Stress Management
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What is stress?

A state of physical/psychological arousal
Stress is normal.

- Manage it—don’t delete it.
- Fight/Flight
  - Positive, productive driving force
  - Saves Lives
  - Increases Productivity
Crisis

- Emotional Turmoil (not intellectual)
- Reaction to stress
- Feeling = out of control
Incident Specific Stress

- **Acute**
  - At scene/or within 24-48 hours
  - Increased mistakes
  - Increased injuries
Incident Specific Stress

• Delayed
  - Days, weeks, months, years after events
  - Intrusive Images (flashbacks), fear of repetition, physical/emotional symptoms
  - Secondary Trigger
Cumulative Stress

• Burnout
  - Piling up lots of things over time
  - 6 months to a year
  - Not generally associated with specific event
  - Tied closely to lifestyle
  - Chronic state of fatigue or frustration from disappointment
Cumulative Stress

- Excessive Exposure to stress over time
- Evolves unusual behavior such as:
  - Increased drug/alcohol use
  - Decreased eating/sleeping
  - Decreased exercise
  - Suicidal
Lifestyle Burnout Phases

- **Warning**
  - Anxiety, depression, boredom

- **Mild**
  - Headaches, nausea, tremors

- **Entanglements**
  - Cardiac problems, cancer, ulcers

- **Severe Symptoms**
  - Suicidal, Homicidal
Post Traumatic Stress (PTSD)

• Maladaptive and result of critical incident stress without appropriate recovery

• Two most likely setups for PTSD:
  - Traumatic childhood
  - Highly anxious personality
Stressors

- **Causes:**
  - Psychological Contact with people daily=pressure
  - Bioecological - noise, dust, dirt, confusion, crowding
  - Personality-plus or minus
Stressors

- Night time operation (police)
- Expanding knowledge base
- Other: press, knowing victim, victim looks like, sounds like, etc., hazardous materials
Stressors

• Administrative hassles
• Non-administrative = field situations
• Death of children (92-95%)
• Injury to children (careless/malicious adults)
• Death of patients
Stressors

• High rise fires with life involvement
• Fear of own death/injury with operational procedures
• Injury to one’s own, personal/vulnerability
• Death of one’s own (hardest to handle)

Validates personal vulnerability