



# ASPR

## **Is Your Check Engine Light on?** *Emotional Intelligence, Self Care & Mitigation Strategies During COVID-19*

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*Unclassified/For Public Use*

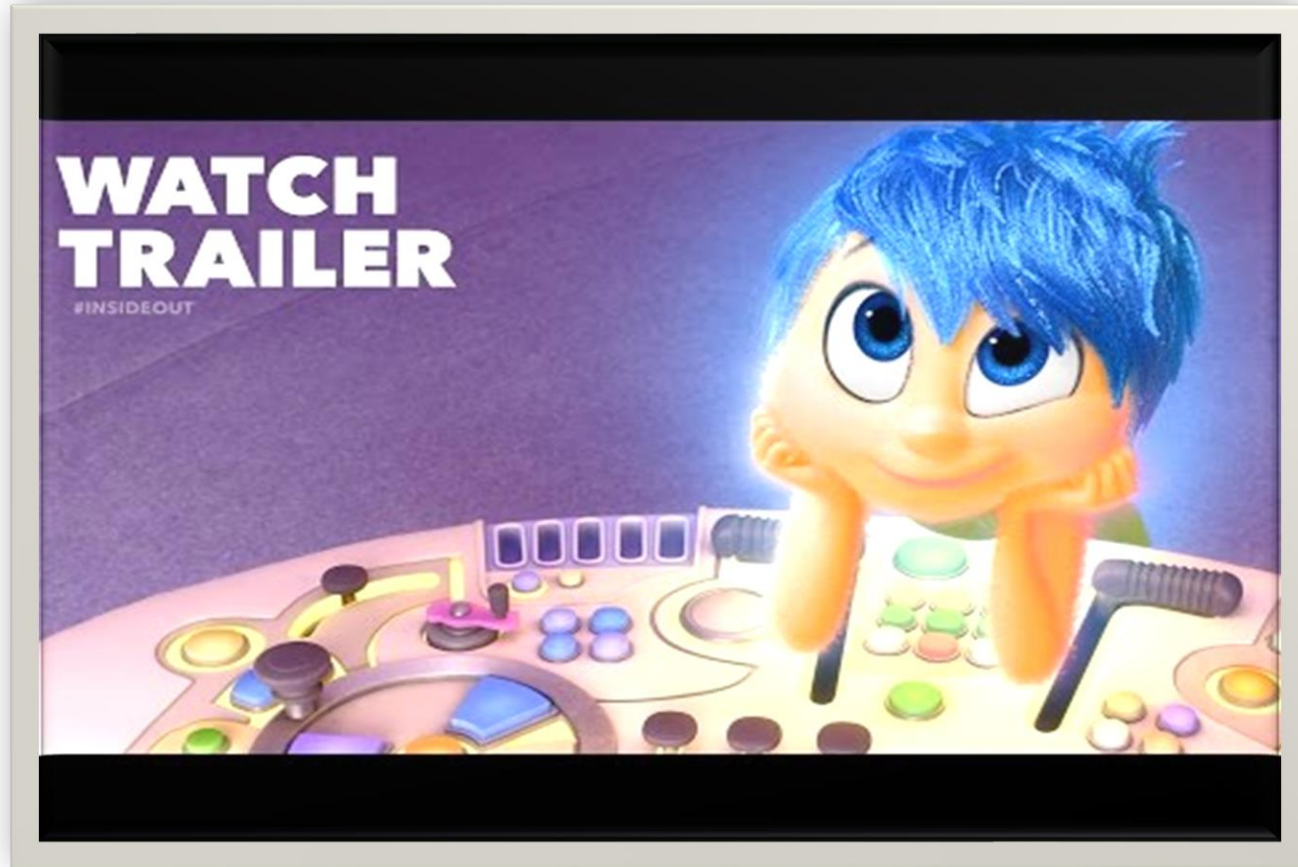
## Who is this Workshop About?



# Learning Objectives

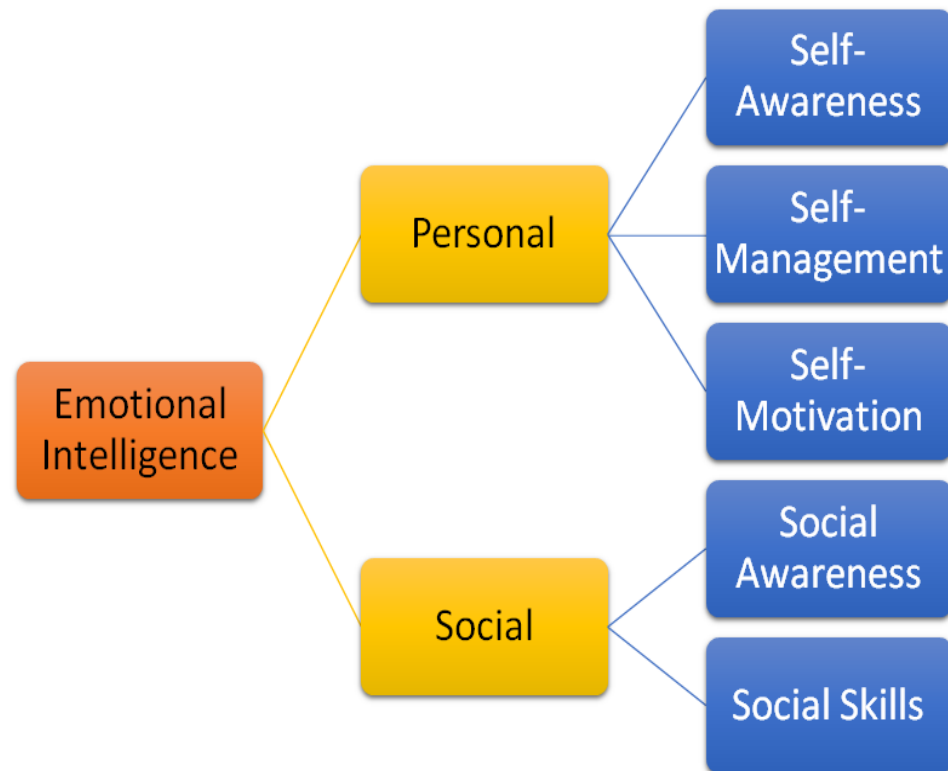
- **Emotional Intelligence**
  - Introducing Emotional Intelligence (EI)
  - Define EI and identify strategies
  
