Develop a familiarity with the negative effects of a career as a first responder and the hypervigilance cycle.**
- **Understand the definition of Stress and the difference between Stress, Burnout and Compassion Fatigue.**
- **Understand the causes of Stress, Burnout, Compassion Fatigue, and PTSD.**
- **Identify the three phases of the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) and describe what happens physiologically when you experience a real or perceived threat.**
- **Examine the health risks associated with stress.**
- **Explore strategies designed to reduce the negative effects of Stress, Burnout and Compassion Fatigue, and increase resiliency.**





What's Wrong With This Picture?

The Facts of Life for First Responders

- First Responders are 1st among all professions for Heart Disease....Hypertension...and Diabetes (The Police Wellness Project)
- First Responders are more likely to suffer from alcoholism (200% more likely to abuse alcohol than the general public) (Palm Beach Institute)
- Many First Responders develop a mental process of emotional containment and detachment.

“Professional Protective Emotional Suppression” (PPES)

Aka “First Responder Syndrome” or Compassion Fatigue

- First Responders have a life expectancy that is 22 years less than the general population



The Facts of Life for First Responders

- First Responders have a divorce rate nearly TWICE the national average at 60%



- First Responders have an extraordinarily high suicide rate.

One suicide every 36 hours

The Facts of Life for First Responders

Suicide Facts

First Responders = 1.8x that of normal Caucasian population

Possibly 1/3 of all First Responder suicides are RETIREES



***"Insanity is doing the same thing
over and over and expecting a
different outcome."***

Unknown



1) Understanding – Know how stress impacts the body, mind, and spirit

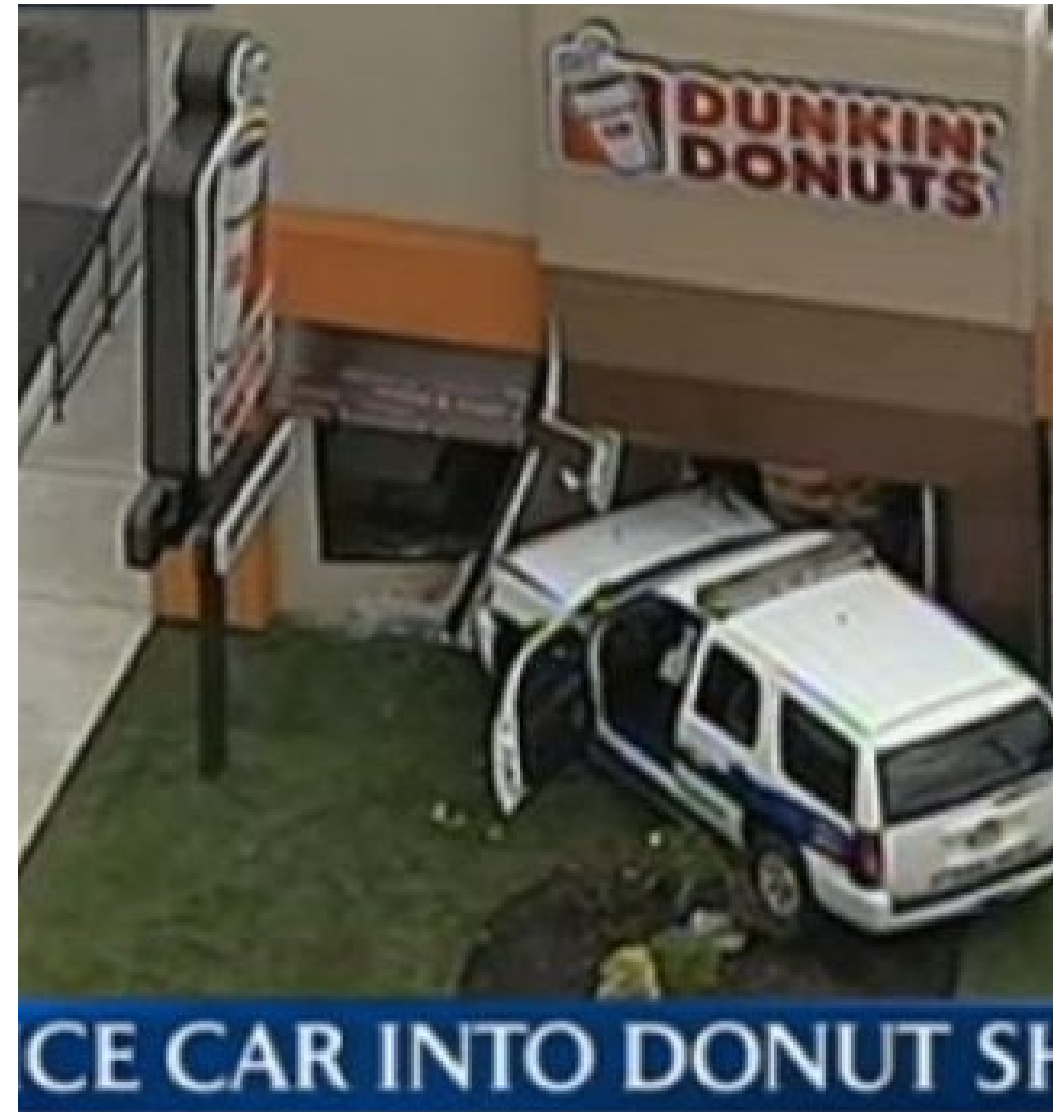
2) Recognizing – Realize when stress is becoming dangerous to health and well-being

3) Coping - Implement strategies to develop resilience and produce stress hardiness

FBI STRESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ELEMENTS



PART I – UNDERSTANDING STRESS



"Stress is the nonspecific response of the body to environmental demands."

Hans Selye

"Stress is a state of anxiety produced when events and responsibilities exceed one's coping abilities."

Richard Lazarus



A Simple Definition

Stress is the state of mental, physical, and/or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances in which the mind, body, and spirit are taxed to respond.



STRESS FACTS

- Stress can result from past, present, or future events.
- The level of stress experienced depends upon one's perception of the event and previous experience with the same or similar events.



HOW IS FIRST RESPONDER STRESS DIFFERENT?



A Source of First Responder Stress?

Restraint = The feeling or desire, along with the ensuing bodily effects, experienced by a person who has a strong longing to choke the living sh** out of someone who desperately deserves it, **BUT YOU CAN'T.**



First Responder Stress



First Responders are among the top-rated professions for job stress next to airline pilots and enlisted military personnel in combat situations.

Stress takes a huge toll on First Responders. It can come on quickly as a result of a critical incident, like a shooting or a horrific accident, or it can come on slowly with the accumulation of taking call after call.

A High-Risk Lifestyle?

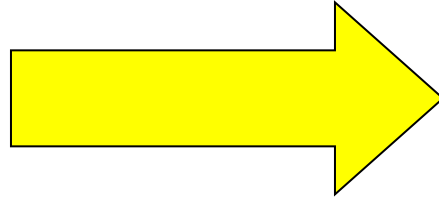


Public Safety is not just high risk in terms of the physical dangers of the job, but also high risk in terms of problems:

- Attitudinal problems,
- Behavioral problems,
- Intimacy and Relationship problems.

How Do We “Manage” Stress?

AVOIDANCE/ DENIAL



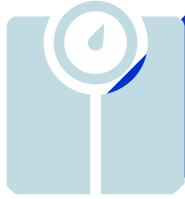
- Alcohol/ Drugs
- Thought Suppression
- Risky Behavior
- Excess Work

Major Contributors to First Responder Stress

Research shows these can contribute to an increased stress response in First Responders:

- **Depersonalization:** Having to react unemotionally
- **Authoritarianism:** Much of First Responders' behavior is governed by regulations (little individual control)
- **Organizational Protection:** Bureaucratic structures designed to primarily protect agencies from criticism and penalty, often at the expense of the individual
- **Dangerous Environment:** knowing your life is in danger

Remember: What causes stress?



Anything that knocks your body off balance



A tension that resists quick resolution



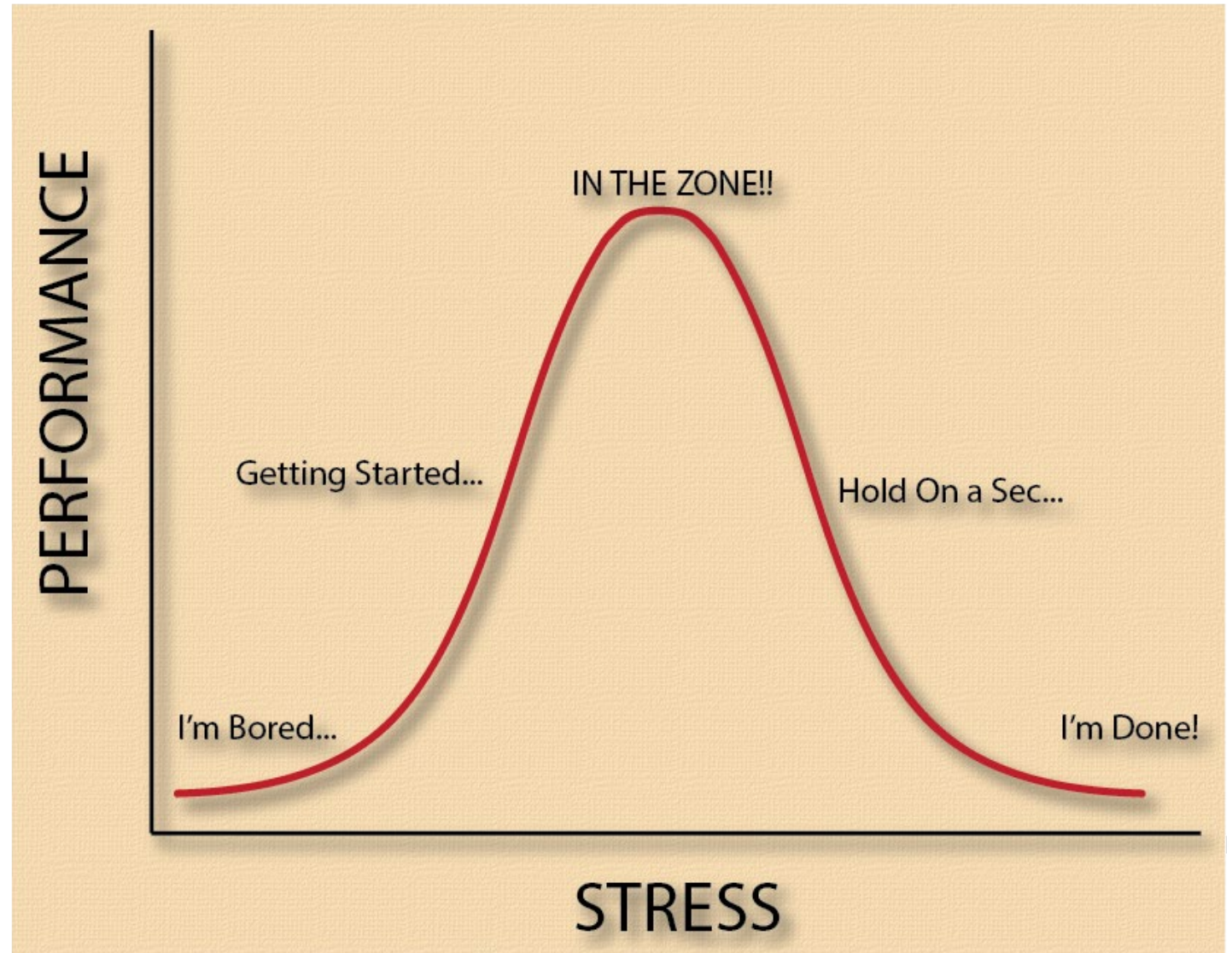
The result of placing environmental demands on a person that their resources struggle to accommodate

How much stress is in your life right now?



Yerkes-Dodson Law Of Stress And Performance

(*Astress*
Eustress
Distress)



TYPES OF STRESS

Acute Stress

Cumulative Stress

Chronic Stress

PTSI

Acute Stress



- Acute stress is the most common form of stress.
- It comes from demands and pressures of the recent past and anticipated demands and pressures of the near future.
- Acute stress is the reaction to an immediate threat, producing the fight/flight/freeze response.
- The threat can be any situation that is experienced or perceived.
- Acute stress is thrilling and exciting in small doses, but too much can be exhausting

Episodic Acute Stress



- There are those who suffer acute stress frequently, whose lives are so disordered that they are studies in chaos and crisis.
- If something can go wrong, it does. They take on too much, have too many irons in the fire, and can't organize the slew of self-inflicted demands and pressures clamoring for their attention.
- They seem perpetually in the clutches of acute stress.

Episodic Acute Stress



- It is common for people with episodic acute stress reactions to be over-aroused, short-tempered, irritable, anxious and tense.
- Often, they describe themselves as having "a lot of nervous energy." Always in a hurry, they tend to be abrupt, and sometimes their irritability comes across as hostility.
- The workplace is often a very stressful place for them.

Cumulative Stress

- Stress that accumulates over time.
- Cumulative stress is a significant factor in burnout.
- It is often the result of the combination of a lack of life balance, the absence of effective methods for dealing with stress, and unhealthy life habits.



