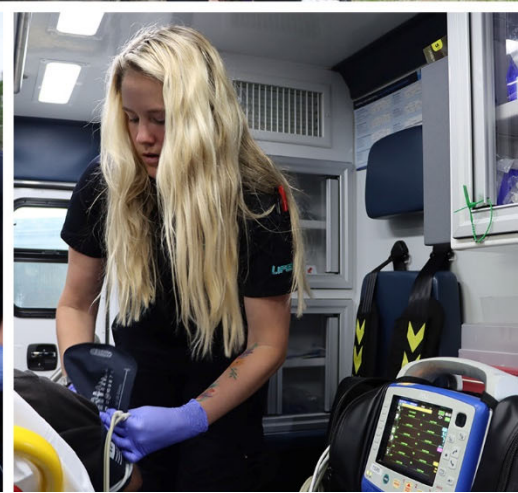


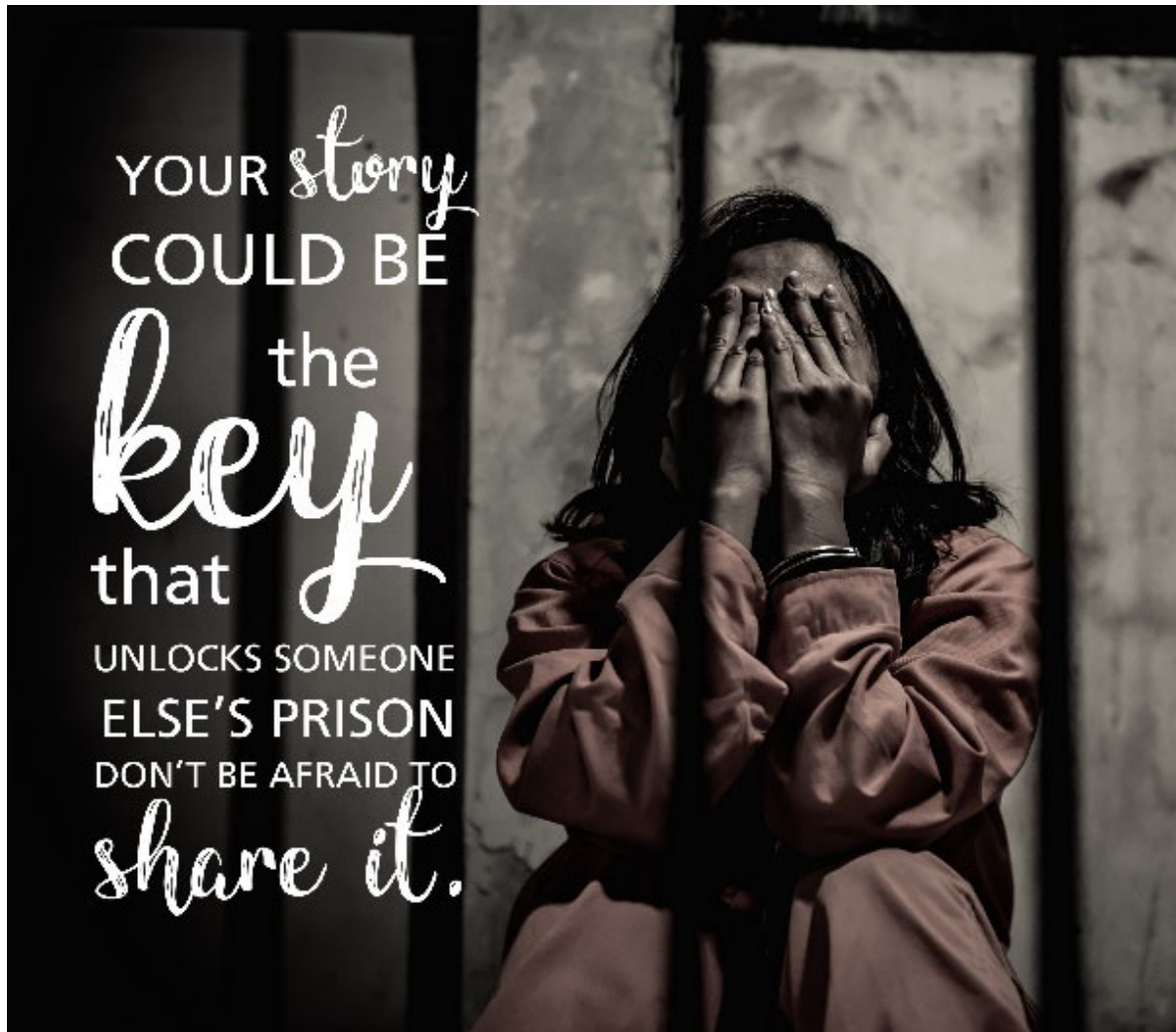


# Resiliency Training

Protecting and Healing First Responders







Information presented in this training is presented solely for the purpose of inspiring the participant to think about his or her own feelings on the topics.

This course should not be used to diagnose or prescribe treatment for any illness or disorder for a particular individual. It is not intended to replace the advice of psychiatrists, psychologists, therapists, physicians or healthcare practitioners and should not be used in place of a visit, call, or consultation or the advice of a qualified care provider.

The course in no way provides medical or counseling advice. If, after attending the class, you feel that you need help with a particular topic or area, we recommend seeking professional guidance and care from a qualified practitioner.

