

# **Basic Course**

# **Workbook Series**

# **Student Materials**

**Learning Domain 14**  
**Officer Wellness**  
**Version 1.0**

**Basic Course Workbook Series  
Student Materials  
Learning Domain 14  
Officer Wellness  
Version 1.0**

© Copyright 2005  
California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST)  
All rights reserved.

Published October 2023

This publication may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, in any form or by any means electronic or mechanical or by any information storage and retrieval system now known or hereafter invented, without prior written permission of the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training, with the following exception:

California law enforcement or dispatch agencies in the POST program, POST-certified training presenters, and presenters and students of the California basic course instructional system are allowed to copy this publication for non-commercial use.

All other individuals, private businesses and corporations, public and private agencies and colleges, professional associations, and non-POST law enforcement agencies in-state or out-of-state may purchase copies of this publication, at cost, from POST as listed below:

From POST's Web Site:  
**[www.post.ca.gov](http://www.post.ca.gov)**  
Go to [Ordering Student Workbooks](#)

## COMMISSION ON PEACE OFFICER STANDARDS AND TRAINING

### COMMISSIONERS

Geoff Long – Chair	Public Member
Rick Braziel	Educator Humboldt State University
Alan Barcelona	Special Agent California Department of Justice
Ingrid Braun	Sheriff-Coroner Mono County Sheriff's Department
Jim Cooper	Sheriff Sacramento County Sheriff's Office
P. Lamont Ewell	Public Member
Kelly Gordon	Chief Santa Barbara Police Department
Shannan Moon	Sheriff Nevada County
Tina Nieto	Sheriff Monterey County Sheriff's Department
James O'Rourke	Sergeant California Highway Patrol
Michelle Rodriguez	Public Member
Eric Schmidt	Deputy Sheriff Fresno County Sheriff's Office
John Marsh Representing Rob Bonta Attorney General Ex-Officio Member	Chief Director of Division of Law Enforcement



## **THE ACADEMY TRAINING MISSION**

The primary mission of basic training is to prepare students mentally, morally, and physically to advance into a field training program, assume the responsibilities, and execute the duties of a peace officer in society.



## **FOREWORD**

The California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training sincerely appreciates the efforts of the many curriculum consultants, academy instructors, directors and coordinators who contributed to the development of this workbook. We must also thank the California law enforcement agency executives who allowed their personnel to participate in the development of these training materials.

This student workbook is part of the POST Basic Course Training System. The workbook component of this system provides a self-study document for every learning domain in the Basic Course. Each workbook is intended to be a supplement to, not a substitute for, classroom instruction. The objective of the system is to improve academy student learning and information retention and ultimately contribute to you becoming a peace officer committed to safety, and to the communities you will serve.

The content of each workbook is organized into sequenced learning modules to meet requirements as prescribed both by California law and the POST Training and Testing Specifications for the Basic Course.

It is our hope that the collective wisdom and experience of all who contributed to this workbook will help you, the student, to successfully complete the Basic Course and to enjoy a safe and rewarding career as a peace officer.

MANUEL ALVAREZ, Jr.  
Executive Director





# LD 14: Officer Wellness

## Table of Contents

---

Topic	See Page
<b>Preface</b>	<b>iii</b>
Introduction	iii
How to Use the Student Workbook	iv
<b>Chapter 1: Emotional Intelligence and Regulation</b>	<b>1-1</b>
Overview	1-1
Emotional Intelligence	1-3
Core Emotions	1-5
Managing Emotions	1-7
Emotional Intelligence Domains	1-9
Workbook Learning Activities	1-11
<b>Chapter 2: Mental Health</b>	<b>2-1</b>
Overview	2-1
Mental Health	2-3
Bureaucratic Stress	2-5
Critical Incident Stress	2-7
Cumulative Stress	2-10
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	2-13
Depression	2-16
Anxiety	2-20
Suicide	2-23
Agency Resources	2-25
Workbook Learning Activities	2-26

---

*Continued on next page*

## Table of Contents, Continued

---

Topic	See Page
<b>Chapter 3: Substance Abuse</b>	<b>3-1</b>
Overview	3-1
Alcohol and Substance Abuse	3-3
Alcohol and Substance Use Disorders	3-5
Impact of Alcohol and Substance Abuse on Peace Officers	3-10
Types of Misuse	3-12
Warning Signs	3-14
Personal, Professional, and Organizational Consequences	3-16
Workbook Learning Activities	3-19
<b>Chapter 4: Financial Wellness</b>	<b>4-1</b>
Overview	4-1
Financial Wellness	4-3
Financial Goal Setting	4-4
How Financial Wellness Impacts Relationships	4-9
Workbook Learning Activities	4-11
<b>Chapter 5: Resiliency Building</b>	<b>5-1</b>
Overview	5-1
Resiliency	5-3
Self-Care	5-6
Self-Care Plan	5-8
Workbook Learning Activities	5-10
<b>Glossary</b>	<b>G-1</b>

---

# Preface

## Introduction

---

**Student  
workbooks**

The student workbooks are part of the POST Basic Course Instructional System. This system is designed to provide students with a self-study document to be used in preparation for classroom training.

---

**Regular Basic  
Course training  
requirement**

Completion of the Regular Basic Course is required, prior to exercising peace officer powers, as recognized in the California Penal Code and where the POST-required standard is the POST Regular Basic Course.

---

**Student  
workbook  
elements**

The following elements are included in each workbook:

- chapter contents, including a synopsis of key points,
  - supplementary material, and
  - a glossary of terms used in this workbook.
-

# How to Use the Student Workbook

---

## Introduction

This workbook provides an introduction to the training requirements for this Learning Domain. It is intended to be used in several ways: for initial learning prior to classroom attendance, for test preparation, and for remedial training.

---

## Workbook format

To use the workbook most effectively, follow the steps listed below.

Step	Action
1	Begin by reading the: Preface and How to Use the Workbook, which provide an overview of how the workbook fits into the POST Instructional System and how it should be used.
2	Refer to the Chapter Synopsis at the end of each chapter to review the key points that support the chapter objectives.
3	Read the text.
4	Complete the Workbook Learning Activities at the end of each chapter. These activities reinforce the material taught in the chapter.
5	Refer to the Glossary for a definition of important terms. The terms appear throughout the text and are bolded and underlined the first time they appear (e.g., <b><u>term</u></b> ).

---

# Chapter 1

## Emotional Intelligence

### Overview

---

**Learning need** Peace officers need to recognize, understand, and regulate emotions to maintain a balanced personal and professional life.

---

**Learning objectives** The following table identifies the learning objectives for this chapter

<b>After completing study of this chapter, the student will be able to:</b>	<b>Objective ID</b>
• Discuss core emotions	14.01.01
• Discuss concepts in managing emotions	14.01.02
• Discuss emotional intelligence domains	14.01.03

---

*Continued on next page*

## Overview, Continued

---

**In this chapter** This chapter focuses on basic knowledge to develop emotional intelligence.

<b>Topic</b>	<b>See Page</b>
Emotional Intelligence	1-3
Core Emotions	1-5
Managing Emotions	1-7
Emotional Intelligence Domains	1-9
Workbook Learning Activities	1-11

---

# Emotional Intelligence

---

## **Introduction**

Peace officers who develop emotional intelligence may be able to communicate more effectively, have a higher success level at work, and achieve their career and personal goals in a shorter amount of time.

---

## **Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize, understand, use, and manage emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges, and defuse conflict.

Emotional intelligence affects how we manage behavior, navigate social complexities, and make personal decisions that achieve positive results.

Healthy Emotions + Clear Thinking + Appropriate Action = High Emotional Intelligence

---

## **Impact**

Emotional intelligence has been found to impact various aspects of one's life, some examples are:

- Time management
  - Decision making
  - Adaptability
  - Assertiveness
  - Empathy
  - Stress tolerance
  - Presentation skills
  - Communication
  - Social skills
  - Anger management
  - Accountability
  - Job performance
  - Trust
- 

*Continued on next page*

## Emotional Intelligence, Continued

---

### **Skills involved with Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional intelligence is a skill that can be learned and can change over time. And like any other skill, you get better at it with training and practice. Other examples include:

- Listen to their emotions and regulate their intensity
  - Keep disruptive emotions in check and maintain a professional demeanor
  - Appear confident during encounters with others and maintain appropriate command presence
  - Laugh at themselves and can show natural human emotions (smile at kids and laughs at jokes) when appropriate
  - Sense other people's emotions and empathize with them
  - Recognize what emotional state the person in crisis is in (e.g., anxious, grieving, fearful or enraged)
  - Act ethically and build trust through integrity and reliability
  - Admit their own mistakes and learn from them
  - Are comfortable with new ideas and new information
  - Can negotiate and resolve disagreements
  - Know personal boundaries
  - Listen to other people and know how to communicate effectively
  - Maintain a professional demeanor and is invested in the encounter
-



# Core Emotions

---

## **Introduction**

Emotions make us human. They tell us what is valuable and important.

Emotions are central in relationships with family, friendships, and colleagues. The ability to recognize emotions is an important first step in helping one regulate and apply emotional intelligence.

Peace officers need to have an enhanced awareness of emotions and ability to demonstrate emotional intelligence.

---

## **Emotional Vocabulary**

There are five core emotions upon which all emotions are derived:

Core Emotions:

1. Happiness
  2. Sadness
  3. Anger
  4. Fear
  5. Shame
- 

*Continued on next page*

## Core Emotions, Continued

A person may experience these five core emotions at varying intensities. Below is a table with a list of emotions based on intensity. The five core emotions run left to right across the table. Manifestations of each emotion based upon the intensity are described down each of the columns in the table.

Intensity of Emotions	Happiness	Sadness	Anger	Fear	Shame
<b>High</b>	Joyful Jubilant Ecstatic Sexy Excited Delighted Overjoyed Elated	Depressed Agonized Alone Hurt Dejected Hopeless Sorrowful Miserable	Furious Enraged Outraged Boiling Irate Seething Loathsome Betrayed	Terrified Horrorified Scared Stiff Petrified Fearful Panicky Frantic Shocked	Sorrowful Remorseful Defamed Worthless Disgraced Dishonored Mortified Admonished
<b>Medium</b>	Cheerful Glowing Relieved Satisfied Good Gratified	Heartbroken Somber Lost Distressed Let Down Melancholy	Upset Mad Defended Frustrated Agitated Disgusted	Apprehensive Frightened Threatened Insecure Uneasy Intimidated	Apologetic Unworthy Sneaky Guilty Embarrassed Secretive
<b>Low</b>	Glad Pleasant Pleased Mellow Tender Comfortable	Unhappy Moody Blue Upset Disappointed Dissatisfied	Perturbed Annoyed Uptight Resistant Irritated Touchy	Cautious Nervous Worried Timid Unsure Anxious	Bashful Ridiculous Regretful Uncomfortable Pitied Silly

*Continued on next page*

# Managing Emotions

---

## **Introduction**

Emotional intelligence is a balance between the rational and emotional brain. Understanding the balance allows peace officers to recognize emotions within themselves and others.

