SUPPORTING NEAR MISS AND EXPEDITION TRAUMA

THE HOW OF IT

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Objectives of Wilderness First Aid and Emergency Medicine:

- Assess LIFE THREATS and preserve life
- Do no harm
- Stabilize and treat to mitigate future complications
- Disposition/referral to higher care

Stress Injuries are physical injuries
STRESS INJURIES

1. Occur on a continuum, with PTSD as one of many presentations
2. Have early and late changing vital signs
3. Are physical injuries
4. Can be supported when they are recognized
5. Are dynamic
6. Are more likely to occur in a state of stress
**STRESS INJURY FORMATION**

- **Neocortex:** Rational or Thinking Brain
- **Limbic Brain:** Emotional or Feeling Brain
- **Reptilian Brain:** Instinctual or Dinosaur Brain

**Response system overwhelmed**

**Emotional Connection**

**Or Isolation**

**Helplessness**
Stress Continuum Model

**Stressor**

**READY**
- Effective communication
- Socially, spiritually active
- Calm and confident
- Strong, cohesive units and families
- Emotionally and physically healthy

**REACTIONG**
- Changes from normal behaviors
- Poor focus, loss of interest
- Irritable and pessimistic
- Temporary and mild distress

**INJURED**
- Unresolved loss, trauma, wear and tear, inner conflict
- Social isolation
- Sleeplessness and self medicating
- More severe and lasting effects

**ILL**
- Constant and disabling distress
- Depression, severe anxiety
- Symptoms get worse or get better then worse again
- Relationships and work suffer

**TO STAY MISSION READY**
- Keep fit, eat right, relax

**TO RECOVER AND BUILD RESILIENCE**
- Get adequate sleep, talk to someone you trust

**TO BEGIN HEALING**
- Talk to a chaplain, counselor, or medical provider

**TO GET HELP**
- Seek medical treatment

**Unit Leader Responsibility**

**Individual, Shipmate, Family Responsibility**

**Caregiver Responsibility**

**Combat and Operational Stress First Aid**

**USMC**

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**INDIVIDUAL STRESS CONTINUUM**

**READY**
- Mastering Stress with Good Coping Skills
  - (Not Stress Free)
  - Ready!

**REACTING**
- Reacting To Life’s Normal Stressors.
  - Mild and Reversible!

**INJURED**
- Stress Injury
  - Damage to Mind/Body/Spirit
  - Temporarily Non-Mission Ready!

**ILL**
- Injuries Become Illnesses
  - Acute Becomes Chronic

**Mission satisfaction/ Mission Drift**
INDIVIDUAL STRESS CONTINUUM

**READY**
- Asking for help, mentoring
- Recreating
- Self care
- Can say NO!

**REACTING**
- Late
- Drinking/ Numbing
- Lack of confidence
- Isolation
- Less willingness to engage
- Complacency
- Obsessiveness

**INJURED**
- Chronic drinking
- or numbing
- Rigidity

**ILL**
- Dragdown
- Burning Bridges
- Break Down
- Relationship breakdown
- Physical deterioration

**Mission satisfaction/ Mission Drift**
TOOLS FOR SUPPORT

Elements of Psych First Aid
The Art and Science of the Excellent Debrief
Incident Review
Organizational support of the individual
access to counselling, EAP

The Be and the Do:

*If I want to be in the green, what do green people do?*
PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID

CALM
ESTABLISH SAFETY
CONNECTION
SELF-EFFICACY
HOPE

GOALS:

- Decrease arousal and re-establish safety.
SAFETY

CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT BY:

Mitigating the scene as much as possible by reducing chaos and removing patients from perceived threats.

Reflecting evidence of safety.

GOAL:
Decrease arousal and re-establish safety
CALM

CREATE CALM BY:

• Calming yourself first - being the dominant nervous system.

• Emphasizing the present, the practical, and the possible.

GOAL:
Decrease arousal and re-establish safety
Self-Efficacy (Effective Action)

CREATE SELF AND COLLECTIVE EFFICACY BY:

- Involving the person in problem-solving, self-care, and rescue - Asking people what else they can do and what they should not do.

- Recognizing and reminding people or existing strengths and past experiences.

GOAL: Combat helplessness

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CONNECTION

CREATE CONNECTION BY:

- Building an on-scene relationship.
- Prioritizing and helping people, contact friends, family, loved ones (including pets) as soon as possible.

GOAL:
Decrease arousal and re-establish safety
HOPE

CREATE HOPE BY:

• Reflecting specific, accurate, positive facts and predictable, realistic steps.

• Personally maintaining and communicating hope.

GOAL:
Decrease arousal and re-establish safety
**STRESS CONTINUUM FOR THE ORGANIZATION**

**READY**
- Innovation
- Time to train
- Ability to say NO!
- Playing together
- Connected

**REACTING**

**INJURED**
- Losing staff
- Tribalism
- Isolation
- What am I doing here?
- Unable to fix ourselves
- Finger pointing
- Scarcity
- Rigidity
- Illegal/Immoral
- Lack of clear lead

**ILL**

**Mission satisfaction/Mission Drift**
## STRESS CONTINUUM FOR THE ORGANIZATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READY</th>
<th>REACTING</th>
<th>INJURED</th>
<th>ILL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resources adequate if not ample</td>
<td>Resources stretched Open to opportunity in theory, “but not now, we’re busy”</td>
<td>Resources scarce Rigid perspectives Closed to opportunity Emergencies strain the system and are survived rather than dealt with capably</td>
<td>Resources absent Calcified perspectives Communication channels closed Sense of doom Major Mission Questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open to Opportunity &amp; Innovation Meeting emergencies with a well-oiled, capable team</td>
<td>Coping with emergencies – barely Some Mission Questions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mission Drift: “why are we doing this?”</td>
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<td>Mission Alignment</td>
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<td>Major Mission Questions</td>
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**Mission satisfaction/ Mission Drift**
TOOLS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL VITALITY

PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID FOR ORGANIZATIONS?

- Safety:
- Calm
- Connection
- Effective action
- Hope
ACTION ITEMS: BITE SIZED GREEN CHOICES

What is one choice you can personally make that would move you towards/keep you in the green zone?

What is one reasonably attainable change that could be made at your organization that would move it towards/keep it in the green zone?
CONCLUSION

Resilience, Healing and Health
Identifying the Practices of the Green Educator and the Green Organization

The world breaks everyone, and afterward, some are strong at the broken places
-Ernest Hemingway

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