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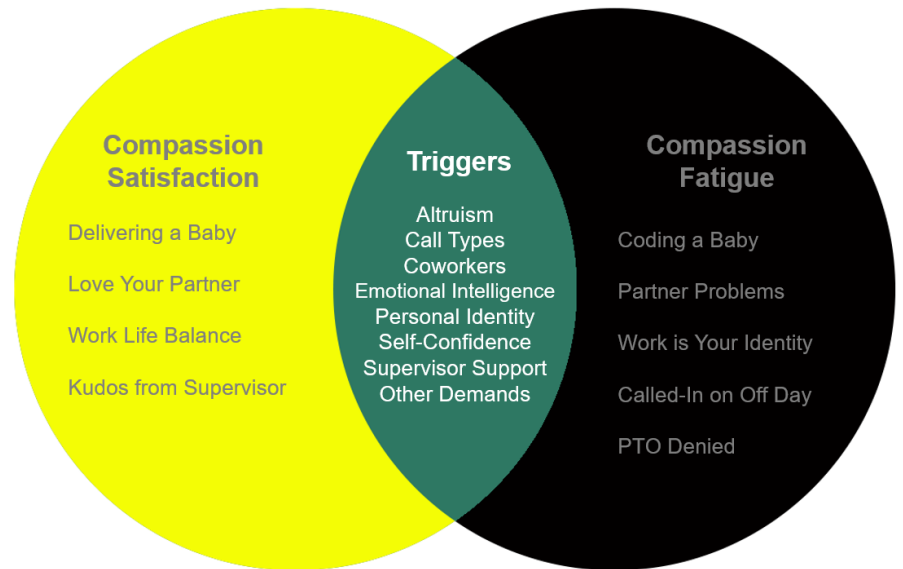
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**Why did you get started as a first responder?**

***"This job will change you, but it doesn't have to damage you."  
– Ellen Kirschman***

## Compassion Fatigue

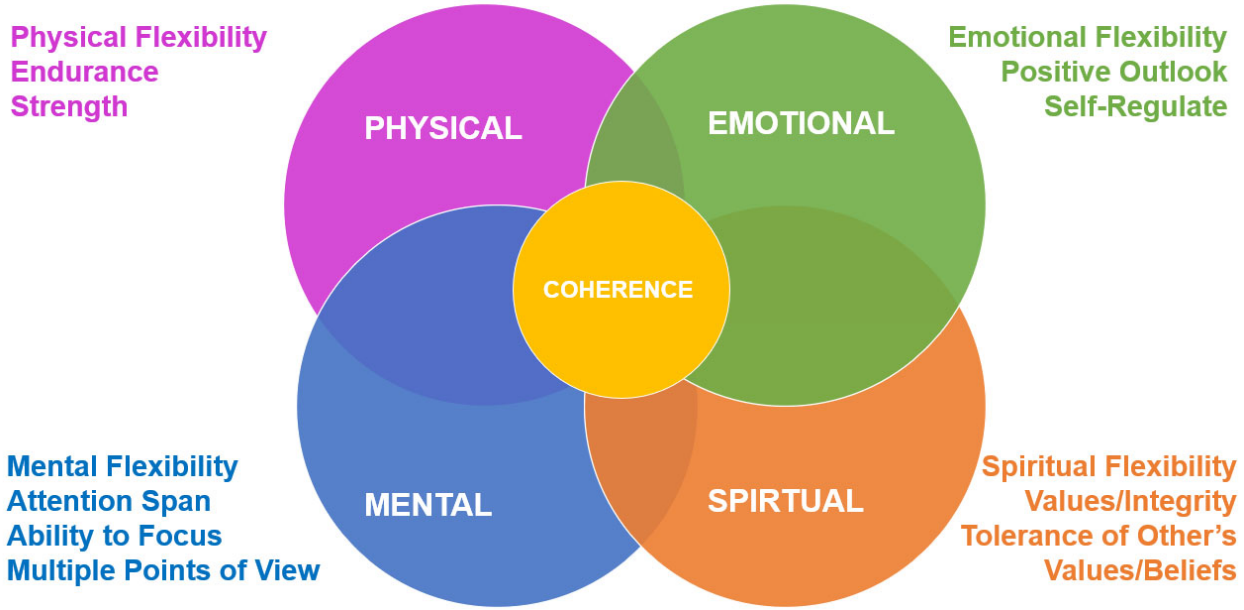


**What is the best call you have ever responded to?**



## Burnout & Bore Out

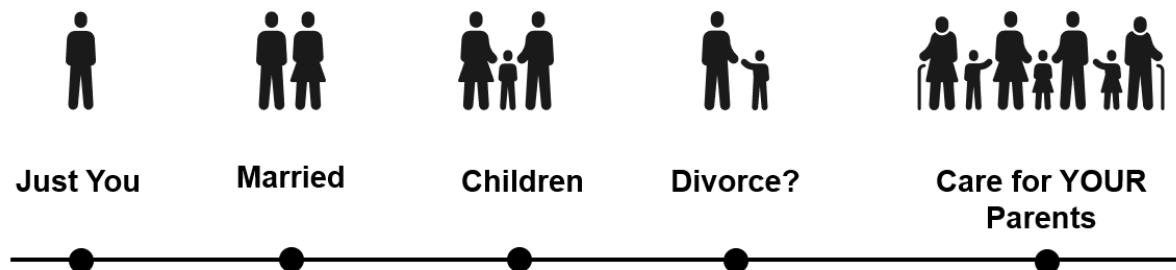
# Domains of Resilience



# What is Stress?

## Stressor vs. Challenge

What determines for you if something is a stressor or a challenge?