---

## **Reactionary behaviors**

Reactionary behaviors are immediate and primarily driven by the emotional centers of the brain. Peace officers driven by negative emotions may display these or similar behaviors:

- Defensiveness
  - Excessive use of force
  - Poor communication
  - Acting out of anger
- 

## **Responses**

Responses are thoughtful behaviors guided by the rational centers of the brain. Peace officers that respond thoughtfully may display these or similar behaviors:

- Deescalation
  - Good communication
  - Emotional regulation
  - Empathy
- 

*Continued on next page*

## Managing Emotions, Continued

---

### Managing Emotions

There are three concepts to managing difficult emotions.

1. Acceptance – Acceptance is acknowledging and allowing an emotion.

Examples include being aware of body sensations such as chest tightness when anxious or feeling hot when angry.

2. Reappraisal – Reappraisal is reframing an event to reduce the negative emotions.

Examples include using mental strategies to reexamine the situation and different ways to look at it.

3. Expression – Expression is naming the emotion and sharing it.

Examples include journaling, talking about it with peers, addressing it with counselors or therapists.

---

# Emotional Intelligence Domains

---

## Introduction

There are four emotional intelligence domains: **self-awareness**, **self-management**, **social awareness**, and **relationship management**.

These four domains are divided into two main competencies which are **personal competence** and **social competence**.

---

## Personal Competence

Personal competence is the ability to stay aware of your emotions and manage your behavior and tendencies. Personal competence is made up of self-awareness and self-management skills.

- Self-awareness (regulation) is critical awareness of one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and motivations, with an acute understanding of how they affect self-perception, thoughts, behaviors, and work performance. Self-awareness skills may include:
  - a. Refraining from knee-jerk reactions
  - b. Adjusting behaviors
  - c. Learning from previous experiences
  - d. Knowing one's own strengths and weaknesses
  
- Self-management (regulation) is being in control of one's feelings and impulses so that one can control one's emotions in healthy ways, take initiative, follow through on commitments, and adapt to changing circumstances. Self-management skills may include:
  - a. Trustworthiness
  - b. Conscientiousness
  - c. Adaptability
  - d. Goal orientation
  - e. Self-initiation

---

*Continued on next page*

## Emotional Intelligence Domains, Continued

---

### **Social Competence**

Social competence is one's ability to understand other people's moods, behavior, and motives to improve the quality of relationships and one's interactions with others. Social competence is made up of social awareness and relationship management skill.

---

### **Social Awareness**

Social awareness is the ability to accurately pick up on emotions in other people and understand what is really going on with them. This often means perceiving what other people are thinking and feeling even if one does not feel the same way. Social awareness skills may include:

- Active Listening
  - Empathy
  - Respect
  - Kindness
  - Cooperation
- 

### **Relationship Management**

Relationship management is the ability to interact positively with others. Some skills may include:

- Building bonds with others over time
  - Being respectful of differing opinions
  - Using different communication styles
  - Separating personal and professional roles
  - Focusing on positive aspects of difficult relationships
- 

*Continued on next page*

# Workbook Learning Activities

---

## Introduction

To help you review and apply the material covered in this chapter, a selection of learning activities has been included. No answers are provided. However, by referring to the appropriate text, you should be able to prepare a response.

---

## Activity questions

1. While on patrol, late at night, you are contacted by a citizen who describes a suspicious jogger in a park. The citizen is vague but alludes to the fact that the jogger might be casing cars to break into them. Moments later, a jogger who “matches the description” goes by you. You make contact. The jogger is angry because they feel you are “just harassing” and “profiling” them, as this is the third time they have been stopped in a month and always seems to “match the description” of alleged crime in the area. How do you address the joggers concerns about being stopped several times in the past month? Are you able to empathize with the jogger? How would you feel being stopped while you jog on a regular basis?
  
2. You stop a vehicle for a stop sign violation. The traffic stop is made in front of the adult driver’s residence. The driver’s parent comes out of the house with a cell phone camera, wanting to record you “harassing” their 18-year-old child. The parent is yelling at you while you are trying to conduct your traffic stop. You now have the parent and the driver yelling at you. How do you regulate your emotions to effectively affect the traffic stop and address the concerns of the adult driver’s parent?

---

*Continued on next page*

## Workbook Learning Activities, Continued

---

**Activity  
questions**  
(continued)

3. You go to a convenience store to take a break between radio calls. You park your marked patrol car at the red curb outside of the store. A customer and their teenage daughter drive into the parking lot and see where you are parked. The teenager is confused because their parent recently received a parking citation for parking in a red zone. The customer becomes angry and confronts you as you leave the store. They question you on the apparent double-standard which allows peace officers to park in a red zone when there is no emergency, while citizens are cited for the same offense. Is it within the law for you to park your patrol vehicle in the red zone while taking a break? How do you explain this to the angry citizen? Do you take the time to explain and take responsibility for your actions?



# Chapter 2

## Mental Health

### Overview

---

**Learning need** Peace officers must understand the impacts on mental health that are unique to a law enforcement career and the strategies for prevention and intervention.

---

**Learning objectives** The chart below identifies the student learning objectives for this chapter

After completing study of this chapter, the student will be able to:	Objective ID
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Define the terms:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bureaucratic stress</li><li>• Critical incident stress</li><li>• Cumulative stress</li><li>• Post-traumatic stress</li><li>• Depression</li><li>• Anxiety</li><li>• Suicide</li></ul></li></ul>	14.02.01
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss categories associated with mental health issues impacting peace officers, to include but not limited to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bureaucratic stress</li><li>• Critical Incident stress</li><li>• Cumulative stress</li><li>• Post-traumatic stress</li><li>• Depression</li><li>• Anxiety</li><li>• Suicide</li></ul></li></ul>	14.02.02
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognize and discuss the associated causes for the above listed mental health issues.</li></ul>	14.02.03

---

*Continued on next page*

## Overview, Continued

### Learning objectives Continued

The chart below identifies the student learning objectives for this chapter

After completing study of this chapter, the student will be able to:	Objective ID
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recognize and discuss behavioral indicators that could possibly be associated with peace officers affected by the above listed stressors.</li></ul>	14.02.04
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recognize and discuss general coping mechanisms generally associated with peace officers dealing with the above listed stressors</li></ul>	14.02.05
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Explain and discuss available resources/referrals, within your agency, that may assist peace officers in managing their stressors.</li></ul>	14.02.06

### In this chapter

This chapter focuses on law enforcement agencies that comprise the law enforcement component of the criminal justice system. Refer to the chart below for a specific topic.

Topic	See Page
Mental Health	2-3
Bureaucratic Stress	2-5
Critical Incident Stress	2-7
Cumulative Stress	2-10
Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress	2-13
Depression	2-16
Anxiety	2-20
Suicide	2-23
Agency Resources	2-25
Workbook Learning Activities	2-26

# Mental Health

---

## Introduction

**Mental health** issues are common in the profession and may surface as early as the police academy. The stressors discussed in this chapter are commonly associated within the career as a peace officer; however, not all recruits and peace officers will encounter each one of these stressors. This chapter will discuss possible stressors, behavioral implications, and coping mechanisms. Mental health issues are nothing to be ashamed of and, most of the time, peace officers are experiencing normal reactions to abnormal events commonly experienced out in the field. It is imperative to address these issues to ensure a well-balanced life both personally and professionally.

Mental health issues are often very personal. They may be difficult psychological and physiological responses to stressful incidents in law enforcement. Sensitivity in speaking with a recruit or a peace officer suspected of dealing with a mental health issue is important, and conversations should be handled with the utmost respect. Law enforcement personnel learn to conceal outward emotional responses to incidents, and it is not uncommon to withhold true emotional feelings regarding stressful events therefore leading to repressed feelings. When speaking with another peace officer, be open and present during the conversation, as it will not be easy for that person to be vulnerable. Respect boundaries and do not push the individual to speak past their level of comfort. Remind the peace officer of the available resources within your agency and provide assistance should the individual request your help.

---

## Mental Health

Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to his or her community.

---

*Continued on next page*

## Mental Health, Continued

---

### **Common Associated Causes**

The law enforcement profession is plagued by mental health issues caused by stressors on and off the job. Peace officers have high levels of exposure to short, or long-term stressors, such as threats to their own safety that of their colleagues, continued exposure to suffering, the use of weapons, performing in emergency operations, and exposure to traumatic events such as serious injuries and death.

---

### **Common Behavioral Indicators**

Common behavioral indicators may include self-medication with alcohol, insomnia, anger, relationship problems, and cynicism.

---

### **Common Coping Mechanisms**

Common coping mechanisms that peace officers use to cope with stress include alcohol abuse, emotional withdrawal, repression of emotions, and psychological symptoms manifesting into physical symptoms such as headaches and/or gastrointestinal problems.

---

# Bureaucratic Stress

---

## Introduction

**Bureaucratic stress**, also called organizational stress refers to characteristics of the law enforcement organization and behavior of the people that produce stress (e.g., co-worker relations, shift work, administrative bias regarding working conditions and rules inherent within the organization).

---

## Bureaucratic Stress

Bureaucratic stress is defined as characteristics of the organization and the behaviors of the people in that organization that generate issues such as: lack of support, time pressures, distrust, heavy workloads, inadequate resources, and interpersonal conflicts with colleagues and supervisors.

---

## Common Associated Causes

- Work overload-expectations to be more productive during shifts, work more hours to supplement dwindling police force numbers
  - Being passed up for a promotion
  - Excessive paperwork
  - Lack of supportive leadership within department hierarchy
  - Inequality in disciplinary action (i.e., favoritism, sexism affecting how people are disciplined)
  - Lack of sufficient training
  - Inadequate resources
  - Lack of positive re-enforcement associated with job performance under-appreciated
  - Inability to perform the job based on department rules and regulations related to not enforcing the laws
  - Insufficient time off (fatigue) which impacts the decision-making process
  - Allegations of discrimination and/or harassment
  - Media coverage/misperceptions of an event
  - Hazing
  - Intense court appearance
  - Internal affairs investigation
  - Supervisor/subordinate relationship issues
  - Lawsuits
- 

*Continued on next page*

## Bureaucratic Stress, Continued

---

### **Common Behavioral Indicators**

Peace officers may perceive bureaucratic stress as unnecessary, oppressive, and inescapable. Feelings of powerlessness that result from this may manifest behaviorally.

- Insubordination
  - Tardiness or excessive absence
  - Lack of work productivity
  - Anger
  - Short fused
  - Poor decision making
  - Increased use of sick time/vacation days
  - Lethargic
  - Poor performance
- 

### **Common Coping Mechanisms**

To cope with the feelings generated by bureaucratic stress it is important to maintain a positive attitude and focus on what can be controlled.