Chronic Stress



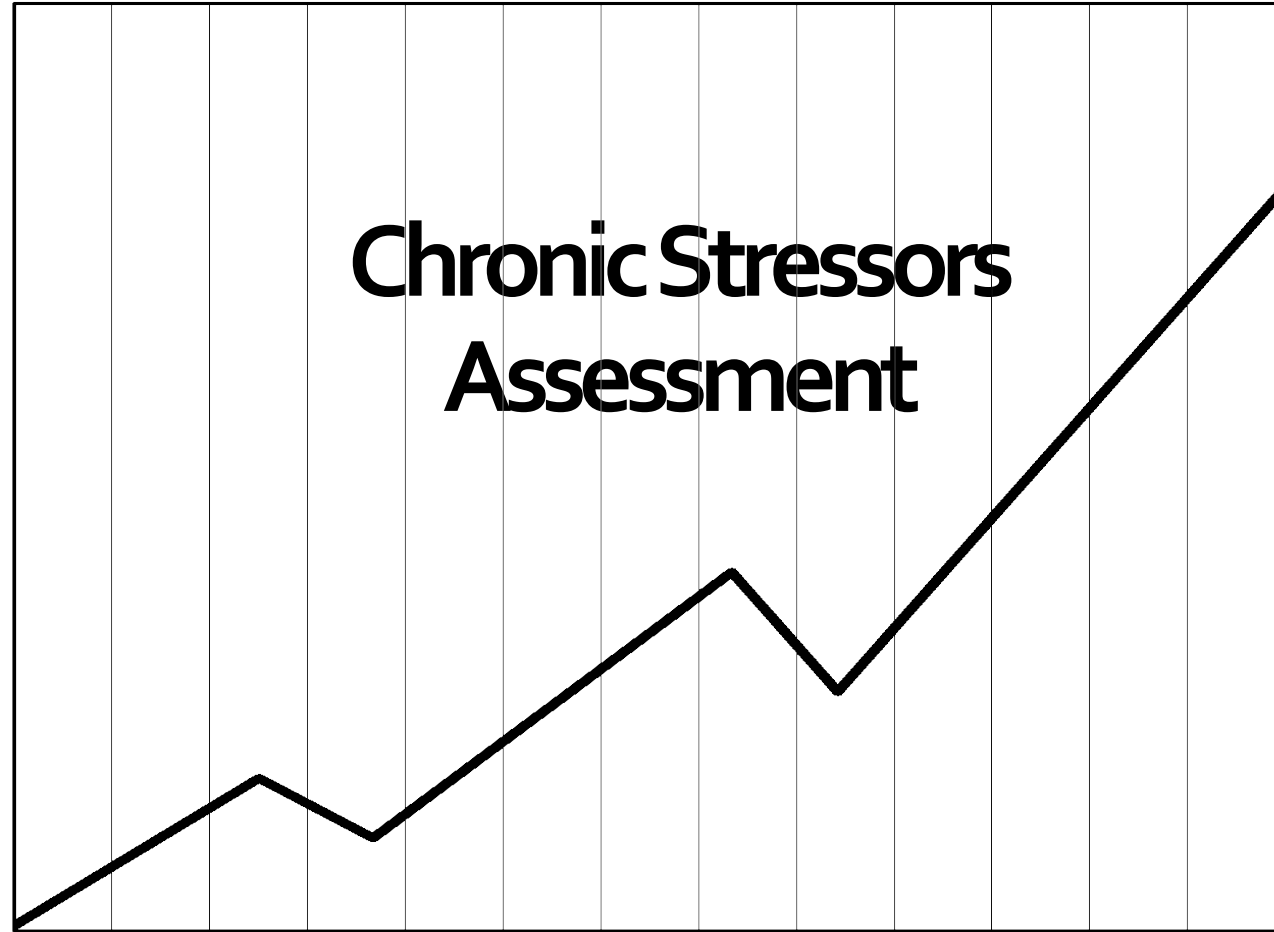
- Chronic stress is a state of ongoing physiological arousal.
- The whole being experiences so many stressors that the autonomic nervous system rarely has a chance to activate the relaxation response. (We were built to handle acute stress, not chronic stress.)

Chronic Stress



- Chronic stress is caused by unrelenting demands and pressures for seemingly interminable periods of time. With no hope, the individual gives up searching for relief
- The worst aspect of chronic stress is that people get used to it

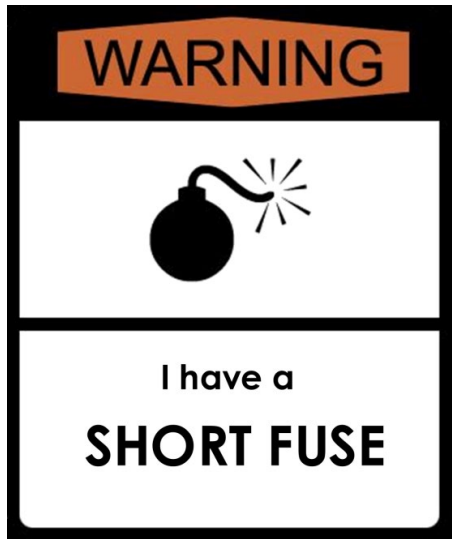
Are you under chronic stress?



Post Traumatic Stress

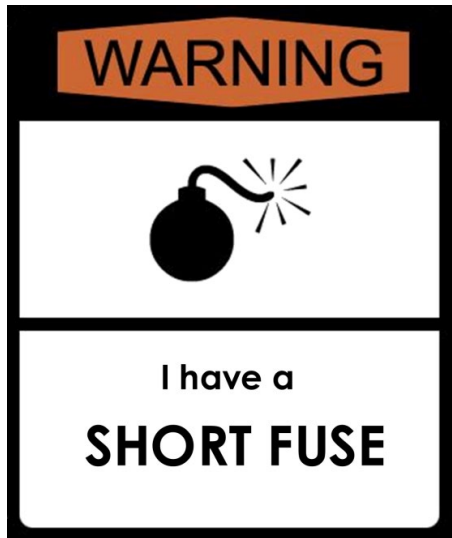
- Results from experiencing a shocking, frightening, or dangerous event.
- Symptoms include flashbacks, intrusive dreams or nightmares, frightening thoughts, avoiding thoughts or feelings related to the event, being easily startled, difficulty sleeping, distorted feelings of guilt or blame, persistent state of arousal, and loss of interest in enjoyable activities.

Stress Symptoms



- Emotional – some combination of anger (or irritability), anxiety, and depression, (the three stress emotions).
- Physical – (Musculoskeletal) includes tension headache, back pain, jaw pain and the muscular tensions that lead to pulled muscles and tendon and ligament problems.

Stress Symptoms



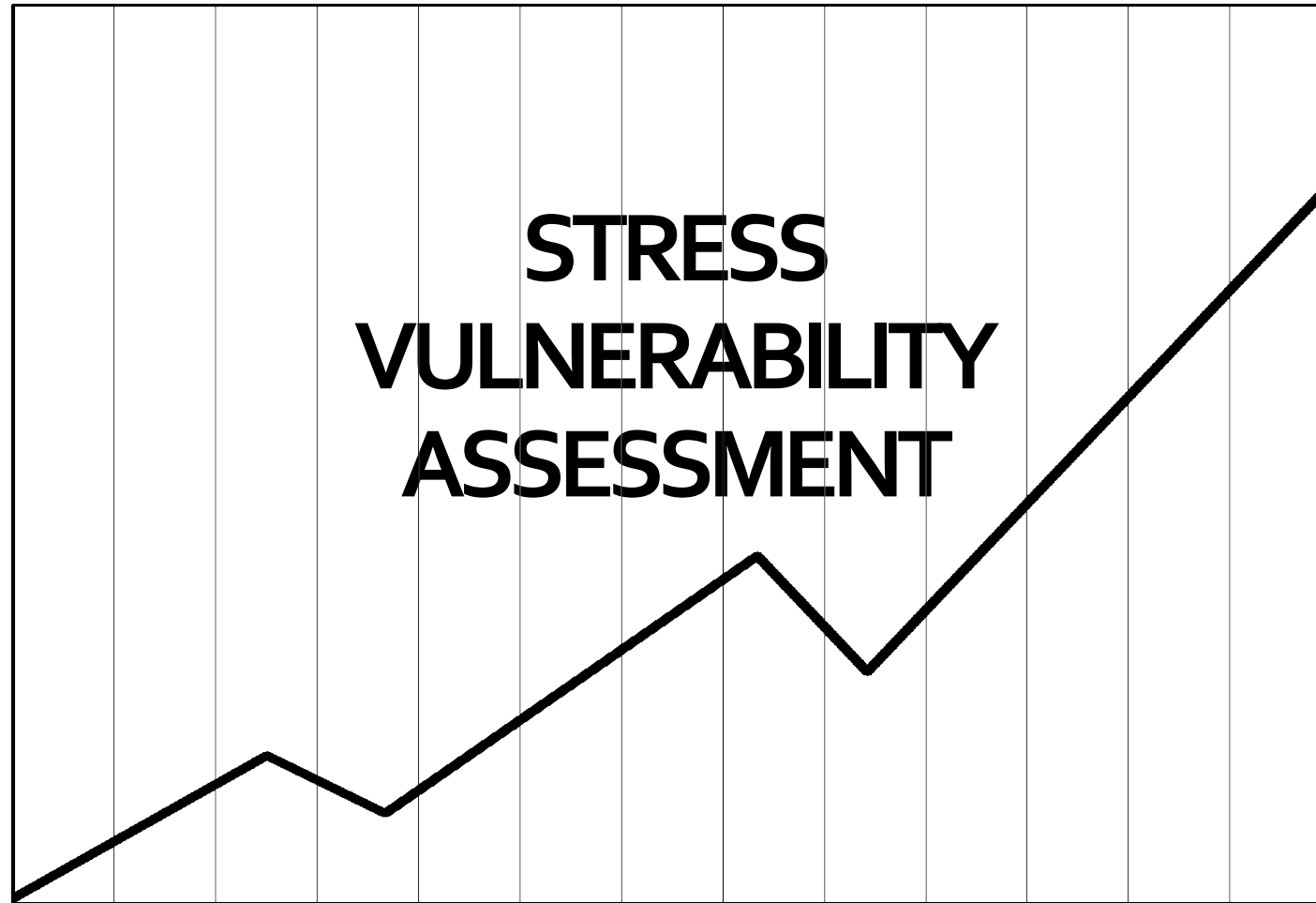
- **Physical – (Gastrointestinal) Stomach, gut and bowel problems such as heartburn, acid stomach, flatulence, diarrhea, constipation and irritable bowel syndrome.**
- **Physical – (Cardio) Elevation in blood pressure, rapid heartbeat, sweaty palms, heart palpitations, dizziness, migraine headaches, cold hands or feet, shortness of breath, chest pain, and fatigue.**

Common Stress Signs



- Overeating or undereating
- Angry outbursts
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Social withdrawal
- Disengagement from exercise and hobbies
- Disruption of sleep

What Is Your Risk Level?

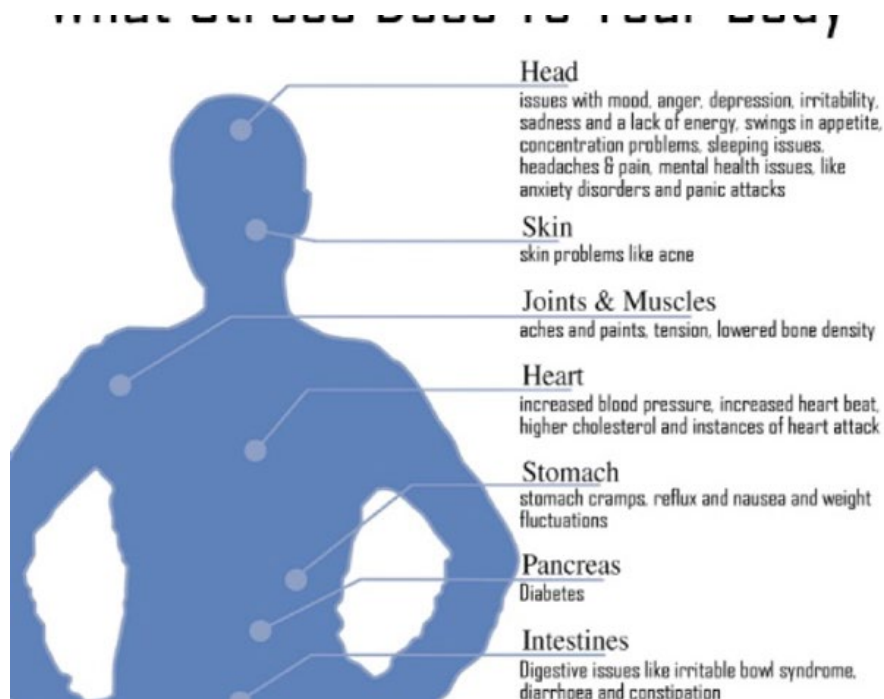


Part II – Understanding The Stress Response



General Adaptation Syndrome

- GAS is a term used to describe the body's short-term and long-term reactions to stress.

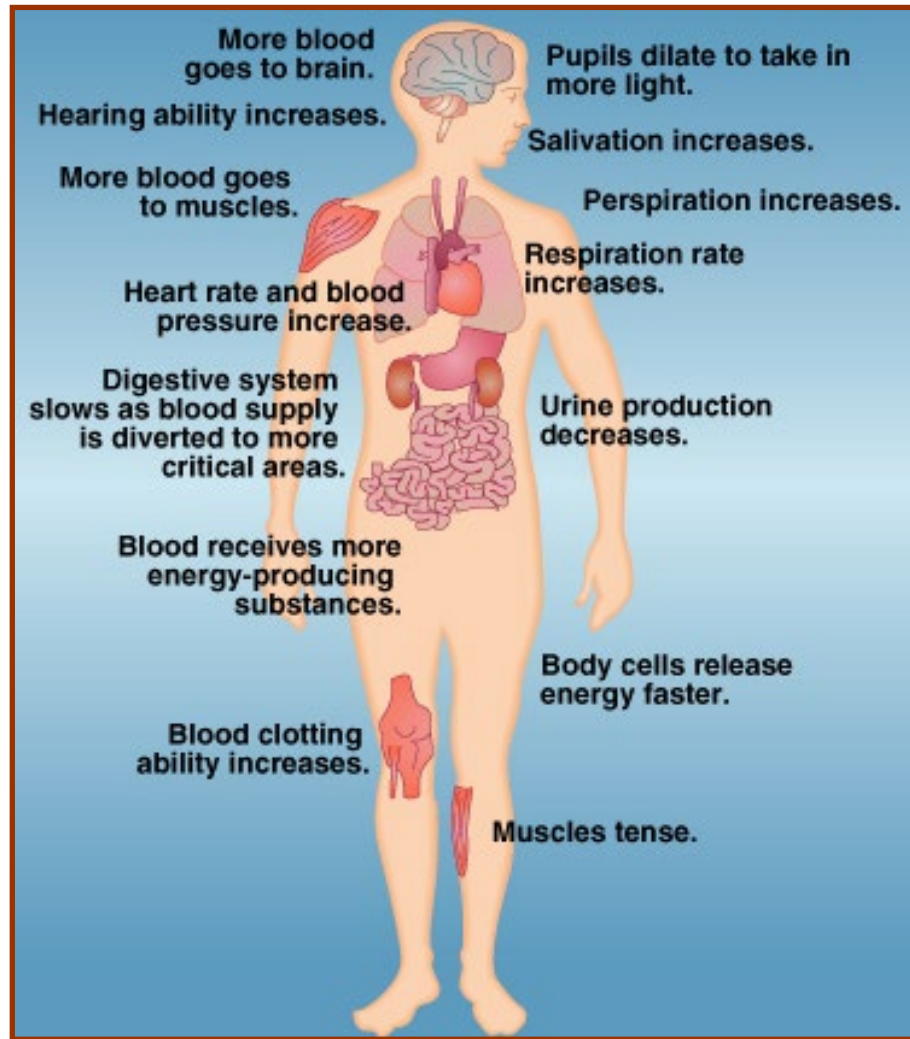


Our Body's Design

- Our bodies are uniquely designed to handle stress.
- When presented with a threatening situation it is our most basic survival instinct to either:
 - ✓ Engage in a fight
 - ✓ Run for our lives
 - ✓ Become completely inactive
- This is what is known as the “fight/flight/freeze” response



Stages of the General Adaptation Syndrome



**Stage 1
Alarm Reaction**

**Stage 2
Resistance**

**Stage 3
Exhaustion**

General Adaptation Syndrome

Alarm Stage

Fight = utilizes the energy to attack and eliminate the threat

Flight = utilizes the energy to escape the threat

Freeze = complete immobility due to feeling overwhelmed.

