

Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training

Basic Curriculum Lesson Plan

LESSON TITLE: STRESS MANAGEMENT 1.6

SUBJECT:	Stress Management
AZ POST DESIGNATION:	1.6
HOURS:	4
COURSE CONTENT	A discussion of the sources, manifestations and stages of stress, plus techniques for managing stress and keys to emotional survival.
PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES	<p>Upon completion of this course of instruction, students using notes, handouts and other support materials as references, within the allotted time, will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.61 Define stress as presented and described within the AZ POST approved lesson plan.1.62 List the three (3) states of stress.<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Alarm.B. Adaptation.C. Exhaustion.1.63 Identify two (2) sources/kinds of stress and give three (3) examples of each.<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Short term.B. Long term.1.64 List the three (3) categories of manifestations or warning signs of stress and give two (2) examples of each.<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Physical.B. Emotional.C. Behavioral.

- 1.6.5 List, and briefly describe, the four (4) management techniques for dealing with stress.
- A. Aerobic exercise.
 - B. Relaxation.
 - C. Nutrition.
 - D. Sleep.
- 1.6.6 Identify the three (3) keys to emotional survival.
- A. Personal time management.
 - B. Physical fitness.
 - C. Having “other” significant roles.
- 1.6.7 Identify the signs and symptoms of PTS/PTSI/CPTSI
- 1.6.8 Identify available resources to assist those struggling with PTS/PTSI/CPTSI

NOTE OF INTEREST:

Stress inoculation (exposing recruits to stress) in a controlled setting may help them to be able to increase confidence for working the street. When recruits are exposed to a tense environment that includes physical exercise, where things are regimented, timelines are necessary, and attention to detail is demanded, then it gives them the opportunity to inspect their physiological response (increase in heart rate, increase in breathing, increase in blood pressure, internal messaging to their brain). This environment can help strengthen resolve, causing recruits to focus, work together, and accomplish tasks with tight deadlines. This can lead to increased confidence, and help them to utilize effective coping strategies (breathing). Recruits can then gain the knowledge of self-awareness to ensure they understand how they can regulate their own physical, emotional, psychological response to this stress. This process can help recruits build coping strategies.

DATE FIRST PREPARED: May 2000

PREPARED BY: SME Committee

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REVIEWED – REVISED:	AZ POST	DATE: April 2008
REVIEWED – REVISED :	AZ POST & Lt. Dave Kelly, Phoenix PD	DATE: August 2009
REVIEWED – REVISED :	AZPOST & Vic Escoto, Ret. Phoenix PD	DATE: February 2021
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AZ POST – APPROVAL:	Richard Watling	DATE: December 2009
AZ POST – APPROVAL:	Mandy Faust	DATE: March 2021
AZ POST – APPROVAL:	Lori Wait	DATE: February 2022
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AZ POST – APPROVAL:	Lori Wait	DATE: July 2023

INSTRUCTOR REFERENCES: “Emotional Survival” by Dr. Kevin Gilmartin (Book and AZ POST telecourse videotape). Physical evidence of police officer stress, Emerald, 25 (2), 399, Anderson, G. S., Litzenberger, R., & Plecas, D. (2002, June), International Chiefs of Police, “what does wellness look like?”

CLASS LEVEL: Student

TRAINING AIDS: “Under the Gun” video #H4869 (available from the AZ POST Resource Center) or any other appropriate video showing similar situations
 ” Emotional Survival” by Dr. Kevin Gilmartin, (teleconference videotape).
 Handout #1 – Life Changing Stress – Rating Scale.
 Handout #2 – Vulnerability to Stress.
 Handout #3 – Stress Physiology by Vic Escoto, (credentials)
 computer with PowerPoint, LCD projector (if using computer presentation), Life Change Inventory handout and Vulnerability to Stress Test handout.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY: Interactive lecture, class discussion and demonstration.

SUCCESS CRITERIA: 70% or higher on a written, multiple-choice examination.

COMPUTER FILE NAME: 1.6 Stress Management

DATE RELEASED TO THE SHARE FILE: July 2023

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Instructor – (self) introduction.
- B. Preview of performance objectives.

II. CLASS BACKGROUND

- A. Tell the class that much of this information is from Dr. Kevin Gilmartin, a clinical psychologist, who was a Deputy Sheriff with the Pima County Sheriff's Department for 15 years.
- B. Dr. Gilmartin's firm provides Critical Incident Stress Debriefings (CISD's) for many agencies in Arizona in officer-involved shootings and other critical incident counseling.
- C. This block of instruction will help you:
 - 1. Define stress and identify its sources.
 - 2. Explain how stress can harm you both physically and mentally if you do not control it.
 - 3. Recognize the manifestations or signs of stress.
 - 4. Describe the unique types of stressors in law enforcement.
 - 5. Describe ways to manage your stress – both off and on the job.
 - 6. Avoid "burnout."
 - 7. Describe several practical management techniques for stress.
 - 8. Map a strategy to deal with stress for the rest of your life.