- **Understanding the Consequences of Responding**
  - Identify typical challenges during response
  - Identify challenges of responding in the COVID-19 environment
  - Understanding cumulative 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

# Emotional Intelligence



“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 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

1. Short notice/limited time to prepare	11. Separation from loved ones/social support
2. Intense workloads	12. Hostile environment/risk of personal harm
3. Long hours/deployment length	13. Hearing survivors stories
4. Lack of time off for personal time	14. Witness mass destruction
5. living conditions	15. Witness human suffering: violence/injury
6. Lack of privacy or personal space	16. Witness dead bodies or body parts
7. Unfamiliar/challenging work setting or role	17. Life-and-death decision making
8. Limited resources	18. Limited communications
9. Encountering unfamiliar cultures/population	19. Loss of colleagues
10. Working with difficult supervisors/colleagues	20. Issues related to returning home



# Chat Box Question

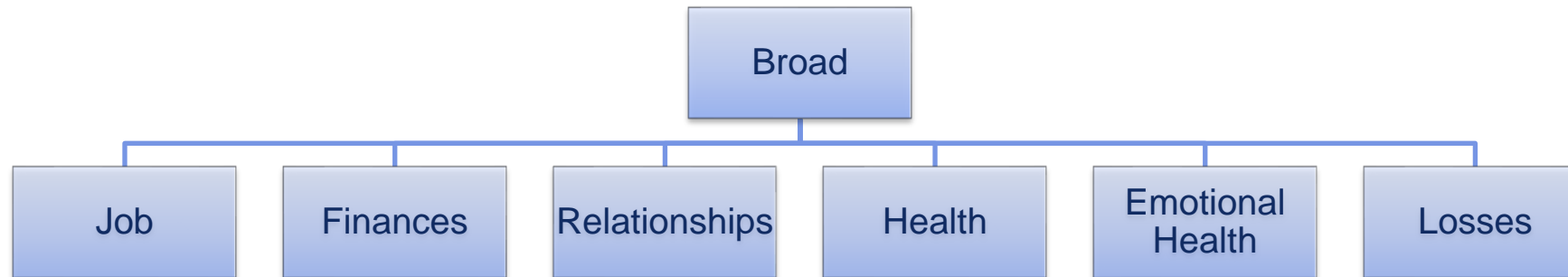
Are there any additional challenges that have emerged with COVID-19?