The Stress Response

- Arousal occurs for physical and non-physical stressors (mental, emotional, & spiritual).
- Response occurs if the threat is real (*car accident*) or perceived (*a noise at night*).



General Adaptation Syndrome *Resistance Stage*

Body perceives the stressor as a threat (loss of equilibrium)

GAS reaction occurs

The stress response occurs in proportion to the perceived danger.

General Adaptation Syndrome *Exhaustion Stage*

Depletion of bodily resources

Feeling of sensory “overload”

Inability to defend against stressors
until full recovery has taken place

Symptoms of Exhaustion Stage

- **Physiological**
Headaches, Muscular aches,
Increased susceptibility to colds,
flu, infections and inflammatory
reactions
- **Psychological**
Depression, Anxiety, Fear
- **Spiritual**
Feeling of Need for
Isolation/Relationship difficulties

**Stress
Exhaustion
Impacts
Every Area
of Your Life**

Physical –

Emotional –

Spiritual –

Mental –

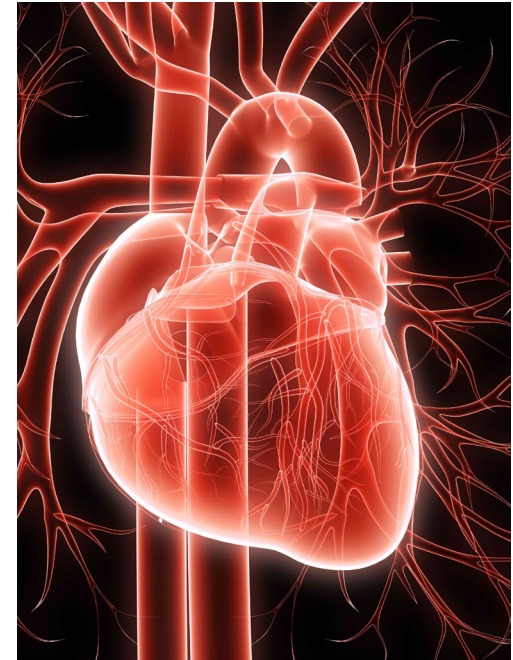
Relational –



The Heart Factor

The “Disease of Allostatic Overload” is caused by the chronic elevation of hormones that are released during stressful events

- Increased plaque buildup
- Hardening of the arteries
- Increased blood pressure
- Increased risk of stroke and heart attack



Type “A” and Stress

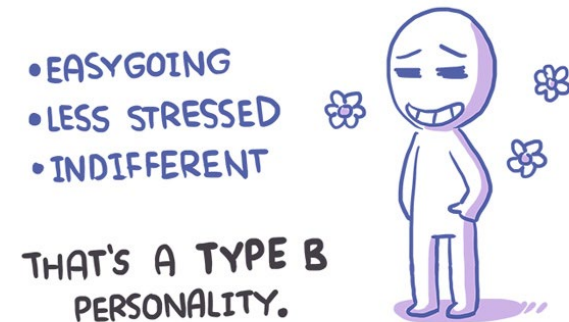
Type A: A personality pattern characterized by:

- Competitiveness
- Time Urgency
- Hostility and anger

It is these last 2 factors that place Type A's at increased risk for stress-related diseases (e.g., CHD, stroke, migraines)

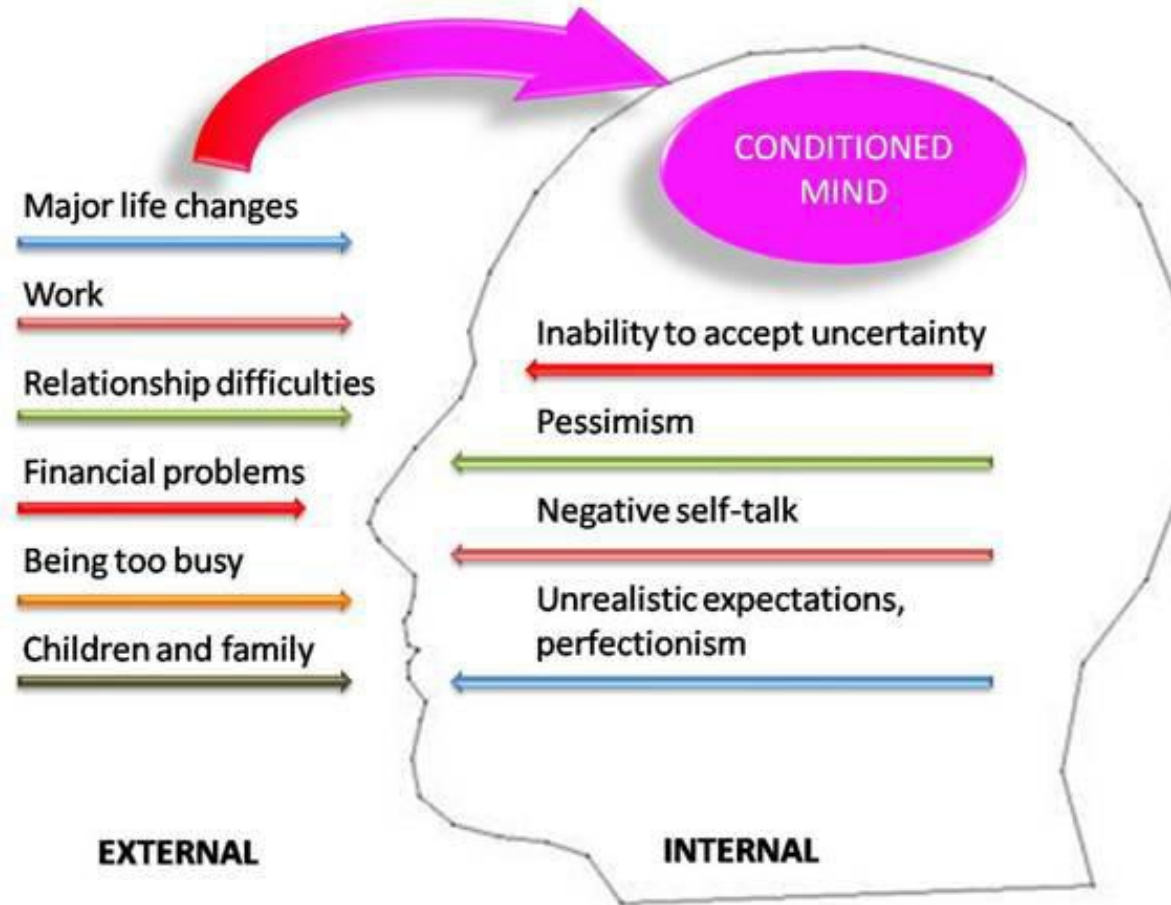
- ◉ The "Type A" personality is similar to an extreme case of episodic acute stress.
- ◉ Type A's have a significantly higher risk of developing heart disease compared to Type B.
- ◉ This personality type is more likely to have their fight/flight/freeze response set off by things in their environment.

Type "A" *and Stress*

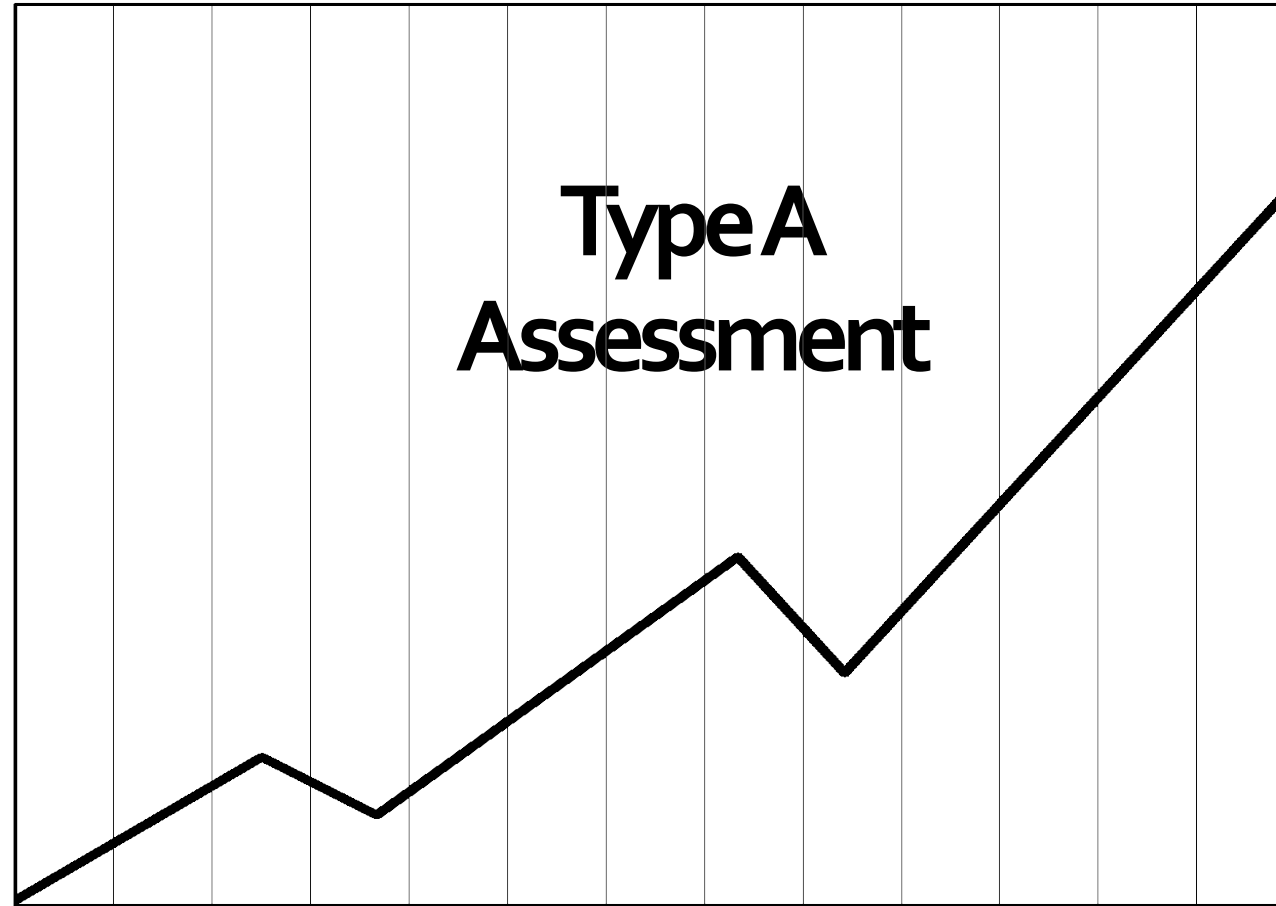


UNDERSTANDING STRESSORS

CAUSES or TRIGGERS OF STRESS & ANXIETY



ARE YOU A TYPE A?



A Matter of Perception

"Stress is an attitude." Hans Selye, 1956

- Stressors in and of themselves are not inherently stressful:
- It is the perception or cognitive appraisal of a stressor as stressful that makes it stressful.



Part III– Recognizing Hypervigilance





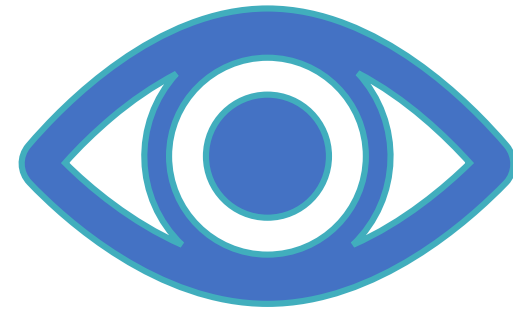
Hypervigilant on duty.... Lethargic off duty...

Profile of the Average First Responder

Hypervigilance

Hypervigilance is the necessary manner of viewing the world from a threat-based perspective; having the mindset to see the events unfolding as potentially hazardous.

This starts out as fun and exciting but is a major factor in the significant change that emotionally effects many first responders.



Hypervigilance

Permits the on-duty First Responder to develop the perceptual skill set required for maximum personal safety. Every decision the First Responder makes is dependent on the perceptual set of hypervigilance.

"Good officers learn to see the world as one big felony in progress. They are just driving thorough it and they don't want any of it to splash on them."

Hypervigilance

What causes the psychological changes
in First Responders?

Is it *what* they see in the world?

Or



Is it *how* they must *learn* to see the
world?

Hypervigilance is a Biological State

Its foundation is in the neurological functioning of the brain. The *Reticular activating system* (RAS). Creating a heightened sense of awareness and perceptiveness of the environment.

- Increased Peripheral vision
- Improved hearing
- Faster reaction times
- Increased blood sugar
- Elevated heart rate
- Increased blood pressure
- A general sense of energy.

This enables rapid thinking on one's feet and quick decision making



The Endorphin rush!

“It’s fun to be a firefighter”

“Police work gets in your blood”

This state of alert interaction with the environment, at mild to moderate levels, is not unpleasant to experience physically.