III. WHAT IS STRESS?**P. O. 1.6.1**

- A. Stress can be called the "disease of modern society." (Definition: Physical, mental or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension - Charles Patrick Davic, MD, PhD.) During the past decade, more than at any period in history, researchers have studied stress and its effects on our daily lives.
- B. Stress is "pressure for action or change." **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Discuss. *Eustress: A positive form of stress having a beneficial effect on health, motivation, and performance, and emotional well-being. During positive stress (Eustress) such as a promotion or vacation, feel-good chemicals called endorphins are released - Tracy Boyd- Distress: Pain or suffering affecting the body, a bodily part, or the mind.*
- C. Think for a moment of a typical lifestyle of an American in the 2000's.

1. We are all in a hurry to go somewhere or to do something.
2. Fast-food chains and convenience stores have popped up everywhere.
3. A recent Newsweek survey showed that 40% of our meals are eaten out of the home or ready prepared.
4. It is a common thing for even our gas stations to have special equipment at the pumps so that we can put in our credit card and get gas without ever having to go inside and interact with a person.
5. As a result, we set ourselves up for stress.
6. Not only do we go, go, go outside of the workplace, but we also tend to carry this over into our jobs, which by its very nature, is very fast paced.
7. Social Media Stressors- “Social network users risk becoming more and more addicted to social media platforms even as they experience stress from their use. Research into the habits of 444 Facebook users revealed they would switch between activities such as chatting with friends, scanning newsfeeds, and posting updates as each began to cause stress. This leads to an increased likelihood of technology addiction, as they use the various elements of the platform over a greater timespan.” - Science Daily/Lancaster University 8/27/2019)

C. Overload AND under load causes stress. (adrenaline rushes vs. boredom)

1. Law enforcement by its very nature is said by many to be “hours and hours of boredom interspersed with moments of sheer terror.” Thus, our job consists of many “overloads” and “under loads” of stressors. **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Refer the students to section (#1) of the handout 3, *Stress Physiology*, and discuss as a class.
2. It is common for officers to erroneously think that we can handle this demanding job without admitting that we are under stress.
3. Sometimes, we hear ourselves or others say catch phrases like, “I can handle anything” or “If you want something done right, then you need to do it yourself.”
4. By repeating these kinds of phrases to ourselves, we eventually hurt ourselves. We gradually move through these destructive stages.
 - a. We deny our stress
 - b. Our stress builds.
 - c. We resort to “quick fixes,” like alcohol, drugs, buying things, etc.

- d. Our health suffers. We may die!
 - 5. According to Andrew Bernstein (myths of stress 2010), “it's not events or circumstances that cause stress, it's the way we think about them”.
 - 6. Sometimes our brains automatically engage in negative thoughts. Most of our negative thoughts are just that—thoughts, not facts.
 - 7. When it feels like something always or never happens, this is just your brain’s natural tendency to perceive threats (inflating the frequency or severity of an event).
 - 8. We allow negative messages, we do not challenge the negative thoughts and we believe these thoughts and stress increases.
- D. Everyone feels stress, it is CUMULATIVE over time.
- 1. Stress seems to be unique to the person – in other words, it is in the eye of the beholder.
 - 2. What stresses out one (1) person, may not stress out another person.

IV. THE THREE (3) STAGES OF STRESS

P. O. 1.6.2

- A. When we are exposed to stress, our bodies undergo three (3) distinct stages:
- 1. ALARM.
 - 2. ADAPTATION.
 - 3. EXHAUSTION.
- B. The first stage is ALARM. In the alarm stage, we first experience the stressor (the thing actually causing our stress). **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Refer the students to section (#2) of the handout 3, Stress Physiology, and discuss as a class. According to Gilmartin (2002), the stress that police officers experience is biological stress caused by a necessary survival state of hypervigilance. The activation is due to the sudden release of hormones, which stimulates the adrenal glands, triggering the release of epinephrine (adrenalin), and norepinephrine, causing a heightened state of readiness. (Anderson, Litzenberger, & Plecas, 2002)

P. O. 1.6.2A

INSTRUCTOR NOTE: Although such actions acutely facilitate essential biological responses to stress and threat, chronic glucocorticoid secretion is associated with a variety of pathogenic processes and disease states, including major depression, insulin resistance and diabetes, hypertension and atherosclerosis, bone loss and disorders related to diminished immune functions (Boyce & Ellis, 2005)

- 1. All of our body alarms go off at once.