# Johari Window Exercise

	Known to Self	Not Known to Self
Known to Others		
Not Known to Others		

Place the adjectives below in the squares that best describe how you see yourself, and how you believe others see you.

- able
- accepting
- adaptable
- bold
- brave
- calm
- caring
- cheerful
- clever
- complex
- confident
- dependable
- dictate
- empathetic
- energetic
- extroverted
- friendly
- giving
- happy
- helpful
- idealistic
- independent
- ingenious
- intelligent
- introverted
- kind
- knowledgeable
- logical
- loving
- mature
- modest
- nervous
- observant
- organized
- patient
- powerful
- proud
- quiet
- reflective
- relaxed
- religious
- responsive
- searching
- self-assertive
- self-conscious
- sensible
- sentimental
- shy
- silly
- smart
- spontaneous
- sympathetic
- tense
- trustworthy
- warm
- wise
- witty



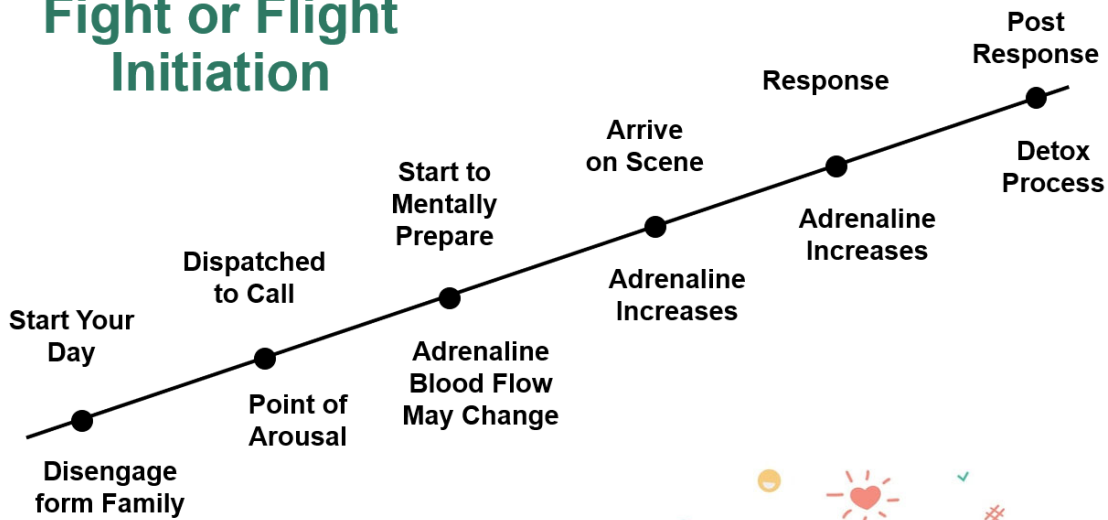
# Types of Stress

Cumulative

Delayed

Traumatic

## Fight or Flight Initiation



**DEPRESSION**  
Dwell on *PAST* mistakes

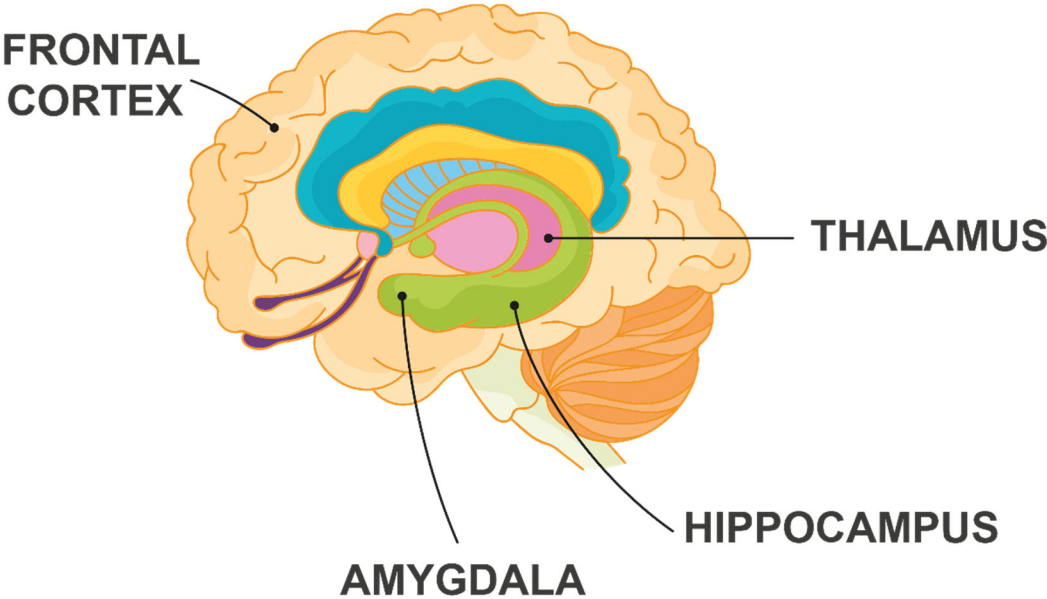


**ANXIETY**  
Worry about *FUTURE* events



The ability to live in the **PRESENT** moment is a major component of mental health.  
-Abraham Maslow

# Biology of Stress



# First Responder Toxic Stress Self-Assessment

This self-assessment can help you identify potential signs of toxic stress and trauma in your life.