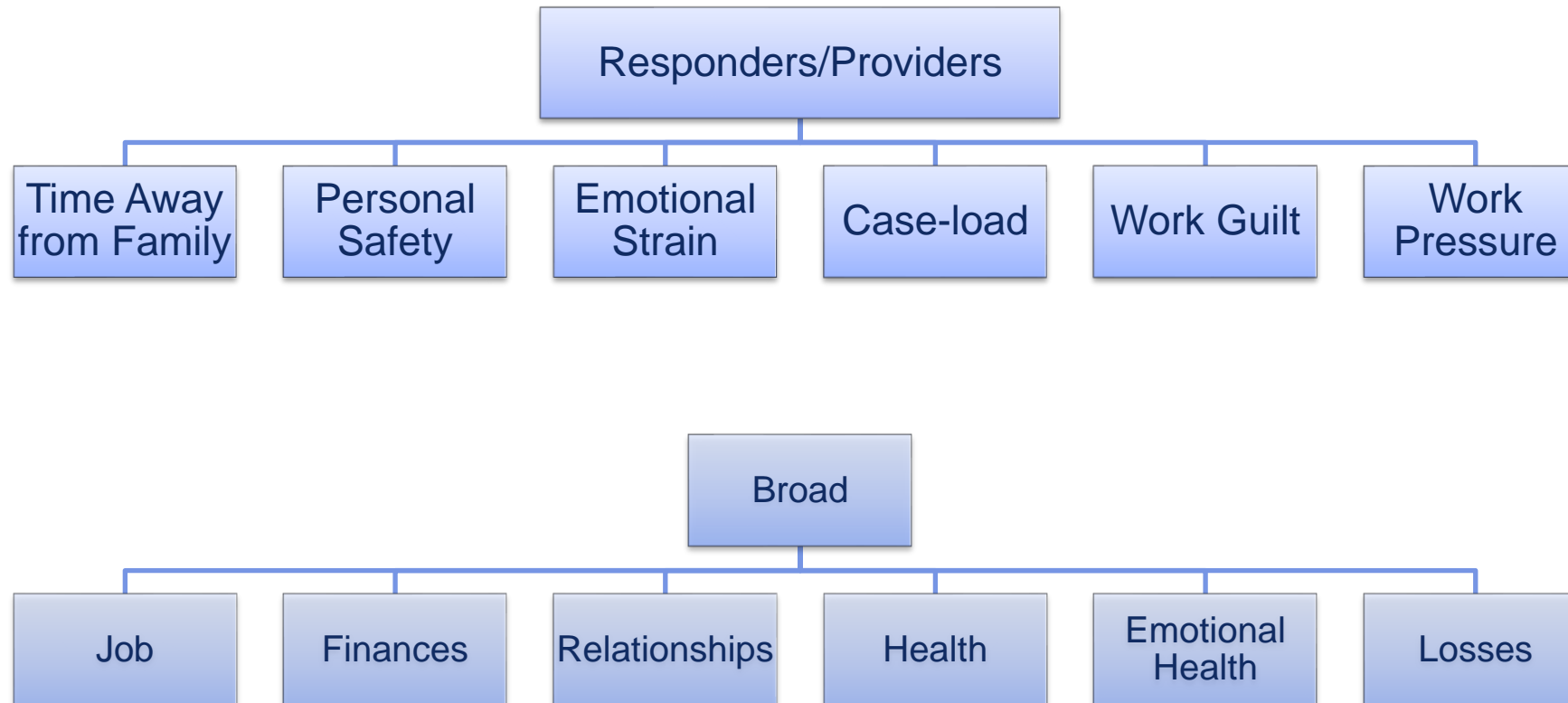
# Challenges Specific to COVID-19

PPE-related challenges	Additional childcare responsibilities
Risks of exposure	Loss of family income
Risk of infecting family members	Working “around the clock”
Loss of autonomy	Isolation from family and friends
Changes in roles/responsibilities	Information overload