2. Physically, it is estimated that our bodies go through about 1,400 changes while we are adapting to the stress. **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Refer the students to section (#4) and (#5) of handout 3, stress physiology, and discuss as a class
 3. Some of these changes are: Slowed digestion, faster breathing, faster heart rate, higher blood pressure, tensed muscles, increased perspiration and increased sugar adrenaline and fats to the blood for quick energy.
 4. We decide whether to meet the stressor head on or to flee from it. This is called the “fight or flight reaction.”
 5. It is thought to originate from our prehistoric survival reaction that prepared a person to either do battle with an enemy or run away.
- C. The second stage is called the ADAPTATION stage. Our reactions to the stressor continues as long as the situation continues and our body continues to adapt. (Discuss examples)
- P. O. 1.6.2B**
- D. The ability to adjust to stress depends on our storehouse of “adaptive energy.” Think of it in terms of your body having an energy tank and that over the day the tank is drained and it becomes harder to handle stress. (Resiliency)
1. The person who is always in a stressful stage, who does not know what to do about stress or who makes no effective effort to resolve the stress, eventually depletes his/her supply of adaptive energy. **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Refer the students to section (#6) of the handout 3, stress physiology, and discuss as a class.
 2. If you always run in high gear, then your tank runs dry – the mechanism breaks down and you get sick.
 3. During the adaptation stage, your stamina and overall health are important.
 - a. Your heart must be able to sustain a rapid pulse rate under stress.
 - b. Your body must be able to outlast the stressor.
 4. In our profession, this may mean calming an angry suspect or breaking up a domestic violence argument.
 5. When the stressful situation is over or resolved, we return to a pre-stress state. **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Refer the students to section (#7) and (#8) of the handout 3, stress physiology, and discuss as a class
 6. During many stressful situations/calls in law enforcement, we may go through this “alarm – adaptation” cycle numerous times before calming down and returning to a

pre-stress state.

7. Some officers, however, do not successfully resist the stress.

E. When we cannot resist the stressor any longer, we reach the EXHAUSTION stage.

P. O. 1.6.2C

1. We succumb to illness or depression. **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Refer the students to section (#9) of the handout 3, Stress physiology, and discuss as a class.

2. Our thoughts may even turn to suicide.

3. Your goal must be to keep healthy enough to NOT reach this stage.

V. SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM STRESS

P. O. 1.6.3

A. Let us talk about stress in terms of being healthy or harmful. There are two (2) kinds of stress – short term and long term.

1. **SHORT-TERM** stress is the “healthy kind of stress.” It represents a challenge or a threat that causes an alarm reaction that we ARE ABLE to respond to effectively.

P. O. 1.6.3A

2. *Example #1: Your doctor’s office calls you in for an appointment to discuss recent lab results. Short term stress starts affecting you, until you get the news. no bad news, stress gone, Bad news, welcome to long-term stress.*

a. When the situation is resolved, we return to a pre-stress state. We feel calm.

b. For example, when you are asked to prepare and deliver a talk, the stress builds as you prepare the material.

3. *Example #2: The process of becoming a Police Officer. Starts with the testing both academically and physically, interviewing, gathering documentation, getting a physical exam. Each part of the process creates stress until you successfully complete it. (Short-term)*

c. As you are waiting to deliver the address, your heart pounds in your ears and sweat begins to pour, even before you are up there.

d. The closer you come to standing up – the more nervous you get. What if you say something dumb? What if you stutter or forget your material?

e. Upon standing up and beginning your talk, you realize that you are in control because you prepared well. You slow down, take a few breaths and do a great job.

f. Upon sitting down, you eventually return to your pre-stress state and feel an

exhilaration in “conquering the challenge you faced.”

4. **LONG-TERM** stress, on the other hand, is the kind of stress that causes trouble for most of us. **P. O. 1.6.3B**
 5. *Continuation of example #2: You get hired by a Police Department and you must prepare for an academy. You will be required to maintain your physical fitness, study and pass academic tests, learn to shoot, learn defensive tactics, learn driving. You make it through and graduate from the academy. You next start your FTO process and a new group of stressors. All of these while dealing with the stress of your personal life as well. This cycle recreates itself your entire career. (Long-term)*
 6. *Example #3: You meet someone and begin a relationship. You're having fun and enjoying the new relationship. There's stress but it's good stress because you're getting to know each other. The relationship progresses into something more permanent. You begin to share more of your life with your partner which causes stress, and your partner shares theirs with you including their stress. You and your partner decide you want to spend your lives together and you become excited about getting married. This causes good and bad stress. You begin to plan a wedding and begin to stress about details and how to afford it. You also experience stress when you think about how permanent marriage is. The cycle continues throughout your married life. (Long-term)*
 - a. Long-term stress is continually there – gnawing at us. These sources of stress include:
 - b. Job-related stressors: Rotating shifts, excessive paperwork, role conflict (law enforcement vs. community service), exposure to unpleasant/dangerous situations, lack of recognition for work well done, negative attitudes towards law enforcement (lack of public support) and many others. (Things such as frustration with the criminal justice system.) **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Refer the students to section (#9) of the handout 3, Stress physiology, and discuss as a class.
 - c. Other sources: Home/family/marital problems, inability to meet your personal expectations, medical problems (chronic pain, major illness), etc.
- B. The result of this stress is that you continually move from alarm to adaptation and back again – never achieving a pre-stress or calm state.
 - C. The predictable result is a breakdown or complete exhaustion.
 - D. A first and important step in managing stress is to recognize its presence and its symptoms.
 1. There is a formal assessment tool to help you understand the level and source of your stress called the Life Change Inventory.
 2. Using hundreds of research participants, two (2) medical researchers constructed a list

of life changing events.