*“I get that **ALIVE**, high energy, quick thinking feeling that makes the reds redder and the blues bluer”*





- Homeostasis = a biological balancing phenomena
- *Every action has an equal and opposite reaction.*

Equal and Opposite Reaction

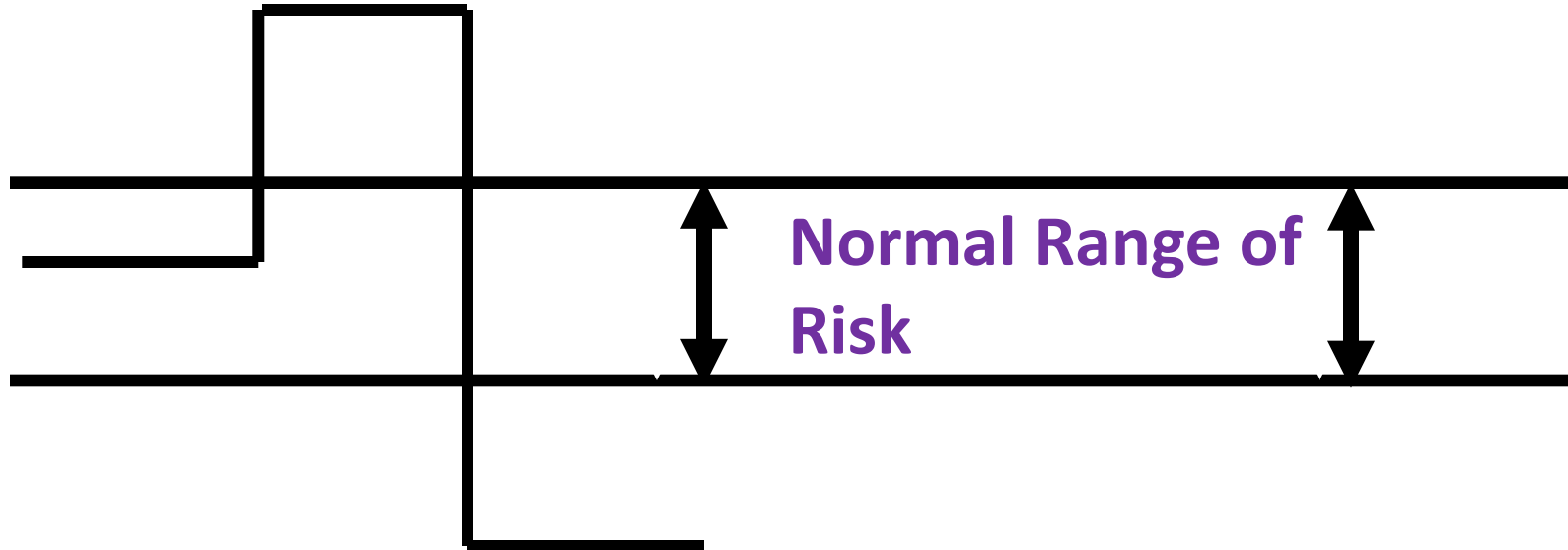


Because every action has an equal and opposite reaction, the HIGH demand for more elevated alertness that is required for on-duty public safety work will produce, unless corrected, an extreme reaction in the opposite direction when off duty.

Equal and Opposite Reaction

On Duty

Alive, Alert, Energetic, Involved, Humorous



Tired, Detached, Isolated, Apathetic

Off Duty

On Duty

Heat seeker

(sympathetic branch)

Alert

Alive

Quick Thinking

Good sense of humor

Camaraderie

Off Duty

Couch Potato

(parasympathetic branch)

Tired

Detached

Isolated

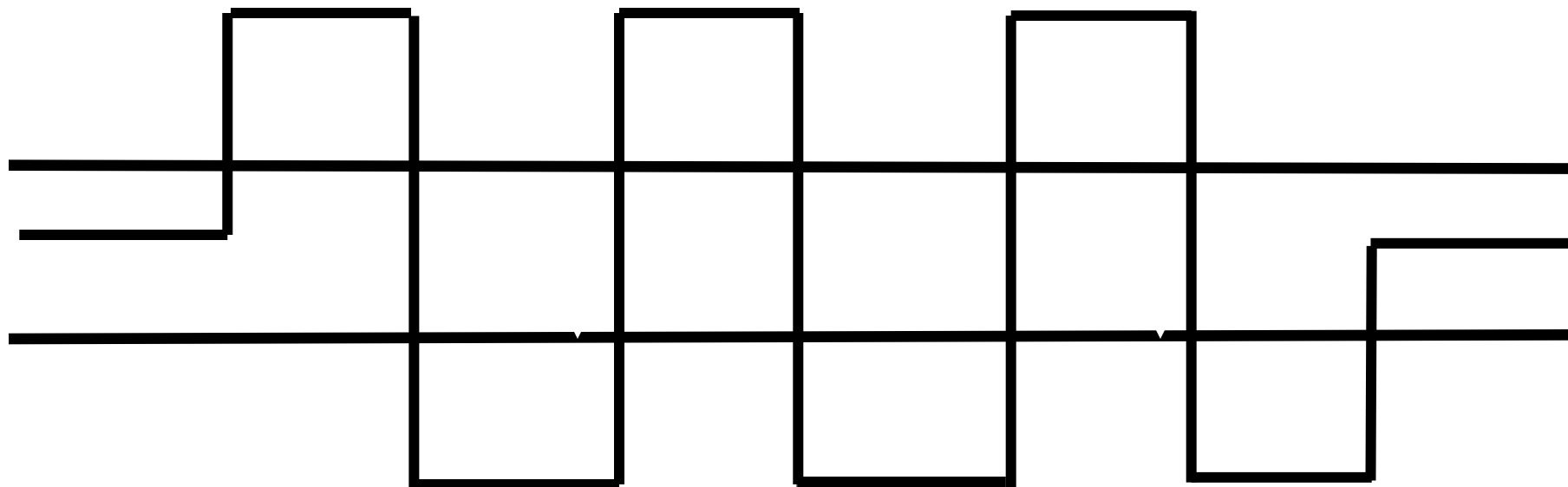
Apathetic

Irritable

Same Stuff Different Day

On Duty

Alive, Alert, Energetic, Involved, Humorous



Tired, Detached, Isolated, Apathetic

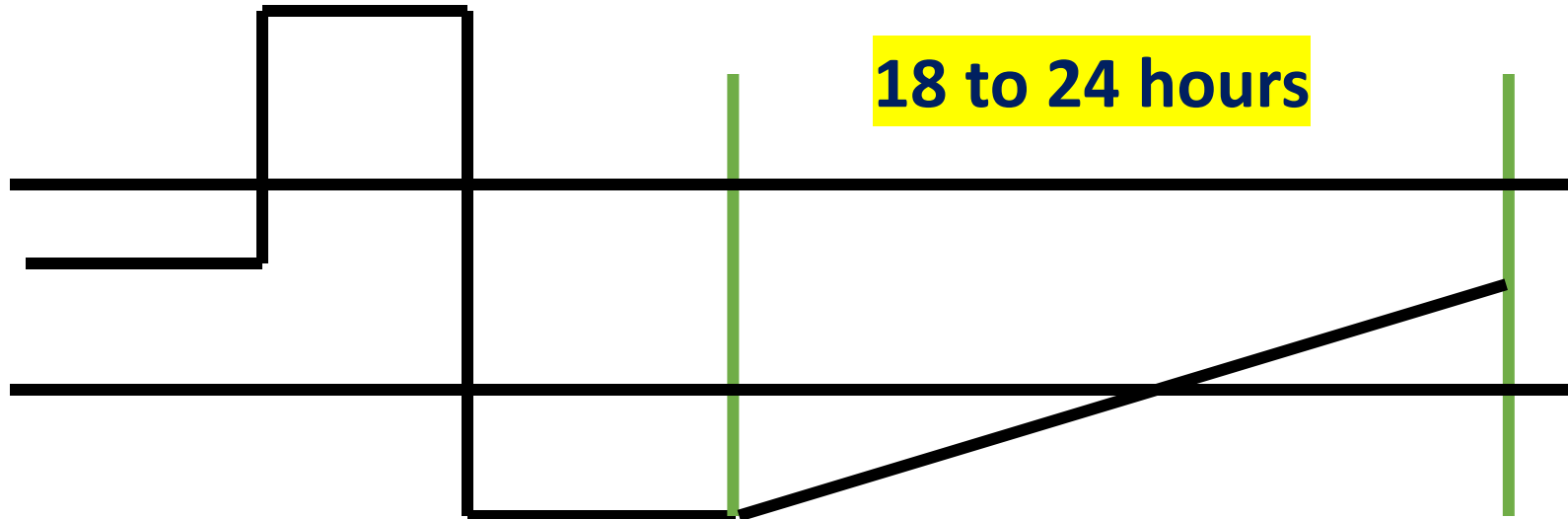
Off Duty



Time to Reset?

On Duty

Alive, Alert, Energetic, Involved, Humorous



Tired, Detached, Isolated, Apathetic

Off Duty

Important Question?

“What do you typically do within eighteen to twenty-four hours after you return home from work?”

Eat, Sleep, Visit Family or Friends?

"I GO BACK TO WORK"



Disengagement

Ask First Responders, what they enjoy doing after they return home and many give a very simple response.

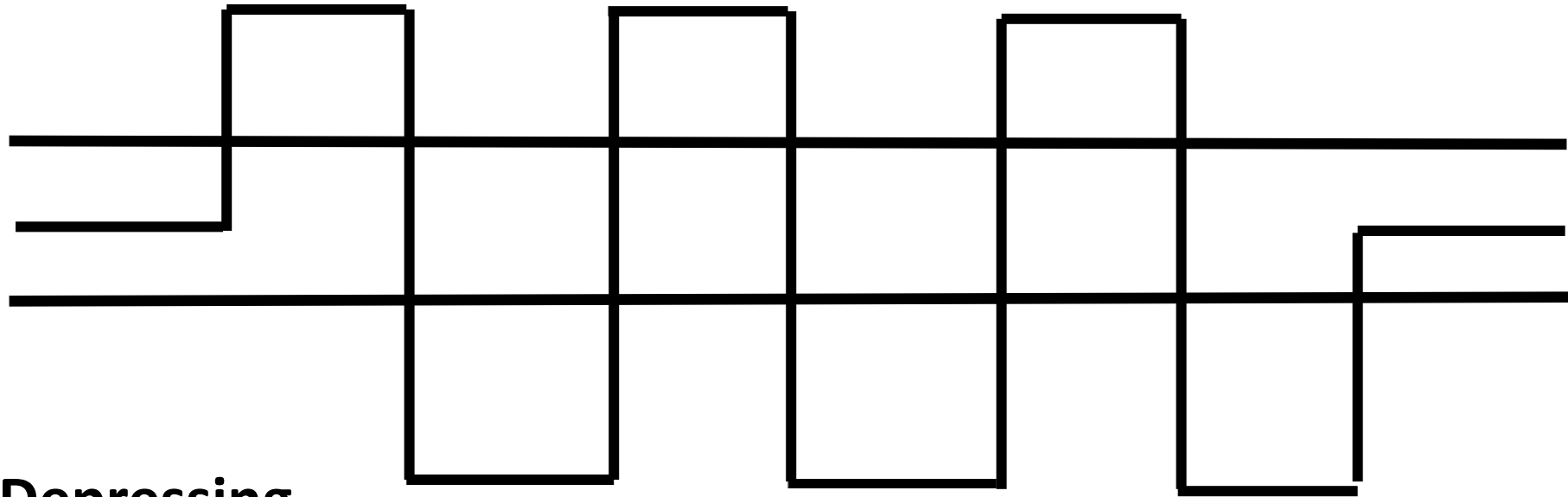
"NOTHING"

Or "Kicking Back", "Relaxing",
"Vegging out".

When Does a Routine Become a Rut?

On Duty

Exciting



Depressing

Off Duty



It must be their fault!

Without knowing that the emotional and perceptual swing is something taking place biologically within them, First Responders can mistakenly project responsibility for their emotions onto the home and blame those in their personal lives.



Many First Responders
decide...

"Don't go Home."

Unfortunately

This mistaken conclusion by
has probably caused more
heartache and destruction in
public safety families than all
the felons' bullets ever fired.

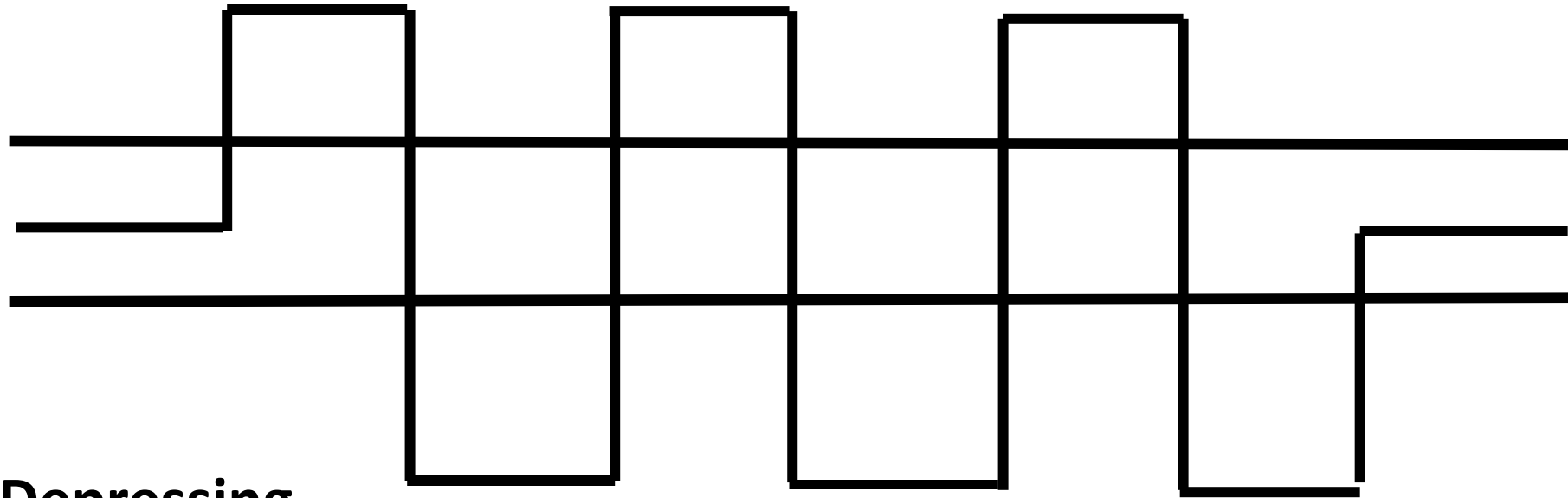


Disengagement

On Duty

Overinvested

Exciting



Depressing

Underinvested

Off Duty



Symptoms of the Hypervigilance Rollercoaster

- The desire for social isolation at home
- Unwillingness to engage in conversation or activities that are not work related
- Reduced interaction with non-public safety friends and acquaintances
- Procrastination in decision-making not related to work.
- Infidelity or serial relationships
- The I “USTA” syndrome-Loss of interest in hobbies or recreational activities.

