Is Your Check Engine Light on?

*Emotional Intelligence, Self Care & Mitigation Strategies During COVID-19*

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*Unclassified/For Public Use*
Who is this Workshop About?
Learning Objectives

- **Emotional Intelligence**
  - Introducing Emotional Intelligence (EI)
  - Define EI and identify strategies

- **Understanding the Consequences of Responding**
  - Identify typical challenges during response
  - Identify challenges of responding in the COVID-19 environment
  - Understanding cumulative stress/burnout/compassion fatigue/moral injury

- **Caring for Yourself and Others**
  - Understanding your red flags
  - Strategies for addressing burnout/compassion fatigue/moral injury
  - Organizational strategies to support team and peers
  - Emergency responder self-care plan practice
“The ability, capacity, skill, or self-perceived ability to identify, assess, and manage the emotions of one’s self, of others, and of groups”. 
Breaking Down Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence

- Personal
  - Self-Awareness
  - Self-Management
  - Self-Motivation

- Social
  - Social Awareness
  - Social Skills
Emotional Intelligence Strategies

Self-Awareness
- **Identify**: what you’re doing, how you feel, what you don’t know about yourself
- **Understand your values**
- **Reflect**

Self-Management
- Emotional self-control
- Adaptability
- Achievement orientation
- Positive outlook

Self-Motivation
- Positive Self-Talk
- Growth versus fixed mindset
- Celebrate the small wins
## Typical Challenges During Response

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<td>Issues related to returning home</td>
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Chat Box Question

Are there any additional challenges that have emerged with COVID-19?
## Challenges Specific to COVID-19

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Impact</th>
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<tr>
<td>PPE-related challenges</td>
<td>Additional childcare responsibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risks of exposure</td>
<td>Loss of family income</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk of infecting family members</td>
<td>Working “around the clock”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loss of autonomy</td>
<td>Isolation from family and friends</td>
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<td>Changes in roles/responsibilities</td>
<td>Information overload</td>
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Overview of Stressors

- Broad
  - Job
  - Finances
  - Relationships
  - Health
  - Emotional Health
  - Losses
Overview of Stressors

Responders/Providers

- Time Away from Family
- Personal Safety
- Emotional Strain
- Case-load
- Work Guilt
- Work Pressure

Broad

- Job
- Finances
- Relationships
- Health
- Emotional Health
- Losses
What’s different now?

Steady State

Disaster

Steady State

Sustained Operational Engagement

Disaster
Poll

What would be most stressful for you while working at a COVID-19 testing site?

a) Managing concerned and fears expressed by people there.
b) Worries about exposure and exposing your loved ones.
c) Resource shortages impacting quality of care.
d) Constantly receiving new information about COVID and guidance materials.
e) Abrupt changes to personal roles/responsibilities at the site.
Continuum of Stress: Where are you?
Chat-Box Question

What signs/symptoms of stress have you noticed in yourself or others in the last 30 days?
Signs & Symptoms

- Stress will look different from one person to another.
- Prolonged exposure to stress can present in a variety of symptoms and levels of severity.
- **What are your red flags?**

- Insomnia
- Libido Changes
- Anxiety
- Social Isolation
- Irritability
- Personal Hygiene
- Aches & Pains
- Low Energy
- Frequent Sickness
- Mood Swings
- Increased Acne
- Depression
- Headaches
- Appetite Change
Consequences for Unaddressed Stress

- Impacts on decision making
- Increased risk of mistakes
- Professional burnout
- Impact on systems outside of work (family, friends, etc.)
- Mental/physical health implications
Stress Disorders & Adverse Conditions

- Acute
- Chronic
- Traumatic

Severity of Symptoms

Examples

- Acute Stress Disorders
- PTSD
- Complex Grief
- Burnout
- Compassion Fatigue
- Moral Injury
Burnout

- Cumulative emotional exhaustion and withdrawal as a result of workload and institutional stress.
- Occurs over time.
- Presents:
  - Decreased performance
  - Increased absenteeism
  - Poor moral/attitude
- Sustained operational stress/pressure
Compassion Fatigue

- Related to exposure working with those suffering from traumatic or distressing events.
- Onset can be early
- Prolonged exposure = Risk
- Presents:
  - Detachment or numbing,
  - Over-engagement
  - Blurred boundaries/roles
  - Defensive/denial/shame
- Often very hard to self-diagnose
- Professional and personal risks during COVID-19
Moral Injury

The psychological, behavioral, social, and/or spiritual distress experienced by individuals who are performing or exposed to actions that contract their moral values.