**1. Have you ever experienced any of these cognitive signs of toxic stress and trauma? Please check all boxes that apply.**

- Confusion
- Disorientation
- Heightened or lowered alertness
- Poor concentration
- Difficulty identifying familiar objects or people
- Memory problems
- Nightmares

**2. Have you ever experienced any of these emotional and behavioral signs of toxic stress and trauma? Please check all boxes that apply.**

- Anxiety
- Guilt
- Denial
- Grief
- Fear
- Irritability, intense anger, or emotional outbursts
- Depression
- Withdrawal
- Panic
- Feeling hopeless or being overwhelmed
- Difficulty sleeping
- Feelings of isolation or detachment
- Changes in sexual behavior
- Increased alcohol consumption
- Temporary loss or increase of appetite

**3. Have you ever experienced any of the following physical signs of toxic stress and trauma? Please check all boxes that apply.**

- Fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness
- Profuse sweating
- Excessive thirst
- Digestive problems
- Headaches
- Visual difficulties
- Clenching your jaw
- Unexplained aches and pains

**4. If you have experienced any of these, did you reach out to someone you trust and/or a professional for support or find a different outlet to help you cope (i.e. improving diet, sleep cycle, exercise, etc.)?**

Please check one box.

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often

The effects of toxic stress can be cumulative. If you experience more than one of the symptoms listed in questions 1–3, it is recommended that you seek out appropriate resources that can help you learn helpful tips and tools that will help you in your career as a first responder.

# Signs of Excessive Stress

## Impaired judgment

Mental confusion  
Uncharacteristic indecisiveness

## Aggression

Temper tantrums  
“Short fuse”  
Continually argumentative

## Increased irritability / anxiety

Feeling like a “time bomb”  
Increased apathy  
Denial of problems

## Loss of interest

In family, friends, and activities

## Increased feelings of

Insecurity with lowered self esteem  
Feelings of inadequacy

# Four Ways to Deal with Stress

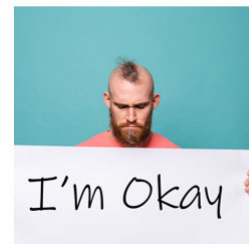


Compartmentalization



Depersonalization

Derealization



Denial





**6. How do you deal with loss, pain, suffering, and a sense of helplessness?**

What is most effective?

What else could you try?

**7. How would you continue to find purpose in your life / maintain emotional and mental wellness if...**

You suddenly lost your career because of a disability (or other reason)?

You suddenly lost your spouse to divorce or death?

**8. How do you deal with a sense of loss of control?**

Do you try to control too many things in your life?

How has trying to control things adversely impacted your relationships?

Adapted from: *Bulletproof Spirit, Revised Edition: The First Responder's Essential Resource for Protecting and Healing Mind and Heart* by Dan Willis

# Post Traumatic Stress

Traumatic Stress Reactions: Key Differences		
Post Traumatic Stress	Acute Stress Disorder (ASD)	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any duration</li> <li>• Impaired daily functioning</li> <li>• One of more symptom in any area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 days to 1 month</li> <li>• Impaired daily functioning</li> <li>• 9 or more symptoms in any area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 month or longer</li> <li>• Impaired daily functioning</li> <li>• Symptoms in all areas</li> </ul>



## **Ways to Recover from Post Traumatic Stress**

1. Accept your emotions as normal and part of the recovery/survival process
2. Talk about the event and your feelings
3. Accept that you may have experienced fear and confronted your vulnerability.
4. Use your fear or anxiousness as a cue to utilize your EMS safety skills
5. Realize that your survival instinct was an asset at the time of the incident and that it remains intact to assist you again if needed
6. Accept that you cannot always control events, but you can control your response.
7. If you are troubled by a perceived lack of control, focus on the fact that you had some control during the event. You used your strength to respond in a certain way.
8. Do not second-guess your actions. Evaluate your actions based on your perceptions at the time of the event, not afterwards.
9. Understand that your actions were based on the need to make a critical decision for action. The decision likely had to be made within seconds.
10. Accept that your behavior was appropriate to your perceptions and feelings at the time of the incident.
11. Accept that no one is perfect. You may like/dislike some actions.
12. Focus on the things you did that you feel good about. Positive outcomes are often produced by less than perfect actions.
13. Do not take personally the response of the system. Keep the needs of the various systems (DA's office, administrative investigation, the press, etc) in perspective.

## **You're Naturally Resilient**

1. You will accept what happened. You will accept any experience of fear and any feelings of vulnerability as part of being human. Vulnerability is not helplessness.
2. You will accept that no one can control everything. You will focus on your behaviors and the appropriate application of authority. You will keep a positive perspective.
3. You will learn and grow from the experience. You will be able to assess all future circumstances on their own merits. You will become stronger and smarter.
4. You will include survivorship into your life perspective. You may re-evaluate life's goals, priorities, and meaning. You will gain wisdom that can come from survivorship.
5. You will be aware of changes in yourself that may contribute to problems at home, work, and other environments. You will work to overcome these problems.
6. You will increase the intimacy of your actions and communications to those you love. You will remain open to the feedback of those who love you.