Become a Survivor

A helpful approach
for the First
Responder leaving
work is to **ACTIVATE**
the APPROPRIATE
RESPONSE.



The Relaxation Response

What is it?

- A physical and mental state that is the opposite of the fight-or-flight response.
- It results in reduced blood pressure and blood glucose levels, and lower breathing and heart rates.
- It involves attaining a state of relaxation that can counteract the ill effects of pain, anxiety and stress.

Benefits

- Decreased generalized anxiety
- Improved ability to face stressful situations
- Improved concentration
- Increased self-awareness
- Increased emotional control
- Increased spontaneity and creativity

How to Elicit the Relaxation Response

- Give yourself time to decompress
- Get into your “right mind”
- Create a “Work-Home” transition physically
- 30-45 minutes of aerobic exercise
- Practice – Practice - Practice

Part IV– Recognizing Burnout and Compassion Fatigue



Burnout

Burnout



Burnout is the result of chronic stress.



Burnout is protective rather than destructive. The shut down prevents further damage.

Burnout



- Burnout is often accompanied by increased cynicism and negative interactions with others
- Burnout is connected to mental and physical exhaustion, work overload, and role conflict at work.

Emotional Exhaustion – Fatigue from caring too much, for too long. (Overinvestment)

Depersonalization – The depletion of empathy, caring, and compassion.

Decreased Sense of Accomplishment – An unconquerable sense of futility feeling that nothing you do makes any difference.

COMPONENTS OF BURNOUT



THE CAREER TRAJECTORY

Fascination
Stage

- Everything is new and shiny

Hostility
Stage

- Gripe about everything

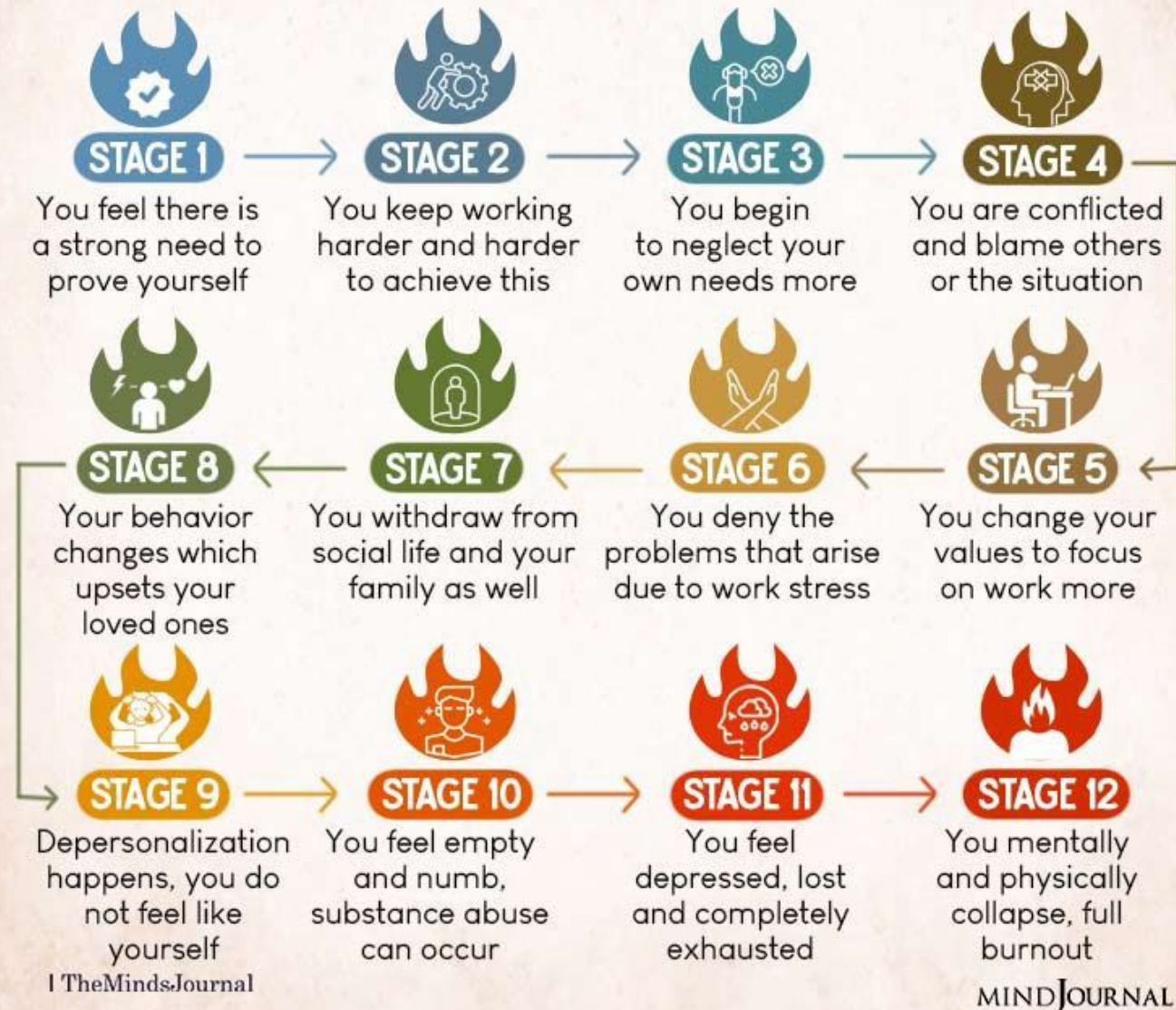
Superiority
Stage

- You know what you are doing

Acceptance
Stage

- The goal is making it to retirement

The 12 Stages Of Burnout



Secondary Traumatic Stress and Compassion Fatigue

**Secondary Traumatic Stress
(or Compassion Stress):
Emotional duress affecting
First Responders due to
exposure to other's trauma.**

**Compassion Fatigue: "A state
of exhaustion and dysfunction
(biologically, psychologically
and socially) as a result of
prolonged exposure to
compassion stress" (Figley,
1995).**

Compassion Fatigue Versus Burnout



Compassion fatigue is when First Responders have depleted empathy due to overexposure to the suffering of others



Resembles burnout, but with burnout, exhaustion is due to increased workload & institutional stress & does not involve trauma

Symptoms of Compassion Fatigue

Trouble being productive

Survivor/work issues encroaching on
personal time

Symptoms of anxiety or depression

Symptoms of Compassion Fatigue

Sense of inadequacy

Attitude of entitlement

Withdrawal from social
connections

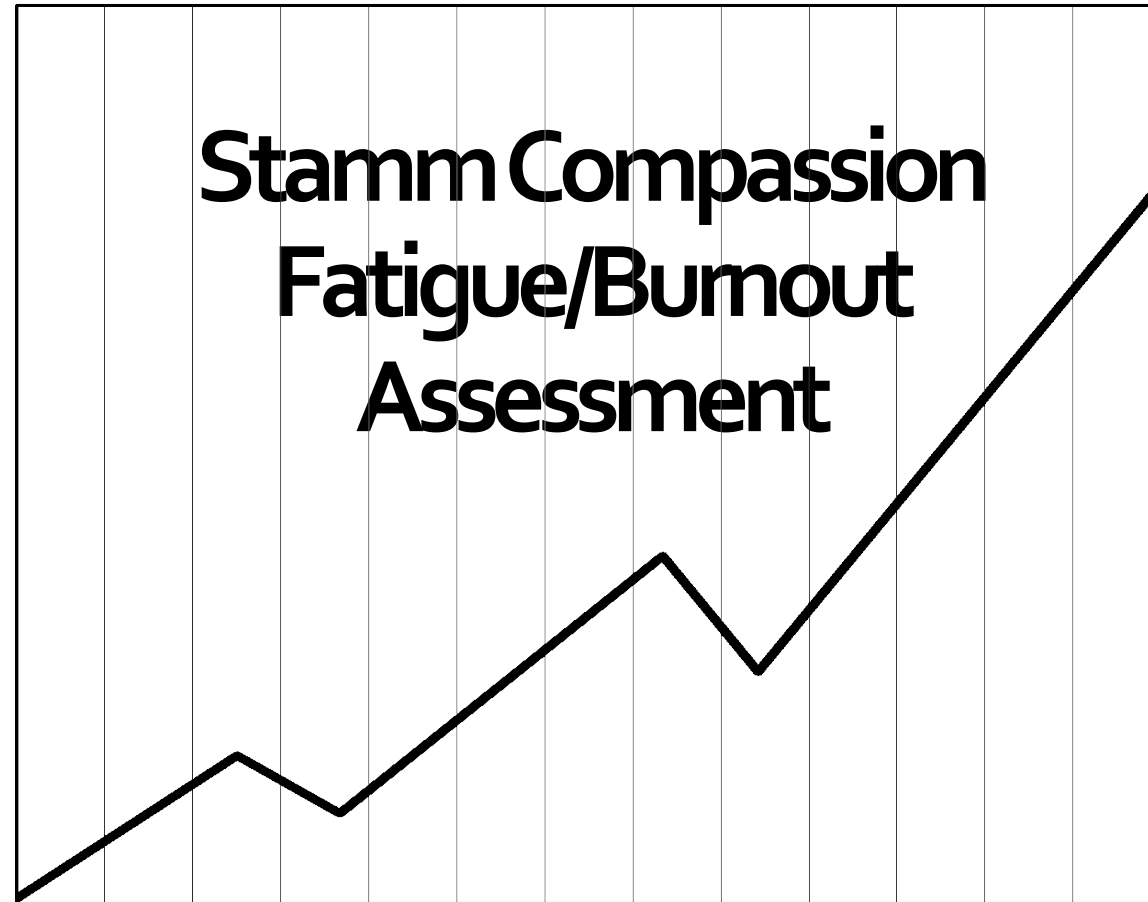
Symptoms Common to Burnout and Compassion Fatigue

- Loss of enjoyment/cessation of self-care activities
- Loss of energy
- Loss of hope/sense of dread associated with work
- Secretively self-medicating/addiction (alcohol, drugs, work, sex, food, spending, etc.)
- Relational dysfunction
- Impulsivity/Over-reactivity
- Sleep disturbance

Ask Yourself

- Have I become cynical or critical at work?
- Do I drag myself to work and have trouble getting started?
- Have I become irritable or impatient with co-workers, customers or clients?
- Do I find it hard to concentrate?
- Do I lack satisfaction from my achievements?
- Do I feel disillusioned about my job?
- Am I using food, drugs or alcohol to feel better or to simply not feel?
- Have my sleep habits changed?

ARE YOU BURNT OUT?



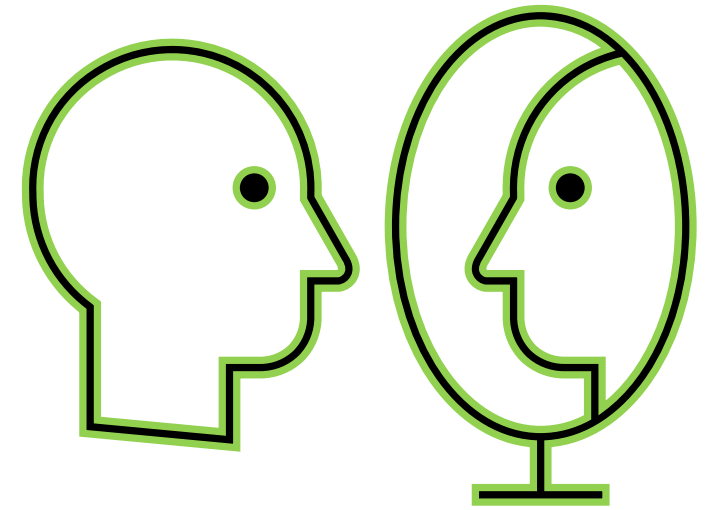
The Truth About Compassion Fatigue and Burnout

- Most First Responders will at times experience symptoms of compassion fatigue and burnout; these are normal reactions to trauma work
- For some First Responders the experience of burnout or compassion fatigue may become so severe as to interfere with their effectiveness and their personal mental health
- Ongoing monitoring is essential to career survival



- Recognize the symptoms of compassion fatigue and burnout
- Learn to ask for help
- Be aware and accept the limitations of your family, your job, and yourself
- Maintain discipline in daily responsibilities and duties
- Take “time out” during the day
- Take short vacations at least twice a year
- Try to change little things that gnaw at you and accommodate to those you can't change
- Organize your time so you can concentrate on vital tasks
- Admit compassion fatigue and burnout are real problems for you and don't try to cover it up
- Distinguish between stressful aspects of your job or home life that you can change, and those you can't change.
CHANGE WHAT YOU CAN!

What You Can Do!