3. They also rated the average amount of stress each event caused.
 4. These researchers found that lives are at risk of developing stress-related illnesses.
 5. The basic premise of the inventory is that life events have varying degrees of impact and require different amounts of adaptation.
- E. The stress events are graded on a scale from 100 down to 11. **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** *Handout #1: Life changing stress-Rating scale.*
1. After each event, in the first short blank, write the number of times you have experienced that event in the past two (2) years.
 2. Then, multiply that number by the number after the multiplication sign.
 3. Next, add all of our totals together.
 - a. For example, if you got divorced in the past two (2) years, write 73 for your score on the right.
 - b. Do the same for each.
 - c. The final score reflects your total life change units.
 - d. Take no more than 10 minutes now to complete the Life Change Inventory exercise.
 4. Process the results with the class. **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** *Do not single out recruits, "group" scores before discussing.*

VI. MANIFESTATIONS OR WARNING SIGNS

P. O. 1.6.4

- A. When we are under a lot of stress, our bodies and minds will give us warning signs.

1. PHYSICAL WARNING SIGNS:

P. O. 1.6.4A

- a. Headaches.
- b. Digestive disorders.
- c. Hypertension (high blood pressure). **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** *Refer the students to section (#9), Stress physiology, and discuss as a class.*
- d. Low back pain.

- e. Arthritis.
- f. Coronary heart disease
- g. Cold hands/feet.
- h. Ulcers.
- i. Nausea or a “sick feeling.”
- j. Shortness of breath.
- k. Teeth grinding.
- l. Skin problems.

2. EMOTIONAL WARNING SIGNS:**P. O. 1.6.4B**

- a. Depression. (Discuss other emotional manifestations.)
- b. Frustration.

3. BEHAVIORAL WARNING SIGNS:**P. O. 1.6.4C**

- a. Withdrawal.
- b. Inappropriate outbursts of anger.
- c. Loss of appetite.
- d. Overeating.
- e. Difficulty sleeping.
- f. Sexual problems (impotency, under-desire or over-desire for sex).
- g. Alcoholism or drinking problems.
- h. Drug dependency.
- i. Thoughts of suicide.
- j. Anger.
- k. Impatience.

- I. Anxiety.
- B. Do you recognize any of these signs? (Review the list with the students)
1. Take a few moments to look over the list in your handout.
 2. Circle the warning signs you have felt because of your stress.
 3. You may have one (1) or more of these problems. The consequences are usually serious.
 4. If you are bothered by these signs, then you will be unable to tackle the demands of your work.
 5. You may not be able to perform the tasks that you need to, or, be up to the level you need to be.
- C. Overreacting to minor problems is one (1) of the most common behavioral warning signs. We “fly off the handle” at minor things or situations.
1. For example, you stop to help a driver who is having problems with his/her vehicle in a busy intersection.
 2. The driver is upset because he/she is blocking traffic.
 3. He/she starts to yell at you. You get angry and yell back before leaving.
 4. You overreacted to a minor problem and failed to use the communication skills you were taught in the academy.
- D. Other common behavioral warning signs are eating disorders and the increased use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco and caffeine.
1. Many of us use oral techniques to cope with stress. In times of tension, we find comfort in putting something in our mouths.
 2. In one study done in New Jersey, officers reported drinking 20-30 cups of coffee every day.
 - a. Some of us smoke and drink in large amounts.
 - b. These are “quick fixes.”
 - c. We think that they calm us down, but they do more harm than good.
- E. Let us view a video and as you watch it, be thinking of how the stress you observe could actually

be controlled or even avoided. We will be discussing your thoughts later on. **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** *Optional video: "Under the Gun" or any other appropriate video showing similar situations.*

VII. CONSEQUENCES OF STRESS

- A. Law enforcement has obvious physical dangers, but far more police officers will be killed by the effects of stress than by criminals. **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** *Review the book "Emotional survival for Law Enforcement" written by Kevin Gilmartin and see the article at <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/gazette/vol70n4/emotion-eng.htm> published by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.*
1. The average American male has a life expectancy of **73** years.
 2. The average American police officer can expect to live only **59** years.
 3. A high number of officers die within only seven (**7**) years after retirement!
- B. The "SUPER HERO" myths, the demands of our job and public expectations play a role in the stress level that police officers experience.
1. Understanding stress includes:
 - a. Realizing the efforts.
 - b. Identifying personal stress problems.
 - c. Recognizing what stress management habits are not working.
 2. Effectively managing stress includes: **P. O. 1.6.6**
 - a. Identifying what you are currently doing to manage stress.
 - b. Determining the long-term success of this method.
 - c. Deciding to do something differently to better manage stress.
 - d. Using healthy, constructive outlets for stress like jogging, basketball or tennis.
 - e. Handling stress better; for example, through the use of progressive relaxation, proper diet and sufficient sleep.