- Find the positive of why you're doing the job
  - Find solace within your patrol car; have a good partner
  - Discuss your concerns in a productive manner
  - Find a hobby or something you enjoy outside of work
  - Accept what you cannot control and focus on what you can control
-

# Critical Incident Stress

---

## Introduction

**Critical incident stress** is a significant emotional event and one that breaks through the individual's normal coping mechanisms and causes physiological distress. In addition, law enforcement personnel who are not directly at the scene of a critical incident may also be affected to some degree. (IACP National Law Enforcement Policy Center Critical Incident Stress Management- Concept and Issue Paper-July 2011)

---

## Critical Incident Stress

Critical incident stress defined as any event that has a stressful impact powerful enough to overwhelm your usual coping strategies.

---

## Common Associated Causes

The symptoms usually occur immediately and up to three days of the incident, but some people have delayed reactions ranging from months to years after the incident.

Symptoms include sensory distortion (e.g., tunnel vision, auditory exclusion, out of body experience), feelings of helplessness, disturbances in memory, headaches, nausea, anxiety, shock, disbelief, hypersensitivity to threat, hypervigilance, obsessive thought rumination (cannot stop thinking about the incident). Reactions may manifest:

- Physically: headaches, muscle aches, diarrhea, fatigue, jaw clenching
  - Cognitively and Emotionally: anger, irritability, mood swings, tearfulness, guilt, worry, forgetfulness
  - Psychologically: depression, anxiety, nightmares, insomnia, panic attacks
  - Behaviorally: aggression, risk taking, domestic violence, withdrawal, isolation
- 

*Continued on next page*

## Critical Incident Stress, Continued

---

### **Common Behavioral Indicators**

Individuals involved in critical incidents may react differently. Generally, the more vulnerable the peace officer feels, the greater the emotional impact. The inability to cope effectively with critical incident stress or attempts to avoid any emotional reactions may show in various behaviors.

- Weight gain/loss
- Fatigue/sleeplessness
- Lethargic
- Anger toward management regarding decision making
- Sadness
- Irritability
- Tardiness
- Call avoidance
- Poor decision making
- Forgetfulness
- Avoiding family, friends, co-workers
- Short attention span and distractibility
- Anxiousness
- Intrusive memories
- Avoidance of thoughts/feelings
- Hypersensitivity to threats
- Increase in aggression
- Obsessing about the incident
- Teeth grinding

---

*Continued on next page*



## Critical Incident Stress, Continued

---

### **Common Coping Mechanisms,** continued

Emotional intensity tends to decrease over time after a critical incident. The peace officer may mentally re-live or re-create the incident and question if they took appropriate action, or if anything could have been done to prevent the incident. If the peace officer allows time to emotionally process the event and does not try to suppress or deny it, they will normally come to accept what happened without the internalization of irrational thoughts or guilt. In order to effectively process the emotional impact of the trauma, below are some recommended coping mechanisms.

- Find a therapist and attend therapy sessions
  - Exercise
  - Hydrate
  - Maintain a regular routine
  - Implement relaxation exercises/techniques...yoga, meditation (apps, websites, books)
  - Avoid alcohol/drugs
  - Do things you enjoy
  - Attend department debriefs
  - Get out of bed
  - Find time for yourself
  - Talk to a co-worker
  - Debrief with your partner or other responding peace officers outside of department debrief
  - See a physician for a medication/evaluation, if needed
-

# Cumulative Stress

---

## Introduction

**Cumulative stress** results from an accumulation of stressors in life. It is a common experience for individuals who work in chronically stressful situations.

---

## Cumulative Stress

Cumulative stress is defined as an accumulation of various stress factors such as a heavy workload, relationship problems, sleep disturbance, and multiple frustrations that cause feelings of powerlessness, and an inability to rest or relax.

---

## Common Associated Causes

An accumulation of stressors in life.

- Prior negative life experiences (e.g., child abuse, drug/alcohol overuse, domestic violence, military experiences, romantic break up, death, losses, and any additional past traumas)
  - Current divorce/break-up
  - Marital/relationship problems
  - Injuries and health issues
  - Sleep deprivation
  - Lawsuits
  - Conflict with co-workers/supervisors
  - Excessive debt, bankruptcy, or financial stress
  - Repetitive response to stressful events
  - Response to unpredictable environments
  - Civilian behavior (e.g., resisting, displaying a weapon, aggression, crowds, recordings, lack of public assistance)
  - Physical injury occurring on the job.
  - Stress in the Academy in relation to:
    - Location (travel time), staff, exams both tactile and learning
    - Personal stress such as lack of support from family and friends
    - Financial strain
    - Relocation (recruits who move from outside California for career)
    - Physical injury sustained in the Academy
- 

*Continued on next page*

## Cumulative Stress, Continued

---

### **Common Behavioral Indicators**

Cumulative stress can cause feelings of powerlessness and fatigue, and ultimately result in mental health issues such as depression and anxiety, if not addressed.

- Anxiety
- Fatigue/sleeplessness
- Lethargy
- Weight gain/loss
- Poor diet
- Injury prone/chronic pain
- Short tempered when dealing with civilians
- Irritability
- Poor decision making
- Anger
- Insubordination
- Forgetfulness
- Trouble concentrating
- Sadness
- Impaired judgment
- Higher excessive force claims
- Burnout
- Focusing on negative thoughts or feelings
- Domestic disputes
- Vehicle accidents
- Marital/relationship problems
- Extramarital affairs
- Depression
- Suicide

---

*Continued on next page*

## Cumulative Stress, Continued

---

**Common Coping Mechanisms** Activating healthy coping strategies can ease the effects of cumulative stress.

- Exercise
  - Hire a financial planner
  - Get a medical check up
  - Problem solve - create a plan with short and long-term goals
  - Do things you enjoy
  - Give your family quality time without your work persona
  - Hire a babysitter or ask a loved one to watch your kids while you go do something you enjoy even if it's going to grab a cup of coffee for a half hour
  - Make time to yourself to allow you to process life
  - Find a therapist and attend therapy sessions (individual and/or couples)
  - Talk to a co-worker
  - Practice mindfulness, yoga, and meditation
  - Recognize symptoms and know when it's time for a change within the job, transfer off street to new position
  - Get a support animal
  - Avoid alcohol/drugs
  - Try something new outside of work
  - Engage in things you used to enjoy
  - Change partner at work
  - Take a day off if you can
  - Ask for 20 minutes of alone time when you return home, then engage with your family
  - Have family dinners/date nights
  - Spend time in nature
  - Healthy exposure to sunlight
-

# Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

---

## Introduction

**Post-traumatic stress disorder** is a mental health condition triggered by experiencing or witnessing a life-threatening event. People may experience a range of reactions after a traumatic event. Most will recover from their symptoms over time. Those who continue to experience symptoms may be diagnosed with PTSD.

---

## Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Post-traumatic stress disorder is defined as a diagnosable mental health condition. It is a psychiatric injury that may occur in people who have experienced, or witnessed a traumatic, or life-threatening event. People with PTSD have intense, disturbing thoughts and feelings related to their experience that last long after the traumatic event has ended. Symptoms include avoidance, hypervigilance, and re-experiencing the trauma through nightmares and/or flashbacks.

---

## Common Associated Causes

Experiencing, or witnessing a life-threatening event with subsequent re-experiencing through nightmares/flashbacks, avoidance behavior (avoiding talking about it, thinking about, avoiding people/place associated with the event), and hypervigilance (increased arousal, hypersensitivity to threat). Symptoms persist longer than 30 days after the traumatic incident.

- Exposure to traumatic incidents such as suicides, fatal traffic collisions, and mass shootings
  - Responding to violent incidents such as physical assaults
  - Responding to sad/depressive incidents such as pediatric deaths (SIDs), suicides, and child abuse
- 

*Continued on next page*

## Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Continued

---

### **Common Behavioral Indicators**

Policing necessitates exposure of violent and traumatic events, which increases the risk for developing PTSD. Law enforcement, the public, and the media falsely believe that peace officers can experience this trauma on a daily basis without any significant effects. The research has revealed the opposite understanding the signs and symptoms of PTSD, and seeking appropriate treatment is essential for law enforcement personnel.

- Hypervigilance
- Nightmares
- Anxiety
- Fatigue/sleep deprivation
- Trouble concentrating
- Flashbacks/intrusive memories
- Impaired judgment
- Depression
- Increased alcohol/drug use
- Anger
- Short temper
- Inability to control/regulate emotional responses
- Avoiding family, friends, co-workers
- Avoiding the people associated with the event
- Avoid talking about the event
- Avoiding driving by, or being near where the event occurred
- Poor diet
- Weight gain/loss
- Feelings of guilt
- Personal routine changes
- Irritability
- Night sweats
- Hypersensitivity to threat/crowds

---

*Continued on next page*

## Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Continued

---

### **Common Coping Mechanisms**

People with PTSD may suffer from frequent and intense symptoms of anxiety. These symptoms can lead people to unhealthy ways of coping such as alcohol abuse. Fortunately, there are many ways to cope with symptoms. These strategies may help reduce the severity and frequency of symptoms.

- Go to a physician for a medication evaluation and check-up
  - Attend psychotherapy; therapists will have techniques to help you process past incidents
    - Attend Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy (E.M.D.R.)
  - Understand your triggers and implement relaxation strategies when they occur
  - Attend provided departmental debriefs
  - Follow up and speak with peace officers who responded to the same incident days, weeks later
  - Get a support animal
  - Talk to peer support
  - Avoid alcohol/drugs
  - Exercise regularly
  - Talk to a Police Chaplain/spiritual support
  - Attend group therapy with other first responders
-

# Depression

---

**Introduction**      **Depression** (or Major Depression Disorder) in law enforcement results from exposure to trauma, being overworked, and habitually internalizing and suppressing feelings. Depression commonly co-occurs with Post-Traumatic Stress.

---

**Define the term Depression**      Peace officers who suffer from a depressed mood experience persistent feelings of sadness and hopelessness. They lose interest in activities they once enjoyed. These symptoms persist longer than two weeks.

---

**Common Associated Causes**      A law enforcement career involves being in high demand with low control over daily tasks. Officers work long, and sometimes unpredictable hours, which may affect their sleep, their health, and their home life. They are also chronically exposed to the worst human behavior, and horrible tragedies.

- Overworked- forced overtime and shift work
  - Guilt over missing family events due to work schedule
  - Loss of relationship (break-up, divorce, child custody)
  - Underappreciation at work
  - Unrelenting symptoms of anxiety due to post-traumatic stress
  - Sleep deprivation
  - Sadness from exposure to death and tragedies on duty
  - Exposure to grieving parents and family members on duty
  - Exposure to child abuse and harm to innocent victims
  - Death notifications
  - Exposure to gore
  - Loss of co-workers due to suicides, traffic collisions, or line of duty deaths
  - Divorce and/or family issues resulting from work stress
  - Administrative betrayal/bureaucratic stress
- 

*Continued on next page*



## Depression, Continued

---

### **Common Behavioral Indicators**

Law enforcement officers are chronically exposed to stressful events, but they work in an environment where they are expected to suppress their feelings. These emotions tend to manifest into physical, behavioral, emotional, and psychological symptoms.