Compassion Satisfaction

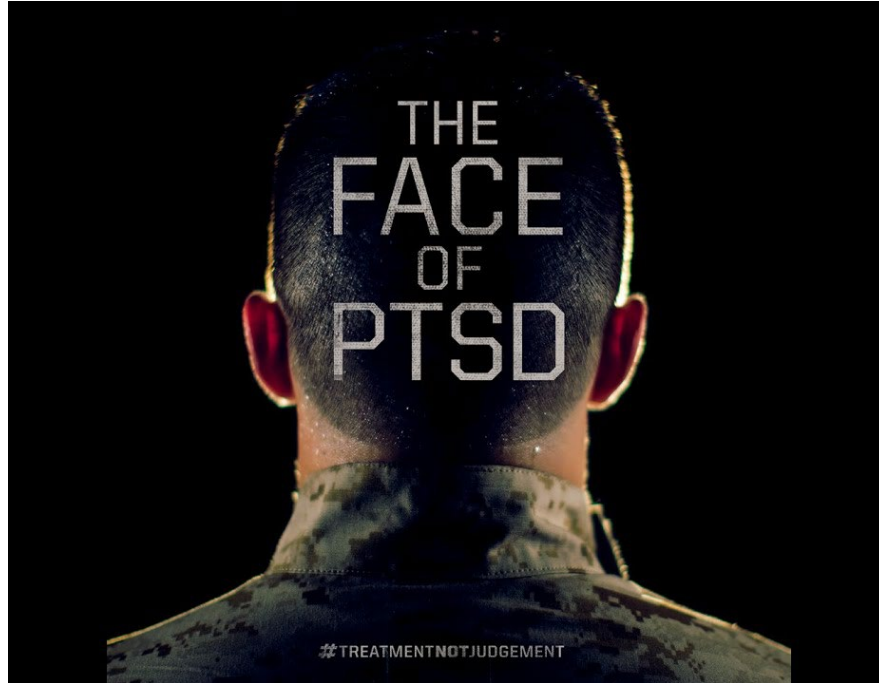
Compassion satisfaction is the ability for First Responders to derive a great sense of meaning & purpose from their work

It may be an important buffer in managing and transcending alterations in belief systems and physiological or emotional reactions due to compassion fatigue

9 Steps to Compassion Satisfaction

- **Know Your Why**
- Practice Self-Awareness
- Develop Healthy Boundaries
- **Cultivate Positive Relationships**
- Practice Self-Care Intentionally
- **Reflect and Celebrate**
- Engage in Ongoing Learning
- Seek Supervision or Mentorship
- Practice Gratitude





Part V –PTSI, MORAL INJURY, and POST TRAUMATIC GROWTH

Post Traumatic Stress Injury – An Assault on the Mind, Body, and Spirit Triggered by Exposure to Trauma



What Is Trauma?

- Any event that overwhelms an individual's ability to cope emotionally, cognitively, or physically
- Traumatic events usually occur suddenly and are unpredictable
- The individual is often left in shock or denial
- The circumstances of the event commonly involve abuse of power, betrayal of trust, entrapment, helplessness, pain, confusion, and/or loss
- The individual's sense of safety is compromised

Types of Trauma

Typical forms of trauma are:

- Acute Trauma (one time event)
- Chronic Trauma (repeated or prolonged events)
- Complex Trauma (multiple events involving a feeling of being trapped)
- Secondary or Vicarious Trauma (exposure to injury and mayhem)
- Adverse Childhood Experiences

Trauma and the Brain

- Trauma is stored in the body. It alters the way the brain and the mind manage what they perceive in the world.
- It changes what we think about, how we think, and our capacity to think.
- Traumatized people tend to superimpose their trauma on everything around them. They look at the world in a fundamentally different way.
- The changes to the brain are visible on PET scans.
- These changes can alter DNA and can therefore permanently change the chemistry and structure of the brain.

Reactions to Trauma

- The reactions to trauma are normal and do not indicate a personal weakness.
- Effects include extreme anxiety, anger, sadness, disassociation, and the inability to feel pleasure
- Additional effects are difficulty sleeping, physical pain, and professional and relationship difficulties.
- Almost always there is a difficulty engaging in intimate relationships after the traumatic event. This is due to a lack of trust both in oneself and for others.

Reactions to Trauma

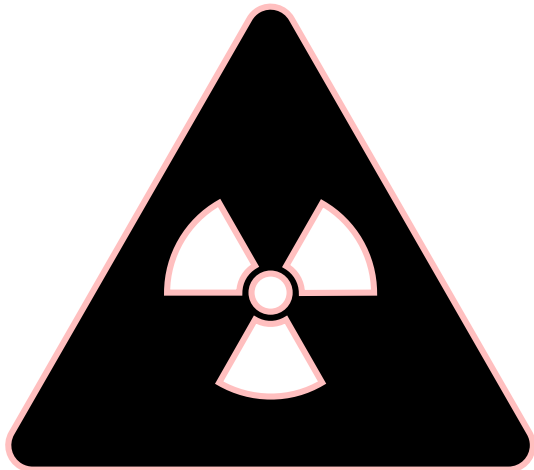
- Emotional numbness is common. Rage and shame are often the only emotions that break through.
- Another common response is a sense of shame or guilt created by the person's second guessing (what did I do, what did I not do).

PTSI – Diagnostic Criteria

- Must be exposed to a traumatic event
- The individual's response to the event must involve intense fear, helplessness, and/or horror



PTSI – Diagnostic Criteria



- Increased Hypervigilance and Arousal
- The event is re-experienced by distressing recollections, dreams, flashbacks, etc.

PTSI – Diagnostic Criteria

Symptoms must
persist for more than
30 days



Additional Significant PTSI Side Effects

- Sleep Disruption
- Impaired Concentration and Memory
- Repetitive Nightmares/Intrusive Dreams
- Sexual Inhibition
- Impulsivity and Instability

Sense of Isolation



"No one else knows what I am going through"

"I can't burden other people with this."

Other Possible Indicators of PTSI

- Frequent use of sick leave
- Difficulty passing fitness-for-duty tests
- Chronic Depression
- Suicidal thoughts/Behavior
- Substance abuse
- Domestic disturbance/Violence
- Inappropriate uses of force
- Increased rudeness complaints

Cumulative Career Traumatic Stress (a special form of PTSI)

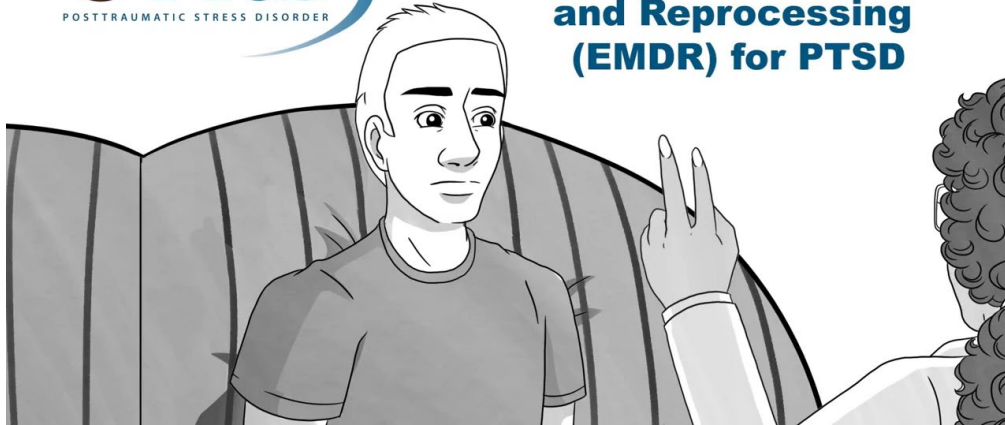
- The response to the accumulated trauma of a career in public safety
- Impacts an estimated 30-50% of all public safety workers

Symptoms of Cumulative Career Traumatic Stress

- Negative change in outlook towards others
- Lack of trust in others as a direct result of the job
- A loss of hope, optimism, and/or religious beliefs since becoming a public safety worker
- Isolation
- Increased anger/depression/anxiety



Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) for PTSD



EMDR

MORAL INJURY

- The deep emotional, psychological, or spiritual pain that results from witnessing, participating in, or failing to prevent actions that violate one's core moral beliefs and values
- Doing something that goes against one's beliefs (commission)
- Failing to do something in line with one's beliefs (omission)
- Betrayal by leadership, others in position of power, and/or peers resulting in adverse outcomes
- Distressing psychological, behavioral, social, and sometimes spiritual aftermath of exposure to such events (National Center for PTSD)

POTENTIAL CAUSES OF MORAL INJURY

- Killing or harming others
- Having to make decisions that affect the survival of others
- Being unable to care for all those who were harmed
- Freezing or failing to perform a duty during a dangerous or traumatic event
- Failing to report an event that violates rules or ethics
- Engaging in or witnessing acts of disproportionate violence and feeling nothing or exhilaration while causing harm to or killing others (National Center for PTSD)

Consequences of Moral Injury



- Guilt, shame, disgust, and anger are some hallmark reactions to Moral Injury
- Moral injury can be a factor in the loss of one's moral compass
- Moral injury is often a contributing factor to suicide



Spirit

- The **SPIRITUAL ASPECT** of human beings refers to the part of us that seeks meaning, connection, and purpose beyond the material world.
- It describes an innate human longing to belong to something greater, to understand our place in the universe, and to live in alignment with deeper values.
- It is not limited to but may involve religion



- How has the job affected you?
- How have you changed over the years?
- How has it affected your view of people?
- How has it impacted your overall quality of life?
- These are questions of the SPIRIT

Why should a career in a helping profession produce such damaging results in those who enter it with the best of intentions?

Spiritual Questions



What would you do with your life if you suddenly lost your career because of a disability or some other reason?

What would you do if you suddenly and unexpectedly lost your spouse due to death or divorce?

How would you continue to find purpose in your life and maintain mental and emotional wellness?

FIVE TIMELESS VALUES (VIRTUES)

- **Compassion/Kindness**
- **Justice/Fairness**
- **Family/Community**
- **Peace/Harmony**
- **Honesty/Truth**



RandallGroup|911



Moral Injury Event Scale



RESTORING YOUR BALANCE

- Serve with compassion and make a difference
- Remain involved with your outside interests
- Practice your faith
- Let go of the need to control
- Consciously practice gratitude
- Speak positively
- Develop your sense of sincere purpose



POST TRAUMATIC GROWTH

- It is possible to experiences positive change as the result of the struggle with traumatic events and major life crises
- Accompanied by transformative life changes
- Experienced both as a process and as an outcome
- Requires challenging and reconstructing basic assumptions about life

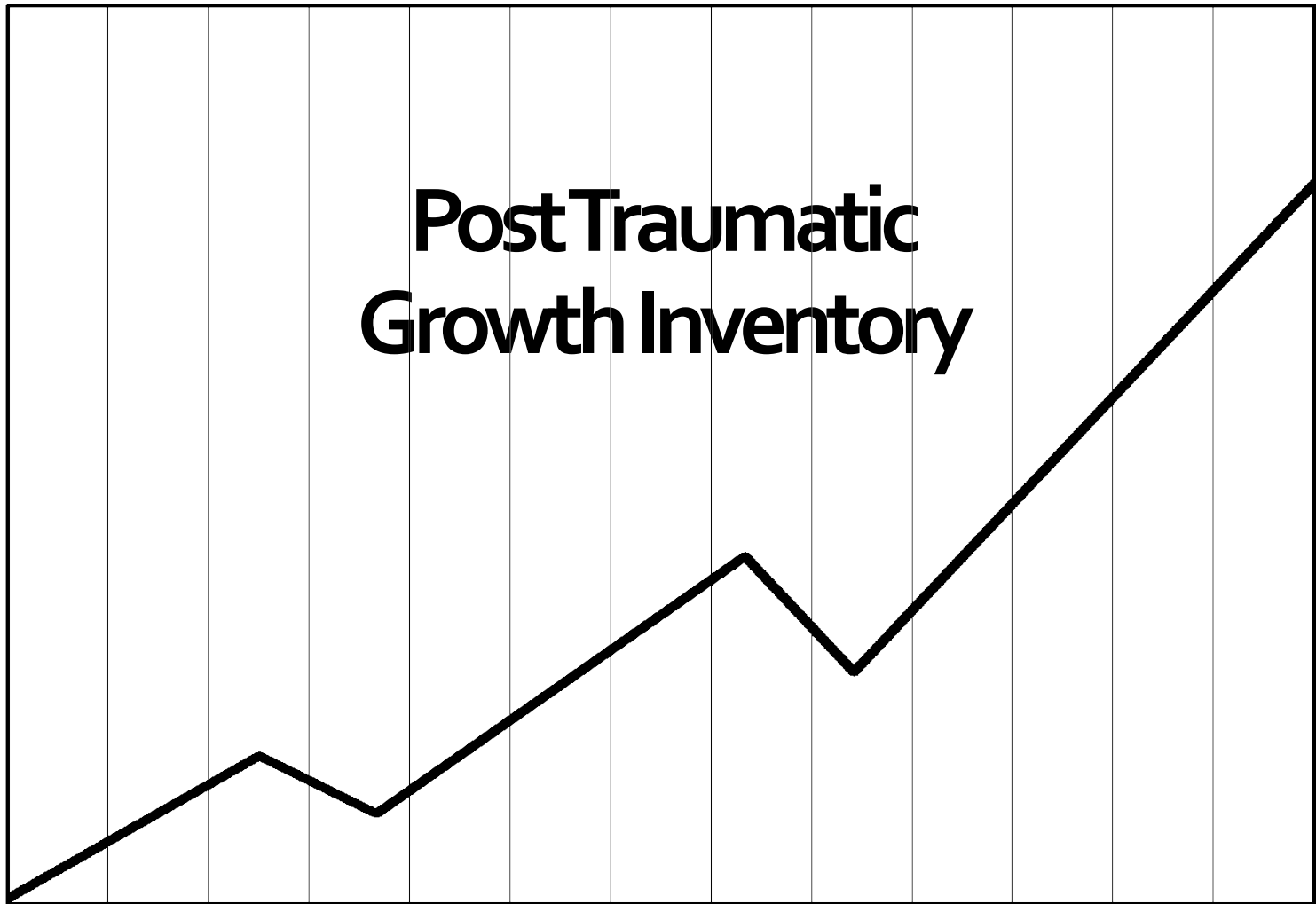
SIGNS OF POST TRAUMATIC GROWTH

- New Appreciation for Life
- Stronger Relationships
- Personal Strength and Resilience
- New Possibilities or Purpose
- Spiritual or Existential Growth

STEPS TO POST TRAUMATIC GROWTH

1. Allow Yourself to Feel and Grieve
2. Find Safe and Supportive Relationships
3. Reflect and Make Meaning
4. Take Purposeful Action
5. Rebuild Your Identity
6. Practice Resilience Skills

Post Traumatic Growth Inventory



Part VI – Coping (Becoming Resilient)





DEVELOPING YOUR “PEAK PERFORMANCE”



