

# Resiliency for First Responders



**Serving Proudly  
Staying Healthy  
Surviving Long**



# 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 seatbelts 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](#); and [Stay Fit, 540](#). These cornerstones are communicated through weekly roll call trainings created and communicated by the Texas Police Chief's 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.

# The VINCIBLE Journey

- A product of the TPCA Officer Safety Committee
- Began distributing roll call training in 2015
- 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 provide 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: *Critical Incident Early Intervention Strategies*

(Rick Randall)

## About the Instructor



Rick Randall founder and CEO of the Randall Group 911 is the Senior Chaplain and the Health and Wellness Division Director (retired) for the Austin Police Department. He served the Department as a senior training specialist, instructing in the Front Line Leadership Training Course, New Supervisor and Field Training Officer programs as well as in such courses as Resiliency, Performance and Accountability, Ethics, Conflict Resolution, Surviving a Toxic Work Environment, Cultural Diversity, Suicide Prevention, and Police Legitimacy. Rick also directed the efforts of the Health and Wellness Division to address the physical, psychological, and spiritual wellness of the employees of APD. Those efforts involved the supervision and coordination of the staff physician, staff psychologists, the exercise and nutrition specialist, the volunteer chaplain program and collaboration with the Department's Peer Support Unit.

Rick has been active in promoting the wellbeing of officers and professional staff through such programs as heart disease detection and prevention, mindfulness, and exercise strategies for stress reduction, and a ground-breaking research project involving the utilization of Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) as a preventive measure to address the trauma in law enforcement. That project was conducted in concert with Vanderbilt University and the LBJ School of Public Policy.

Rick holds a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and a Master's degree in Educational Administration from the University of Texas at San Antonio. He also holds a Master's degree in Biblical Theology from Abilene Christian University. He has a basic instructor certification with the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement and is certified as a QPR suicide prevention instructor, a Myers-Briggs facilitator, and an ADW certified facilitator. He is also CISM certified and certified as a Dispute Resolution Specialist.

Rick currently serves the Texas Municipal League as a contract instructor in the areas of Resiliency for First Responders and Critical Incident Early Intervention Strategies in partnership with the Texas Police Chiefs Association's Vincible Program. To date, he has taught this material to more than 3000 first responders across the State of Texas.

Rick has been married for 54 years to his wife, Faye. They were blessed with two children and seven grandchildren.

## 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, PTSD and Moral Injury.
- Identify the three phases of the General Adaptation Syndrome and describe what happens physiologically when you experience a real or perceived threat. Examine the health risks of stress.
- Explore strategies designed to reduce the negative effects of Stress, Burnout and Compassion Fatigue, and increase resiliency.

# The Facts of Life for First Responders

- First Responders are 1<sup>st</sup> 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)*
- First Responders have a life expectancy that is 22 years less than the general population
- First Responders have a divorce rate that is nearly twice the national average at 60%
- First Responders have a significantly higher suicide rate than the general population (1.8x that of the normal Caucasian population)
- Estimates are that as many as 1/3 of all First Responder suicides are retirees

## FBI Standards for Stress Training

- Understanding
- Recognizing
- Coping

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# Part I – Understanding Stress



- “Stress is the non-specific response of the body to environmental demands.”
- “Stress is a state of anxiety produced when events and responsibilities exceed one’s coping abilities.”
- “Stress is the state of mental, physical, or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances in which the mind, body, and spirit are taxed to respond.”
- Stress can result from past, present, or future (anticipated) events
- The level of stress experienced depends upon one’s perception of the event and previous experience with the same or similar events.
- First Responders are among the top rated professions for job stress, second only to airline pilots and enlisted military personnel under combat conditions
- Stress takes a huge toll on First Responders; It can come on quickly as a result of a critical incident, or it can come slowly with the accumulation of taking call after call

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# 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” Our Stress?

Avoidance/Denial strategies include Alcohol/Drugs, Thought Suppression, Risky Behavior, Excess Work

## Major Contributors to First Responder Stress

- Depersonalization
- Authoritarianism
- Organizational Protections
- Dangerous Environment

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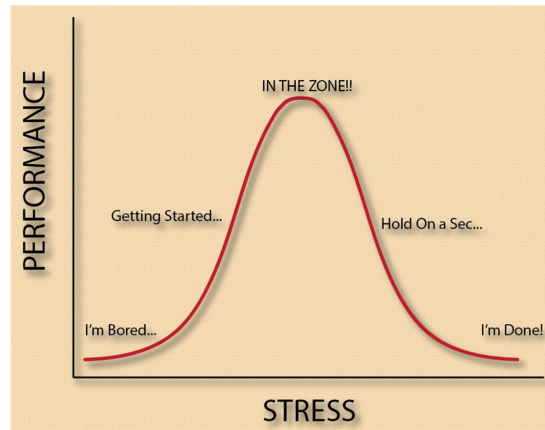
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# Yerkes-Dodson Law Of Stress And Performance