- Persistent depressed mood
- Withdrawal
- Cynicism-altered perspective on the world
- Irrational verbal behavior, or conduct
- Low energy/lethargy/fatigue
- Sleep disturbance: insomnia, or sleeping too much
- Poor hygiene/disheveled appearance
- Disorganized, dirty, and/or cluttered home
- Tardiness and/or absenteeism
- Anger/ irritable mood
- Poor performance and/or low productivity
- Poor appetite, or overeating
- Significant weight loss or weight gain
- Loss of interest in work, family, or once-pleasurable activities
- Tearfulness
- Problems with concentration/attention/memory
- Recurrent thought of death, thoughts of suicide
- Feeling worthless, excessively guilty, and hopeless
- Apathy
- Increased aggression, excessive force, domestic violence, divorce
- Financial problems- late payments, not paying bills
- Physical symptoms- pain, gastrointestinal issues, muscle aches
- Increased number of injuries/accidents
- Negative interactions with co-workers, supervisors, inmates
- Increased alcohol consumption-hiding/falling asleep

---

*Continued on next page*

## Depression, Continued

---

**Common Coping Mechanisms** Peace officers tend to avoid talking about their feelings, because they work in an environment where they are expected to remain in control. They also fear that their co-workers and supervisors may see them as unfit for duty, and this may threaten their career and livelihood. Common coping mechanisms tend to be activities that result in immediate gratification. Unfortunately, these behaviors end up creating additional problems.

- Alcohol abuse
- Prescription drug misuse
- Emotional withdrawal
- Isolation
- Arguing, aggression, fighting
- Overeating/eating unhealthy food
- Pornography/affairs

---

**General Coping Mechanisms** Depression can be a dangerous condition because people can become suicidal. Medical/psychological treatment is imperative. Below are some effective strategies for coping with depressive symptoms.

- Seek medical treatment
- Seek psychotherapy
- Seek alcohol treatment, if needed
- Avoid alcohol, over-spending, gambling, affairs, pornography
- Reach out and accept social support
- Exercise
- Sleep hygiene
- Meditation/mindfulness/yoga
- Therapy dog
- Limit caffeine consumption
- Journaling
- Nutritious diet-avoid processed foods
- Sunshine

---

*Continued on next page*

## Depression, Continued

---

### **Available Resources/ Referrals**

The most effective way to deal with depression is to seek professional help. The more support a depressed person receives, the better. It is recommended to provide all of the options listed below, and to emphasize the importance of seeking professional help.

- Medical doctor-medication evaluation
  - Police Psychologist/department psychologist-psychotherapy
  - Private insurance psychotherapist (preferably culturally competent)
  - Chaplain/Priest/Rabbi-spiritual support
  - Employee Assistance Program (request culturally competent therapist, if possible)
  - Peer Support
-

# Anxiety

---

## Introduction

Peace officers are exposed to more stressful situations than the average person. Consequently, many peace officers spend more time in an anxious state, experiencing chronic worry, unease, or nervousness. **Anxiety** is an emotional state of fear, tension, and anticipation that something negative is going to happen.

---

## Anxiety

Anxiety is defined as an emotional state that includes feelings of apprehension and fear, physical symptoms of tension, and anticipation that something dangerous or negative is going to occur.

---

## Common Associated Causes

A feeling of worry, unease, or nervousness.

- Long work hours
  - Lack of staffing
  - Shift changes
  - Exams
  - Lack of family support for career choice
  - Time spent away from family and/or friends
  - Commute
  - Not physically/mentally prepared for profession
  - Fatigue
  - Repeated responses to traumatic/violent incidents
  - Public perception/lack of respect for profession
  - Name and address revealed/retribution
  - Lawsuits
- 

*Continued on next page*

## Anxiety, Continued

---

### **Common Behavioral Indicators**

These are biological and physiological processes that occur in the body in response to anxiety. It may feel as though the body is preparing to respond to a potentially dangerous situation.

- Increased heart rate
- Numbness
- Tension
- Inability to perform basic functions
- Nervousness
- Trouble concentrating
- Worrying
- Panicking
- Focusing on negative thoughts or feelings
- Sweating
- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Trembling
- Fear
- Increased use of alcohol/drugs
- Irrational decision making
- Obsessive checking on children (after pediatric death calls)
- Gastrointestinal issues
- Muscle aches
- Panic attacks

---

*Continued on next page*

## Anxiety, Continued

---

**Common Coping Mechanisms** Anxiety disorders are medical conditions such as cancer or diabetes, which are treatable and should be taken seriously.

- Find a therapist and attend therapy sessions
  - Go to a medical doctor
  - Find support and understanding for your anxiety; significant other, friends, loved ones, self-help books
  - Incorporate breathing techniques into daily routine
  - Try to learn and understand your triggers
  - Find the best ways to support your triggers
  - Tell yourself you're okay and safe to help eliminate "fight or flight"
  - Exercise regularly
  - Eat a healthy diet
  - Avoid, or limit caffeinated beverages
  - Sleep hygiene
  - Yoga
  - Mindfulness
  - Meditation
-

# Suicide

---

## Introduction

Suicidal ideation are ongoing thoughts of **suicide** and can be a serious medical condition. Suicide is one of the leading causes of death among peace officers. The deadly triad of suicide in law enforcement tend to be (1) untreated depression, (2) alcohol/substance abuse, (3) the loss of a significant relationship. A person with suicidal ideation may need immediate medical care.

---

## Suicide

Suicide is defined as taking one's own life intentionally and voluntarily.

---

## Common Associated Causes

There are psychosocial factors associated with suicide. Below are more common associated causes of this condition:

- Depression
  - Family history of suicide
  - Past suicide attempts or suicidal ideation
  - Psychiatric history
  - Terminal illness/serious health issues
  - Relationship conflicts or personal losses/break-up/divorce
  - Easy access to firearms
  - Drug and alcohol abuse
  - Financial difficulty
  - Internal investigations
  - Embarrassment/ humiliation
  - Hopelessness
  - Impulsive, poor impulse control
- 

*Continued on next page*

## Suicide, Continued

---

### **Common Behavioral Indicators**

Before suicide certain behaviors are likely exhibited, it is important to take actions if you see any of these or similar behavioral indicators of suicide:

- Making statements about death (i.e., “pretty soon you won’t have to worry about me”)
  - Stockpiling pills
  - Co-occurring depressions, moodiness, hopelessness
  - Putting personal affairs in order
  - Giving away prized possessions
  - Sudden interest or disinterest in religion
  - Drug or alcohol abuse or relapse after period of recovery
  - Any previous suicide attempt
- 

### **Common Coping Mechanisms**

Suicide is a medical condition and must be addressed by medical professionals. Do not attempt to deal with this serious issue yourself or with friends/co-workers. Immediate medical attention is required.

- Drive the individual to the nearest emergency room
  - Call 911 for help
  - Do not leave the individual alone
  - Encourage the individual to voluntarily hospitalize her/himself, versus involuntary hospitalization (i.e., 5150 hold), if possible
    - Involuntary hospitalization has negative implications for carrying a firearm in the future
  - Enlist the help of others to transport in needed
  - Remove firearms/weapons
  - Report the suicidal behavior to family members to ensure the individual remains safe once they are released from the hospital. Advise them to remove weapons, extension cords, knives, etc., from the home
    - Unfortunately, many peace officers know what to avoid saying to not be hospitalized. If they are released, ensure they are not left alone and that they are safe
  - Coping mechanisms for the peace officer involve medical (psychiatric/medication) and psychological (psychotherapy) treatment
-



## Agency Resources

---

### **Available Resources**

Some agencies have specific mental health resources available to peace officers while employed with a department such as in-house clinicians, therapy networks, or Behavioral Science Units, who are available to assist recruits/peace officers in finding requested resources. Find your available resources within your department. These resources might help save your life or the life of another peace officer. Do not wait until it is too late. Getting help for yourself or someone else is never a sign of weakness.

Some agencies foster supportive, emotionally safe environments for handling mental health issues. Others may not be as supportive. Understand that invalidating environments may cause peace officers to suppress their emotions and avoid mental health treatment, which contributes to the high suicide rate among peace officers. Suppression of emotions plus constant exposure to stress may often lead to significant mental health problems, as well as difficulties in your professional and personal life. Peer support members tend to be the most psychologically educated and compassionate people in the department. Seek their help and guidance if you are worried about being judged. Most importantly, do your share in changing the culture. Be compassionate and open-minded about receiving and providing mental health support.

---

# Workbook Learning Activities

---

## **Introduction**

To help you review and apply the material covered in this chapter, a selection of learning activities has been included. No answers are provided. However, by referring to the appropriate text, you should be able to prepare a response.

---

## **Activity questions**

1. A peace officer shows up to work smelling like alcohol. You confront him and he says that he was out with friends the night before but denies being currently intoxicated. An hour later, you notice the same peace officer asleep in the station parking lot in his patrol vehicle while in uniform, and dispatch has been trying to raise him on the radio to handle a call for service. Consider what would be your first step. Do you advise a supervisor? What are the ramifications if you notify someone else regarding your observations?
  
2. A peace officer involved in a fatal peace officer involved shooting comes to work with dark circles under his eyes. He is irritable and avoids everyone, which is abnormal from his jovial personality. You notice his hands trembling during briefing. When you talk to him, he tells you that he can't sleep because of recurrent nightmares of the incident. When you ask more questions, he said that he does not want to talk about it. What actions could you take? Would you continue to try and have conversations regarding your observations and provide any Department resources?

---

*Continued on next page*

## Workbook Learning Activities, Continued

---

**Activity  
questions**  
(continued)

3. A peace officer tells you she is overwhelmed. She stated that she is working overtime to keep up with her credit card bills. She said that her supervisor is treating her unfairly, and she was recently passed up for promotion. She believes she is disliked by her supervisor and co-workers. She stated that the stress from work and her finances has caused a strain on her relationship, and she suspects that her partner is having an affair. What would you suggest to this peace officer? Would you give advice or choose not to get involved?

## **Workbook Learning Activities, Continued**

---

**Student Notes**

# Chapter 3

## Substance Abuse

### Overview

---

**Learning need** Peace officers need to recognize the dangers of alcohol and substance abuse and the effects on their professional and personal lives.