What to Focus On

- Develop a resilient mindset (mindfulness)
- Exercise
- Eat a nutritionally balanced diet
- Hydrate (avoid excessive caffeine)
- Sleep a minimum of 8 hours in every 24
- Develop your own support team



What to Focus On

- Schedule time for yourself
- Take vacations
- Designate time for hobbies
- Have a complete annual physical including a skin check, testing for cholesterol, lead, and all high-risk blood-borne diseases
- Have a regular mental wellness checkup





THE “BIG FOUR”



MINDFULNESS



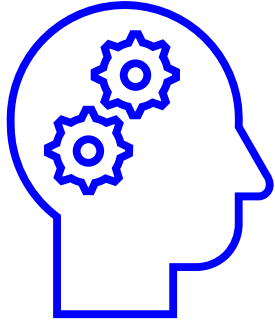
EXERCISE



SLEEP



NUTRITION



WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

- A deliberate, purposeful, focused way of looking at your experience in the present moment
- Allows you to realize that you are more than the stressful event
- It triggers the “relaxation response”
- The most common anchor for mindfulness is your breathing

COMPONENTS OF A “MINDFUL” MENTAL STATE



- Self-Knowledge (Understanding with Self-Control)
- Unchangeable Principles (Value the Right Things)
- The Ability to Simplify (Use Your Imagination Well)
- An Attitude of Contentment

BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS

- Calms down the amygdala
- Reduces fear and panic
- Creates a healthy distance between you and your stressful thoughts (gives you room to choose how to respond)
- Allows you to respond peacefully in the present moment, creating an inner calm that is centering



BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS

- Allows the prefrontal cortex to engage and guide you through the stressors
- Stimulates the relaxation (parasympathetic) response to counter the “fight/flight/freeze (sympathetic) response so balance is restored.
- Slows down breathing and heart rate
- Helps us become comfortable with uncontrollable circumstances



BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS

- Moves your mind out of “acting” mode into “watching” mode, taking away the sense of urgency
- Replaces fear and emotional reactivity with curiosity
- Increases your capacity for stress
- Repeated practice may change the structure of your amygdala



Preparation:

- Start with a daily routine
- Create an atmosphere of peace
- Surround yourself with encouragement
- Be still
- Journal
- Take “Mental Breaks during the day



MINDFULNESS 101

BODY SCAN EXERCISE



MINDFULNESS AND MEDITATION

- Meditation = A technique for achieving mindfulness
- Includes elements to encourage positive, healthy thoughts
- May or may not have a spiritual component
- Meditational “apps”;

Headspace, Calm, Simple Habit, Ten Percent Happier

Deep Breathing

Benefits

- Good primer for exercise program
- Improves and Increases Oxygen Delivery
- Decreases Anxiety
- Promotes Well-being
- Improves Mental and Physical Health
- Helps Lower Blood Pressure

Deep Breathing

The Box Technique (*Square Breathing*)

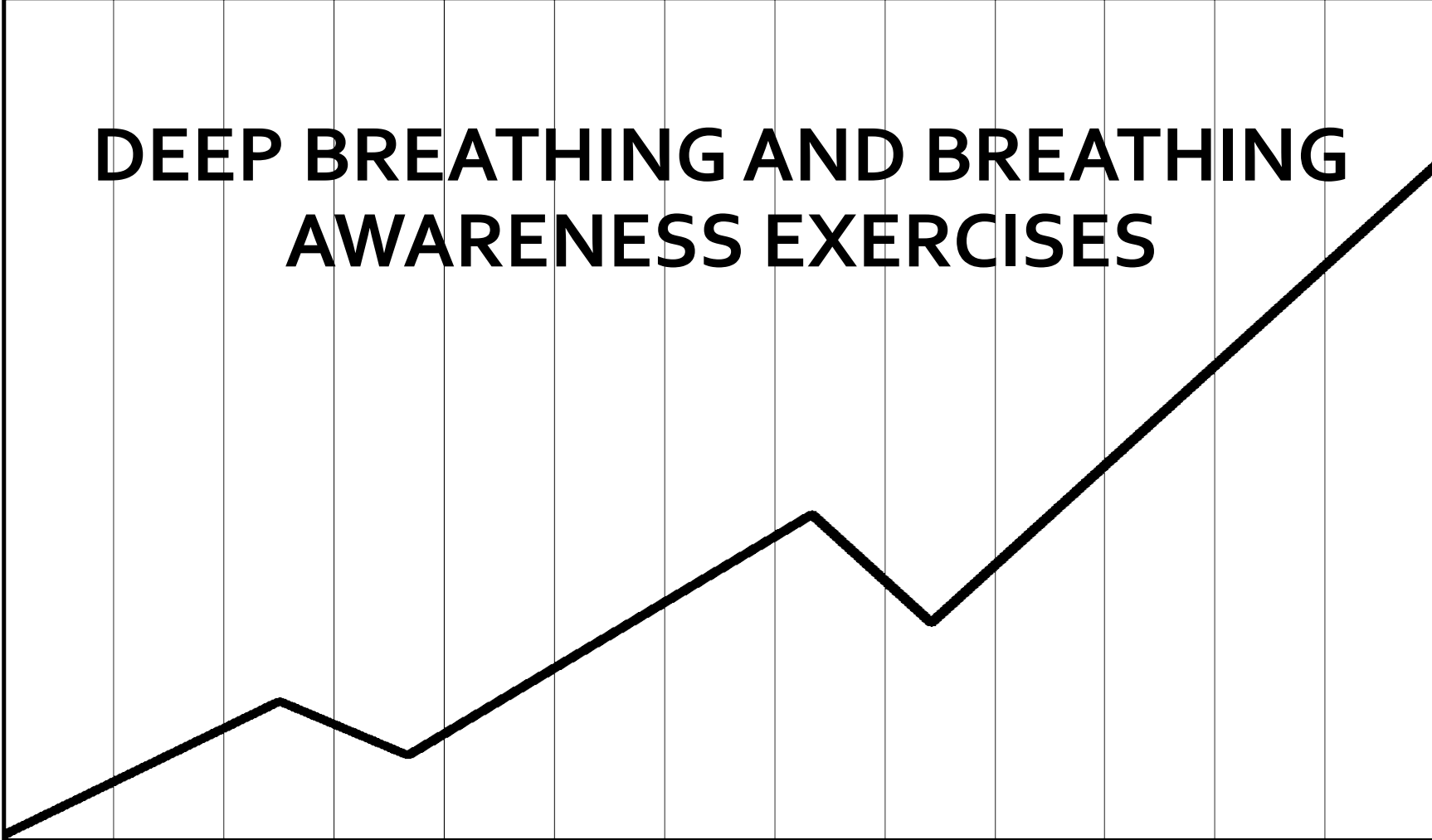
- Evens out your breath so that it is slightly longer and more consistent
- Four parts of your breathing cycle (*inhalation – pause – exhalation – pause*)
- Count slowly to four in each part of the cycle
- Relaxes the mind, improves the flow of oxygen to the brain, increases mindfulness

Deep Breathing

Types

- **Abdominal** – emphasizes the engagement of the diaphragm and minimizes the activation of the ribcage. Facilitates greater respiratory efficiency.
- **Thoracic** – emphasizes the expansion and contraction of the ribcage over the use of the diaphragm. Helps the body obtain more oxygen.
- **Clavicular** – concentrates on the final stage of thoracic breathing, drawing the shoulders and collarbone upward allowing more air into the lungs.

DEEP BREATHING AND BREATHING AWARENESS EXERCISES



Progressive Muscle Relaxation

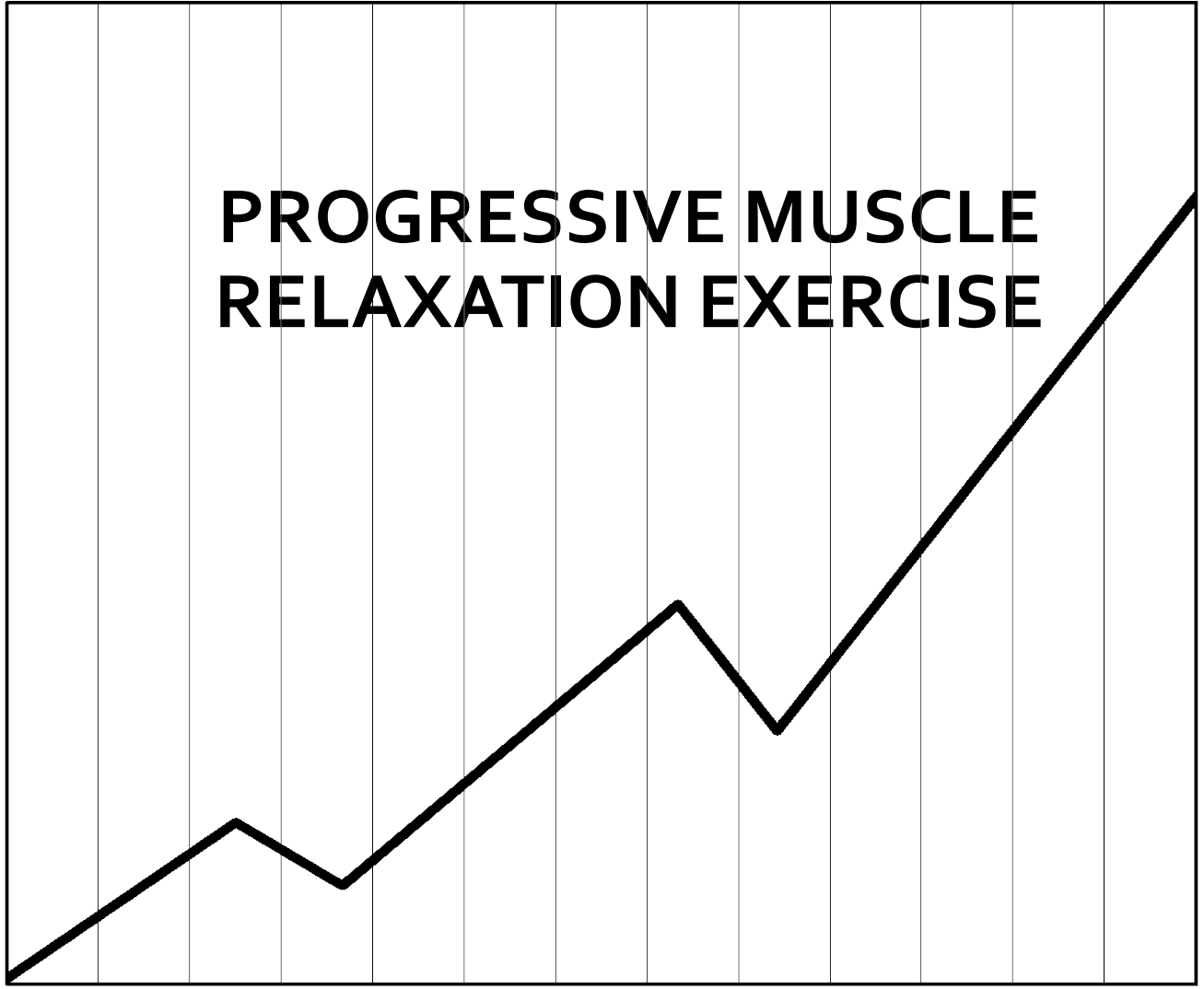
What is it?

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (or PMR) is a technique for reducing anxiety by alternately tensing and relaxing the muscles.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation Technique

- *Observe Guidelines*
- *Work systematically from large-to-small, head-to-toe, upper-to-lower, medial-to-lateral, proximal-to-distal*
- *Vigorously tense muscle for 7-10 seconds*
- *Release abruptly and then relax for 15 to 20 seconds*
- *Keep other muscle groups relaxed*
- *Do once per muscle group unless more tense*

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION EXERCISE



Guidelines

- Practice in a quiet location
- Practice at regular times (get in the habit)
- Practice on an empty stomach
- Assume a comfortable position
- Wear loose clothing
- Do not worry about anything!
- Assume a passive, detached attitude (let things be)





Exercise

- 30 minutes of moderate exercise (this can be broken up in several blocks throughout the day)
- If done most days of the week, this exercise will bring significant payoffs in physical and emotional health.
- Active body work that exercises the body and elevates heart and respiratory rates to a moderate extent such as:
brisk walking, running, swimming, cycling, rowing, using an elliptical trainer, etc.







Aerobic vs. Anaerobic Training



Aerobic activity

Types of Aerobic Exercise Include:

Cardio Machines, Spinning, Running, Swimming, Walking, Hiking, Aerobics Classes, Dancing, Cross Country Skiing, and Kickboxing. There are many other types.






