



# Officer Wellness

*Dealing with Stress*

# Objectives



To understand the mental, physical and emotional stress and demands of the law enforcement career.



To understand the toxic physiological process that occurs during the course of a normal LE workday.



Develop and put into practice strategies that alleviate the cumulative stress of the LE occupation



Identify the components of optimum wellness and the resources that assist in attaining optimum wellness.



**The cumulative process  
marked by emotional  
exhaustion and withdrawal  
associated with increased  
workload and institutional  
stress, DOES NOT have  
to be trauma-related. It's...**



**Burnout**

# Compassion Fatigue

The emotional strain of witnessing or working with those suffering from traumatic events.





# What is trauma ?

**A deeply  
distressing  
or  
disturbing  
experience:**

Vehicle accident

Health scare

Sudden job loss

Losing a loved one

Natural disaster

Emotional, physical or sexual abuse





## Secondary Trauma

A side effect or result of seeing or hearing about acts of cruelty or suffering which cause permanent and often profound changes in workers. Its symptoms mimic those of post-traumatic stress.



# What does secondary trauma do?



It shapes a person's basic beliefs about identity, world view, and spirituality.

Creates symptoms that are **ADAPTATIONS** - *What we see as the problem is the person's solution.*

Affects the brain and all of the bodily systems





# Case Study





# Effects of Secondary Trauma

You can never do enough

Hypervigilance  
(Officer safety)

Diminished creativity

Decreased ability for complexity

Minimizing

Chronic exhaustion/physical ailments

Inability to listen/deliberate avoidance

Dissociative moments – forgetting what you do



# Effects of Secondary Trauma

Sense of  
persecution

Guilt

Fear

Anger and  
cynicism

Inability to  
empathize/numbing

Addictions

Grandiosity

Feeling  
helpless/hopeless/w  
orthless

(this is otherwise  
known as suicide)



What  
we lose

“Every 18 hours an officer commits suicide” \*Dr. Kevin Gilmartin

High Divorce Rates

Domestic violence is common.