---

**Learning objectives** The chart below identifies the student learning objectives for this chapter

<b>After completing study of this chapter, the student will be able to...</b>	<b>Objective ID</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Define terms related to alcohol and substance use disorders:</li></ul>	14.03.01
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss potential impacts of alcohol and substance abuse on the peace officer, personal relationships, and social networks.</li></ul>	14.03.02
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the ways in which alcohol and controlled substances might be misused by peace officers</li></ul>	14.03.03
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss warning signs of problematic alcohol consumption</li></ul>	14.03.04
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe personal, professional, and organizational consequences of alcohol and substance abuse by peace officers including:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Family and social life</li><li>• School or work</li><li>• Financial</li><li>• Serious misconduct</li><li>• Liability to employing department</li></ul></li></ul>	14.03.05

---

*Continued on next page*

## Overview, Continued

---

**In this chapter** This chapter focuses on the basic knowledge needed to recognize the signs and symptoms of alcohol and /or substance abuse by a peace officer. Additionally, peace officers should be able to describe the risks to the individual peace officer, their family, friends, career, and their department(s).

<b>Topic</b>	<b>See Page</b>
Alcohol and Substance Abuse	3-3
Alcohol and Substance Use Disorders	3-5
Impact of Alcohol and Substance Abuse on Peace Officers	3-10
Types of Misuse	3-12
Warning Signs	3-14
Personal, Professional and Organizational Consequences	3-16
Workbook Learning Activities	3-19

---

# Alcohol and Substance Abuse

---

## **Introduction**

Addiction involves craving for something intensely, loss of control over its use, and continuing involvement with it despite adverse consequences. Addiction changes the brain, first by changing the way it registers pleasure and then by corrupting other normal drives such as learning and motivation. Just as cardiovascular disease damages the heart and diabetes impairs the pancreas, addiction hijacks the brain. This happens as the brain goes through a series of changes, beginning with recognition of pleasure and ending with a drive toward compulsive behavior.

---

## **Common Associated Causes**

People in law enforcement work in an environment that discourages normal human reactions to highly emotionally charged events. They are expected to suppress their feelings and move on to the next call and go to work the next day. Many people seek relief from this pressure and stress by self-medicating with alcohol, and oftentimes, with prescription medication (as orthopedic injuries are common in law enforcement). Addiction may occur with cumulative stress and/or after a traumatic event.

- Long hours and shift work
  - Family history of alcohol/substance abuse
  - Exposure to tragedy and negative human behavior
  - Critical incident stress
  - Cumulative stress
  - Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, depression, and/or anxiety
  - Bureaucratic stress/ administrative betrayal
  - Lawsuits
  - Media scrutiny
  - Marital/relationship problems
  - Financial difficulty
  - Internal investigations
  - Impulsive, poor impulse control
- 

*Continued on next page*

## Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Continued

---

### **Common Behavioral Indicators**

A pattern of alcohol or substance abuse may result in one or more of the following situations:

- Failure to fulfill major work, school/academy, or home responsibilities
  - Drinking in situations that are physically dangerous, like a car
  - Having recurring alcohol-related problems like DUI's or fights
  - Continued drinking despite having ongoing relationship problems that are caused or worsened by drinking
  - Falling asleep on duty
  - Drinking to get rid of a hangover
  - Feeling guilty about drinking
  - Being annoyed by people criticizing your drinking behavior
- 

### **Common Coping Mechanisms**

Alcohol and substance abuse are medical conditions that require medical attention.

- Seek medical care by a licensed physician
  - Abstain from drinking/using substances
  - Seek psychotherapy by a licensed clinician
  - Attend an alcoholics anonymous meeting
  - Go to inpatient/outpatient alcohol or substance abuse treatment, as advised by your medical professional.
    - There are alcohol treatment facilities specifically designed for first responders
  - Learn healthy coping strategies for stress management
-



# Alcohol and Substance Use Disorders

---

## Introduction

It is important that peace officers understand what constitutes alcohol and substance abuse, so they can recognize the concerns associated with abusing substances in their daily lives and behavior.

---

## Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD)

**Alcohol use disorder (AUD)** is defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5) as a chronic use of alcohol with an inability to stop or control use despite negative social, occupational, or health consequences. Considered a brain disorder, AUD can be mild, moderate, or severe.

A person's risk for developing AUD depends, in part, on how much, how often, and how quickly they consume alcohol. Alcohol misuse, which includes binge drinking and heavy alcohol use over time increases the risk of AUD.

The DSM identifies 11 questions that clinicians use to determine if the AUD is at a mild, moderate, or severe level. The presence of at least 2 of these symptoms indicates AUD. The severity of the AUD is defined as:

Mild: The presence of 2 or 3 symptoms

Moderate: The presence of 4 to 5 symptoms

Severe: The presence of 6 or more symptoms

---

## Factors that Increase the Risk of AUD

- Drinking at an early age, those who began drinking before age 15 were more than 5 times as likely to report having AUD
  - Genetics and family history of alcohol problems. Genetics play a role, with heritability approximately 60 percent; however, like other chronic health conditions, AUD risk is influenced by the interplay between a person's genes and their environment
  - Mental health conditions and a history of trauma. A wide range of psychiatric conditions, including depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, are co-occurring with AUD, and are associated with an increased risk of AUD. People with a history of childhood trauma are also vulnerable to AUD, according to a study by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)
- 

*Continued on next page*

## Alcohol and Substance Use Disorders, Continued

---

### Alcohol Abuse

Alcohol is the most widely used drug in the United States and the third leading preventable cause of death reports the NIAAA. The cumulative effects of trauma take a toll and alcohol is often used as a coping mechanism for dealing with the stress and trauma in a peace officer's daily life.

In October 2004 a study published in the National Criminal Justice Reference Service four main occupational demands that can trigger alcohol abuse were identified. They are:

- Reacting unemotionally to the daily stresses of the job (depersonalization)
- Authoritarian demands from police managers
- Organizational protection of peace officers from criticism
- Daily awareness of the dangers of the job

Anecdotally, many peace officers report using alcohol to fall asleep. Studies show that using alcohol to fall asleep has an adverse effect on deep sleep and often leads to insomnia and chronic sleep issues. As sleep worsens, peace officers may increase their alcohol intake or combine with substances to sleep.

This worsening cycle inevitably leads to fatigue, sleepiness, poor decision making and overall reduced work performance.

---

*Continued on next page*

## Alcohol and Substance Use Disorders, Continued

---

**Binge Drinking** **Binge drinking** is defined as the consumption of excessive amounts of alcohol in a short period of time. This is further defined as a male consuming 5 or more alcoholic drinks and a female consuming 4 or more alcoholic drinks within 2 hours by the NIAAA.

It is believed peace officers may binge drink due to peer pressure, job stress, familial issues, public criticism, and/or lack of support.

---

**Substance Use Disorder** **Substance use disorder** is a strong desire or craving to use substances, with such usage resulting in impairments including health problems, disability, or failure to meet responsibilities at work, school, or home (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, 2019).

Substances, which includes alcohol and drugs, are often used as a coping mechanism for dealing with the stress and trauma in a peace officer's daily life.

---

*Continued on next page*

## Alcohol and Substance Use Disorders, Continued

---

### **Drug Dependence**

**Drug dependence** is the psychological or physical state resulting from the interaction between the body and the drug that will alter, over time, the production of certain hormones and neurotransmitters. Very quickly, the user simply cannot cope without the drug.

Physical and/or psychological withdrawal symptoms become evident if the drug is not available; the user is now dependent on the drug to achieve a sense of well-being.

---

### **Misconceptions**

The misconception is that marijuana is the most abused drug in the United States when it is actually alcohol. Alcohol is legal in all states and socially acceptable to consume.

Substance use disorders are estimated to be between 20 and 30% greater among police, compared to under 10% among the general population. With 1 in 4 peace officers struggling with an alcohol or drug abuse issue, it raises major concerns for this population. Alcoholism in peace officers not only affects the individual and their family, but it can also affect the community (Alcohol Rehab Guide, 2020).

Peace officers face a great deal of stress and trauma much more regularly than the general population. The stress and trauma that police encounter while they work may take a toll on the peace officer's mental health. That stress and trauma often leads people to turn to alcohol or substances as a means of coping. Extreme stress, as well as an ingrained drinking culture can exacerbate an alcohol or substance use disorder.

---

*Continued on next page*

## Alcohol and Substance Use Disorders, Continued

---

### CAGE

Researchers from John Hopkins Healthcare developed a self-screening tool to assist individuals in examining the influence of alcohol in their lives. This simple screening tool is a way for peace officers to evaluate their current and ongoing use over the course of their careers. Below are the Cut down, Annoyed, Guilty, and Eye opener (CAGE) screening tool questions;

---

### CAGE Questions

Peace officers may find it beneficial to refer to these questions periodically throughout their career:

1. Have you ever felt you ought to cut down on your drinking or drug use?
  2. Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking or drug use?
  3. Have you felt bad or guilty about your drinking or drug use?
  4. Have you ever had a drink or used drugs first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or to get rid of a hangover (eye-opener)?
-

# Impact of Alcohol and Substance Abuse on Peace Officers

---

## **Introduction**

Alcohol and substance abuse can adversely impact a peace officer's life. The effects of substance use are cumulative and costly for society, placing burdens on workplaces, the healthcare system, families, and communities stated a Surgeon General's report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health.

Peace officers need to recognize the impact their alcohol and/or drug abuse is having on them, their personal relationships, and social networks.

---

## **Impact on Peace Officers**

Consistent or escalating use of alcohol or substances can lead to significant issues in the peace officers life. Without an awareness of their use, peace officers may experience any of the following consequences:

- Health problems
- Work related problems
  - Decrease in workplace productivity
  - Your skills, coordination, and alertness are diminished
- Risky sexual behavior, such as unprotected sex
- Family problems
- Higher incidence of vehicle crashes, property damage, and injuries
- Financial problems
- Violent behavior
- Mental health problems (depression and anxiety)

How drinking problems may affect employers:

- Neglect important duties
  - A lot of time spent nursing hangovers
  - Encounter legal problems
  - Inability to stop drinking
  - Vicarious liability resulting from improper or illegal actions
- 

*Continued on next page*

# Impact of Alcohol and Substance Abuse on Peace Officers, Continued

---

## **Personal Relationship Impact**

Alcohol abuse within a family is a problem that can destroy a marriage and/or drive a wedge between family members. This means that people who drink can blow through the family budget, cause fights, ignore children, and otherwise impair the health and happiness of the people they love. Additional consequences of alcohol/ substance use on personal relationships could include:

- Violence towards partner (domestic violence)
  - Neglect of family responsibilities
  - Increased spending (on alcohol/drugs, gambling, & drunk purchases)
  - Divorce
- 

## **Social Networks**

Many alcoholics and drug users start to withdraw from society, spending less time participating in activities they once enjoyed.

Often, alcohol and substance users prefer to only spend time with other heavy drinkers or substance users or alone.

All relationships are impacted and effected by a peace officer who has an alcohol or substance use problem.

---

# Types of Misuse

---

## **Introduction**

The unpredictability of a career in law enforcement, the exposure to traumatizing events and the impact of critical incidents can lead to mental health concerns and post-traumatic stress, which can leave peace officers vulnerable to turning to alcohol and substance abuse as a form of self-medication; cutting themselves off from peer and family support.