## Astress\\Eustress/Distress

### TYPES OF STRESS

- **Acute Stress** — Most common form; Comes from recent past, current circumstances, and anticipated future situations
- **Episodic Acute Stress** — Consistently triggered Acute Stress reaction due to personality or lifestyle
- **Cumulative Stress** — The accumulation of stress over time
- **Chronic Stress** — The state of ongoing physiological arousal
- **PTSI** — Stress produced by a shocking, frightening, or dangerous event

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# ***Stress Symptoms***

- Emotional—A combination of anger, anxiety, and depression (The 3 Stress Emotions)

- Physical

Musculoskeletal: Headaches, back pain, jaw pain, joint pain

Gastrointestinal: Heartburn, acid stomach, flatulence, diarrhea, constipation, irritable bowel syndrome

Cardiovascular—Elevated blood pressure, rapid heartrate, sweaty palms, heart palpitations, dizziness, shortness of breath, chest pain, fatigue

# ***Common Stress Signs***

- Overeating or Undereating
- Angry Outbursts
- Drug or Alcohol Abuse
- Social Withdrawal
- Disengagement from exercise and hobbies
- Disruption of Sleep

***Acute Stress Response:*** Shaking, Vomiting, Loss of Bladder and/or Bowel control, Prefrontal Cortex Shutdown (*amygdala hijack*)

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# Part II—Understanding The Stress Response



**Our Body's Design:** We are designed to handle stress.

- When presented with a threat, our most basic survival instinct to either:

*Engage in a fight—Utilizes the energy to attack and eliminate the threat*

*Run for our lives—Utilizes the energy to escape the threat*

*Become completely inactive—Complete immobility due to feeling overwhelmed*

## THE FIGHT/FLIGHT/FREEZE RESPONSE

**GAS = General Adaptation Syndrome (The body's reaction to stress)**

**Stage 1—Alarm Reaction:** Arousal occurs for physical and non-physical stressors

**Stage 2—Resistance:** Loss of equilibrium; GAS reaction occurs

**Stage 3—Exhaustion:** Symptoms of stress response (physical, psychological, and spiritual)

**Stress impacts every area of your life**

**The Disease of Allostatic Overload :** Increased plaque build up, hardening of the arteries, increased blood pressure, increased risk of stroke and heart attack

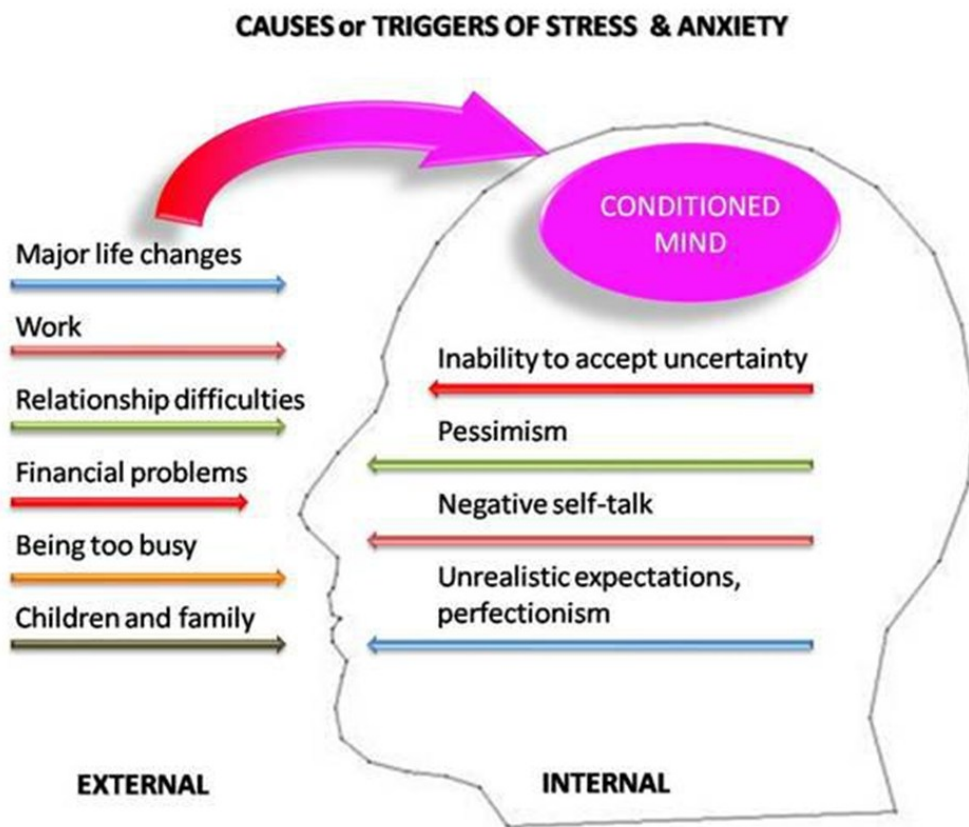
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# Type "A" and Stress