I did something bad.

I cannot forgive myself.

I feel disgusted and betrayed.

I am bad because of what I did.

How does it feel?
Poll

In your role, what are you most at risk for?

a) Stress disorder
b) Burnout
c) Compassion fatigue
d) Complex grief
e) Moral injury
Coping Strategies

• **The Foundation:** Sleep, Food, Movement & Hygiene
• Minimize news exposure
• Increase support connections
• Assess your self-care toolbox:
  ▪ What do you use?
  ▪ What kind is it?
  ▪ What can you add?
• **Who** can you turn to for support?
• Are there resources you need?
Optimism

“The main concern of optimistic thinkers isn’t whether the glass is half full or half empty. Instead, they focus their energy where they have control to make a situation better”.

- CHAMP
Optimism: How does it work?

- Control the controllable
- Compartmentalize
- Take productive action
- Find the good
Self-Awareness and Reflection

Individual Resiliency
- Awareness
- Balance
- Connections

Reflection
- What are your stressors?
- How do you know when you are stressed?
- How do you reflect on this?
- What is your experience and how do you define it?
Who do I want to be during COVID-19?

**FEAR ZONE**
- Hoard food, toilet paper & medicines I don’t need
- I complain all the time
- Transmit my anger and fear related emotions to others
- I acknowledge everyone is trying their best

**LEARNING ZONE**
- I stop compulsively consuming things that harm me, from food to news.
- I start letting go of things that are out of my control
- I identify my emotions
- I make myself aware of the situation and think about the best way to act
- I verify information before I share it
- I practice calmness, patience, relationships and creativity

**GROWTH ZONE**
- I think of how I can help others
- Use my skills to service the ones in need
- I show empathy to myself and others
- I live in the present and focus in the future
- I keep myself emotionally happy and transmit hope
- I show gratefulness
- I find ways to adapt to changes
## Organizational Strategies

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<th>Identify and recognize strengths</th>
<th>Encouragement of workforce self-care</th>
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<td>Organizational guidelines and policies</td>
<td>Learning tools</td>
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Information pulled from *Health Promotion to Enhance Healthcare Worker Performance During COVID-19.*
Identify and Recognize Strengths

• Highlight past successes (e.g., dealing with a measles outbreak, natural disaster crisis)
• Identify leaders to model healthy behaviors for others
• Create consistent positive messaging to outweigh the negative
• Thank staff openly and frequently
• Make yourself seen in the hallways, using the same PPE that staff are required to use
• Recognize all successes, no matter how small
Encouragement of Self-Care

- Lead by example
- Self-monitoring tools (COVID Coach App)
- Buddy System (CDC Guidance)
- Ensuring access to basic needs
- Regular peer consultation and supervision
- EAP information
Policies & Learning Tools

Policies

• Wellness officers
• Listen to responders
• Implement team huddles for debrief
• Adjust strategies to meet expressed needs

Trainings/Programs

• Skills for Psychological Recovery
• Mental Health First Aid Training
• Stress, Trauma, and Resilience (STAR) Brief Emotional Support Team (BEST)
Check Your Engine: Key Points

• Previous strategies may not be enough for current stressors.
• Acknowledge life disruptions and how COVID-19 has impacted/will impact your engine.
• How do you know when you are stressed?
• Figure out what you CAN do.
Emergency Responder Self-Care Plan

- PHS handout: CAPT Michael King
- An approach that can be used individually or within a team to meet emerging and unique challenges felt during COVID-19 deployments.

SOURCES

- CDC Traumatic Incident Stress: Information for Emergency Response Workers
- CDC Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event
# Predict Problems

As an emergency responder, you and your team are at risk of experiencing a traumatic incident— an incident that may involve exposure to catastrophic events and emotionally or physically challenging situations like those listed below. Check all exposures you predict might be associated with your current/upcoming deployment:

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Everyone reacts differently to stressful exposures, particularly when an event reminds them of a tough time in the past. List a few things that are traumatic reminders or emotional “triggers” for you personally? Ex. Sights/sounds, places, smells, people, times of day/situations, feelings.
Prescribe Protection

Given the problems you have predicted, consider what you can do, think and avoid to help you stay fit for duty. Review and practice this “prescription for protection” during and after your deployment or any particularly traumatic work shift.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- What do you do for yourself when you are upset?
- What do you like to do when you’re in a good mood or to help you relax?
- What will help you get through a typical day?
- What has helped you during previous deployments?
- What positive things can you say to yourself when things are tough?
- What/Who should you avoid?