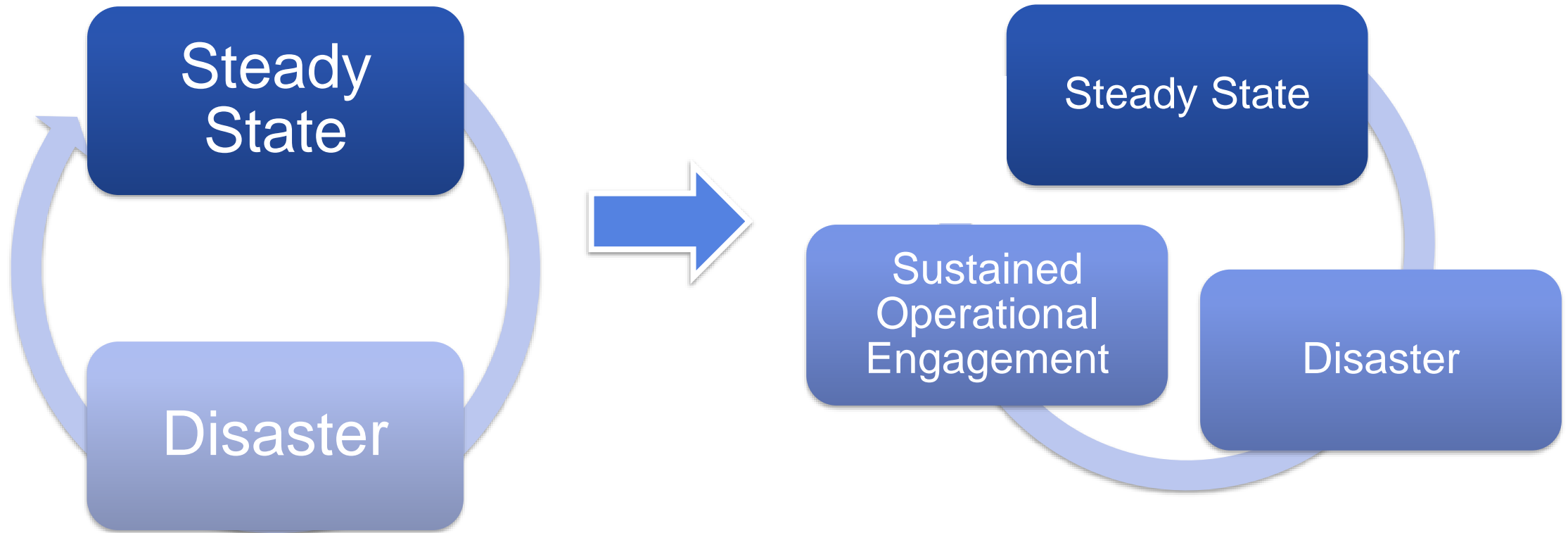
# Overview of Stressors



# Overview of Stressors



## What's different now?



# Poll

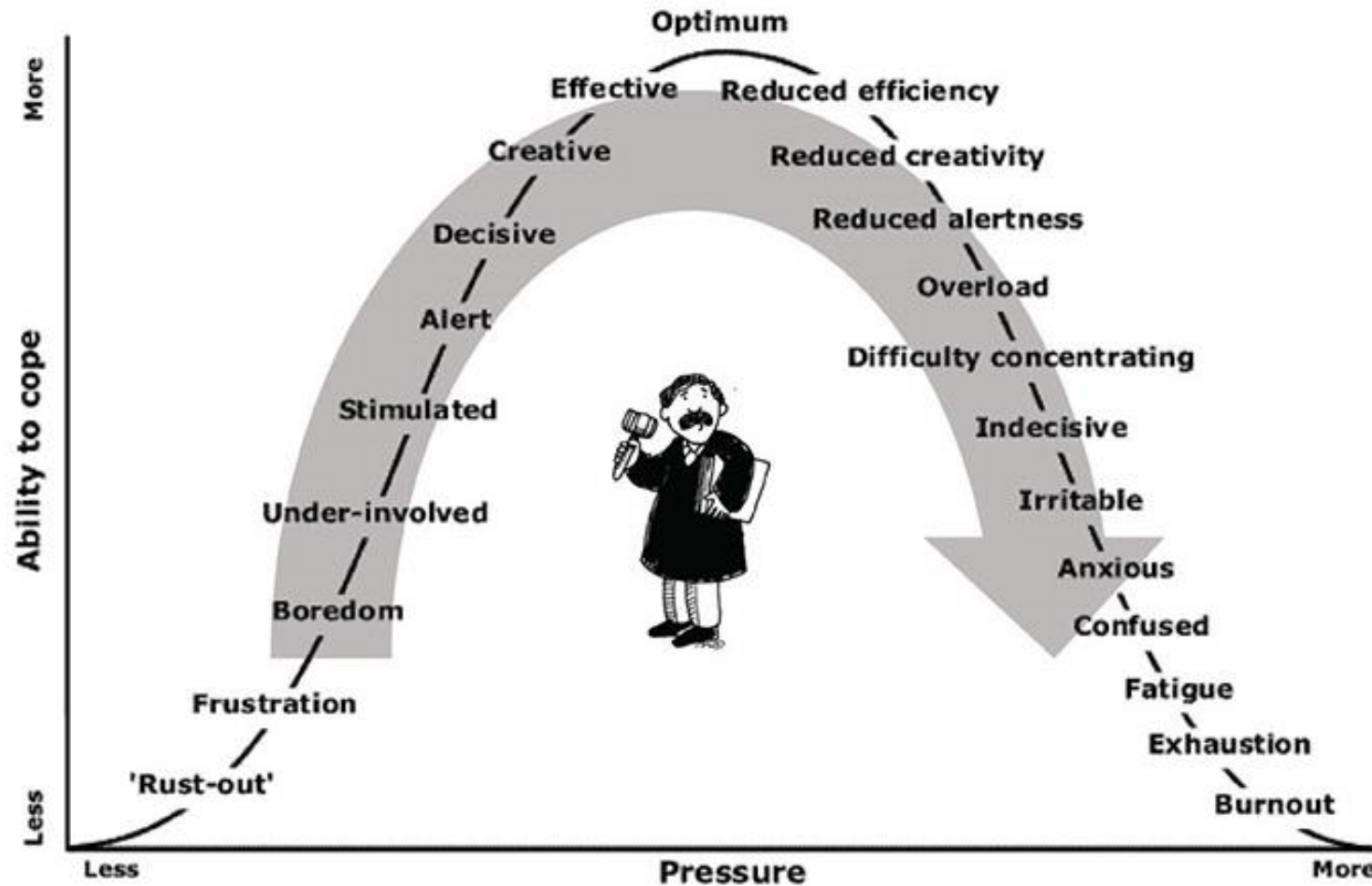
What would be most stressful