## **Ask for Help**

1. Only YOU can work through the aftermath
2. Be open minded
3. Allow family, friends, peers to help
4. See professional assistance if
5. You feel "stuck"
6. "I don't feel like myself anymore"
7. Friends and family notice dysfunctional emotional responses
8. Share your experience with others who care



# Moving Past Traumatic Events

To move past a traumatic event, you must answer:

What happened?

Why did it happen?

Why did I act as I did?

Why do I act as I have since?

What if it happens again?

**As you look at your answers:**

- Recognize unreasonable beliefs and expectations
- Normalize your reactions
- Identify strategies to reassert control over your emotions

# Domestic Abuse Checklist

- \_\_\_\_\_ Does your partner or someone close to you criticize you, put you down or call you names?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are you frightened about how your partner will react if you get into an argument?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are you frightened of your partner when he or she has been drinking?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has your partner ever hit you?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does your partner complain about your friendships or family members or stop you from seeing them?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does your partner ask you to do things you are uncomfortable with?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are you ever worried that your children are seeing or hearing things they shouldn't be?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has your partner ever forced you to have sex with him/her or with other people? Has he/she made you participate in sexual activities that you were uncomfortable with?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has your partner ever kept you short of money so you are unable to buy food and other necessary items for yourself and your children?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has your partner prevented you from continuing or starting a college course, or from going to work?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does your partner constantly check up on you or follow you?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has your partner ever threatened to take your children away or said he/she would refuse to let you take them with you, or even to see them, if you left him/her?