- Personality characterized by:
  - Competitiveness/Time Urgency/Hostility and Anger
- Similar to episodic acute stress
- Significantly higher risk of developing heart disease
- More likely to have their fight/flight/freeze response set off



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Stress is an attitude: Absence of inner peace vs Loss of Control

# 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.
- 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.
- What causes the psychological changes in First Responders?
- This state of alert interaction with the environment, at mild to moderate levels, is not unpleasant to experience physically.

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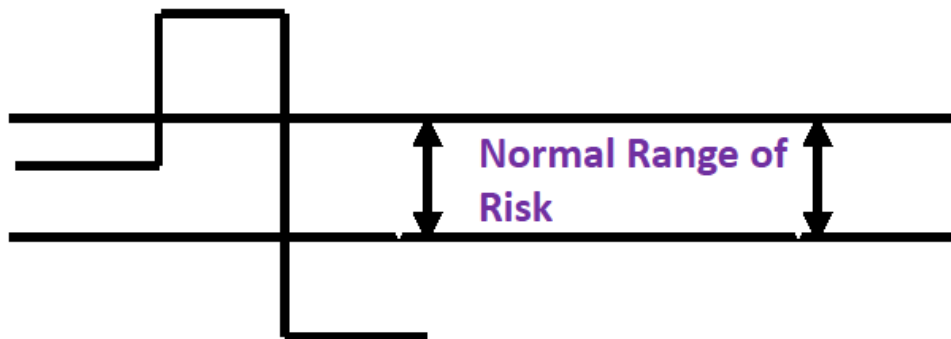
**Homeostasis = a biological balancing phenomena**

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

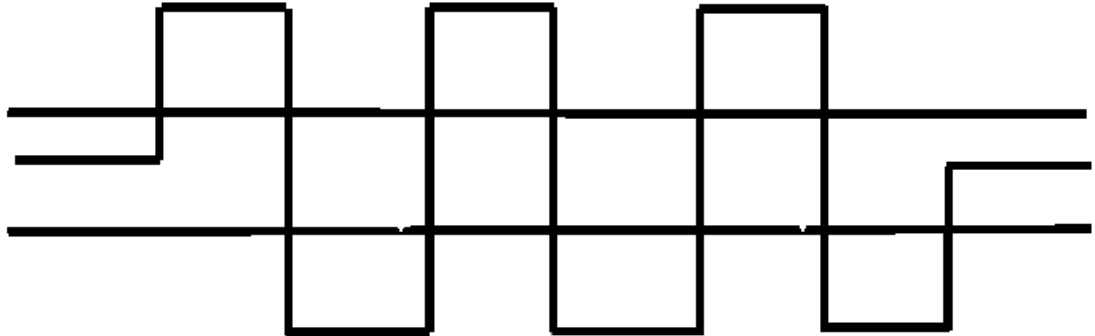
Apathetic

Irritable

# Same Stuff Different Day

**On Duty**

Alive, Alert, Energetic, Involved, Humorous



Tired, Detached, Isolated, Apathetic

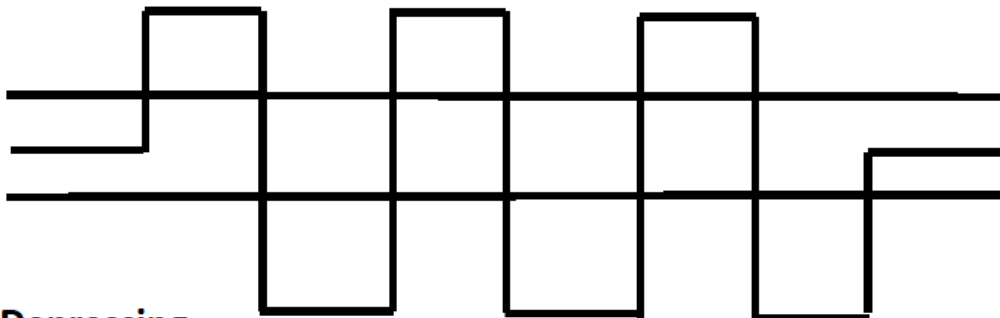
**Off Duty**

“What do you typically do within eighteen to twenty-four hours after you return home from work?” ....**NOTHING**