VIII. VICARIOUS VICTIMIZATION FOR POLICE OFFICERS

- A. It is a process – not an event. This is something that happens to you over a long haul of work. Picture this like a bucket. Each emotional call you go to adds water to the bucket. At some

point, if you do not have a mechanism to take care of how much you have absorbed, the bucket will begin to overflow.

- B. Sometimes referred to as “compassion fatigue.”
- C. Changes in the officer’s view of the world and inner experience because of empathetic engagement with other trauma (process, not a specific incident).
- D. Vicarious victimization is our strong reactions of grief, rage and outrage which grow as we repeatedly hear about and see people’s pain and loss.
- E. Symptoms include: **P. O. 1.6.7**
 - 1. No time or energy for self.
 - 2. Social withdrawal/disconnect from loved ones/difficulty maintaining relationships.
 - 3. Generalized despair and hopelessness.
 - 4. Nightmares.
 - 5. Changes in world view, spirituality.
 - 6. Altered sensory experiences (intrusive imagery, dissociation).
 - 7. “Burn-out”.
 - a. Usually about work and begins gradually; looks like physical and emotional exhaustion caused by prolonged stress and the accumulation of emotionally demanding situations. Difficulty regulating emotions that often manifest as rage.
 - 8. Other Symptoms include:
 - a. Lack of energy, feel exhausted.
 - b. Irritable and inflexible.
 - c. Cynical/detached/loss of compassion.
 - d. Physical/medical complaints.
 - e. Losing Memories or trauma or reliving them.
 - f. Depression
 - g. Suicidal thoughts or actions.

- h. Sudden mood swings.
- i. Feeling ashamed or guilty
- j. Difficulty trusting others.
- k. Feeling afraid for no obvious reason.
- l. Hypervigilance.

F. PTS/PTSI/C-PTSI

P.O. 1.6.7

1. Post Traumatic Stress/Post Traumatic Stress Injuries

- a. PTS/PTSI is an injury, not a disorder. It is treatable.
- b. Exact causes are unknown but can be caused by a traumatic event which is frightening, shocking, dangerous or scary. Most people recover from such experiences, but some people develop short-term or ongoing symptoms including:
 - i. Flashbacks
 - ii. Nightmares,
 - iii. Avoiding certain places, events or objects.
- c. Risk factors include:
 - i. Family history of depression and/or anxiety
 - ii. Having experienced prior traumatic events such as child abuse.
 - iii. Having previously been diagnosed with depression or anxiety.
 - iv. Substance abuse.
- d. Varies from person to person.

2. Complex Post Traumatic Stress Injury.

- a. Complex PTSI comes in response to chronic traumatization over the course of months or, more often years. The feeling of not being in control with no foreseeable end in sight can break down the psyche and can affect the person's sense of self worth. This injury is additive in nature.

Symptoms can “sneak up” or suddenly manifest itself. The person in trouble may not know they are in trouble.

3. How is it treated?
 - a. Identify there is a problem or change in behavior.
 - i. In one’s self
 - ii. Noticing the change in a friend or colleague.
 - b. Approach the friend, acknowledge what you/they are experiencing. Understanding and acknowledging that there is a problem is the largest step on the road to recovery. Reach out to those who are suffering, reach out if you are suffering.
 - i. Compassion heals.
 - c. Get the conversation started.
 - i. “Hey, I noticed you aren’t yourself lately, do you have some time to talk?”
 - ii. “I feel like something is wrong, and I’m concerned about you. Can we talk?”
 - d. Seek professional help. **P.O. 1.6.8**
 - i. Psychologists. Either department provided or outside of law enforcement channels. Not everyone feels comfortable utilizing avenues within their agency. There are many psychologists who specialize in first responders who are outside of department avenues and are covered under most health insurance plans. ***INSTRUCTOR NOTE: [The Warfighters: Intense Combat in the Streets of Iraq \(S1, E6\) | Full Episode - YouTube](#) Start clip at 30:18 seconds.***
 - ii. Councilors.
 - iii. Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)
 - a) Compsych.
 - b) Hotlines such as 988.
 - c) Peer support.
 - d) Spiritual peers/leaders.

- e) Text "BLUE" to 741741.
- f) National Suicide prevention lifeline 1-800-273-8255.
- g) PTSD coach phone app.

