



USING THIS GUIDE

This Participant's Guide is intended to assist individual viewers of the video material outside of a facilitated group or classroom setting. The scenarios presented do not necessarily depict a correct or incorrect way to handle a situation. The goal is to prepare participants to later engage in discussion of the scenarios and topic and how it relates to them and to their agency policy and procedures. See the explanation for "Informational/Individual Viewing" on next page.

VIEW THE VIDEO

To access this video online, visit the [POST Learning Portal](#).

ABOUT THIS VIDEO

The goal of this training program is to give law enforcement personnel means to greater mental, emotional, and physical health (i.e., wellness) by providing information on the causes and signs of law enforcement-related stress and revealing strategies for dealing with stress-related impairments. It is intended to enhance cultural shifts toward a greater openness about, and the destigmatization of, stress-related physical and mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, and suicide, which are so pervasive in law enforcement. This video program defines wellness, reviews causes and symptoms of stress, gives examples of how to achieve and maintain a healthy life balance, and provides information on resources available to individual officers, their partners, and departments. Using straightforward testimonials, the program reveals how officers can face-- and overcome-- many of the personal challenges a law enforcement career may create.

NOTE: This program addresses serious issues law enforcement professionals face and will include available resources during the presentation and at the end of the program. **If you or anyone viewing this course material is in emotional distress or contemplating suicide, call 9-1-1 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline now at 1-800-273-8255. Your life is worth the call.**

GUIDE CONTENTS

The facilitator should preview all video and guide materials in this course and be prepared to provide information on resources available locally to the participants. The conclusion of the facilitated discussions should focus on resources available for affected personnel and any specific agency policies related to the subject.

Video Viewing Options and Features

Describes how the training video is formatted and organized on screen and provides navigation instructions for facilitators or individual viewers. The video may be viewed in a single training session or broken up into shorter segments.

Program Overview

Lists the main teaching points and provides general information that is examined in greater detail within each scenario.

Scenarios

Each scenario features a brief overview and *Key Learning Points* to assist with quick review of the material during presentation. The *Suggested Facilitation Questions and Common Responses* are designed for use in a traditional training session where more time is available to explore the subject in depth. *Suggested Learning Activities* are also included to aid facilitators in providing more meaningful training in small group settings (roll-call or squad training).

Participant's Guide Answer Key

A completed version of the Participant's Guide self-assessment is provided at the end of this guide. This answer key provides the facilitator with necessary information to evaluate the participant's completed self-assessment, which must be reviewed with the designated training manager or supervisor for the participant to receive training credit.



VIDEO VIEWING OPTIONS AND FEATURES

Two different viewing options are offered with this training video: FACILITATED GROUP COURSE or INFORMATIONAL/INDIVIDUAL VIEWING.

FACILITATED GROUP COURSE

The **Facilitated Group Course** option should be selected when the video is being used in a classroom or briefing setting. The material may be delivered in a single session or broken up over several days, such as delivery during briefing or roll call. The material is divided into tabbed sections that the facilitator may play in whatever order they feel best meets the training need (see Navigating the Video section below). Once the material has been covered in its entirety, the instructor, supervisor, or training manager (as designated by the department) may [submit a completed training roster](#) via POST EDI for CPT credit for participants.

INFORMATIONAL / INDIVIDUAL VIEWING

The **Informational/Individual Viewing** option should be selected when a participant is viewing the video alone or without an instructor or supervisor present to facilitate the delivery of the material. This option should not be used in a group training session. This option is intended for participants who work in a remote location, for a smaller agency that cannot readily access group training, or for an officer who is simply interested in viewing the video for informational purposes. The segment order is preset, and the viewer will be guided through the video without live facilitator interaction.

At the discretion of the department-designated training manager or supervisor, participants of the Informational/Individual Viewing mode may receive CPT credit for viewing this video. To receive credit, individual viewers must be provided with the Participant's Guide (pdf). The individual watches the video and reviews and completes the Participant's Guide assessment as they follow along. The training manager or supervisor then facilitates a discussion of the video and assesses the participant's responses using the Participant Assessment Answer Key provided at the end of this guide. If the facilitator is satisfied that the participant has demonstrated an understanding of the concepts of the video, they may [submit a completed POST Course Roster](#) via EDI for CPT credit.

Facilitators should contact POST's [Training Delivery and Compliance Bureau](#) at (916) 227-7748 or their POST [Regional Consultant](#) for questions about completing and submitting POST Course Rosters via POST EDI for training video completion.