## When Does a Routine Become a Rut?

**On Duty**

Exciting



Depressing

**Off Duty**

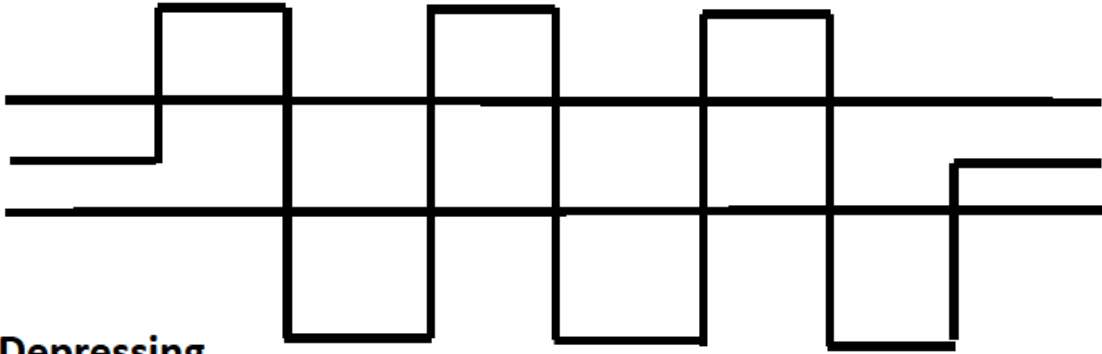
Without knowing that the emotional and perceptual swing is something taking place biologically within them, First Responders can mistakenly project responsibility for their emotions onto the home and blame those in their personal lives. **DON'T GO HOME!**

# Disengagement

**On Duty**

*Overinvested*

Exciting



Depressing

**Off Duty**

*Underinvested*

## 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

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

## The Relaxation Response:

- 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

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# Part IV—Recognizing Burnout and Compassion Fatigue

A graphic featuring the word "Burnout" in a bold, black, serif font. The letters are partially obscured by a circular, glowing orange and yellow fire effect with white smoke rising from it. The graphic is centered between two vertical orange lines.

## Burnout

- Burnout is the result of chronic stress.
- Burnout is protective rather than destructive. The shutdown prevents further damage.
- Burnout is often accompanied by increased cynicism and negative interactions with others
- Burnout is connected to mental and physical exhaustion, work overload, and/or role conflict at work

### COMPONENTS OF BURNOUT

Emotional Exhaustion

Depersonalization

Decreased Sense of Accomplishment

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Fascination Stage

- Everything is new and shiny

Hostility Stage

- Gripe about everything

Superiority Stage

- You know what you are doing

Acceptance Stage

- Years 15-? The goal is making it to retirement



## **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

## **Compassion Fatigue versus Burnout**

- **Compassion fatigue** is when First Responders have depleted empathy due to overexposure to the suffering of others
- **Compassion Fatigue** resembles burnout, but with burnout, exhaustion is due to increased workload and institutional stress, and does not involve trauma

## **Symptoms of Compassion Fatigue**

- Trouble being productive
- Survivor/work issues encroaching on personal time
- Symptoms of anxiety or depression
- 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, gambling, 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 simply not feel?
- Have my sleep habits changed?

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# 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

## What You Can Do!

- 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 “timeout” during the day
- Take short vacations at least twice a year
- 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 your home life that you can change and those you cannot. **CHANGE WHAT YOU CAN!**

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# COMPASSION SATISFACTION

- The ability for First Responders to derive a great sense of meaning and purpose from their work
- An important buffer in managing and transcending the alterations in belief systems and the physiological and/or emotional reactions due to compassion fatigue

## 9 STEPS TO COMPASSION SATISFACTION

1. **Know Your Why**
2. Practice Self-Awareness
3. Develop Healthy Boundaries
4. **Cultivate Positive Relationships**
5. Practice Self-Care Intentionally
6. **Reflect and Celebrate**
7. Engage in Ongoing Learning
8. Seek Supervision or Mentoring
9. Practice Gratitude

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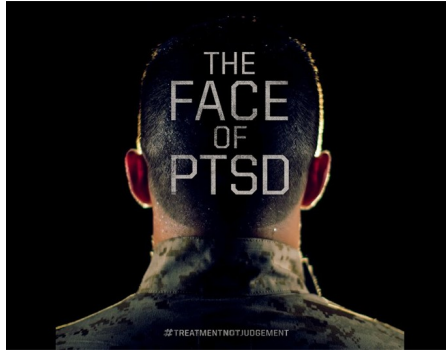
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# Part V-PTSI, Moral Injury and Post Traumatic Growth