---

## **Culture of Misuse**

Peace officers encounter stressors on the job originating from their daily work, environmental factors and departmental policy and culture. If peace officers do not intentionally manage their stress, they may turn to alcohol or substance use as a simple and socially accepted way to deal with their emotions. Alcohol and/or substance use can provide a distraction for the peace officer from the negative aspects of the job. In addition to the distraction, alcohol and substance use is normalized in many departments.

Departments contribute to demonstrating a culture of misuse by indirectly condoning a culture of use. Alcohol often plays a role in:

- Promotions, retirements, and law enforcement wakes
  - Choir practice; meeting for drinks after work, at the end of a big case or the completion of FTO or other intense trainings
  - Off duty sports leagues, BBQ's, or other law enforcement social gatherings
- 

*Continued on next page*



## Types of Misuse, Continued

---

**Problematic Use** Peace officers have crossed the line into excessive/inappropriate use of alcohol or other substances when they begin to experience situations such as:

- Abuse prescription medications stemming from on-the-job injury
  - Abuse alcohol or other substances to cope and keep working
  - Self-medicate with alcohol or other substances as feelings begin to “leak”
  - Peace officers use alcohol or substances daily
  - Peace officers consistently drink more than they intended to in social settings
  - Experience symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) and turn to alcohol/drugs as a means of short-term avoidance of intrusive thoughts, memories, or feelings
-

# Warning Signs

---

## **Introduction**

Peace officers need to learn to recognize warning signs of problematic drinking or substance use to identify when they are at risk of abusing alcohol or drugs as a way to cope with the stressors of the job. These can include changes in behavior, actions, and priorities over time as a result of job stress.

---

## **Familial Changes**

Over time, a peace officers drinking, or substance use can lead to family relationship conflict. Peace officers may begin to engage in any of the following behaviors:

- Staying out later or going out after work to drink with peers
  - Lack of communication and time spent with significant other off duty
  - Emotional disconnection from kids and family
  - Not attending school/extracurricular activities or family events
  - Infidelity
  - Marital counseling
  - Marital separations/ divorce
- 

## **Social Changes**

Peace officers may find themselves limiting the friendships they have with others who are not in law enforcement, they may experience some of the following:

- Isolation from non-law enforcement friends
  - Loss of friends through their own choices or friends giving up due to repeated absences/excuses to spend time
  - Peace officers may prioritize events that support alcohol use or allow them to use a substance without scrutiny leading to an ever-narrowing pool of social contacts/events.
- 

*Continued on next page*

## Warning Signs, Continued

---

**Work Changes** As peace officers escalate their drinking or substance use, this behavior will begin to have a negative impact on their work performance. A normally reliable and productive peace officer may begin to have:

- Increased absenteeism
  - Being hung over or sick at work from use
  - Tardiness/leaving early
  - Decreased job performance
  - Moving departments frequently
  - Complaints/Internal Affairs investigations
  - Unnecessary use of force
  - Discipline
-

# Personal, Professional, and Organizational Consequences

---

## **Introduction**

Alcohol and substance abuse can have detrimental consequences on a peace officer's personal, professional, and/or organizational well-being.

---

## **Family and Social Life**

At home and with social contacts, peace officers may begin to experience:

- Voluntary disengagement from the family
  - Extramarital affairs
  - Divorce
  - Increased binge drinking
  - Self-isolation
  - Choosing video games or other distractions over family and friends
  - Reckless behavior
  - DUI
- 

## **Work**

At work, peace officers may find themselves subject to:

- Negative peer relations
  - Extension of probationary status
  - Write ups/Counseling Memos
  - IA investigations
  - Termination
- 

*Continued on next page*

# Personal, Professional, and Organizational Consequences, Continued

---

## **Financial**

Peace officers who engage in excessive drinking or use of substances place themselves at risk of financial stress. Some of those stresses could include,

- Impulse/excessive spending due to intoxication
  - Alcohol/drug induced gambling
  - DUI costs
  - Cost associated with alcohol/drug purchases
- 

## **Serious Misconduct**

Alcohol or substance abuse could lead to the potential loss of a career in law enforcement. Any peace officer convicted of a felony or certain misdemeanors offences would be prohibited from serving as a peace officer.

A peace officer who has an alcohol or substance use problem could be more uninhibited than they might normally be sober. A peace officer, having used excessive alcohol or substances could partake in unacceptable behaviors they normally would not become involved in.

---

## **Liability to Employing Department**

As a result of peace officers on-going alcohol and/or substance abuse, employing departments could face significant vicarious liability as a result of the intoxicated peace officers actions. Some of the areas of liability include:

- Excessive use-of-force complaints
  - Poor work performance
  - On-duty DUI accident
  - Liability to community
  - Lawsuits
- 

*Continued on next page*

# Personal, Professional, and Organizational Consequences, Continued

---

## Resources

Assistance is available for peace officers struggling with alcohol or drug abuse concerns. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Your department Peer Support/Chaplain Team
  - Licensed clinician who specializes in alcohol/drug treatment
  - Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)
  - (AA) Alcoholics Anonymous or (NA) Narcotics Anonymous
  - Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
  - National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)
  - National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)
-

# Workbook Learning Activities

---

## Introduction

To help you review and apply the material covered in this chapter, a selection of learning activities has been included. No answers are provided. However, by referring to the appropriate text, you should be able to prepare a response.

---

## Activity questions

1. Using the CAGE Assessment tool presented in this chapter, answer the following questions:
  - Have you ever felt you should CUT DOWN on your drinking?
  - Have you ever felt ANNOYED when others criticized your drinking?
  - Have you ever felt GUILTY about your drinking?
  - Have you ever experienced an EYE OPENER moment about your drinking, such as realizing you need to drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or soothe a hangover?

## Workbook Learning Activities, Continued

---

### Activity questions

2. Peace officer Smith attended a birthday party with fellow department employees and consumed numerous alcoholic beverages. Some co-workers were concerned about Peace officer Smith driving home due to his level of intoxication and asked him for the keys to his vehicle, which he refused to provide. Peace officer Smith was very intoxicated and got into a physical altercation with a fellow peace officer. Peace officer Smith left the party driving his vehicle. About 30 miles down the road, Peace officer Smith crashed his vehicle into a fence, leaving the roadway. Peace officer Smith sustained minor injuries and his vehicle sustained major damage. Law enforcement arrived on scene and arrested Peace officer Smith for DUI. During the DUI investigation, Peace officer Smith refused to provide a blood/urine sample.
    - a. What potential work-related consequences could Peace officer Smith be facing?
    - b. What additional consequences could Peace officer Smith face if he is a probationary employee?
  
  3. Peace Officer Lopes was injured during a foot pursuit of a suspect. He has been on the job for three years and is eager to get back to full duty. His doctor prescribed a prescription pain medication to help Peace officer Lopes complete his physical therapy and heal from his surgery. Once back on duty, Peace officer Lopes has begun taking more of his medication than prescribed and constantly worries about his next refill because his doctor wants to reduce his dosage.
    - a. What resources are available to assist Peace officer Lopes with his pain and dependence on his medication?
-



# Chapter 4

## Financial Wellness

### Overview

---

**Learning need** Peace officers need to understand the impact of financial wellness on their overall well-being and to be equipped with the skills, tools, and knowledge necessary to develop and support successful financial outcomes.

---

### Learning objectives

After completing study of this chapter, the student will be able to:	Objective ID
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Define financial wellness</li></ul>	14.04.01
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe personal financial wellness and goal setting</li></ul>	14.04.02
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain financial wellness and its impact on relationships</li></ul>	14.04.03

---

*Continued on next page*

## Overview, Continued

---

**In this chapter** This chapter focuses on the financial wellness. Refer to the chart below for a specific topic.

<b>Topic</b>	<b>See Page</b>
Financial Wellness	4-3
Financial Goal Setting	4-4
How Financial Wellness Impacts Relationships	4-9
Workbook Learning Activities	4-11

---

# Financial Wellness

---

## Introduction

Consumer **debt** and financial problems are regularly identified as major sources of stress in people's lives. Peace officers are inherently exposed to high stress situations which can lead to cumulative stress. Peace officers should have a plan and goal for their money and financial future to help alleviate some of that stress.

---

## Financial Wellness

**Financial wellness** means that a person is comfortable in their financial situation to the point where finances do not overtly control the decisions in their lives. This can also include the tendency to rely on overtime checks to cover necessary expenditures.

The idea of financial wellness goes far beyond creating and sticking to a budget and saving for unforeseen financial burdens. The concept of financial wellness includes preparing for retirement as early as your first day on the job. Preparing for retirement can include investing through a pension, 457 (b) retirement plan, or personal 401 (k) plan. For more information on retirement planning, it is advised to speak with a financial advisor. Financial wellness also includes preparing for a rainy day in the form of needed time off to prepare for unforeseen difficulties like personal injuries or illnesses, and time off to support an ill family member. These leave banks should be looked at like a savings account when your time is demanded away from work. Peace officers can be tempted to earn and use accrued leave time like vacation and sick time off.

Preparing for life's unforeseen demands like an expected car repair, injury, or loss of a family member can take a toll on a peace officer's mental health. These external stressors (although they can be self-inflicted), can cause peace officers to experience a lapse in judgement or cause their attention to be placed elsewhere while performing their duties. This lapse of judgement or inattention to duty can have personal, professional, or even peace officer safety repercussions.

---

# Financial Goal Setting and Planning

---

## **Introduction**

Financial wellness is a healthy balance between wants, needs, and how you manage your money in order to achieve your personal financial goals. Identifying short-term and long-term financial goals are key to keeping you focused and on track with your financial plan.

---

## **Short-term goals**

A short-term financial goal is for more immediate purchases. An example of this type of goal may be saving a small emergency fund, paying off a credit card, or saving up to make a specific purchase. Typically, these goals would take about six months to a couple years to complete. Completing a short-term goal can help you achieve momentum towards your future long-term goals.

---

## **Long-term goals**

A long-term financial goal would be something that takes over a year to complete. This could be saving for a down payment on a house, investing for retirement, or saving up for another large purchase. In order to achieve a long-term financial goal, it is good to look at your budget and see how much money you could comfortably put away each paycheck. This lessens the blow to your finances by saving up in smaller increments and over time.

---

*Continued on next page*

## Financial Goal Setting and Planning, Continued

---

### Have a plan for your money

By knowing where you will spend your money before you receive it, the chances of you making impulse buys or frivolous financial decisions are much lower. Creating a simple plan for how to use your income will help you stay on track. In doing so, you will have more financial peace which will allow you to focus on other aspects of life such as hobbies, family, and your career. One way to create a plan for your money is to have a budget.

---

### Budget

A **budget** is a tool used to evaluate, manage, and plan for future expenses. A budget is a personal plan for how you will spend your money. A budget is created by taking your total monthly income and subtracting monthly expenses. This will show you how the money is being spent and where you may have left over funds.