IX. HOME

- A. Home and family life are other extremely important sources of stress for criminal justice workers.
- B. Common stress problems at home include: (Discuss home stressors)
 - 1. Financial pressure.
 - 2. Not communicating well with the children and your spouse.
 - 3. An inadequate sexual relationship with your spouse.
 - 4. No time for chores around the house.
 - 5. Irritating habits of your spouse or family members.
 - 6. Frequent fights, crises or hassles with family members.
 - 7. No time to have fun with the family.
 - 8. Little or no appreciation from, or for, family members.
- C. After a short discussion of additional home stressors, ask the class to write their two (2) most important home stressors beside #1 and #2. (Ask the students to get a separate sheet of paper and number from 1-6)

X. PERSONAL LIFE

- A. It is natural to feel stress from your personal expectations, goals and needs. (Discuss personal life stressors).
- B. Common personal stress problems include:
 - 1. Feeling "trapped" by too many responsibilities.
 - 2. Problems meeting career objectives.
 - 3. No time for relaxation or fun.

4. Negative or cynical feelings.
 5. Unmet sexual needs.
 6. Lacking energy or time to do things you would like to do.
 7. Difficulty in changing a bad habit (e.g., smoking or excessive drinking). **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** *If applicable, a support member should be present in the back of the room for questions or issues that may arise from the students. s/he can also be available after class for private questions and concerns.*
 8. Feeling depressed or dissatisfied.
- C. After a short discussion of additional personal life stressors, ask the class to write their two (2) most important personal life stressors beside #3 and #4.

XI. PEER SUPPORT AND CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT (CISM)

- A. Many professional police departments are sensitive to the stress that exists not only in police work, but also in everyday life.
1. As a result, they offer their employees and their families assistance through various programs such as Peer Support Teams.
 2. This assistance provides peer support for officers involved in highly-stressful situations encountered at work and for stressful personal and family situations.
- B. Some agencies provide “on the scene” support and/or debriefing(s) after incidents involving abnormal stressors such as:
1. Officer-involved shootings.
 2. A serious line-of-duty injury.
 3. A line-of-duty death.
 4. Prolonged or violent tactical operations.
 5. Major disaster scenes.
 6. Any other incident that may create a stressful situation.
- C. It is very important to note that CISM IS NOT A CRITIQUE OF DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS AND/OR PROCEDURES OF THE INCIDENT!

1. Members are encouraged to discuss their thoughts, feelings, concerns and reactions to the critical incident or problem.

XII. HEALTH

- A. It is natural to experience health-related physical changes as we grow older. The stressors of law enforcement can accelerate these conditions if not properly managed.
- B. Health stressors may result from having to deal with:
 1. Chronic pain.
 2. A major illness.
 3. A weight problem (too much or too little).
 4. Poor body image.
 5. A progressive disease.
 6. Medical expenses.
 7. Sleep problems.
 8. Realization of declining physical abilities with age. (Discuss the sources of the stress and ways to reduce them.)
- C. After a class discussion on health stress, the participants should write their two (2) major health stressors beside #5 and #6.
- D. Then, ask class members to identify their two (2) most important sources of stress from their list of six (6).
 1. Ask for a “few” volunteers to give you their top two (2) stressors. (Make three (3) categories on the board to record answers)
 2. Help them identify methods of reducing these stressors.

XIII. STRESS REDUCTION/PREVENTION TECHNIQUES

- A. Stress damage to the body can be minimized by keeping it well nourished, relaxed, rested and strong. Stress reduction/prevention requires developing and maintaining healthy habits.
INSTRUCTOR NOTE: Consider showing the 4 7 8 breathing technique video.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p8fjYPC-k2k>
- B. Reducing the amount of stressors in your life is done by:

1. Learning to say “no” to demands on your time.
2. Delegating some responsibilities to other people.
3. Setting more realistic goals for yourself.
4. Learning new skills (assertive training or couples communication) or new ways of looking at life (setting the right priorities).
5. Learning to cope with situations you cannot change.
6. Time management, conflict management and interpersonal skills training.
7. Discussing a stress event with a friend immediately after it occurs (support groups).

XIV. MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES DEALING WITH STRESSORS**P. O. 1.6.5****A. AEROBIC EXERCISE.****P. O. 1.6.5A**

1. Exercising aerobically involves daily activities that strengthen the heart and circulatory system by raising the pulse rate to a target zone appropriate for one’s age (usually about 120 beats per minute) and maintaining it for at least 20 minutes. (Discuss types of aerobic exercises.)
2. Activities like handball, swimming, jogging, cycling and skating are aerobic.
3. Even walking at a fast pace can have positive value until you are able to do more.
4. Studies show that a police officer at a low fitness level has a 25 times greater chance of dying from a cardiovascular event than from an “in-the-line of duty” death.

B. RELAXATION TECHNIQUES provide time for these things:**P. O. 1.6.5B**

1. Progressive relaxation. (Discuss types of relaxation such as “belly breathing.”)
2. Music, videos of nature, etc.
3. Prayer/quiet times or meditation.
4. Recreational reading.
5. Stretching exercises.
6. Cultivate an attitude of gratitude.