**Post Traumatic Stress Injury – An assault on the Mind, Body, and Spirit triggered by exposure to Trauma**

## **What Is Trauma?**

- Any event that overwhelms and 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**

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

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# 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 a PET scan
- The changes can alter the brain's DNA and can therefore PERMANENTLY change the chemistry and structure of the brain
- Reactions to trauma are normal and are not indicative of 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/or relationship difficulties
- Almost always there is a difficulty engaging in intimate relationships after a traumatic event due to a lack of trust both in oneself and for others
- Emotional numbness is common. Rage and shame are often the only emotions to break through
- Second guessing of one's actions , (what I did or did not do), is also common

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## **PTSI – Diagnostic Criteria**

- Exposure to a traumatic event
- Response must involve intense fear, helplessness, and/or horror
- Increased hypervigilance and arousal
- Event is re-experienced by distressing recollections, dreams, flashbacks, etc.
- Symptoms must persist for more than 30 days

### **ADDITIONAL SIDE EFFECTS**

- Sleep disruption
- Impaired concentration and memory
- Repetitive nightmares/intrusive dreams
- Sexual inhibitions
- Impulsivity and/or instability
- A sense of isolation

### **POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF PTSI**

- Frequent spontaneous use of sick leave
- Difficulty passing a fitness-for-duty evaluation
- Chronic depression
- Suicidal thoughts/Behavior
- Substance abuse
- Domestic violence/disturbance
- Inappropriate use of force and/or increased citizen complaints for rudeness

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# Cumulative Career Traumatic Stress (a special form of PTSI)

- 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

## EMDR

### Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing



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# 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
- Caused by doing something that goes against one's beliefs (commission)
- Caused by 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 Moral Injury Causes

- 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

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# THE SPIRITUAL ASPECT

- 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

## 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.

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## FIVE TIMELESS VALUES (VIRTUES)



- **COMPASSION/KINDNESS**
- **JUSTICE/FAIRNESS**
- **FAMILY/COMMUNITY**
- **PEACE/HARMONY**
- **HONESTY/TRUTH**

*These are often factors in the maintenance or loss of one's moral compass*

### 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**

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# **POST TRAUMATIC GROWTH**

- It is possible to experience positive change as the result of the struggle with traumatic events and major life crises
- Post Traumatic Growth is Accompanied by Transformative Life Changes
- Post Traumatic Growth is Experienced Both as a Process and an Outcome
- Post Traumatic Growth 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

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# Part VI – Coping (Becoming Resilient)



## What to Focus On:

- Develop a resilient mindset (mindfulness)
- Exercise
- Eat a nutritionally balanced diet
- Hydrate (avoid excessive caffeine and alcohol)
- Sleep a minimum of 8 hours in every 24
- Develop your own support team
- Schedule time for yourself
- Take vacations
- Designate time for hobbies and self-care
- Have a complete annual physical including testing for cholesterol, lead, and all high-risk blood-borne diseases
- Have a regular mental wellness check

## THE “BIG FOUR”

*MINDFULNESS/EXERCISE/SLEEP/NUTRITION*

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# **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
- 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
- Allows you to respond peacefully in the present moment (Centering)
- Allows the prefrontal cortex to engage and guide you through the stressors
- Stimulates the Relaxation Response (parasympathetic) to counter the Fight/Flight/Freeze Response (sympathetic) so balance is restored
- Helps us become comfortable in uncontrollable circumstances
- Moves the mind out of the “acting” mode and into a “watching” mode, removing the sense of urgency
- Replaces fear and emotional reactivity with curiosity
- Increases your capacity to handle stress
- Repeated practice may change the structure of your amygdala

# Preparation

- Start with a daily routine
- Create a peaceful atmosphere
- Surround yourself with encouragement
- Be still
- Journal
- Take “mental breaks” during the day

## Body Scan Exercise

**Step 1:** Begin by lying on their back with your palms facing up and your feet falling slightly apart. This exercise can also be done sitting on a comfortable chair with feet resting on the floor;

**Step 2:** Lie or sit very still for the duration of the exercise, and move with awareness if it becomes necessary to adjust your position;

**Step 3:** Focus on your breath, noticing the rhythm, the experience of breathing in and expelling out. Do not try to change the way you are breathing but rather just hold gentle awareness on the breath;

**Step 4:** Notice what your body’s sensations, the texture of clothing against the skin, the contours of the surface on which your body is resting, the temperature of the body and the environment;

**Step 5:** Become aware of the parts of the body that are tingling, sore, or feeling particularly heavy or light, note any areas of their body where you don’t feel any sensations at all or are hypersensitive.

