

The image shows three police officers in tactical gear walking through a crowd. The officer on the left is holding a rifle. The officer in the middle is holding a large, clear riot shield with the word 'POLICE' printed on it. The officer on the right is holding a walkie-talkie. They are all wearing helmets and vests. The background is a blurred crowd of people, suggesting a public event or protest. The text is overlaid on the image in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

MINDFUL RESILIENCE FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

MEETING STRESS WITH STRENGTH AND INTEGRITY



MODULE SIX: ► LAW ENFORCEMENT SITUATIONAL STRESS

Definition of Situational Stress

- ❖ a situation that you don't have (or feel you don't have) control over; uncertainty, unknown, change
- ❖ potentially unpleasant situation
- ❖ a situation that involves conflict, or a loss of status or acceptance in the eyes of your group
- ❖ often appears suddenly: a situation that you didn't anticipate
- ❖ brings up difficult and challenging emotions

Source: *Stress and The Manager* by Dr. Karl Albrecht

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CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS

Officer-involved shootings, line-of-duty deaths and injuries, child victims, employee suicide, and mass-casualty incidents can trigger traumatic-stress disorders for officers and first responders.

COMMON EFFECTS OF TRAUMATIC STRESS INCLUDE:

- ▶ Concentration impairment
- ▶ Eating and sleeping disturbances
- ▶ Psychosomatic symptomology
- ▶ Addictions
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Irritability
- ▶ Avoidant behaviors
- ▶ Changes in libido
- ▶ Increased personal and professional conflict



The effects of traumatic stress on law enforcement agencies:

- ▶ Communication breakdowns
- ▶ Decreased morale
- ▶ Deteriorating group cohesiveness
- ▶ Increased absenteeism
- ▶ Increased healthcare costs including increased worker's compensation and disability claims
- ▶ Decreased ability to retain effective personnel
- ▶ Decreased employee efficiency and productivity

How does
your agency
handle
officer and
first
responder
critical
incident
stress,
trauma, and
burnout?



 **DISCUSSION**

What are
the impacts
of your
agency's
existing
policies
on stress?



▶ **DISCUSSION**



BURNOUT

WARNING SIGNS:



Procrastination, fatigue, cynicism, lateness, difficulty experiencing anything resembling happiness, pessimism, a sense of a foreshortened future, loss of satisfaction in your career or your life, and questioning your faith.

Burnout happens slowly over time, that's why it's so hard to pick up.

Burnout: a slow erosion of psychological and physical resources

VICARIOUS TRAUMA:

Psychological trauma that results from seeing and/or listening to the trauma of others. Psychologically contagious.

- ▶ “Compassion fatigue”: developing some of the signs and symptoms of PTSD by observing the traumas of others.
- ▶ Guilt: a) for doing something you shouldn't have, b) for not doing something perhaps you could have, c) survivor guilt.
- ▶ Again, symptoms can include reliance on drinking or drugs to sleep and/or energy drinks or lots of caffeinated beverages.





OFFICER DEPRESSION AND SUICIDE

Signs and Risk Factors of Depression and Suicide:

- ▶ Difficulty with shiftwork (did not have in the past but is now struggling)
- ▶ Divorce and child custody issues
- ▶ Missing work and showing up late for duty (out of character)
- ▶ Abusing alcohol or other substances
- ▶ Duty performance drastically falls
- ▶ Preoccupied with death

Signs and Risk Factors of Depression and Suicide:

- ▶ Facing department charges/prosecution/internal affairs and feels humiliated and ashamed
- ▶ Death of a close friend, spouse, or child
- ▶ Loss of sleep, nightmares, and/or flashbacks
- ▶ Unexpected mood swings (not normal behavior)
- ▶ Not wearing the uniform with pride
- ▶ Personal legal problems
- ▶ Social media postings (self-harm threats or hopelessness themes)

Signs and Risk Factors of Depression and Suicide:

- ▶ Serious illness and physical pain
- ▶ Loss of appetite
- ▶ Financial troubles
- ▶ Takes risk on duty (walking into danger on purpose without normal tactical response)
- ▶ Openly talks about self harm and makes statements like: "Things will be better when I'm gone."
- ▶ Withdrawn; not associating with fellow officers (as previously did)



**RESPONDING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT
SITUATIONAL STRESS:**

CHOOSING DIFFERENTLY

The image shows two police officers in tactical gear. The officer in the foreground is seen from the back, wearing a dark vest with 'POLICE' written in yellow on the back. The officer in the background is also in tactical gear and is entering a doorway. The scene is set against a wooden wall.

RESPONDING TO SITUATIONAL STRESS

ADMITTING YOU NEED HELP – AND GETTING IT -
IS AN ACT OF POWER, NOT A SIGN OF WEAKNESS



MINDFULNESS PRACTICES:

- EXPLORING EMOTIONS
- ACTIVE/REFLECTIVE LISTENING

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:

- MANAGING DISRUPTIVE IMPULSES
- REGULATING STRESSFUL EMOTIONS

PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID

**FOR CIVILIANS, LEOS,
AND FIRST RESPONDERS
IN DISTRESS**

**RESPONDING TO
SITUATIONAL STRESS**

PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID

FOR CIVILIANS, LEOS,
AND FIRST RESPONDERS
IN DISTRESS

Compassionate, supportive presence designed to mitigate acute distress, and assess the need for continued mental health care. Includes building rapport, active listening, assessment, intervention, disposition – and self care.

Designed specifically for public health personnel, educators, emergency responders, and disaster workers with little or no formal mental health training.

Evidence suggests that Psychological First Aid can increase the perception of personal and community resilience and preparedness, thus alleviating some of the strain on the public health system.



“Psychological crisis intervention has been shown to be superior to multisession psychotherapy post disaster, for reducing acute distress for first responders as well.”

Source: Everly, *Psychological First Aid*

A group of police officers in dark blue uniforms and caps, standing in a line outdoors. The officers are looking forward with serious expressions. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark grey filter.

WHAT ARE YOUR KEY TAKEAWAYS?

WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE?



ASSIGNMENT:

**JOURNAL EXERCISE:
"DEFINING TRUE NEEDS"**

A woman in a red shirt and black cap is shown in profile, eyes closed, in a meditative state. She is part of a group of people, with others visible in the background, also appearing to be in a similar state. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting an indoor setting like a classroom or a workshop.

NEXT WEEK

**MODULE SEVEN:
CHOOSING RESILIENCY**



Mindful Responders™

**MINDFUL AWARENESS SKILLS TRAININGS FOR
LAW ENFORCEMENT AND EMERGENCY FIRST RESPONDERS**

THANK YOU!