---

### Example of a monthly budget

In this sample budget, this individual has \$780 left over at the end of the month. This leftover money can be used to build an emergency fund, pay off debt, or plan for a future expense.

<b>Income</b>	<b>\$5,500</b>
<b>Expense</b>	<b>Monthly Cost</b>
Rent	\$2,400
Utilities (Water, Electricity, Gas)	\$350
Car Payment	\$450
Cell Phone	\$90
Gasoline	\$500
Groceries	\$500
Car Insurance	\$150
Internet	\$45
Subscriptions	\$35
Savings	\$200
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$4,720</b>
<b>Excess</b>	<b>\$5,500 - \$4,720 = \$780</b>

---

*Continued on next page*

## Financial Goal Setting and Planning, Continued

---

**Examples of a monthly budget,**  
*continued*

Many new peace officers will make large purchases after being hired on with a department because they are now making a decent income. For some of these peace officers, they are making more money than they ever have before. Although a new car or boat may seem like a good idea, these items may cause you to incur significant debt. This becomes a problem when a person takes on too much debt and they begin living paycheck to paycheck. Sometimes, they must rely on overtime shifts and extra hours in order to pay their monthly bills. This is where a budget becomes crucial.

It is a good idea not to keep debt or rolling credit card balances from month to month. Recurring debt, such as a car payment, boat payment, credit card bills, etc. can have a significant impact on your overall financial plan. As you can see in the example budget, adding additional expenses such as a boat payment or additional credit card debt, can quickly deplete your excess monthly funds.

---

*Continued on next page*

## Financial Goal Setting and Planning, Continued

---

### Planning for the Unplanned

An **emergency fund** is money set aside in order to cover unplanned expenses such as a vehicle repair, appliance replacement, etc. When you have an emergency fund, unplanned problems become a simple inconvenience because the money is already set aside to pay for the issue or problem. A good initial starting amount for an emergency fund is around twenty percent of your monthly income, and any funds used should be replaced.

For example, your vehicle's water pump goes out while driving home from work. The repair costs \$650. If you have an emergency fund of \$1,000, you can pay for the repair, and it does not affect your overall financial situation. However, if you do not have a savings or emergency fund, you will have to put that repair on credit. Over time, these situations may continue to occur, putting you deeper into debt and further from your financial goals. A goal should be to have a long-term emergency fund that would be able to cover three-six months of monthly expenses. This money would only be used in the event of an emergency expense, job loss, etc.

---

### Credit Cards

A credit card allows you to purchase a good or service on loan, in the trust that you will make the payment later, or by installments with interest (**APR – Annual Percentage Rate**) accrued. For example, if you have a credit card with a \$1,000 limit, you do not have \$1,000 to your name (cash), but you can make a purchase up to \$1,000 now and you are promising to pay the money to the credit card company by the time the money is due, usually 30 days. Credit card companies typically will allow you to make small payments over long periods of time which makes you feel as though you can afford the item when in reality you are paying more for the item due to accruing interest.

---

*Continued on next page*

## Financial Goal Setting and Planning, Continued

---

### Interest

Interest is money paid at a percentage rate based on the amount of debt owed or money lent. For example, if you spend \$1,000 on a credit card and you have an interest rate of 10% accrued monthly, at the end of the billing cycle you will pay back \$1,100. \$1,000 for the initial item and \$100 in interest on the money borrowed.

Credit scores can be useful in order to obtain a home loan, personal loan, car loan, etc. A **credit score** is a calculation used to determine your overall worthiness to borrow and pay money back. Credit scores are calculated based on your number of credit accounts, if you pay your bills on time, your income, and credit to debt ratio, among other factors. Credit scores range from 300 to 850 points. A higher credit score means that banks and loan companies view you as more responsible with money or a less risky borrower. This also helps determine the amount of interest rate you will pay when borrowing money.

---

### Net Worth

Net worth is the value of the assets a person owns, minus the liabilities they owe. Net worth is an important metric to gauge a person's financial health.

Sometimes called net wealth, one's net worth is used in the financial world to qualify certain individuals for particular investment strategies or financial products.

---

### Spending less than you make

Do not get into a position with purchases that require you to work overtime or extra shifts. Do not get used to using credit cards in order to make purchases. Credit cards allow you to spend money with less emotional attachment because the numbers or credit card balance does not directly affect your bank account. A credit card minimum payment is usually much less than the total balance of the credit card which makes you feel like you can afford whatever it is that you purchase when in reality you will pay much more over time due to accrued interest.

---



# How Financial Wellness Impacts Relationships

---

## **Introduction**

The financial health of peace officers is extremely important to help reduce stress, alleviate ethical issues, maintain security clearances, and prevent you from living paycheck to paycheck. Financial wellness is taking control of your money, so it does not take control of you. Financial wellness is a state of financial well-being in which you can pay your debts, provide for current needs, handle unexpected financial emergencies, and plan for long-term financial goals such as building college funds and saving for retirement.

---

## **Financial Wellness**

One might expect that money would be an easier topic to talk about since it is a tangible concept compared to other emotional issues; however, families often find these topics painful and difficult to discuss. Money is a fundamental aspect of marriage and the family. Without good money management, it can be difficult to have healthy relationships. Arguing over money is an issue that encompasses many relationships and can become costly, especially when children are involved. For a relationship to be successful, both partners should be able to discuss financial issues openly with one another and feel comfortable asking for help when needed. That is where understanding your significant other's perspective on money comes into play as a strong foundation in establishing healthy dialogue around finance. When talking about money, you want to remember that this is a big part of your union. You also need to have the perspective that no matter how much money you make or how little you make; the goal is to create a sense of security.

Financial wellness is the key to solving large-scale, complex inequities embedded in our society. We also know there is a cyclical relationship between mental health and money.

The interaction between financial well-being, income, and the strength of relationships is complex. One's sense of financial well-being and the experiences which accompany it (e.g., stress level, effort to acquire necessities, sense of security and stability), interact with relationships and how people relate to others in their lives.

---

*Continued on next page*

## How Financial Wellness Impacts Relationships, Continued

---

### **Family Impact**

Financial problems are commonly cited as the second most cause of divorce, just behind infidelity. Arguments about finances and debt are deeply rooted in emotion and blame. Having an open dialogue about your current financial situation, financial goals, and retirement planning is crucial to a healthy family dynamic. Having this open dialogue about finances removes a significant potential source of conflict.

---

### **Social Relationships**

Social relationships influence financial well-being. For example, divorce or separation can cause financial difficulties; however, strong relationships may ease the psychological burden of coping with financial stress, such as having friends who are willing to offer support.

The relationships individuals have with their finances and the management of their money has a significant effect on their personal relationships -- for high-income and low-income alike. Financial well-being is more than income alone. Individuals with high incomes who do not successfully manage their money and who do not live within their means could have low financial well-being -- and those with moderate or low incomes who manage their money well and live within their means could have high financial well-being.

Overall, these results distinctly illustrate that financial well-being and strong relationships are linked, regardless of income.

---

# Workbook Learning Activities

---

## Introduction

To help you review and apply the material covered in this chapter, a selection of learning activities has been included. No answers are provided. However, by referring to the appropriate text, you should be able to prepare a response.

---

## Activity question

1. Using your own words define the following terms. Give an example of each. How can these examples impact your overall wellness?

Terms	Examples	Potential Impact on Wellness
Net Worth		
Financial Goal Setting (Short-term/Long-term)		
Budget		
Retirement Planning		
Financial Stress		

---

*Continued on next page*



## Workbook Learning Activities, Continued

---

### Activity questions (continued)

4. While sitting in the morning briefing you notice that one of your partners, who is normally attentive, seems distracted and is not paying attention. After the briefing, you ask them why they were not paying attention in briefing, and they tell you they have been having a lot of financial issues at home and feel like they are drowning in credit debt and car payments. Your partner says they have no idea what to do. What resources or conversations can you have with this partner to help them in their situation?

## **Workbook Learning Activities, Continued**

---

**Student Notes**

# Chapter 5

## Resiliency Building

### Overview

---

**Learning need** Peace officers need to understand what elements help build and sustain resiliency to improve peace officer wellness and identify a self-care plan.

---

**Learning objectives** The chart below identifies the student learning objectives for this chapter.

<b>After completing study of this chapter, the student will be able to:</b>	<b>Objective ID</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Define the terms:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Resiliency</li><li>○ Self-care</li><li>○ Self-care plan</li></ul></li></ul>	14.05.01
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe the personal, professional, and organizational benefits of building and sustaining resiliency for peace officers</li></ul>	14.05.02
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognize factors that may be barriers for resiliency for peace officers</li></ul>	14.05.03
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify and create a personal self-care plan</li></ul>	14.05.04

---

*Continued on next page*

## Overview, Continued

---

**In this chapter** This chapter focuses on the basic knowledge needed to recognize and describe how resiliency and self-care can help improve peace officer wellness. Refer to the following chart for specific topics.

<b>Topic</b>	<b>See Page</b>
Resiliency	5-3
Self-Care	5-6
Self-Care Plan	5-8
Workbook Learning Activities	5-10

---



# Resiliency

---

## Introduction

Peace officers need to recognize, understand, and regulate their physical, mental, and emotional needs to maintain a balanced personal and professional life. The recognition and identification of our resiliency, by utilizing a personal self-care plan, can benefit us before, during, and after we are faced with a critical incident and or cumulative stressors and ultimately enhance our resiliency. A peace officer's resiliency during a critical incident and or cumulative stressors can affect not only him/her, but their family, friends, department, and community.

---

## Resiliency

**Resiliency** is needed to cope with traumatic scenarios emotionally and mentally. Coping mechanisms vary for everyone, but a successful resilience-focused strategy will allow people to address the trauma they faced and move on.