for you while working at a COVID-19 testing site?

- 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.

# Stress



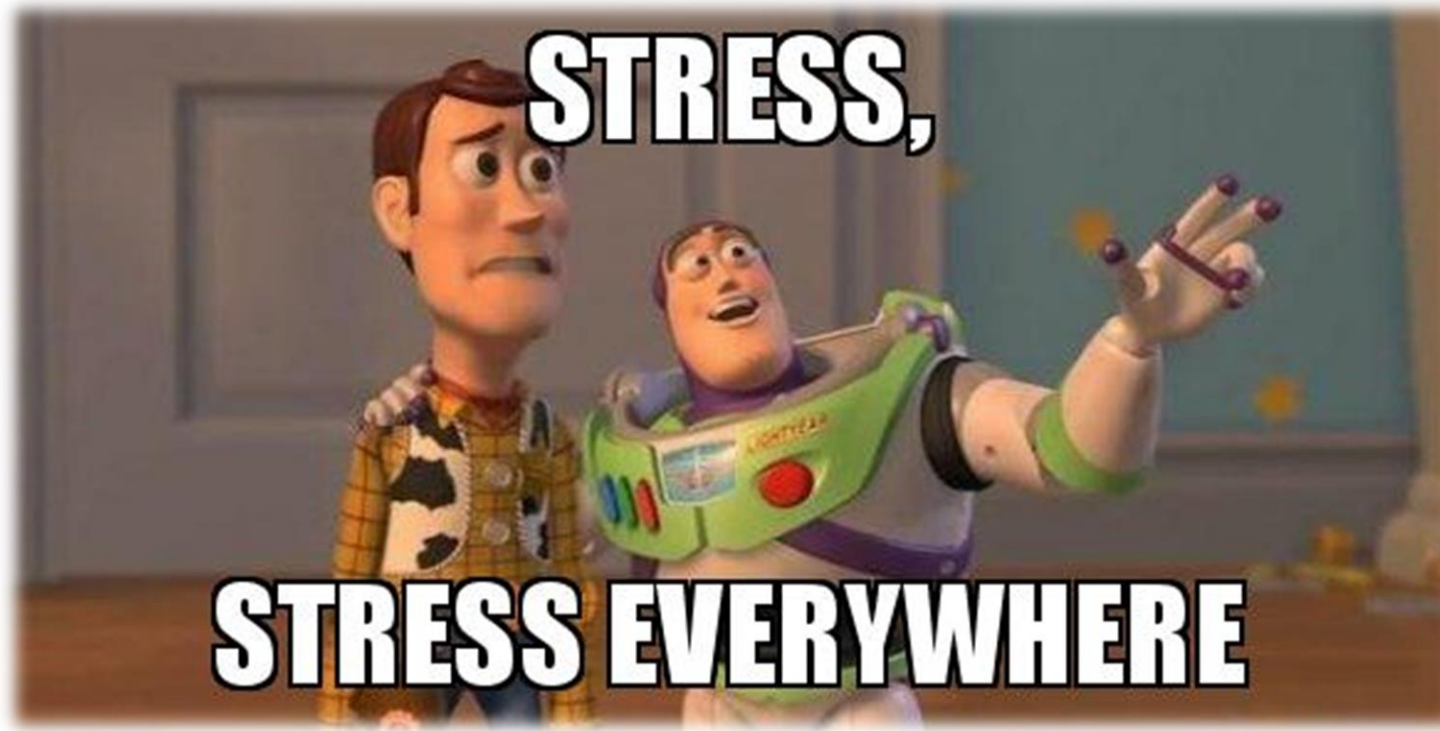
# Continuum of Stress: Where are you?