-  Requires the presence of oxygen.
-  Primarily works type I muscle fibers.
-  Increases muscle endurance and capillary size
-  Heart muscle to pump blood more efficiently
-  Sustain for an extended period of time
-  Heart rate between 120 and 150 BPM



Anaerobic activity

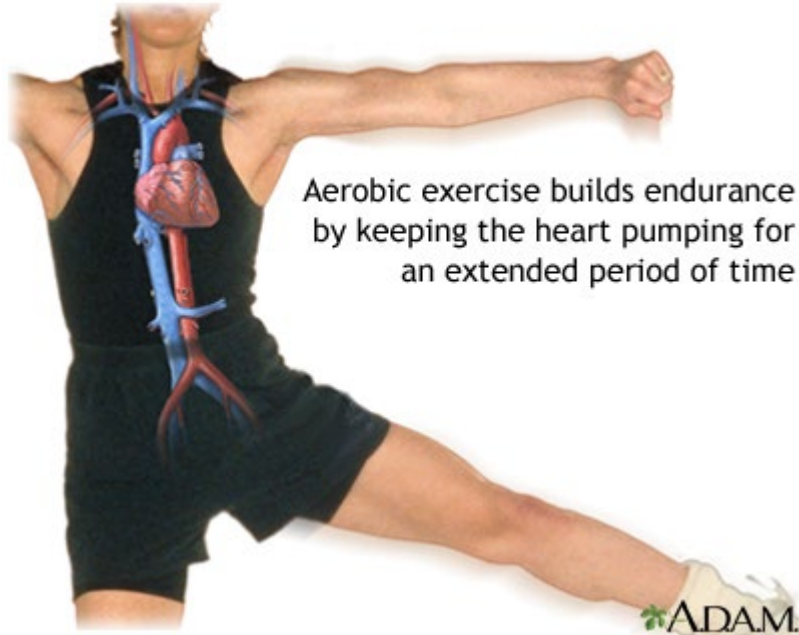
Types of Anaerobic Exercise Include:

Heavy Weight-Lifting, Sprints (running, biking, etc.), Jumping Rope, Hill Climbing, Interval Training, Isometrics

-  Does not require the presence of oxygen
-  It works the type II muscle fibers, which leads to greater size and strength of muscles.
-  You exercise till you gas out
-  Oxygen builds up, lactic acid builds up, and you start to feel the burn
-  You can't sustain this kind of activity for extended time



Benefits

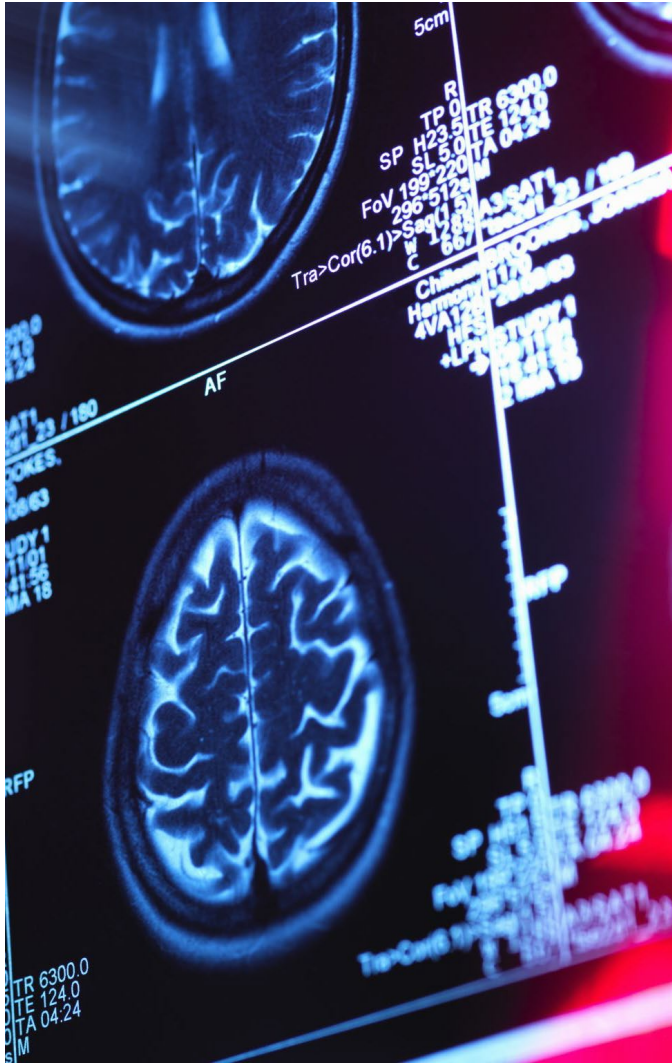


- Weight control
- Increased stamina
- Wards off viral illnesses (colds and flu)
- Reduced health risks (obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure)
- Helps manage chronic conditions (blood sugar)

Benefits



- Strengthens your heart
- Keeps your arteries clear (lowers cholesterol)
- Boosts your mood
- Stay active and independent as you get older
- Live longer



SLEEP

Most adults need 7-8 hours of sleep per night to rejuvenate

- Processing of Experiences and Emotions
- Rest for the Amygdala
- Improved Mental Function
- Memory Repair and Restoration
- Essential for restoring the body's functions

SLEEP DEPRIVATION

- Sleep deprivation impacts the ability to make good, rational decisions
- Driver fatigue causes an estimated 100,000 police-reported crashes annually (1,550 deaths, 71,000 injuries, \$12.5 Billion in property loss and diminished productivity)

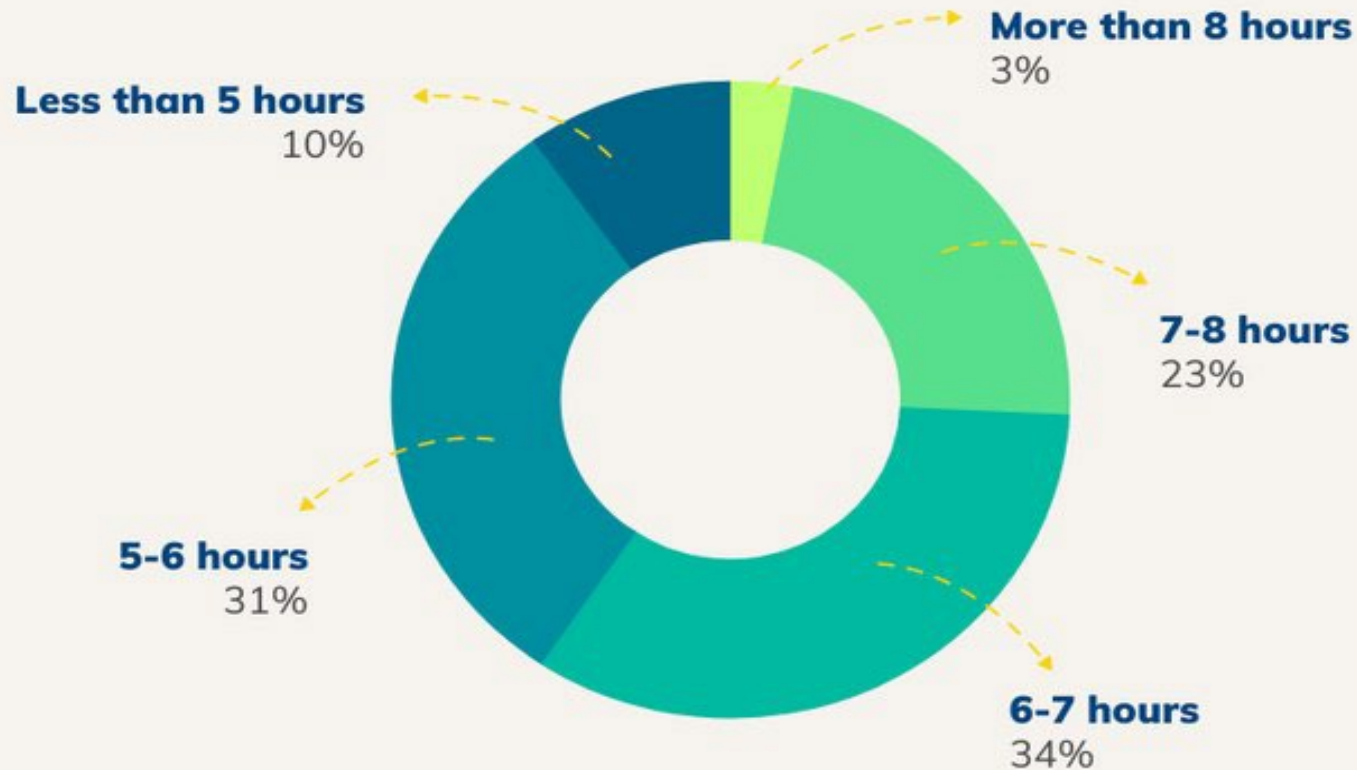


SLEEP DISORDER PREVALENCE AMONG FIRST RESPONDERS

CONDITION	% IMPACTED
Shift Work Disorder	31%
Obstructive Sleep Apnea	30%
Excessive Daytime Sleepiness	28%
Insomnia	28%
Restless leg syndrome	2%
Narcolepsy	1%

Nearly 60% of those surveyed have some form of sleep disorder (diagnosed)

How much sleep do you average IN A 24-HOUR PERIOD?



Nearly 75%
of those
surveyed
got less
than the
required
amount of
sleep

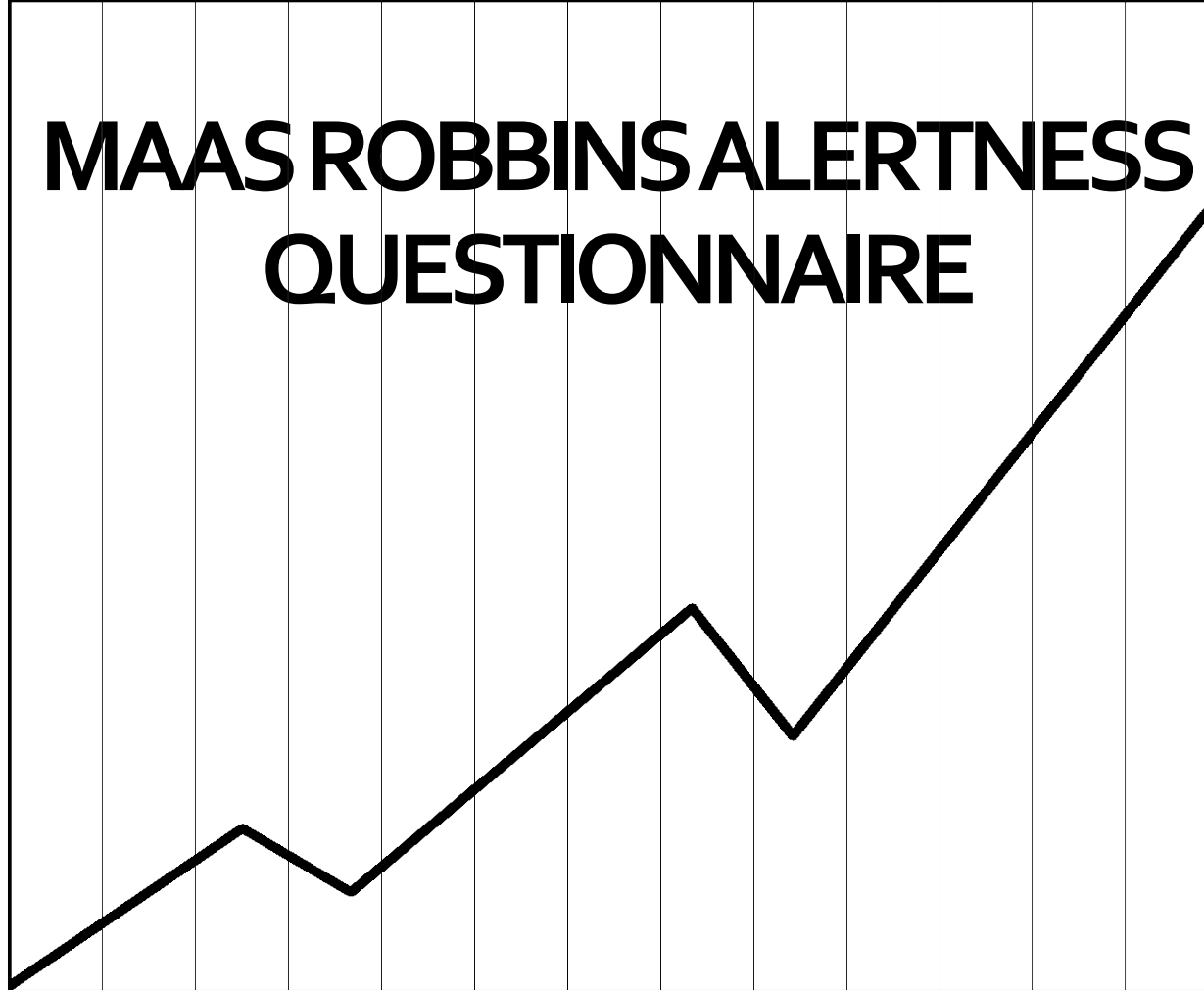
SLEEP



What to focus on:

- Adequate Time
- Conducive Environment (dark, quiet)
- Eliminate Distractions
- Temperature
- Avoid Napping, Strenuous Exercise, Large Meals, Excessive Fluid Intake, Caffeine, Smoking, and Alcohol within 2 hours of sleep

MAAS ROBBINS ALERTNESS QUESTIONNAIRE





PART VII – TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

A Moment of Reflection



- What is going on in your life right now (your current reality)?
- Why does your “current reality” seem so difficult?
- How are your relationships?
- How do you spend your time?
- What should you choose to continue/let go of?

GOD GRANT ME THE
SERENITY
TO ACCEPT THE THINGS
I CANNOT CHANGE
COURAGE
TO CHANGE THE
THINGS I CAN AND
WISDOM
TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE



Remember your *"Purpose"*



- Why am I here now?
- What is it I ultimately want to achieve?
- What power do I have?
- Where am I “in” purpose, or “out” of purpose right now?
- Will any of this matter to me on my deathbed?

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Resilient = Stress Hardy

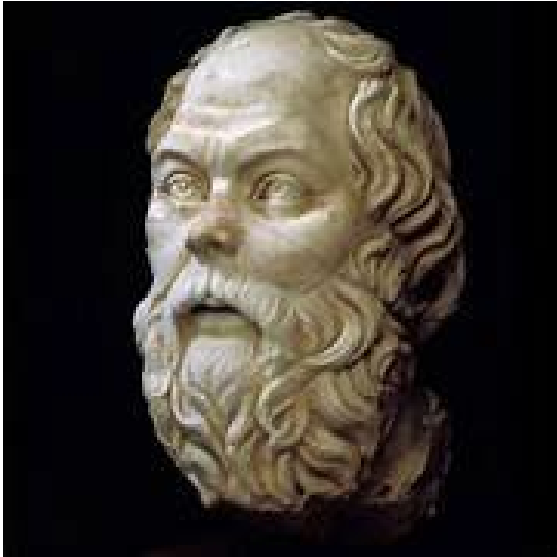


- You can learn to see stress as a challenge rather than a threat
- Promote the feeling that you have control of your life situation
- Maintain a commitment rather than alienation from home, family, and work

Stress Busters

Set	Set Boundaries To Your Work
Resolve	Resolve Conflicts Quickly
Take	Take Care Of Unpleasant Tasks First
Inoculate	Inoculate Yourself Against Stress
Be	Be Firm About Setting Up Your Recovery Times
Keep	Keep Your Adrenaline Arousal To A Minimum
Maintain	Maintain Open And Healthy Relationships
Sleep	Sleep Better And Probably Sleep Longer

Words of Wisdom



Keep your sense of humor

*Remember that you are more
than what you do*

*Your life is the most
important asset you have*

Tough Times Don't Last....Resilient People DO!



WHERE DO I START?

- Review your assessment scores
- Choose two or three behaviors to focus on
- Make a 1% commitment

THANK YOU!