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- The concept of “Wellness”
 - Its general meaning
 - Negative connotations
 - As defined within this program
- The impact of stress on one’s:
 - Personal life
 - Mind
 - Body
 - Soul
 - Relationships
 - Professional life
 - Service ability
 - Service quality
- Common internal and external stressors facing law enforcement
- The law enforcement culture’s influence on stress mitigation
 - Rationalization
 - Recognition
 - Proactive efforts
- Common life areas that show symptoms indicative of unmitigated or cumulative stress include:
 - Physical
 - Emotional
 - Mental
 - Interpersonal
 - Professional
- Common behaviors indicative of unmitigated stress include:
 - Isolation / withdrawing
 - Discontinuing outside activities/relationships
- Wellness-related concepts include:
 - Thriving vs. surviving
 - Pain vs. suffering
 - Self-awareness
 - Vulnerability
 - Self-care
- Confidentiality and privacy
- Common ineffective coping mechanisms
 - Reliance on sleeping aids without seeking alternatives
 - Alcohol to assist medication’s efficacy
 - Ignoring other’s (e.g., spouse’s) observations and comments
 - Continuing to hide problems
 - Isolation
- The importance of relationships
 - Avenue for dialogue
 - Provides alternate views of situations
 - Allows for additional information

Continued



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

CONTINUED

- Others meeting the individual's need for outside involvement include:
 - Peer
 - Supervisor
 - Agency
 - "Outside" (i.e., non-law enforcement) relationships
 - Professional: including medical and psychological practitioners
- Indicators warranting professional services include:
 - Degrading relationships
 - Substance use/abuse
 - Workplace incidents
 - Changes in routine behaviors
 - Depressive/suicidal thoughts
- Available resources for the individual and those wanting to help others
 - Peers and peer programs
 - Chaplaincy
 - Department-based services
 - Medical intervention
 - Therapy
 - Web-based and outside resources
- Methods of early intervention include:
 - Inquire
 - Information
 - Support
 - Encouragement
- Compassion and resiliency's part in dealing with stress
- Compassion fatigue and chronic stress
- The need for, and benefits of, intentionally engaging in personal/family life
- Mind/body relationships including:
 - Breathing techniques
 - Mindfulness
 - Meditation
 - Compassion training
 - Physical health's relationship to overall performance and wellness
 - Diet
 - Exercise
 - Cortisol
 - Sleep
- The concept of "R to the Third Power" and its overarching benefits
 - Respect everyone you contact
 - Respect the profession
 - Respect yourself
- The value of enjoying life rather than just enduring life

Continued

**PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

CONTINUED

- Changing trends in the law enforcement culture
 - Past resistance to problem recognition
 - Unwarranted stigmas associated with mental health, professional services, and medication
 - Resistance to authenticity, perception of weakness, and seeking help

- Seeking and maintaining a healthy life balance
 - Outside interests
 - Self-care
 - Valuing relationships
 - Setting priorities
 - Managing work
 - Identify as more than just a peace officer
 - Repurposing; expanding life's purpose beyond just law enforcement service



SCENARIO 1 – WHAT IS WELLNESS?

Two younger officers provide parallel but seemingly contrasting stories of the changes all officers face in their interpersonal relationships and personal wellness. Although presented in a condensed timeline, the scenario reveals how the job may begin quickly changing people without them even realizing it.

KEY LEARNING POINTS

The concept of “Wellness”

- Its general meaning
- Negative connotations
- Holistic view
- Personal definitions vary

Common behaviors indicative of unmitigated stress include:

- Isolation or withdrawing
- Discontinuance of outside activities/relationships
- Rationalization

Common life areas that show symptoms indicative of unmitigated or cumulative stress include:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Mental
- Interpersonal

Indicators warranting professional services include:

- Degrading relationships
- Workplace incidents
- Changes in routine behaviors (e.g. diet, exercise)

Resources for the individual and those wanting to help others

- Peers and peer program
- Chaplaincy
- Department-based services and training
- Resiliency skill-building and training
- Medical intervention
- Therapy
- Web-based and outside resources

Confidentiality and privacy

Wellness-related concepts include:

- Thriving vs. surviving
 - Self-awareness
 - Self-care
-



SCENARIO 2 – THE ISSUES OF STRESS AND STRESSORS

Common stressors and resulting symptoms are revealed at the conclusion of an officer's shift and with her being delayed in going home. Possible effects of peers and supervisors on another's wellness are also shown.