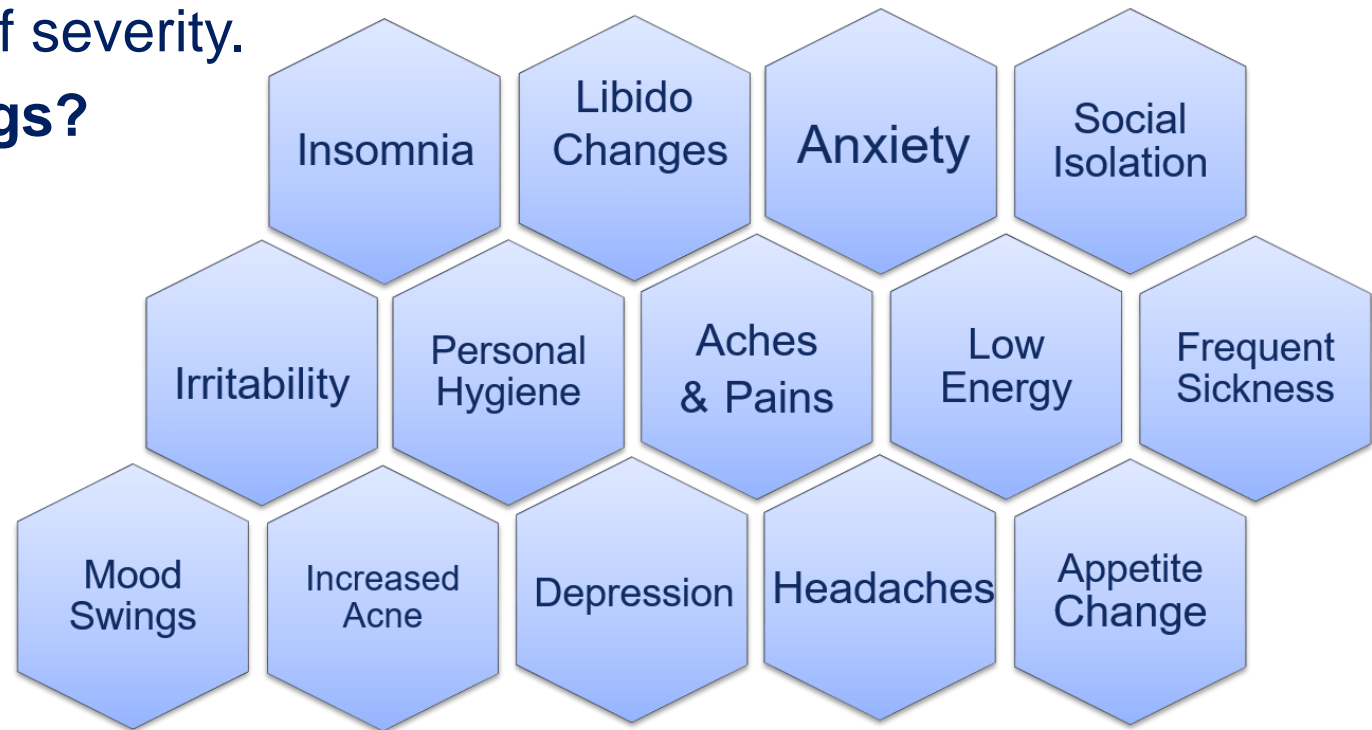
## Chat-Box Question

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



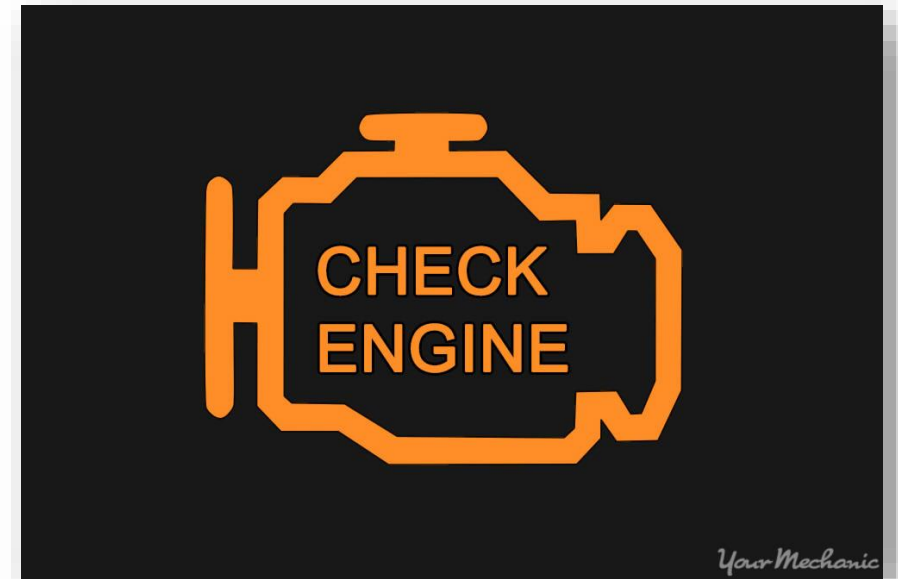
# Signs & Symptoms

- 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?**

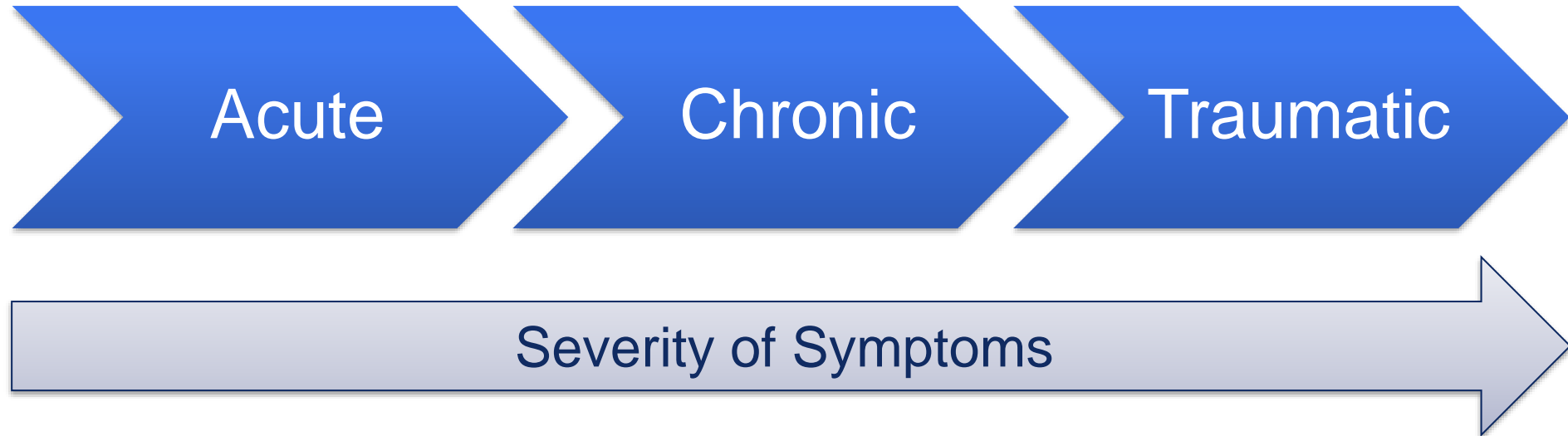


# Consequences for Unaddressed Stress

- 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



## 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.





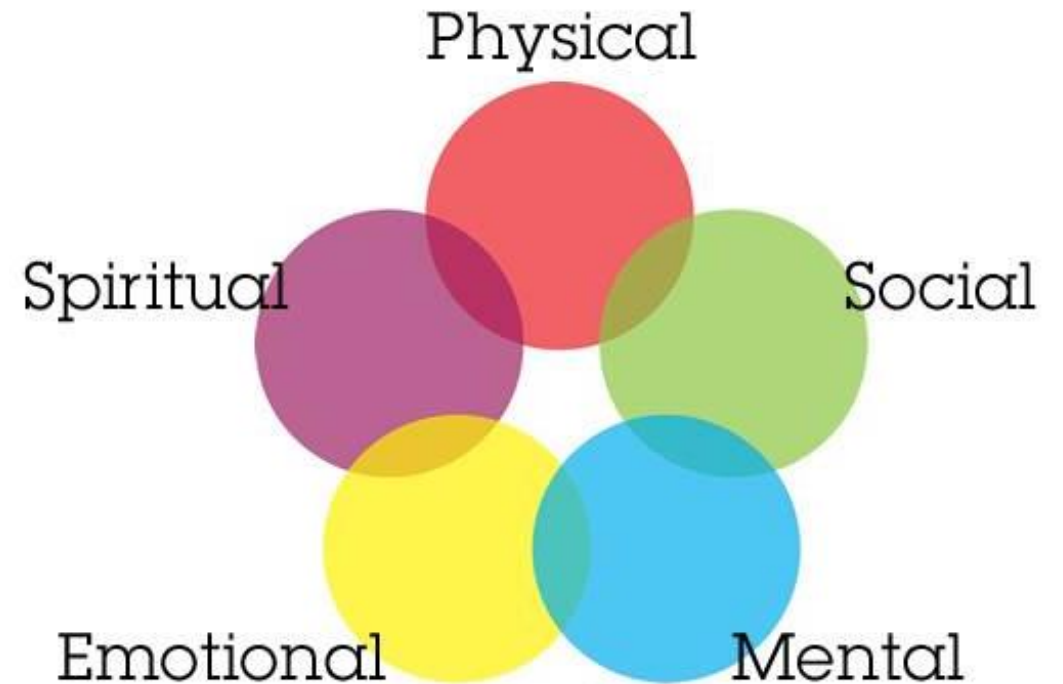
# Poll

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

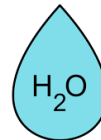
- ***The Foundation:*** Sleep, Food, Movement & Hygiene
- Minimize news exposure
- Increase support connections
- Assess your self-care toolbox:
  - What do you use?
  - What kind is it?
  - What can you add?
- *Who* can you turn to for support?
- Are there resources you need?