- a. Focus on things in life which you are thankful for. You can write them down.
- b. Allows you to bring yourself to a positive place which helps with relaxation.

C. NUTRITION.**P. O. 1.6.5C**

1. You are what you eat! (Garbage in = garbage out). (Discuss the aspects of a proper diet - use the 8.3 lesson plan on physical conditioning as a resource, if needed.)
2. Recommendations for diet.
3. Reduce cholesterol levels to reduce blood pressure. (Fast foods?)

D. PROPER SLEEP.**P. O. 1.6.5D**

1. Studies show the optimum amount of sleep for most adults is seven and a half (7 ½) hours. (Discuss ways to get better sleep)
2. Without proper sleep, the other senses are negatively affected.

E. OPTIONAL TECHNIQUES/STRESS INOCULATION.

1. It is also possible to significantly reduce the negative effects of some expected traumatic events before they occur by using stress inoculation.
 - a. Familiarize a person with an anticipated cause of stress.
 - b. For example: Recruits who see photos of gruesome traffic deaths will have reduced stress when they later see actual fatalities.
 - c. Make a person aware of feelings that may be experienced in trauma situations. Discuss ways to do role playing/mental imagery while patrolling in order to prepare for stressful incidents.
 - d. Give a person a familiar procedure to follow when the actual trauma/stress event occurs.
2. Stress inoculation by role playing simulates the expected cause of stress and allows the police officer to practice his/her desired behavior in that situation. If possible, off-site locations can add to the realism.
3. An added value may be gained by role playing in the location where the stressful event is expected to occur.
4. Sports persons using mental practice exercises beat the other team that only practiced physically for the game (not mentally also). **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Discuss: See every

move in your mind before it happens. See it with a successful ending for you.

XV. DISCUSSION OF DR. GILMARTIN'S EMOTIONAL SURVIVAL IDEAS**P. O. 1.6.6**

- A. If not careful and properly trained in "EMOTIONAL SURVIVAL," the stress of this job can make people become angry – with others and with themselves. These types of officers are known as W/S/W's (Whiney, Sniveling, Malcontents!)
- B. They begin to not accept responsibility for themselves by not accepting any blame. They commonly say and feel "Not me!"
- C. Ask the recruits: "Does the policing experience cause changes in a person's perception of the people and things around them?" Discuss responses.
- D. In other words, "Do police officers see things differently?"
- E. Many people say that police officers are cynical. What is cynicism? Ask students for their definition of cynicism.
 - 1. "Being distrustful of human nature and motives."
 - 2. What are some examples you have seen or experienced?
- F. Cynicism can be rationalized as REALITY to the at-risk police officer. Why?
- G. Today, police officers are TWO (2) TIMES more likely to commit suicide than be killed by a felon. And the suicide rate for officers has more than doubled from 1950 to 1990. This is staggering, horrifying and preventable. 25% of law enforcement deaths were self inflicted in 2021, if COVID-19 deaths are not factored in, suicides would be the cause of 49% of law enforcement deaths. Suicides ranked second among law enforcement deaths last year. Officers involved in a high stress event have a 70% chance of suicide following the next incident if they do not seek intervention. (Nick Brooks-WTVY/Dr. Tim Faulk, ALLEAPS<,Clinical Director)

XVI. CORE VALUES VS. SITUATION VALUES

- A. Core values are how we are programmed – the REAL us.
- B. Situational values are nothing more than the occasion when we do what we do, BECAUSE of the situation we find ourselves in. Discuss examples they know about.
- C. When an officer feels he/she is a "victim":
 - 1. He/she forgets or sets aside core values and does things that are not normal.
 - 2. He/she begins to believe in "entitlements" – that the rules do not apply to us as officers for many different reasons (not enough salary, appreciation, bad working hours, stressful

job, etc.). THIS is when officers get into trouble and do things that are illegal and/or unethical.

XVII. THE BIOLOGICAL ROLLER COASTER

- A. In police work, we must be constantly vigilant and aware of our surroundings, first and foremost for OFFICER SAFETY.
 - 1. Because of this hypervigilance, we experience energy, humor, feel alive, alert and able to make quick decisions at work.
 - 2. HOWEVER, for every action there is an opposite and equal reaction.
 - 3. When we come home we feel tired, detached, apathetic, tired and we do not want to make decisions or be bothered with “small things.”
- B. For a person in a normal job – this would be alright because the body recycles itself to the normal mode after 18-24 hours.
 - 1. But we go back to work in less time than this time! The result is that we experience this “biological roller coaster.”
 - 2. We disengage and avoid making decisions.
 - 3. We become angry at people and events that make us take actions mentally or physically.
- C. Officers caught in this roller coaster have a tendency to find a “magic chair.” We come home and plop down in the magic chair.
 - 1. It is magic because all of our blood turns to lead.
 - 2. We grab the remote control and begin clicking channels or sit in front of the computer and start surfing the net.
 - 3. We lose all of the top responses of the roller coaster and settle at the bottom.
- D. Because we feel bad at home (or at the bottom of the roller coaster), the officer becomes over-invested in his/her job to feel better. Discuss examples.
- E. Officers in this mode experience the “**I USTA SYNDROME.**”
 - 1. Because they disengage – they stop doing things they used to do that made them feel good and helped to reinforce their sense of self:
 - a. “I USTA RIDE MY MOUNTAIN BIKE.”

