Mental Health & Wellness
During COVID 19 Operations

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Delivering Care That Changes People’s Lives
Stress Prior to COVID 19

1. Working conditions
2. Role factors
3. Career factors
4. Interpersonal relations
5. Job performance
6. Job satisfaction
7. State of physical health
8. State of emotional state
9. Drinking and/or drug use
10. Family adjustments
11. The individual
Three Phases of Burnout

**Stress Phase**
- Anxiety
- Panic
- Physical Symptoms

**Energy Conservation Phase**
- Procrastination
- Lateness
- Absenteeism
- Increased caffeine & nicotine
- Withdrawal
- Avoidance

**Exhaustion Phase**
- Depression
- Thinking of career change
- Substance abuse
- Contemplating self destructive actions

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Iceberg Effect

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Stress Resilience

Building Emotional Fitness

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Relax !!!
The “R’s” for Stress Management

Responsibility
- Establish priorities & goals
- Establish rules to live by
- Be able to say “no”

Reflection
- Know your stress level
- Be aware of stress symptoms
- Check your balance in life
The “R’s” for Stress Management

**Relaxation**
- Do something good for you & you enjoy
- Schedule timeouts
- Do nothing at times

**Relationships**
- Maintain positive relationships
- Balance your relationships
- Improve relationships with yourself
The “R’s” for Stress Management

Refueling
• Eat balanced diet
• Be aware of caffeine & nicotine
• Drink water

Recreation
• Have fun
• Enjoy Life
• Laugh
Healthy Living Tips

- **EAT** – breakfast
- **EAT** – 3 meals a day
- **Sleep** – 7-8 hours a night
- **Exercise** – regularly
- **Weight** – within normal limits
- **Self Medicating** – avoid
- **Drinking** – in moderation
- **Smoking** - avoid

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Managing Work/Home Relationship

• Communication Problems – how much to tell?

• Family Routines – get disrupted

• Humor – home versus work

• Preoccupation with Work – cell phone, pagers
Connectedness via Support Systems

- Family Members
- Colleagues
- Civilian Friends
- Peer Counselors
- Clergy
- Support Groups
Being Mindful of Moral Injury

Moral injury is the damage done to one’s conscience ...
Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue & Peer Support: A Forensic Science and Medicolegal Death Investigation Perspective

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Morgue Operations

Medicolegal Death Investigations
Autopsy
Histology
Pathology

Laboratory Operations

Evidence Receiving
Forensic Biology
Drug Chemistry
Toxicology
Environmental Chemistry
Firearms & Tool marks
Latent Prints
Trace Evidence
Mobile Crime Unit
**Vicarious / Secondary Trauma**

**Compassion Fatigue**

- Emotional or physiological effects through the vicarious exposure to the details of a traumatic experiences of others
  - Case Reports
  - Evidence Processing
- Emotional residue of exposure to working with those suffering from the consequences of traumatic events
  - Family Interactions
  - Initial investigation, Follow up and Resolution
Mass Fatality / Mass Causality Event

- Team Response
  - Crime Scene Unit Response
  - Death Scene Investigation Response
  - Autopsy Examination
  - Evidence Analysis
- Before, During and Post- Event
- Continual Status Checks
CISM and Peer Support

- Pittsburgh CISM team – Mental Health Advisors
- Pittsburgh Department of Public Safety Peer Support Group
  - Police
  - Fire
  - EMS
- Pennsylvania State Coroner’s Association
ACOME Peer Support Team

• Creation of the Team
• Grants funding for Peer Support, Resilient Leadership and Response to Vicarious Trauma
  • Training Opportunities
• Established Quarterly Peer Support Team events for the entire office
• Publish quarterly newsletters on behalf of the peer support team
COVID 19

• New Normal
  • Work requirements
  • Family Requirements
• Separation and Isolation
• Stress of Scene Response and Examinations
  • Direct
  • Indirect
Contact Information

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