---

*Continued on next page*

## Resiliency, Continued

### How to be resilient

As peace officers improve their resiliency, it will have a positive impact on their work-life balance. They will be more likely to have a positive career if they apply the following:

<p><b>Daily</b></p>	<p>Numerous studies have been conducted to prove that a good sleep routine, healthy diet, and daily workout routine greatly improve your overall resilience.</p> <p>Peace officers are the first to help anyone in need; however, we are not the best at recognizing when we need help. It is important to recognize your weaknesses and do what it takes to overcome them. By identifying your weakness, you can learn what it takes to overcome them and become a stronger peace officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a daily workout routine</li> <li>• Have a healthy diet</li> <li>• Have a good sleep routine</li> <li>• Surrounded yourself with good people</li> <li>• Have a mentor or accountability partner</li> <li>• Recognize your weaknesses and do what it takes to overcome them</li> </ul>
<p><b>Short-term</b></p>	<p>As a peace officer, you are constantly learning from day one of the academy until the day you retire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand you will make mistakes; however, learn from them when you do and try not to repeat them</li> <li>• Knowledge is power. Learn something new every day and try to master your assignment</li> <li>• Stress, anxiety, and tragic events will happen sooner or later. Know when you are not ok, take days off when needed, and seek help if it continues</li> </ul>

*Continued on next page*

## Resiliency, Continued

**How to be resilient,**  
continued

<p><b>Short-term,</b> continued</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life is a marathon, not a sprint. Learn how to relax and decompress</li> <li>• Have a rest day and turn work off when you are not there</li> <li>• Take vacations and use sick days when needed</li> </ul>
<p><b>Long-term</b></p>	<p>As peace officers, we give everything we have and then some to the community we serve. We have no problem going above and beyond for everyone; however, we tend to sometimes forget about our own families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get routine medical check-ups</li> <li>• Set goals, reach them, surpass them, and then make more</li> <li>• Retire when you can and enjoy it</li> <li>• Take care of your family. When you are older, they will take care of you</li> <li>• Have a financial investment plan</li> <li>• Stay physically active and have hobbies</li> </ul>

*Continued on next page*

# Self-Care

---

## Introduction

Self-care helps peace officers strike a balance between fulfilling life's obligations and sustaining healthy coping mechanisms for both personal and professional wellness.

---

## Self-care

**Self-care** is a term that refers to any activity that we do deliberately in order to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health. Self-care is the practice of individuals looking after their own health and well-being and using the knowledge and information available to them.

Self-care can appear to be a simple concept in theory; however, it is something we very often overlook. Self-care is not something you need to force yourself to do. It should give you pure enjoyment and should relax you from day-to-day stressors.

Practicing self-care can be an effective way to reduce peace officer stress and its short and long-term consequences.

---

*Continued on next page*

## Self-Care, Continued

---

### Benefits to Self-care

The following table identifies a number of benefits for peace officers who learn to recognize and practice self-care.

<b>Personal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improved mood</li><li>• Reduced anxiety</li><li>• Improved communication</li><li>• Better relationships</li><li>• Reduced stress</li><li>• Better physical health</li><li>• Fewer illnesses</li><li>• Better sleep</li></ul>
<b>Professional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improved communication</li><li>• Stronger motivation</li><li>• More positive interactions with the public</li><li>• Less burnout</li></ul>
<b>Organizational</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased work product</li><li>• Better quality of work</li><li>• Fewer complaints</li></ul>

---

### Barriers to Self-care

Peace officers often have competing demands on their time. These professional and personal demands may inflict severe time constraints that cause peace officers to believe they do not have time to care for themselves. The first step to overcoming barriers to self-care may be identifying the following barriers:

- Time constraints
  - Workload
  - Family obligations
  - Support system or lack of
  - Lack of education on what self-care means
  - Selfless personality
  - Lack of motivation
  - Exhaustion/fatigue
-

# Self-Care Plan

---

## Introduction

The creation of a **self-care plan** can help guide the peace officer in their individual plan. Planning and organizing time for self-care is essential to a person's wellness.

“If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail.”- Benjamin Franklin

---

## Self-Care Plan

A thoughtfully constructed and personalized plan and/or task list set to promote and provide direction for you in times of crisis and or challenge.

Self-care plans are unique to each person and are focused on helping an individual to feel happy, healthy, and complete. Self-care plans can help you achieve a true work-life balance and if crafted thoughtfully and executed weekly, your individualized plan can help you improve the quality of your life.

---

## Elements of a Self-Care Plan

While self-care plans are unique to each person, the common thread is the personal commitment to attend to all domains of your life for overall wellness. These domains may include, but are not limited to, your physical and psychological well-being, emotional and spiritual needs, and personal and professional relationships.

When developing your self-care plan, consider:

- How your current coping strategies impact your well-being
  - Activities you engage in to take care of yourself on a regular basis that reduce stress and enhance your overall well-being
  - A framework before you are faced with a crisis or feel overwhelmed
  - Setting aside reservations that might inhibit your full, personal commitment to implementing your self-care plan
  - Talking about your self-care plan with family, close friends, and trusted peers who can be sources of support and encouragement
- 

*Continued on next page*

## Self-Care Plan, Continued

---

### Example of a Self-Care Plan

There are various methods to creating a self-care plan that works for you. The following is one example of a self-care plan.

---



# Workbook Learning Activities

---

## Introduction

To help you review and apply the material covered in this chapter, a selection of learning activities has been included. No answers are provided. However, by referring to the appropriate text, you should be able to prepare a response.

---

## Activity question

1. You respond to a medical assist call with a baby that is not breathing. Upon your arrival, the baby is pronounced deceased by medical personnel. You handle the call and go back into service. After your shift, you can't seem to stop thinking of the deceased baby and the grief the family is going through. Two weeks have gone by, and you are not sleeping well at all. You started consuming alcohol more than usual, using prescription medication to help you sleep, and are very agitated with family and friends.
  - a. How does being resilient help, you deal with this situation?
  - b. What are some of the barriers to self-care in this situation?
  - c. Utilizing your self-care plan, articulate to the class how you handle this situation.
  
2. You are a four-year peace officer working in the patrol division. You have a great reputation with your peers and supervisors and do not have any major stressors at work. You are married with two young kids and depend on overtime money to pay the bills as you are a single-income home. You recently found out that your spouse was diagnosed with cancer. The stresses of time-off, finances, child-care, and your wife's health are weighing heavy on you.
  - a. How does being resilient help, you deal with this situation?
  - b. What are some of the barriers to self-care in this situation?
  - c. Utilizing your self-care plan, articulate to the class how you handle this situation.

---

*Continued on next page*



## Workbook Learning Activities, Continued

---

### Activity questions (continued)

3. Your spouse has charged your credit cards to the limit without your knowledge. Your sergeant just served you a subpoena for civil law suit you are now named in. Your Lieutenant has stated your time on working day shifts is up and you must work nights despite your childcare needs.
  - a. How does being resilient help, you deal with this situation?
  - b. What are some of the barriers to self-care in this situation?
  - c. Utilizing your self-care plan, articulate to the class how you would handle this situation.
  
4. You are in field training and routinely stay over your shift to complete your reports. Your Field Training Officer (FTO) advised you that you need to get faster at report writing, as the Sergeant is not happy with all the overtime. You have a new baby at home, and your spouse/significant other has been arguing with you over you continuing to work over your shift. When you are home, you don't sleep very well as you help with the baby and stress over field training. Due to the time retrains you are not going to the gym anymore, you are living off energy drinks, and are constantly stressed and tired.
  - a. How does being resilient help, you deal with this situation?
  - b. What are some of the barriers to self-care in this situation?
  - c. Utilizing your self-care plan, articulate to the class how you handle this situation.

---

*Continued on next page*

## **Workbook Learning Activities, Continued**

---

**Student notes**

# Glossary

---

**Introduction**      **The key vocabulary terms for LD 14: Officer Wellness are listed below with the definitions as they apply to this workbook.**

---

**Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD)**      Is defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5) as a chronic use of alcohol with an inability to stop or control use despite negative social, occupational, or health consequences

---

**Annual Percentage Rate (APR)**      Is defined as the percentage of a principal amount borrowers will additionally pay each year that may include fees or additional costs associated with a given transaction.

---

**Anxiety**      Is defined as an emotional state that includes feelings of apprehension and fear, physical symptoms of tension, and anticipation that something dangerous or negative is going to occur.

---

**Binge Drinking**      Is defined as the consumption of excessive amounts of alcohol in a short period of time. This is further defined as a male consuming 5 or more alcoholic drinks and a female consuming 4 or more alcoholic drinks within 2 hours by the NIAAA.

---

**Budget**      Is a tool used to evaluate, manage, and plan for future expenses. A budget is a personal plan for how you will spend your money.

---

**Bureaucratic Stress**      Is defined as characteristics of the organization and the behaviors of the people in that organization that generate issues such as: lack of support, time pressures, distrust, heavy workloads, inadequate resources, and interpersonal conflicts with colleagues and supervisors.

---

**Credit Score**      Is a calculation used to determine your overall worthiness to borrow and pay money back.

---

*Continued on next page*

## Glossary, Continued

---

**Critical Incident Stress**

Is defined as any event that has a stressful impact powerful enough to overwhelm your usual coping strategies.

---

**Cumulative Stress**

Is defined as an accumulation of various stress factors such as a heavy workload, relationship problems, sleep disturbance, and multiple frustrations that cause feelings of powerless, and an inability to rest or relax.

---

**Debt**

Is any financial obligation or alleged financial obligation of a consumer arising out of transactions and expressed agreement.

---

**Depression**

Is defined as a mental health disorder characterized by persistently depressed mood or loss of interest in the activities of daily living, causing impairment in daily life.

---

**Drug Dependence**

Is the psychological or physical state resulting from the interaction between the body and the drug that will alter, over time, the production of certain hormones and neurotransmitters.

---

**Emergency Fund**

Is money set aside in order to cover unplanned expenses such as a vehicle repair, appliance replacement, etc.

---

**Financial wellness**

Means that a person is comfortable in their financial situation to the point where finances do not overtly control the decisions in their lives.

---

**Mental Health**

Is defined as a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to his or her community.

---

**Personal Competence**

Is the ability to stay aware of your emotions and manage your behavior and tendencies.

---

*Continued on next page*

## Glossary, Continued

---

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

Is defined as a diagnosable mental health condition. It is a psychiatric injury that may occur in people who have experienced, or witnessed a traumatic, or life-threatening event. People with PTSD have intense, disturbing thoughts and feelings related to their experience that last long after the traumatic event has ended. Symptoms include avoidance, hypervigilance, and re-experiencing the trauma through nightmares and/or flashbacks.

---

**Relationship Management**

Is the ability to interact positively with others.

---

**Resiliency**

Is the capacity to recover from difficulties and cope with stressful situations.

---

**Self-Awareness**

Is critical awareness of one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and motivations, with an acute understanding of how they affect self-perception, thoughts, behaviors, and work performance.

---

**Self-Care**

Is a term that refers to any activity that we do deliberately in order to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health.

---

**Self-Care Plan**

Can help guide the peace officer in their individual plan. Planning and organizing time for self-care is essential to a person's wellness.

---

**Self-Management**

Is being in control of one's feelings and impulses so that one can control one's emotions in healthy ways, take initiative, follow through on commitments, and adapt to changing circumstances.

---

**Social Awareness**

Is the ability to accurately pick up on emotions in other people and understand what is really going on with them.

---

**Social Competence**

Is one's ability to understand other people's moods, behavior, and motives to improve the quality of relationships and one's interactions with others.

---

*Continued on next page*

## **Glossary, Continued**

---

**Substance Use Disorder**

Is a strong desire or craving to use substances, with such usage resulting in impairments including health problems, disability, or failure to meet responsibilities at work, school, or home (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, 2019).

---

**Suicide**

Is defined as taking one's own life intentionally and voluntarily.

---