More prone to potentially fatal health issues

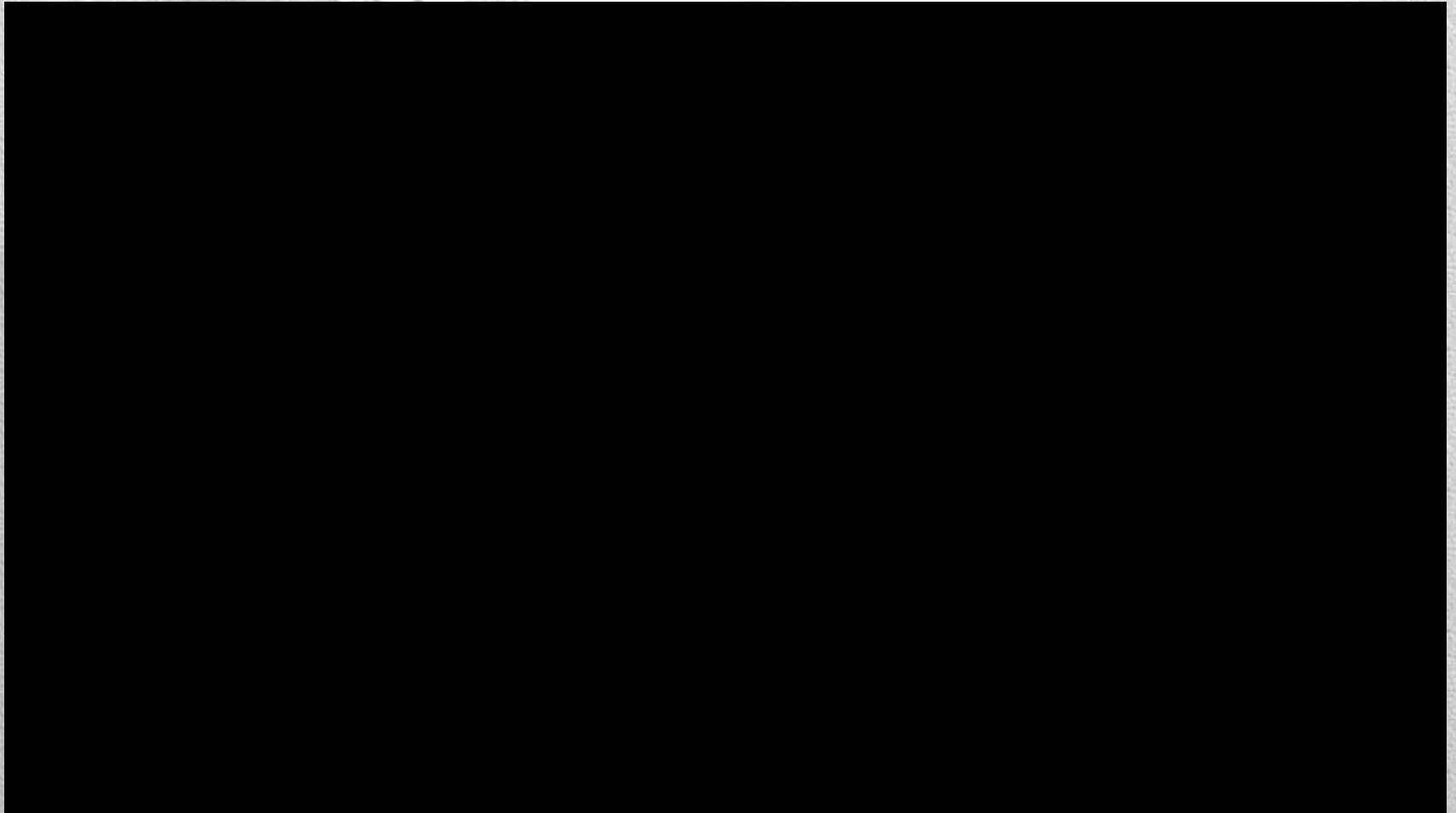
- Diabetes
- Heart disease



# WHEN?

**The issue is not *IF* we are  
affected by secondary  
trauma, but rather *WHEN*  
we will be affected...**

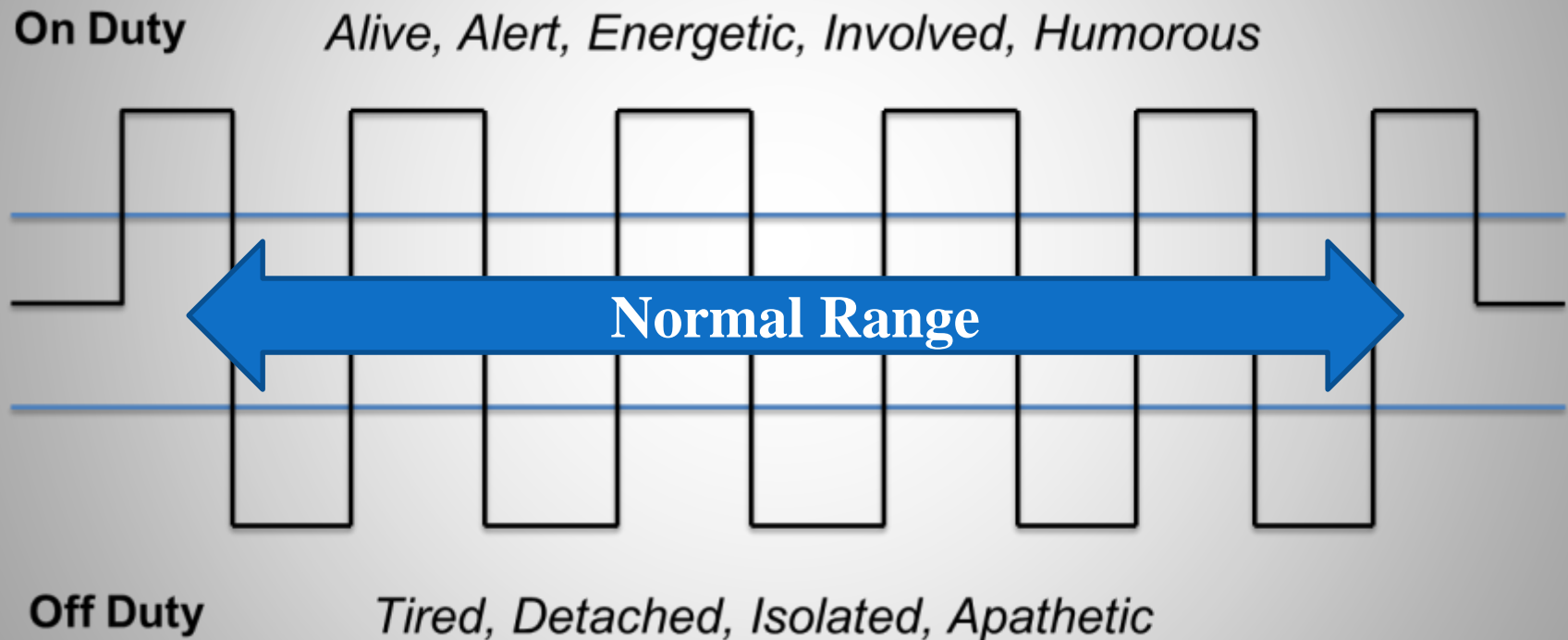
**It's NOT about the nail!!!**



# HYPERVIGILANCE AND HOW TO OVERCOME IT



# The Hypervigilance Biological Rollercoaster



# **But..... we are RESILIENT!!**

- able to recoil or spring back into shape after bending, stretching, or being compressed
- able to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions

**WE ARE NATURALLY RESILIENT**

# The Domains of Personal Resilience



**Mental**



**Physical**

**Response  
Ability**



**Spiritual**



**Social**



*"7 Usta...."*





# What's Important Now?



# RESOURCES

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BPD Peer Support

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BHS App & Services

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Health Insurance

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Friends & Family

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Each Other



# Officer Safety and Wellness

State of Wellness at BPD

What percentage of BPD officers reported experiencing a significant incident within a 12-month period?



# Officer Safety and Wellness

## Peer Support



# Officer Safety and Wellness

## Resources

**BHS – Free, confidential, 24/7 counseling.**

### **Substance abuse counseling**

- Harbor Grace
- Tranquility Woods

### **Nutritional guidance**

- Nourish
- FX Well

**Cell service discounts (AT&T FirstNet)**

**Financial planning (InvestED, M&T, Op. Hope)**

# What questions do you have for me?