## **Additional Training**

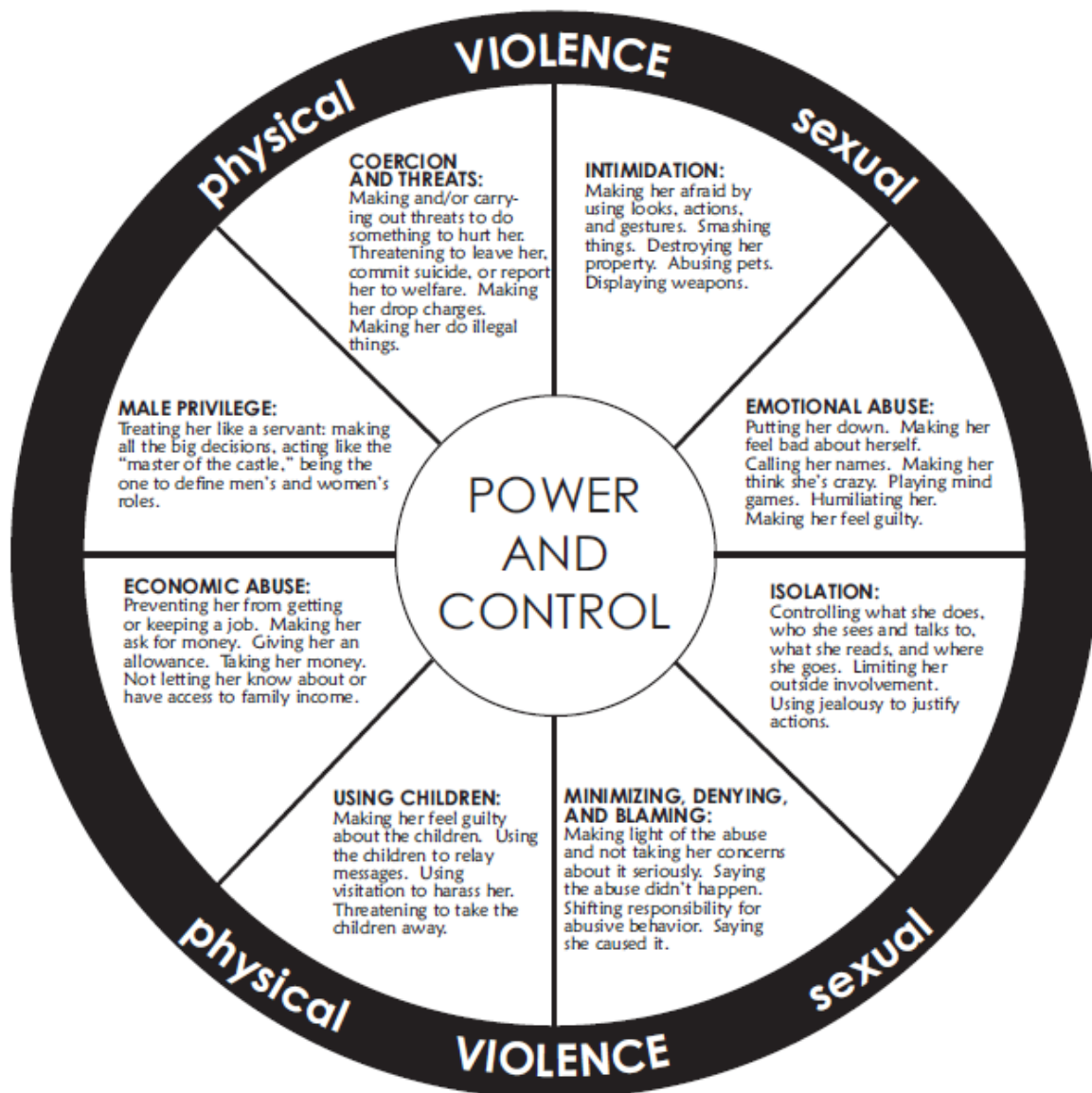
Recognizing Signs of Domestic Violence

<https://www.academyhour.com/offers/7Uw76PEU>

# POWER AND CONTROL WHEEL

Physical and sexual assaults, or threats to commit them, are the most apparent forms of domestic violence and are usually the actions that allow others to become aware of the problem. However, regular use of other abusive behaviors by the batterer, when reinforced by one or more acts of physical violence, make up a larger system of abuse. Although physical assaults may occur only once or occasionally, they instill threat of future violent attacks and allow the abuser to take control of the woman's life and circumstances.

The Power & Control diagram is a particularly helpful tool in understanding the overall pattern of abusive and violent behaviors, which are used by a batterer to establish and maintain control over his partner. Very often, one or more violent incidents are accompanied by an array of these other types of abuse. They are less easily identified, yet firmly establish a pattern of intimidation and control in the relationship.



Developed by:  
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Produced and distributed by:



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on Domestic and Sexual Violence  
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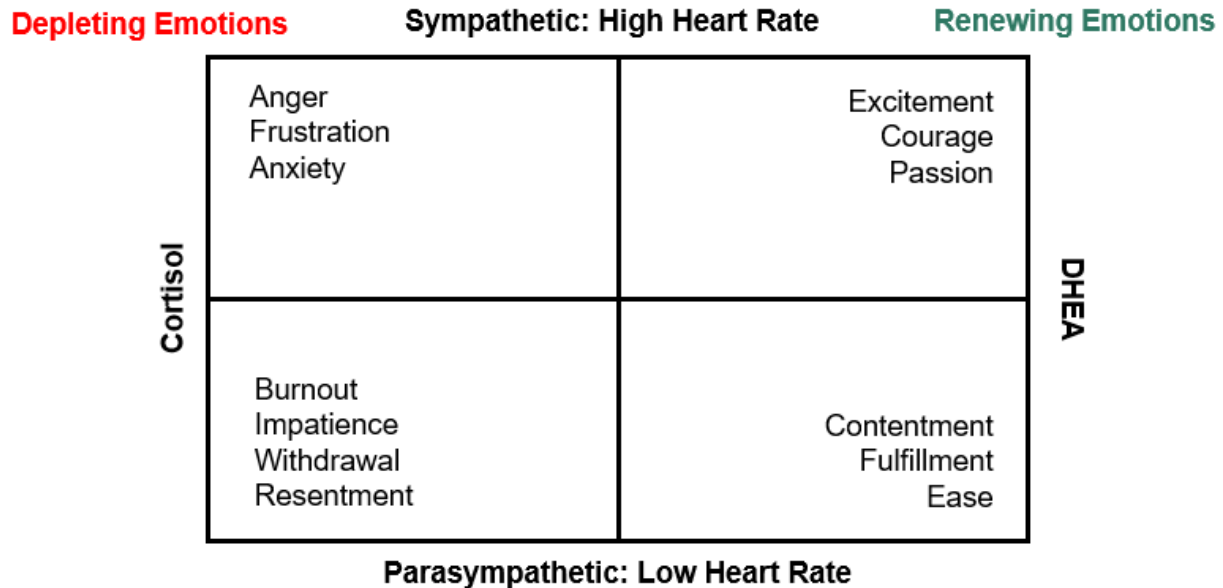
# Alcoholism Checklist

- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you ever drink after telling yourself you won't?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does your drinking worry your family?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you ever been told that you drink too much?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you drink alone when you feel angry or sad?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you ever felt you should cut down on your drinking?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you get headaches or have hangovers after drinking?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does your drinking ever make you late for work?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you ever been arrested because of your drinking?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your drinking?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you ever substituted drinking for a meal?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you tried to stop drinking or to drink less and failed?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you ever felt embarrassed or remorseful about your behavior due to drinking?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you drink secretly to avoid the concerns of others?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you ever forget what you did while you were drinking?
- \_\_\_\_\_ For women - Have you continued drinking while pregnant? (even small amounts)
- \_\_\_\_\_ For women - Have you continued drinking while breastfeeding?  
(even if only between feedings or in small amounts)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or get rid of a hangover?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you ever had to take a drink while at work to feel better?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you feel shaky, unsettled, or sick if you do not have a drink for a few days?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you ever stockpiled alcohol to avoid anxiety about not having it available?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you hide alcohol to avoid the concerns of family or friends?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you plan activities to insure that alcohol is available?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you look for happy or sad occasions to justify drinking alcohol?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Has the availability and consumption of alcohol become an overriding concern?

*This is an awareness tool only designed to help you reflect and consider if you should reach out for help related to an alcohol dependency.*



# Depletion to Renewal Grid Exercise



Look at the Grid. Ask yourself which quadrant are you in right now? Where were you yesterday? Notice that some of the time you may be in one quadrant, and during other times in a different one.