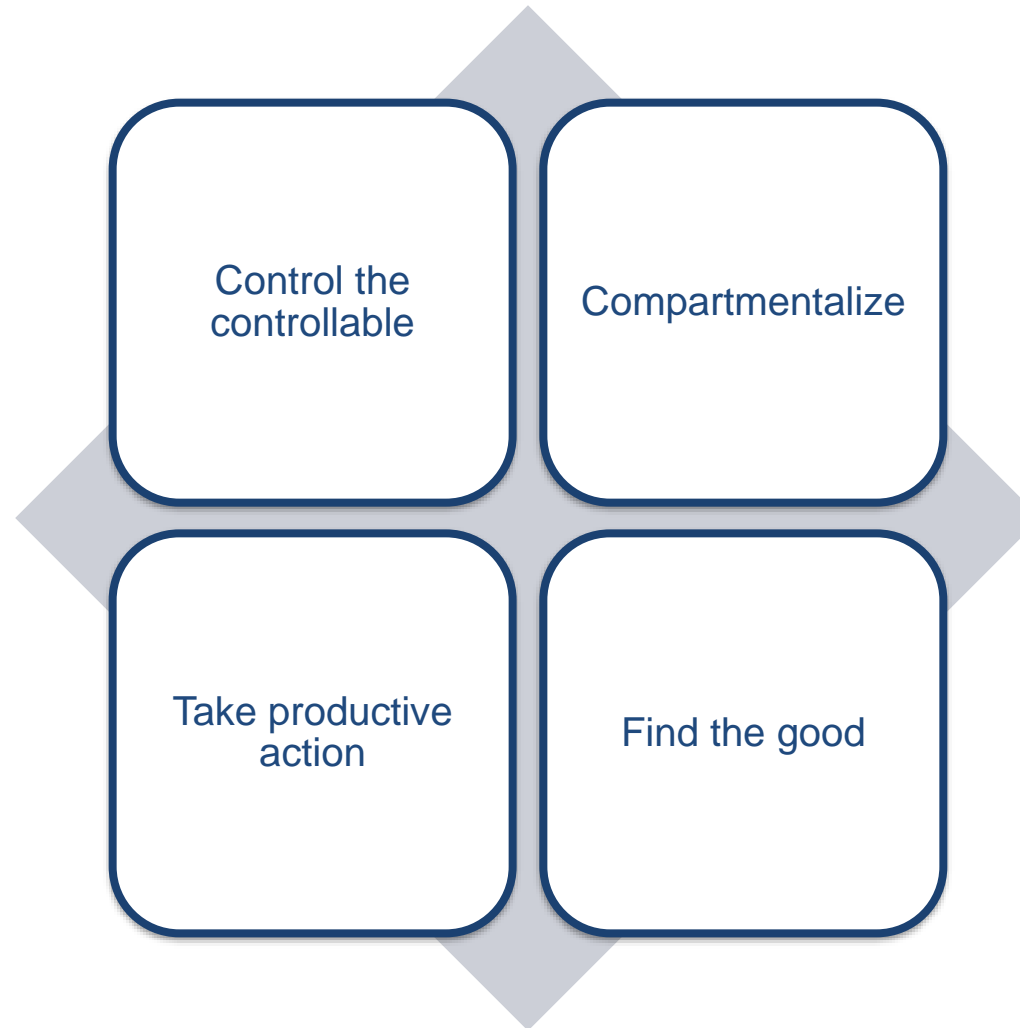
# Optimism

“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?



