

## HEALTHY COPING STRATEGIES

Figley Institute 2012-2013

Being responsible to self aids toward success in one's responsibility to others. Healthy coping starts with an authentic and transparent assessment that implements positive goals for ongoing health and wellness. Below are strategies for success:

**COGNITIVE:** Give yourself permission to ask for help | Make small, daily decisions | Break large tasks into small ones

**EMOTIONAL:** Allow yourself to experience what you feel | Keep communications open with others | Have a buddy you can vent to

**BEHAVIORIAL:** Limit demands on time and energy | Do activities you previously enjoyed | Help others with tasks | relax

**SPIRITUAL:** Find spiritual support | Discuss changed beliefs with spiritual leader | Practice rituals of your faith | Meditate

**INTERPERSONAL:** Take time to enjoy time with trusted friend/partner | Set healthy boundaries | State needs/wants clearly

**PHYSICAL:** Eat well-balanced, regular meals  
Take mini-breaks | Remember to breathe deeply | Engage in physical luxuries (a trainer, spa, massage or other enjoyed activity)



**Resiliency**  
Body Mind Spirit

Care for Enhanced Life & Vitality

### Post Traumatic Growth

Posttraumatic growth was introduced by Richard Tedeschi and Lawrence Calhoun in 1995, referring to positive changes that some trauma survivors report as a result of the struggle to cope with traumatic events. People report five areas of growth: improvements in interpersonal relationships, a greater appreciation for life, new opportunities or pathways in life, a greater sense of personal strength in ability to cope with crises, and spiritual changes or development.

Tedeschi, R. & Triplett, K. N. (2012)

# Self-Care & Resiliency

Nurturing Life | Vitality | Wellness

Peer Support

SMART  
GOALS

Accountability for

Coping with  
Stress & Trauma



Specialized Care  
Plans & Goals

PTS Growth  
Initiatives

Health & Wellness  
For Enduring Self-Care

Support for BF/MF  
CISM TEAM by Appointment

Coping with  
Stress & Trauma

## SELF CARE RESPONSE

Effective self-care starts with one's commitment to sustainability. While one's work in first-response is rewarding and beneficial, there are many ways that exposure to repeated crises and trauma can lead to unhealthy outcomes. Many areas need post-attention for first-responders who consistently expose themselves to crisis and suffering. Keeping in mind the stain of the prolonged exposure factor, one should put into place a post, self-care plan that helps alleviate stressors and works through the unwanted or unwelcomed areas that may affect first responders health and wellness.

### Standards for Self-Care Plans

- ◇ Strategies for *letting go of work*
- ◇ Strategies for gaining a *sense of self care achievement*
- ◇ Strategies for acquiring *adequate rest and relaxation*
- ◇ Strategies for practicing *effective daily stress reduction methods*

### KEY QUESTION

**Do you have a Self-Care Plan that can reduce stress & increase focus and quality of life?**

## POST INCIDENT CARE

### Care Values: Envisioning Hope via Management Plans

#### Step One: Assessment

- ◇ Personal Reflections: Your Current Level of Self-Care for Life Stress, Resilience, and Coping
- ◇ Measuring Stress Vulnerability
- ◇ Examining Personal Resilience
- ◇ Evaluating Healthy Coping
- ◇ Compassion Satisfaction vs Fatigue and/or Burnout

#### Step Two: Setting Goals

Review Your Self-Assessment Results

Identify Life Stress

Evaluate Responder Stress

Set **SMART** Goals that are:

Specific

Measurable

Attainable

Realistic

Time-based

## PEERS in ACTION

For thousands of emergency responders, saving lives is more than a job—it's a vocation that drives them. Fortunately, the Boston Fire / Metro Fire Critical Incident Stress Management Team is readily available after the urgency of the trauma scene dissipates with education and commitment to post-crisis care and peer support. Additionally available are referred resources, continuing education and an advocacy for self-care management that provides ongoing attention to care responsibly for self and others.

### Other Factors of Impact

*“Self-Care plans have aided those who care for others in significant ways.”*

Below are other factors that play a role as part of pre-and postvention care.

- ◇ Exposure to the Person/Need
- ◇ Empathic concern, ability, response
- ◇ Detachment Initiatives
- ◇ Sense of Achievement
- ◇ Compassion Stress or Fatigue
- ◇ Prolonged Exposure
- ◇ Traumatic Recollections
- ◇ Life Disruption