- b. "I USTA LIFT WEIGHTS OR RUN."
 - c. "I USTA TAKE COLLEGE CLASSES."
 - 2. Everyone needs to feel that he/she controls his/her life or at least his/her sense of self.
 - 3. **This is something that people cannot take from us – unless we allow them to.**
 - 4. The biological roller coaster can make officers become VICTIMS rather than SURVIVORS.
- F. WHAT YOU REALLY CONTROL:
- 1. Your integrity.
 - 2. Your professionalism.
 - 3. How well you do your job.
 - 4. **We must be careful to not connect the circle with our job. Because when we feel our job goes down – then if we are connected – we go down with it.**

XVIII. **VICTIMS FOCUS ON WHAT THEY DO NOT CONTROL** (Discuss)

- A. They think of how their agency controls their work schedule and then they carry it over to their personal schedule. This is a mistake.
 - 1. Reality shows us that for a regular assignment officer – the agency may interfere with our personal schedule approximately 30% of the time.
 - 2. This leaves us 70% of the time to control our lives.
- B. At work, we are REACTIVE. We respond to external stimuli all of the time.
 - 1. At home, we need to be PROACTIVE.
 - 2. We need to control the things around us such as our time, actions and thoughts.

XIX. **SURVIVORS FOCUS ON WHAT THEY DO CONTROL**

- A. When people feel like SURVIVORS – it does affect the way they behave!
P. O. 1.6.6
- B. We need to create a culture/work environment of SURVIVORS and not VICTIMS!

XX. **TIME MANAGEMENT**

- A. We like to control things in our lives.

P. O. 1.6.6

1. This gives us a sense of well being and direction.
 2. A key component to reducing stressors in our lives is to control our time.
 3. To do this we need to PLAN our time and use effective TIME MANAGEMENT skills.
- B. Make two (2) calendars at home.
1. One (1) for your use to record shifts you are going to work and court dates – everything needed for work. (Day Planner?)
 2. The other calendar does not include any work-related matters, but only personal and family happenings.
 3. Plan out your week to the extent of listing school functions, birthdays, anniversaries, etc.
 4. PLAN a date and time for exercising and family fun activities like going camping, playing ball, having a picnic, etc.
- C. DO NOT JUST ALLOW THESE THINGS TO HAPPEN – PLAN THEM OUT IN DETAIL.
1. This will increase our sense of control in matters that are the most important in the long run – personal and family matters.
 2. It is important to maintain or create other significant roles in your life and it should be separate from police work.
 3. They include things such as:
 - a. Being a volunteer for a church or civic organization.
 - b. Coaching a youth sports team.
 - c. Being involved at your child’s school.
 - d. Pursuing hobbies (other than shooting guns!) and many others.
 4. The important thing is to create an aspect of our life that is separate from your job to have an identity in.

XXI. HOW VULNERABLE ARE YOU TO STRESS?

- A. Have the recruits complete the stress survey to evaluate their vulnerability to stress. **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** Complete handout #2- Vulnerability to Stress. Discuss the results with the students.

- B. Help them identify ways to reduce their stress levels from the areas tested.
- C. Have each of them circle two (2) areas they will begin working on today.
 - 1. Have each of them write down a specific “first step” for the two (2) areas they circled.
 - 2. Ask for a “few” volunteers to share one (1) “area” and one (1) “first step.”

XXII. THE KEYS TO EMOTIONAL SURVIVAL ARE:**P. O. 1.6.6**

- A. Personal time management.
- B. Physical fitness.
- C. Having “other” significant roles. **INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** *Be aware of those recruits that appear to need to talk about personal issues or concerns after a class such as this.*

XXIII. YOU HAVE CHOSEN AN EXCITING AND REWARDING PROFESSION TO GO INTO, IT IS A JOB

- A. YOU are not the job!
- B. The job is not YOU! Keep them separate!!!!
- C. Your sense of self is vital to remaining healthy, both physically and mentally.
 - 1. This is affected by your sense of: (Do not let what you do become who you are. Ask each student to identify one (1) “non-job related activity or release they have in their life now)
 - a. Community.
 - b. Friends.
 - c. Family.
 - d. Health.
 - e. Spirituality.
 - f. Hobbies.
 - g. Job.
 - h. Special interests.

2. It is a TOTAL PACKAGE that we CANNOT neglect if we are to be successful in identifying and managing our stressors.

XXIIV. CONCLUSION

- A. Review of performance objectives.
- B. Final questions and answers.
- C. Instructor closing comment(s).