# Self-Awareness and Reflection

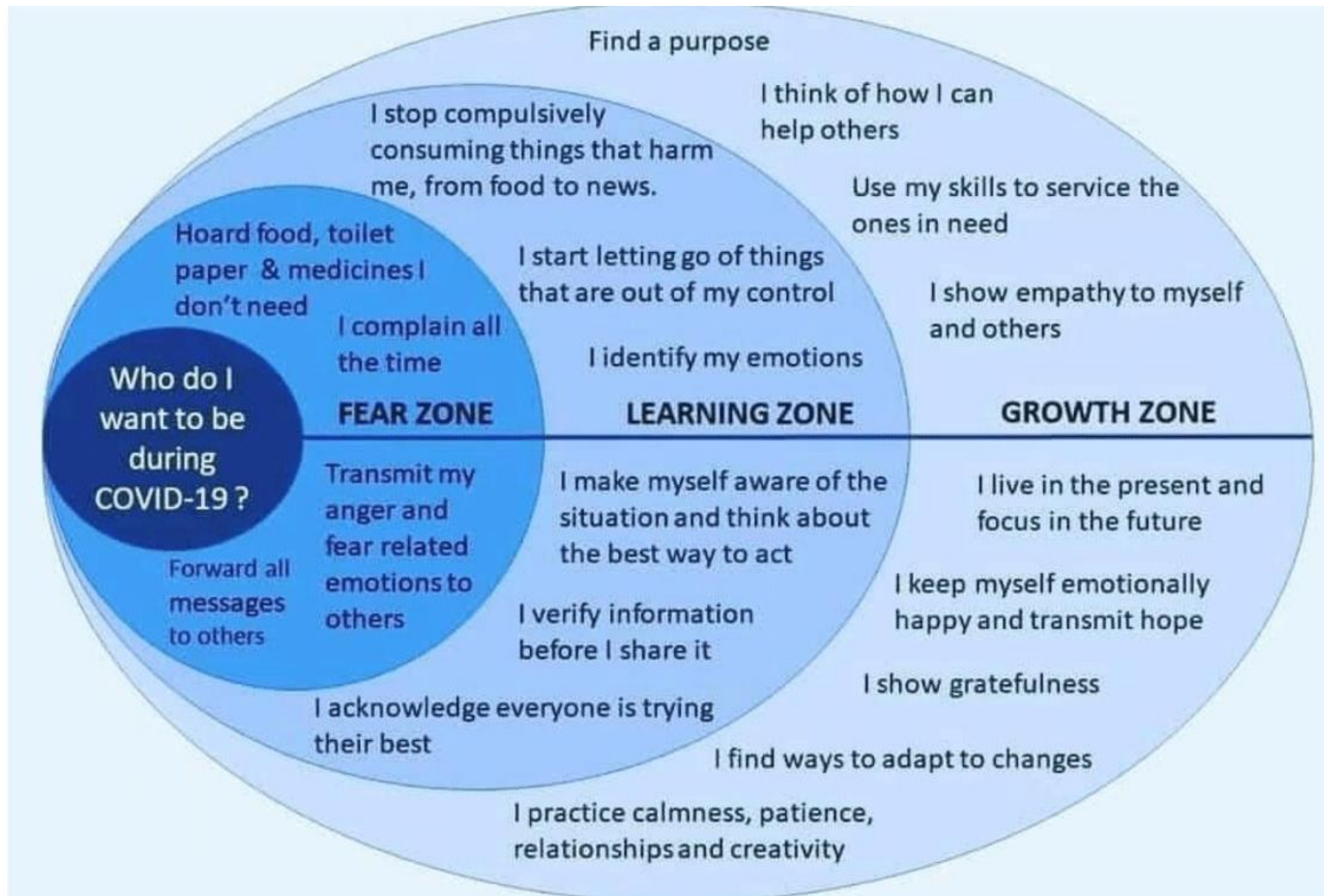
## Individual Resiliency

- *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?







# Organizational Strategies

Identify and recognize strengths	Encouragement of workforce self-care
Organizational guidelines and policies	Learning tools



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 \(BEST\)](#)

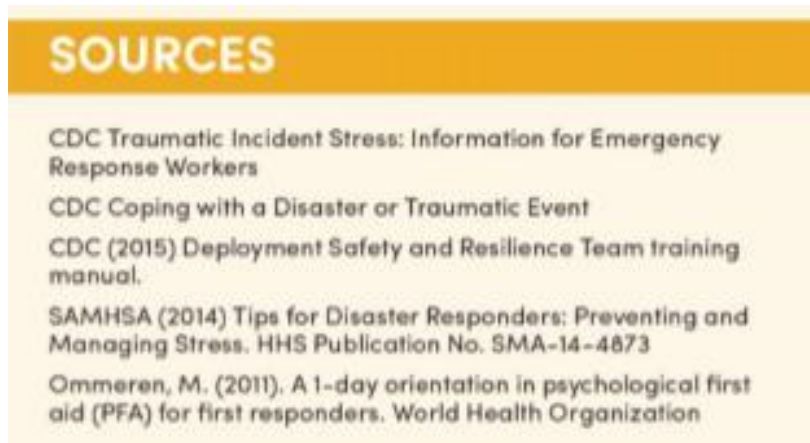
# Check Your Engine: Key Points

- 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.



# 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:

<input type="checkbox"/> Short notice/limited time to prepare	<input type="checkbox"/> Separation from loved ones/social support
<input type="checkbox"/> Intense workloads	<input type="checkbox"/> Hostile environment/risk of personal harm
<input type="checkbox"/> Long hours/deployment length	<input type="checkbox"/> Hearing survivors stories
<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of time off for personal time	<input type="checkbox"/> Witness mass destruction
<input type="checkbox"/> Austere living conditions	<input type="checkbox"/> Witness human suffering: violence/injury/death
<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of privacy or personal space	<input type="checkbox"/> Witness dead bodies or body parts
<input type="checkbox"/> Unfamiliar/challenging work setting/role	<input type="checkbox"/> Life-and-death decision making
<input type="checkbox"/> Limited resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited communication
<input type="checkbox"/> Encountering unfamiliar cultures/populations	<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of colleagues
<input type="checkbox"/> Working with difficult supervisors/colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/> Returning home

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:

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

## 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, 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>

### 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-DKAPP-1>

### NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE



Toll-Free 1-800-272-TALK (8255)

TTY: 1-8007994TTY (4889)

## SOURCES

CDC Traumatic Incident Stress: Information for Emergency Response Workers

CDC Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event

CDC (2015) Deployment Safety and Resilience Team training manual.

SAMHSA (2014) Tips for Disaster Responders: Preventing and Managing Stress. HHS Publication No. SMA-14-4873

Ommeren, M. (2011). A 1-day orientation in psychological first aid (PFA) for first responders. World Health Organization



## EMERGENCY RESPONDER SELF-CARE PLAN

### BEHAVIORAL HEALTH P.P.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.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Limited resources                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited communications                         |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Blaming others, irritability   | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical signs of stress (e.g. racing heart, chest pain, difficulty breathing)*seek medical care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lacking feelings, indifference   | <input type="checkbox"/> Nightmares or recurrent thoughts of traumatic event  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Isolation or disconnection   | <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling other's trauma is yours  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor self care   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tired, exhausted or overwhelmed  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling like a failure, nothing you do will help, not doing job well, need alcohol/drugs to cope |   |

### 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:



# 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

- <https://asprtracie.hhs.gov/technical-resources/resource/6987/resiliency-in-disaster-behavioral-health>
- <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/stress-kinds>
- <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/stress/index.shtml>
- <http://www.gostress.com/stress-definitions/>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/features/copingwithstress/index.html>
- <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma05-4113.pdf>
- <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4873.pdf>
- <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4869.pdf>
- <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/s/stress>
- <https://www.fema.gov/news-release/2018/11/17/4407/state-and-federal-partners-respond-california-wildfires>
- <https://www.fema.gov/news-release/2019/05/23/4407/california-wildfires-myth-vs-fact-iii>
- <https://www.samhsa.gov/dtac/disaster-responders>
- <https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/abc/Pages/resilience-factsheet-responders.aspx>
- <https://www.stress.org/military/for-practitionersleaders/compassion-fatigue>
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- <https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma17-5036.pdf>
- <https://www.tetrattech.com/en/emergency-management-and-disaster-recovery>
- <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/dtac/supplementalresearchbulletin-firstresponders-may2018.pdf>
- <http://www.compassionfatigue.org/pages/healthprogress.pdf>
- [https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/cooccurring/moral\\_injury.asp](https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/cooccurring/moral_injury.asp)