- A typical Body Scan runs through each part of the body, paying special attention to the way each area feels.
- The scan usually moves systematically through the body; starting at the feet and moving upwards as follows: • *Toes of both feet*; • *The rest of the feet (top, bottom, ankle)*; • *Lower legs*; • *Knees*; • *Thighs*; • *Pelvic region (buttocks, tailbone, pelvic bone, genitals)*; • *Abdomen*; • *Chest*; • *Lower back*; • *Upper back (back ribs & shoulder blades)*; • *Hands (fingers, palms, backs, wrists)*; • *Arms (lower, elbows, upper)*; • *Neck*; • *Face and head (jaw, mouth, nose, cheeks, ears, eyes, forehead, scalp, back and top of the head)*

# 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

## 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

## Types

- Abdominal—Engages the diaphragm while minimizing activation of the ribcage (*greater respiratory efficiency*)
- Thoracic—Engages the ribcage while minimizing the activation of the diaphragm (*greater oxygen capacity*)
- *Clavicular*—Engages the shoulders and the collarbone (*increases lung volume*)

## DEEP BREATHING EXERCISE

- Sit straight, feet flat on the floor
- Place right hand on top of your navel and left hand on top of your chest
- Observe the natural flow of your breath for a few cycles
- **A:** With the next inhalation, think of intentionally sending the air toward your navel by letting your abdomen expand and rise freely
- Feel the right hand coming down as you exhale while keeping the abdomen relaxed
- **B:** Without changing position, shift your attention to your ribcage
- With the next inhalation, think of intentionally sending the air toward your ribcage instead of your navel
- Let the thorax expand and rise freely, allowing your left hand to move up and down as you keep breathing
- Breathe through the chest without engaging your diaphragm. Your right hand should remain almost still
- **C:** With the next exhalation, repeat the thoracic breathing pattern; when the ribcage is completely expanded, inhale a bit more, thinking of allowing the air to fill the upper section of your lungs at the base of your neck
- Feel the shoulders and collarbone rise gently then find some space for the extra air to come in
- Exhale slowly, letting the collarbone and shoulders drop first and then continue to relax the ribcage

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## Breath Awareness

1. Sitting in an up-right position or laying down on your back, find a comfortable position you can sustain for a few minutes.
2. Release any unnecessary tension and gently bring your awareness to your breath.
3. You only need to observe your breath, do not change anything.
4. Observe the movements and sensations in your body with each inhalation and exhalation.
5. Let your attention travel with the air passing through your nose and throat to your lungs, feeling the expansion of the chest and belly.

## Anchor breathing

1. Imagine being on a boat, feeling calm, and safe
2. Attached to the boat is an anchor. It keeps you there, where you want, and happy
3. Our bodies, like the boat, also have anchors, and they can help us focus.
4. Our belly, our nose and mouth, and our chest and lungs can help us feel grounded.
5. With your hands on your chest, breathe in deeply.
6. Breathe out slowly.
7. Feel your ribs rise and fall
8. As your mind wanders, gently bring it back to the anchor point

## PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

*A technique for reducing anxiety by alternately tensing and relaxing the muscles.*

- 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 14-20 seconds
- Keep other muscle groups relaxed
- Do once per muscle group unless more tense

## PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

*Lie or sit as comfortably as you can. Close your eyes.*

*Tense the muscles of a particular body part.*

*Hold the tension in that body part for about seven seconds.*

*Let go of the tension fairly quickly, letting the muscles go limp.*

*Repeat steps one through four using the same muscle group.*

*Move to another muscle group and go through the same procedure.*

**RELAX YOUR FACE AND HEAD:** Wrinkle your forehead by raising your eyebrows as high as you can. Hold this tension for about five seconds and then let go, releasing all the tension in your forehead. Notice the difference between the feelings of tension and relaxation.

Clench your jaw by biting down on your back teeth and at the same time force a smile. Hold this uncomfortable position for about five seconds or so, and then relax your jaw, letting your mouth fall slightly ajar.

Purse your lips, pushing them together firmly. Hold that tension for a bit and then relax, letting your lips open partly.

**RELAX YOUR NECK AND SHOULDERS:** Bend your head forward as though you are going to touch your chest with your chin. Feel the tension in the muscles of your neck. Hold that tension. Now tilt your head slightly, first to one side and then to the other. Notice the tension at the side of your neck as you do so. Now relax, letting your head return to a more comfortable, natural position.