STRESS MANAGEMENT TIPS:
- Limit work to no longer than 12-hour shifts
- Work in teams
- Write in a journal
- Talk to family, friends, and teammates about your feelings
- Maintain a healthy diet, get adequate sleep, and exercise
- Remember it is ok to say “no”
- Remind yourself it is not selfish to take breaks...and take them
- Name 5 non-distressing objects around you
- Pace yourself
- Watch out for each other
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Recognize and accept what you cannot change
- Use structured meditation or breathing techniques to relax
- Practice yoga or use Progressive Muscle Relaxation techniques
- Listen to music you enjoy
- Avoid excessive alcohol/caffeine/sugar/negative people
- Use “positive” self-talk and avoid self-criticism
Engage Your Plan

Recognize your personal signs of stress and monitor them throughout deployment so you know when to engage your protection plan. Common symptoms of stress that may be experienced include:

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<th>Excessive worry or fear about something bad happening</th>
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<td>Feeling others trauma in yours</td>
<td>Easily startled or “on guard” all the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easily frustrated</td>
<td>Physical signs of stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaming others, irritability</td>
<td>Nightmares or recurrent thoughts of traumatic event</td>
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<td>Lacking feelings, indifference</td>
<td>Feeling like a failure, nothing you do will help, not doing job well, need alcohol/drugs to cope</td>
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<tr>
<td>isolation, or disconnection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor self care</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Tired, exhausted or overwhelmed</td>
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PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID

Offer peer support and practical assistance to teammates using the Look-Listen-Link model.

**LOOK:**
- Look for safety issues.
- Look for people with obvious urgent basic needs.
- Look for serious distress reactions:
  - Is anyone extremely upset, immobile, or not responding to others, or in shock?
  - Where and who are the most distressed people?

**LISTEN:**
- Approach people who may need support
  - Introduce yourself by name and organization; ask about immediate needs
  - If possible, find a quiet & safe place to talk; respect privacy
  - LISTEN to find out about people’s needs and concerns
  - Ask about any obvious needs & concerns
  - Find out what is most important to them; help them prioritize
  - LISTENING will help people feel calm
  - Remain calm, quiet, and available
  - Do not pressure a person to talk; offer to listen and standby

**LINK:**
- LINK people to services and help address basic needs
  - Provide water, food, shelter, etc. and link people to available services for needs
  - Follow up with people if you promise to do so
- Help people cope with problems
  - Help people identify their most urgent practical needs and prioritize them
  - Ask how they coped with past difficulties and affirm their ability to cope now
- LINK people to information
  - Only say what you know
  - Provide people with contact details or direct referral to at least one other person they can go to once your assistance has ended.
- Do not leave people who are seriously distressed or who cannot take care of themselves alone.

RESOURCES

**SAMHSA DISASTER DISTRESS HELPLINE**

Having Trouble Coping After a Disaster? Talk With Us.

Toll-Free: 1-800-985-5990
TTY: 1-800-846-8517
Text: “talkWithUs” to 66746
Website: [http://disasterdistress.samhsa.gov](http://disasterdistress.samhsa.gov)

**SAMHSA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DISASTER RESPONSE MOBILE APP**

Offers first responders immediate access to field resources for aiding disaster survivors. Has the ability to search for and map behavioral health service providers in the impacted area, review emergency preparedness materials, and send resources to colleagues.

Website: [http://store.samhsa.gov/product/PEP13-DXAPP-1](http://store.samhsa.gov/product/PEP13-DXAPP-1)

**EMERGENCY RESPONDER SELF-CARE PLAN**

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH P.E.E.

Name of Mission/Event:

Dates:

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN:

Being a resilient responder starts with a commitment to taking care of yourself. There are important steps you should take before, during, and after an event to keep yourself healthy and fit for duty as you take care of others. Complete this self-care plan before each mission/event and keep it with you so you are ready when things get tough.

**NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE**

Toll-Free 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
TTY: 1-800-799-4TTY (4869)

**SOURCEs**

- **CDC Traumatic Incident Stress: Information for Emergency Response Workers**
- **CDC Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event**
- **CDC (2005) Deployment Safety and Resilience Team training materials**
- **SAMHSA (2014) Tips for Disaster Responders Preventing and Managing Stress**
- **OMMEISER, M., (2012), A 1-day orientation in psychological first aid (PFA) for first responders, World Health Organization**
### PREDICT PROBLEMS

As an emergency responder, you and your team are at risk of experiencing a traumatic incident—an incident that may involve exposure to catastrophic events and emotionally or physically challenging situations like those listed below. Check all exposures you predict might be associated with your current/upcoming deployment:

- Short notice/time limited to respond
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- Long hours/deployment length
- Lack of time off for personal time
- Austere living conditions
- Lack of privacy or personal space
- Unfamiliar/lengthening work setting/role
- Limited resources
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- Working with difficult supervisors/colleagues

Everyone reacts differently to stressful exposures, particularly when an event reminds them of a tough time in the past. List a few things that are traumatic reminders or emotional "triggers" for you personally? Examples—sights/sounds, places, smells, people, times of day/situations, feelings.

### PREScribe PROTECTION

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#### GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- What do you do for yourself when you are upset?
- What do you like to do when you're in a good mood or to help you relax?
- What will help you get through a typical day?
- What has helped you during previous deployments?
- What positive things can you say to yourself when things are tough?
- What should you avoid?

### ENGAGE YOUR PLAN

Recognize your personal signs of stress and monitor them throughout deployment so you know when to engage your protection plan. Common symptoms of stress that may be experience include:

- Excessive worry or fear about something bad happening
- Easily startled or "on guard" all the time
- Physical signs of stress (e.g., racing heart, chest pain, difficulty breathing/seek medical care)
- Feeling like a failure, nothing you do will help, not doing (job well, need alcohol/drugs to cope
- Feeling others' trauma is yours

#### REMEMBER: Strong Emotions Are Normal Reactions to an Abnormal Situation

Create a team culture and buddy system to provide peer support. Remember you may be able to see the signs of stress better in your teammates than in yourself. In a buddy system, two responders partner together to support each other and monitor each other's stress, workload, safety.

**BUDDY'S NAME:**

**CONTACT NUMBER:**

**OTHER PEOPLE I CAN CONTACT IF I NEED SUPPORT:**

**MY ORGANIZATION'S EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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**STRESS MANAGEMENT TIPS:**

- Limit work to no longer than 12-hour shifts
- Work in teams
- Write in a journal
- Talk to family/friends, and teammates about your feelings
- Maintain a healthy diet, get adequate sleep, and exercise
- Remember it's ok to say "no"
- Remind yourself it is not selfish to take breaks...and take them
- Name 5 non-distressing objects around you
- Price yourself
- Watch out for each other
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Recognize and accept what you cannot change
- Use structured meditation or breathing techniques to relax
- Practice yoga or use Progressive Muscle Relaxation techniques
- Listen to music you enjoy
- Avoid excessive alcohol/caffeine/sugar/negative people
- Use "positive" self-talk and avoid self-criticism
When to reach out?

Symptoms (*Mental Health America*)

- Confused thinking
- Prolonged depression
- Feelings of extreme highs and lows
- Excessive fears, worries and anxieties
- Social withdrawal
- Dramatic changes in eating/sleep
- Strong feelings of anger
- Delusions or hallucinations
- Growing inability to cope with daily problems and activities
- Suicidal thoughts
- Denial of obvious problems
- Numerous unexplained physical ailments
- Substance abuse

Have a **plan** and **know your options** (EAP, Hotlines, peer support, etc)

Call 911-if you believe someone is in imminent danger

National Suicide Prevention Hotline
**Call 1-800-273-8255**
Available 24 hours everyday

Disaster Distress Helpline
Call **1-800-985-5990** or text **TalkWithUs to 66746** to connect with a trained crisis counselor
Available 24 hours everyday
Questions?
Additional Sources

- ASPR TRACIE: COVID-19 Behavioral Health Resources
- Preventing and Addressing Moral Injury Affecting Healthcare Workers During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Mini Modules to Relieve Stress For Healthcare Workers Responding to COVID-19: Stress Management Exercise
- NCPTSD: Moral Injury
- Learned optimism (Seligman)
- CHAMPS: 5 Ways Power Your Performance Optimism
Sources

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- http://www.gostress.com/stress-definitions/
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- https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/abc/Pages/resilience-factsheet-responders.aspx
- https://www.stress.org/military/for-practitionersleaders/compassion-fatigue
- https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/abc/Pages/crisis-factsheet.aspx
- https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/abc/Pages/crisis-factsheet.aspx
- https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/cooccurring/moral_injury.asp