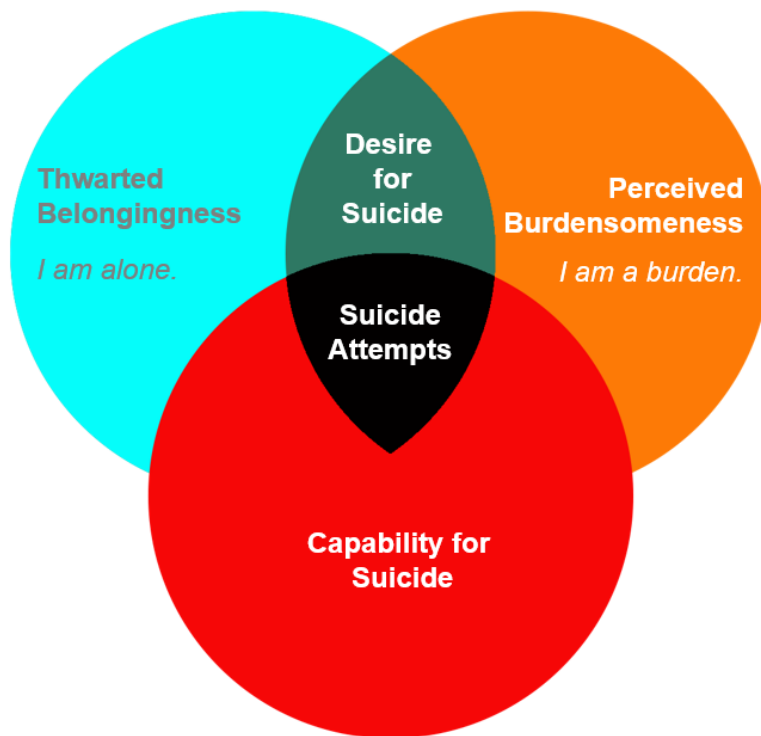
1. Think about or notice which quadrant you spend most of your time in. Place an X in that quadrant.
2. Write down some of the triggers or situations that can cause you to be on the left side of the vertical line.
3. Place an X in the quadrant in which you would like to spend more time - and commit to it.
4. Select one of your triggers and commit to better managing your reactions and your energy drains over the next week.

# Chronic Anger Syndrome Self-Evaluation

- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you often find yourself irritable and annoyed?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do certain people or situations make you furious?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are you often irritable and don't know why?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you often use obscenities in your speech or mind?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you often think of people who upset you in terms of "a—hole", "jerk", etc.?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you have trouble giving someone a genuine compliment?
- \_\_\_\_\_ When something goes wrong, do you generally blame someone else?

*This is an awareness tool only designed to help you reflect and consider if you should reach out for help related to an anger issue.*

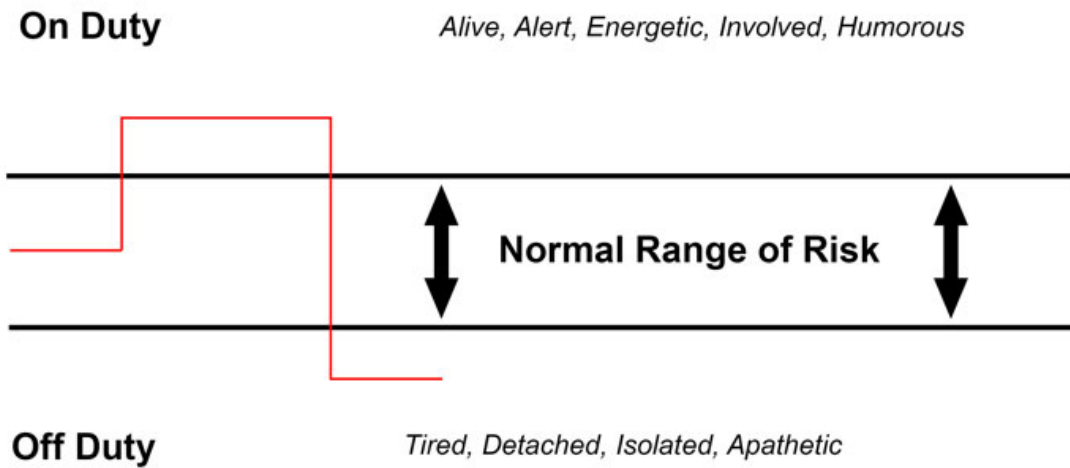
# Suicide



***Suicide isn't about someone wanting to die ... it's about them wanting their pain to end.***

# Problems at Home

## Hypervigilance Cycle



## Work Family vs. Traditional Family

## Invisible Injuries

**Shift Work and Separation**

**Self-Inflation**

**Overprotective**

**Overcoming It...**

# Where to Get Help

## National Resources

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800-273-8255
- Fire/EMS Helpline 888-731-3473
- Copline 800-267-5463
- Veteran's Crisis Line 800-273-8255
- [www.codegreencampaign.org](http://www.codegreencampaign.org)



## LifeNet Mental Health Library

LifeNet has an updated list of counselors, reading material, and free online training to assist you in dealing with mental health related issues.