KEY LEARNING POINTS

Common internal and external stressors facing law enforcement include:

- Organizational/administrative
- Schedules
- Field performance demands
- Traumatic incidents/vicarious trauma
- Societal pressures

Traits of self-care

- Make yourself a priority
- Develop healthy relationships
- Involve others
- Reset priorities when warranted

Intervention strategies include:

- Peers' involvement
- Self-disclosure (i.e., "tell" when something is not right)
- Inquire (i.e., "ask" when concerned)
- Support

Cumulative stress

- Without being addressed, occurs over time with:
 - Major and minor incidents
 - Changes in personal life habits (e.g., missing workouts)
 - Routine items (e.g., simple radio calls)

Causes of isolationism and self-removal from personal life endeavors

- Shift schedules
- Specialty assignments/promotions requiring more attention
- Misinterpreting family/loved ones' inquiries
- Depression/mental health decline



SCENARIO 3 – WHAT TO LOOK FOR

An on-duty officer meets with a recently retired officer for coffee and discovers his former partner has been showing previously unknown symptoms of stress for some time. By discovering some of their common needs, they plan positive actions and show how important the support and involvement of others can be to promoting positive, and sometimes lifesaving, change.

KEY LEARNING POINTS

The individual's need for involvement by:

- Peers
- Supervisor
- Agency
- "Outside" relationships
- Professionals; including medical and psychological practitioners

Indicators warranting outside or professional services include:

- Degrading relationships
- Substance use/abuse
- Changes in routine behaviors
- Depressive/suicidal thoughts

Common coping mechanisms and their effectiveness

- Reliance on sleeping meds without seeking alternatives
- Alcohol to assist medication's efficacy
- Ignoring other's (e.g., spouse's) observations and comments
- Continuing to hide problems
- Isolation

Methods of early intervention include:

- Inquire (i.e., "ask" when concerned)
- Self-disclosure (i.e., "tell" when something is not right)
- Seeking/providing information
- Support by individuals or groups
- Simple encouragement to take the next step

The importance of relationships

- Avenue for dialogue
 - Provide alternate views of situations
 - Allow for additional information
-



SCENARIO 4 – LIFE BALANCE

Several officers and one family member provide an unapologetic, yet intimate, glimpse into their family and professional lives. Their candor and openness reveal often-hidden issues facing law enforcement professionals while also showing how they recognized their own needs and found the courage to seek the means to recover their own lives and wellness.

KEY LEARNING POINTS

The impact of stress on one's

- Personal life
 - Mind
 - Body
 - Soul
 - Relationships
- Professional life
 - Service ability
 - Service quality

Common internal and external stressors facing law enforcement

- Day-to-day requirements of the job
- Significant events
 - Traumatic injuries
 - Officer deaths
 - Child-related incidents

Compassion fatigue and chronic stress

Compassion and resiliency's part in dealing with stress

Common life areas that show symptoms indicative of unmitigated or cumulative stress include:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Mental
- Interpersonal

Stress and the autonomic nervous system

- Autonomic nervous system (fight or flight; "gas pedal")
- Parasympathetic nervous system ("brake pedal")
 - Engaging counteracts cumulative stress

Indicators warranting professional services include:

- Degrading relationships
- Substance use/abuse
- Workplace incidents
- Changes in routine behaviors
- Depressive/suicidal thoughts

Continued



SCENARIO 4 – LIFE BALANCE

KEY LEARNING

POINTS

CONTINUED

Resources possibly available to the individual and those wanting to help others

- Peers and peer programs
- Chaplaincy and faith-based assistance
- Department-based services and training
- Medical intervention
- Therapy
- Web-based and outside resources
- Simple communication
 - As noted by the officers, one might be able to say that “talking to someone was one of the best things I could have done.”

Seeking and maintaining healthy life balance

- Outside interests
- Self-care
- Valuing relationships
- Setting priorities
- Managing work
- Identify as more than just a peace officer
- Repurposing; expanding life’s purpose beyond law enforcement service

The concept of “R to the Third Power” and its overarching benefits

- **R**espect everyone you contact
- **R**espect the profession
- **R**espect yourself

The value of enjoying life rather than just enduring life



SCENARIO 5 – RESOURCES AND COPING

A veteran officer begins realizing some of his behaviors, which are being identified by friends and loved ones, are not what he would prefer. He seeks assistance through readily available avenues.