**RELAX THE BACK:** Arch your back, being careful not to overdo it. Hold that tension for several seconds, and then let your back and shoulders return to a more comfortable, relaxed position.

**RELAX YOUR LEGS AND FEET:** Either sitting or lying down, raise your right foot so that you feel some tension in your thigh and buttock. At the same time, push your heel out and point your toes toward your head. Hold this tension and notice what it feels like, and then let go, letting your leg fall to the floor or bed, releasing any remaining tension. Let this relaxation deepen for awhile. Repeat the process with the other foot and leg.

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**RELAX YOUR STOMACH:** Take in a deep breath and hold that breath, tensing the muscles in your stomach, Imagine that you are preparing yourself for a punch in the stomach. Hold that tension, then relax, letting go of the tension.

After you finish this sequence, let your body sink into an even deeper state of relaxation. Let go more and more. Mentally go over the sensations you are feeling in your arms, face, neck, shoulders, back, stomach, and legs. Feel your body becoming looser and more relaxed. Savor the feeling.

**SCRUNCHING UP LIKE A PRETZEL:** Find a quiet place that is relatively free from distractions. Tense all these muscle groups simultaneously.

Clench both fists, bend both arms and tense your biceps. At the same time,

Lift both legs until you notice a moderate degree of tension and discomfort, and

Scrunch up your face, closing your eyes, furrowing your brow, clenching your jaws, pursing your lips, and

Bring your shoulders as close as you can to your ears, while you

Tense your stomach muscles.

Hold this total scrunch for about five seconds and then release, letting go of any and all tension. Let your legs fall to the floor or bed, your arms to your sides, and let the rest of your body return to a relaxed position. Repeat this sequence at various points throughout your day.

## 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)

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# 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 of Exercise

- Weight control
- Increased stamina
- Wards off viral illnesses (colds and flu)
- Reduced health risks (obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure)
- 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 normal functions

## SLEEP DEPRIVATION

Impacts the ability to make good, rational decisions

Driver fatigue causes an estimated 100,000 police-reported crashes annually

Nearly 60% of First Responders reported some form of sleep disorder

31% of First Responders have shift work disorder

30% have obstructive sleep apnea

28% have excessive daytime sleepiness

28% have insomnia

75% of First Responders get less than the necessary amount of sleep for an adult

**WHAT TO FOCUS ON:**

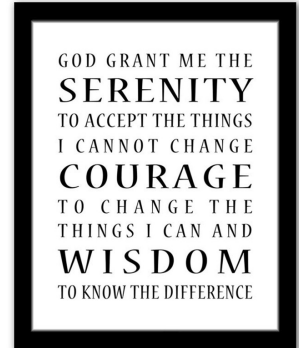
- Adequate time
- Conducive environment (dark, quiet)
- Eliminate distractions
- Temperature
- Avoid napping, strenuous exercise, large meals, excessive fluid intake, caffeine, smoking, and alcohol within 2 hours of sleep



# 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 or let go of?



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# Remember your "Purpose"

Why am I here now?

What it is 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?

## RESTORE YOUR BALANCE



- *Put energy into developing and maintaining each aspect of your life*
- *Discipline yourself to regularly address each area*

## BECOME STRESS HARDY (RESILIENT)

- Learn to see stress as a challenge rather than a threat
- Promote the feeling that you have control over your life situation
- Maintain a commitment to yourself, home, family, and work (*in that order*)

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

## **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; Tough people do**

**Be kind to yourself**

**Perfection is not mandatory**

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# RESOURCES

## SUICIDE PREVENTION

**Copline** - a not-for-profit 501©3 dedicated to serving active and retired law enforcement officers and their loved ones on a 24/7 confidential basis. **(800) 267-5463**

**Texas Law Enforcement Peer Network** - A state-wide Peer Network offering continuous support to the police officers in the field. TLEPN's mission is to eliminate police suicide in the state of Texas. Completely anonymous and peer staffed. **(972) 336-1314** or by email [TLEPN@untdallas.edu](mailto:TLEPN@untdallas.edu)

**QPR (Question/Persuade/Refer)** - An emergency mental health intervention for suicidal persons created in 1995 by Paul Quinnett, designed to identify and interrupt the crisis and direct the suicidal person to the proper care. [QPRInstitute.com](http://QPRInstitute.com)

## THERAPY

**EMDRIA (EMDR International Association)** - Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy is an extensively researched, effective psychotherapy method proven to help people recover from trauma and PTSD symptoms. Ongoing research supports positive clinical outcomes showing EMDR therapy as a helpful treatment for disorders such as Post Traumatic Stress Injury, anxiety, depression, OCD, chronic pain, addictions, and other distressing life experiences. **(512) 451-5200** [info@emdria.org](mailto:info@emdria.org)

## YOGA AND MINDFULNESS RESOURCES ([Yogamatters.com](http://Yogamatters.com))

### YOGA

**Ekhart Yoga** - New online classes each week, Ekhart Yoga helps to make yoga part of your daily routine. They also offer Pilates, meditation and programs to help you deepen your practice. You can sign up for a 2-week free trial.