[www.LifeNetEMS.org/Mental-Health-Resources](http://www.LifeNetEMS.org/Mental-Health-Resources)



RESILIENCY  
TRAINING  
WELLNESS  
CHALLENGE

Adapted from:  
*Bulletproof Spirit:  
The First  
Responder's  
Essential Resource  
for Protecting and  
Healing Mind and  
Heart* By: Captain  
Dan Willis

# 15 DAY CHALLENGE

# 15 Day Challenge

## Day 1: Self Awareness

Why did you become a first responder?

What is your purpose for doing your job?

How has the job adversely affected you, your relationships, your outlook on life?

What value do you get from doing your job?

**Challenge:** Rededicate yourself to the purpose of protecting and giving life to others. Write down what your family, spouse, friends, work colleagues, and community need from you. Focus on their needs instead of what you want from them. Focus on what you can give.

Make a list of the positive values of public service.



# Day 2: Goals

What are your short-term goals (at least one realistic goal to accomplish within the next month)?  
*What can you do daily to achieve this goal?*

What are your intermediate-term goals (at least one realistic goal to accomplish within the next year)? *What can you do daily to achieve this goal?*

What are your long-term goals (at least one realistic goal to accomplish within the next 5 years)? *What can you do daily to achieve this goal?*

**Challenge:** Write down your goals. As goals are achieved, replace them with new ones. Share your goals with a family member or friend to help you with accountability. Remember a goal without a date is just a dream. Write a goal with a deadline and steps you can measure towards achieving it.

# Day 3: Communication

Who are the most important people in your life?

Which people would you benefit from having more open communication with?

**Challenge:** Actively work each day to develop a genuine interest in others, especially the most important people in your life. Learn to ask questions of other people to connect with them, to find out more about them, and to get them to talk about themselves. Listen more than you talk. Develop a firm foundation in your relationships by getting others to share with you, even when you don't feel like talking.

# Day 4: Relationships

Why are the people you listed yesterday the most important to you?

**Challenge:** Write a note to someone, or call them and tell them, what they mean to you and why you appreciate them. Develop a plan for how you can consistently improve your relationships, despite how the other person may respond.

If you are married, consider implementing "Shared Withholdings" where every 48-hours you take time to tell your spouse something good you saw them do over the past 48-hours and to also discuss anything they may have done that bothered you or needs additional clarification. Allow them to do the same thing.

## Day 5: Expressing Love

What is your love language (see challenge below)?

What is the love language of your spouse/partner/kids or other relationship you want to work on improving this month?

**Challenge:** Learn about the 5 Love Languages by visiting [www.5lovelanguages.com](http://www.5lovelanguages.com). Discover your own Love Language and the language of those closest to you. Come up with a plan to show and express love to the person/people most important in your life in their love language.

## Day 6: Forgiveness

Who is someone you have wronged in the past that you need to ask for forgiveness from?  
Reflect and then ask for forgiveness.

Who is someone who has wronged you in the past that you're still harboring ill will towards?  
Reflect and then forgive them and let go of the thought.

**Challenge:** Reflect on the statements above and work on practicing forgiveness. Not forgiving yourself or others only hurts you, not them.

# Day 7: Letting Go

Write down your negative thoughts and emotions throughout the day today. Then write down how you can replace that negative thought with a positive thought.

Negative Thought	New Positive Thought

**Challenge:** Today and going forward, try to live present in the moment. Don't let the negative emotions and negative feelings you've harbored in the past control your future.

## Day 8: Compassion

**Challenge:** Do something kind and unexpected today for someone else. Make a habit of looking for unexpected things to do for others.

## Day 9: Self-Improvement

What is one negative or bad habit you wish you did not have?

How can you replace that habit with something positive or good?

**Challenge:** Work daily to develop the ideal version of yourself you want to become. Ask someone to be your accountability partner in breaking your bad habit.

## Day 10: Exercise

**Challenge:** If you are not consistently exercising three to four days a week, develop an exercise plan you can maintain. Start it today. If you are already exercising, evaluate how effective and consistent your exercise program is. Resolve to improve any inconsistencies.

# Day 11: Gratitude

Write a list of the things you are thankful for in your life.

**Challenge:** Put a copy of this list on your mirror and reflect on it as you start your day for the next seven days. Repeat this process again in seven days and see if there is anything new you need to add to your list. Start each day going forward by expressing gratitude for the things you have in your life.

# Day 12: Silence

**Challenge:** Use today as a day of reflection. Try not to speak unless spoken to (or unless required to in your job duties). Don't listen to the radio, log on to social media, listen to the television, etc... Use this day of silence to think about what you value most in life and contemplate new perspectives on issues and problems.

# Day 13: Speak Kindly

**Challenge:** Use today to only speak positive and kind words. You are not allowed to speak negatively today about anyone or anything, including coworkers and your work environment. Use today to focus on the positives in your life and to look for the kindness in others.

# Day 14: Right Choices

List three choices you regret making in life (personal or professional) and the motivation behind each choice.

Bad Choice	Reason Behind the Choice

What will you do going forward to not make similar bad choices?

**Challenge:** Consciously make 3 good choices today.

# Day 15: Right Past Wrongs

Make a list of people you have wronged in your personal and professional life.

Person	Wrong Committed

**Challenge:** Start with the first person on the list and do something to rectify the wrong. Each day going forward, move down the list to rectify the wrongs you've done. The wrongs may be something you said in the past or an action you did that had negative consequences. Rectifying the wrongs will help release the weight on your spirit.