KEY LEARNING POINTS

The impact of stress on one's

- Personal life
- Professional life

Common life areas that show symptoms indicative of unmitigated or cumulative stress include:

- Interpersonal
- Internal (self-view)
- Behavioral

Common behaviors indicative of unmitigated stress include:

- Isolation/withdrawing
- Discontinuance of outside activities/relationships
- Rationalization

Others who may meet the individual's need for outside involvement include:

- Peers
- "Outside" relationships
- Professionals, including medical and psychological practitioners

The importance of relationships

- Avenue for dialogue
- Provides alternate views of situations
- Allows for additional information

Indicators warranting professional services include:

- Degrading relationships
- Substance use/abuse
- Workplace incidents
- Changes in routine behaviors
- Depressive/suicidal thoughts

Available resources for the individual and those wanting to help others

- Peers and peer program
- Chaplaincy
- Therapy

Confidentiality and privacy

Changing trends in the law enforcement culture

- Past resistance to problem recognition
 - Unwarranted stigmas associated with mental health, professional services, and medication
 - Resistance to authenticity, perception of weakness, and seeking help
-



CONCLUSION

After completing this course, participants should better understand:

- Causes and effects of stressors innate to law enforcement
- How to recognize unhealthy behaviors and actions in self and others
- Available resources and strategies for dealing with their own symptoms of stress and those of others
- The need to have courage to address one's own life challenges and take appropriate step toward better health and overall wellness
- Why officers need to be better prepared and willing to ASK when they see someone is not right, TELL when they find themselves in need, and BE SILENT NO MORE about the critical effects of stress in the law enforcement profession



NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____

As you watch the training video in the Informational/Individual Viewing mode, follow along and answer the questions below. You may pause the video and view a section again if needed. The goal is for you to complete this assessment and then discuss the material with your designated agency training manager or facilitator.

ASSESS WHAT YOU LEARNED

Which of the following is not likely to assist with maintaining an overall fitness for duty? (circle one)

- A. Exercise
- B. Training for the job
- C. Having regular blood tests
- D. Addressing pain
- E. None of the above

Which of the following does not indicate professional services may be warranted? (circle one)

- A. Depressive/suicidal thoughts
- B. Degrading relationships
- C. Outburst over a performance evaluation
- D. Substance use/abuse
- E. Changes in routine behaviors

Low-intensity exercises can be used to reduce cortisol levels, which affect sleep and are often high both in the morning and after high-intensity exercises. (circle one)

- A. True
- B. False

Based on the information in the program, which of the following is not usually directly affected by stress? (circle one)

- A. Intimate relationships
- B. Professional relationships
- C. Mental acuity
- D. Family acceptance of profession's demands
- E. Goal setting

Continued



ASSESS WHAT YOU LEARNED
CONTINUED

Describe the actions and attitudes shown by individuals whose lives reveal that they are not “losing self” and are “all in” with friends, family, and loved ones when away from work.

Ineffective coping mechanisms include: (circle one)

- A. Peer support/counseling
- B. Medical intervention/Professional therapy
- C. Concealment of problems
- D. Disclosure to family
- E. Both C and D

Which of the following actions by an officer may warrant a peer’s concern and intervention? (circle one)

- A. Comments or jokes about suicide
- B. Occasional loss of temper
- C. Frustration with work conditions
- D. New/unexplained risk-taking on calls
- E. Both A and D

List four resources readily available in your area to aid officers with mitigating stress.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____

Which of the following is not necessarily an indicator that stress is negatively affecting an officer? (circle one)

- A. Changes in behavior
 - B. Routines and approaches to calls changing
 - C. Increased reactivity
 - D. Loudness during some encounters
 - E. None of the above
-

Continued



ASSESS WHAT YOU LEARNED
CONTINUED

Describe the idea of “career seduction” and how it negatively affects relationships, family, and one’s personal wellness over time.

Early intervention techniques include all but which of the following?
(circle one)

- A. Inquire
- B. Delayed response
- C. Information
- D. Support
- E. None of the above

Which of the following does not impact the mind/body relationship and personal well-being? (circle one)

- A. Breathing techniques
- B. Yoga
- C. Mindfulness
- D. Compassion training
- E. None of the above

Internal and external stressors faced by law enforcement officers include all of the following except: (circle one)

- A. Work schedules
 - B. Field performance demands
 - C. Traumatic incidents/vicarious trauma
 - D. Societal/media-based pressures
 - E. None of the above
-