**Movement for Modern Life** - Known for its variety in teachers and classes, this popular site features a great filtering system that helps you find a class to suit your mood. You can try a 14-day free trial before committing to a monthly or yearly subscription. Best for: A huge variety of teachers, all with a unique teaching style

**Downdog** - The **downdog** app group includes apps for Yoga, Yoga for beginners, HIIT, Barre, 7 Minute and Prenatal Yoga. All apps deliver a no-frills, personalized yoga experience right from your phone. Free for everyone until 1st May with students, teachers and healthcare professionals having free access until 1st July. Best for: The music lover! Switch it up from classical to sounds of nature.

**Glo** - Glo offers something for everyone with over 4000 classes in 16 different styles. Based on a community of members, Glo lets you interact with other members, including regular Q+A's with world-renowned teachers. Free for the first 15 days Best for: Range of classes that cover multiple styles.

**Gaia** - Gaia offers more than just yoga classes, they have an enormous amount of material aimed at deepening your mind, body and spiritual connection. Gaia is one of the biggest platforms yet one of the most budget-friendly. Offers 1 week free trial. Best for: If you want more than just a physical yoga practice.

## **ONLINE MEDITATION RESOURCES**

**Calm** – Rated as the best app for sleep, meditation, and relaxation. Includes meditation and mindfulness techniques, sleep sounds and relaxing music, breathing exercises, and stress reduction practices. Calm offers some free content or a yearly subscription to unlock all the content. They also offer a 7-day free trial. Best for: Finding (and sticking to) a daily meditation practice as there are new meditations every day. Available in both Apple and Android.

**Justbreathe** - An app that helps you find stillness and balance during life's ups and downs. The Justbreathe app is simple, incredibly easy to use and perfect for any time of day. The app is free. Best for: Those that don't think a meditation app is for them!

**Headspace** - Headspace focuses on making mindful living accessible for all. Recently Headspace created a collection called 'Weathering the storm'. It consists of meditations, sleep and movement exercises specifically made for this time of uncertainty. Some features on the app are free including all 'weathering the storm' content. They offer a 2 week free trial and an annual subscription after that. Best for: Beginners to mindfulness and those wanting to live a more mindful life.

**Smiling Mind** - This is a non-for-profit web and app-based meditation program. Smiling Mind's goal is to reduce the amount of mental health related illnesses in young people. They have started a 'Thrive Inside' initiative, which anybody can use. It helps you foster good mental habits. The app is free.

Best for: Those that want to feel good while supporting a great cause.

**Insight Timer** - Features over 30K free guided meditations, it's no wonder this app is one of the most popular out there. Their homepage is a never-ending scroll of talks, music and guided meditations, on a wide range of topics, it's a one-stop-shop for all your mental wellbeing needs. The app is free. Best for: If you're looking to spend more time meditating and want new content every time.

## **SLEEP AND PHYSICAL HEALTH**

**Sleepfoundation.org** - SleepFoundation.org is the go-to source for trustworthy sleep information. Their extensive article library is based on sleep science, and comprehensive reviews of different sleep and wellness products. A medical board and medical review panel ensures their work is rooted in medical literature and follows up-to-date research.

**Sigma Tactical Wellness ([iamsigma.com](https://www.iamsigma.com))** – Sigma Tactical Wellness is dedicated to providing affordable, convenient, accessible testing and consultation for the early detection of cardiac and metabolic risk in First Responders. Their goal is to help First Responders become more effective in their work, reduce health expenses, and improve First Responder survivability and longevity.

## **STRESS MANAGEMENT**

**National Institute of Mental Health/Brochures and Fact Sheets/I'm So Stressed Out!** Fact sheet <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/so-stressed-out-fact-sheet>

**Cleveland Clinic Health Essentials – “Your Definitive Guide to Work Stress and Burnout** <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/work-stress-and-burnout/>

**Mayo Clinic Healthy Lifestyle Stress Management – Relaxation Techniques** <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/relaxation-technique/art-20045368>



# THANK YOU!



**Randall**Group**911**