Maintaining Sustainability of Public Servants in Turbulent Times:
Supporting the Humans Behind the Mission

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Maintaining Sustainability of Public Servants in Turbulent Times: Supporting the Humans Behind the Mission

NLC-RISC

Pittsburgh

May 12, 2022
History

▪ Rhonda Kelly- EMT (Antarctic, Volunteer and Career), Firefighter/Paramedic (Aurora Fire), ER and Psych ER Nurse, Health & Safety

▪ Founder ResponderStrong- born at CU Anschutz- National Mental Health Innovation Center in 2016- moved to All Clear Foundation in 2020

▪ Director GMR Life (Health, Wellness and Resilience) at Global Medical Response: January 2020-present

▪ All Clear Foundation Executive Director: November 2020-present
ALL CLEAR FOUNDATION

- Launched October 2019 by Global Medical Response as a solution for the common challenges among Emergency Responders nationally
- Mission: to improve the wellbeing and longevity of Emergency Responders (including Healthcare Workers) and their families
- [http://www.allclearfoundation.org](http://www.allclearfoundation.org)
Challenges

- Geographic - urban, large, small, rural, volunteer
- Financial – personal and agency budgets
- Scheduling/Time – overflowing training calendars, low staffing

How to create effective Solutions that are accessible across all these domains:

Digital, Train the Trainer, and Hybrid
2020-2022: Burnout and Compassion Fatigue

is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It occurs when we feel overwhelmed, emotionally drained, and unable to meet constant demands: a failure to meet our basic human needs.

Increases our susceptibility to anxiety, depression, substance misuse, anger...When we are stressed, we are more likely to sustain a stress-related injury.

**Burnout** occurs when our (cumulative) stressors outpace our (cumulative) self care.
Challenges Being Seen Across Public Service

Understaffing
Recruitment and retention
Work from home/return to office - boundaries/expectations
Insecurity - novel times, destabilizing
Instability - social, financial, global
Inflation - homes, finances, investments, retirement
Increasing complexity with decreased capacity
Existential concerns - meaning, freedom, security

STRESS
Stress

- Body’s response to a threat, perceived threat, or challenge
- Not always bad, can be motivating and necessary to manage difficult situations
- Body is designed for acute stress; however, much of what we encounter today is chronic stress
Stress

Sympathetic Response:  
Fight or flight (or freeze)

Stress Hormones:  
Adrenaline  
Cortisol  
Nor-epi
Acute vs. Chronic Stress

*THE "BOILING FROG" SYNDROME*
Stress

Prefrontal Cortex

Limbic System
Stress

Prolonged stress response leads to:

- Decreased immune response
- Increased inflammation
- Decreased digestive function
- Impaired sugar metabolism (insulin)
- Lower level cognitive functioning
Stress Injury Formation

Stress Continuum Model

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**TO GET HELP**
- Seek medical treatment

Unit Leader Responsibility
- Individual, Shipmate, Family Responsibility
- Caregiver Responsibility

**ALL CLEAR FOUNDATION**
Health & Performance Continuum

**PEAK PERFORMANCE**
- Quality Sleep
- Focused Attention
- Sustained Energy
- Engaged
- Optimistic
- Physically Fit
- Flexible
- Self-confident
- Quality Relationships
- Emotionally Balanced

**How to Maintain**
- Sleep Optimization
- Well-balanced Diet
- Social Connectedness
- Regular Exercise
- Enjoyable Hobbies
- Communication Skills
- Spiritual Practice
- Mindfulness
- Yoga
- Martial Arts

**DECREASED PERFORMANCE**
- Sleep Loss
- Decreased Focus
- Reduced Energy
- Displaced Sarcasm
- Pessimistic
- Fatigue
- Inflexible
- Self-doubt
- Reduced Social Activity

**How to Improve**
- Peer Support Program
- EAP Consultant
- Spiritual Practice
- Mental Enrichment
- Psychological First Aid
- Communication Skills
- Sleep Hygiene
- Well-balanced Diet
- Social Engagement
- Mindfulness

**POOR PERFORMANCE**
- Disturbed Sleep
- Poor Focus
- Binge Drinking
- Sadness
- Displaced Anger
- Aggressive Behavior
- Moral Injury
- Guilt
- Relationship Issues

**How to Improve**
- Peer Support Program
- EAP Consultant
- Chaplain Services
- Mental Enrichment
- Psychological First Aid
- Sleep Hygiene
- Well-balanced Diet
- Social Engagement
- Mindfulness

**IMPAIRED PERFORMANCE**
- Sleep Deprivation
- Inability to Focus
- Increased Absenteeism
- Substance Use Disorder
- PTSD
- Depression
- Feelings of Hopelessness
- Suicidal Thoughts

**Professional Services**
- Brief Psychotherapy
- Family Therapy
- Marital Counseling
- Medication Therapy
- Federal Employee Health Benefit
- Additional Counseling
- Primary Care Physician
- Dietician
- Personal Trainer

Information and resources to improve your performance can be found at: dhs.gov/employees
Stress and Resiliency

- Stress and trauma can accumulate over time
- How we prepare for it (proactive) and process it (resilience) impacts our wellness (mentally and physically)
- To increase our capacity to cope, we need to meet our basic human needs
- Succeed, Thrive, and Matter
How Do We Keep Public Safety Appealing

- Show we care for the human behind the uniform, desk, job
- Focus and train for the human impacts of the jobs
- Train stress management and injury prevention
- Focus on performance on the job and in life
- Take care of our leaders
- Engage families
  - Awareness
  - Education
  - Tools and Resources
2022 Agency Concerns

- Recruitment
- Retention
- Decreased performance under long-term stress
- Exodus from jobs due to career pressure from:
  - Public
  - Media
  - Family
Digital Solution- YOU | ResponderStrong

In April 2020, Global Medical Response, the Anschutz Foundation, Grit Digital Health and All Clear Foundation collaborated to create an effective tool to empower Emergency Responders and their families.

Launched in Summer of 2020.

About YOU® | ResponderStrong

This is your confidential space for responders, healthcare workers and their families to take charge of their well-being in order to Succeed, Thrive, and Matter.

What's YOU | ResponderStrong?

The first of its kind, this is a digital platform, available 24-7, with hundreds of evidence-based resources and tools to support responders, healthcare workers and their loved ones with their personal and professional well-being.

LEARN ABOUT ALL CLEAR FOUNDATION

Get the word out.

The ResponderStrong Marketing Toolkit has everything you need to help spread the word, from posters to videos and social media assets. Help your responder
An essential tool for essential work.

As a frontline responder, rescuing others is the job, but that job can take its toll. YOU | ResponderStrong is a free, confidential space for responders and their families to take charge of their well-being and be their best in their personal and professional lives.

100% free & confidential. Really.
Check in with yourself

Succeed
SUCCEED measures all things on the business end of your life — from professional skills to career goals and finances.

RE-TAKE THE ASSESSMENT
SEE SUCCEED RESULTS

Thrive
THRIVE measures physical, mental, and emotional well-being — letting you make the most of every aspect of your life.

RE-TAKE THE ASSESSMENT
SEE THRIVE RESULTS

Matter
MATTER helps you find purpose in your relationships and community. From volunteerism to inclusivity and understanding your personality, here you can deepen your sense of belonging.

RE-TAKE THE ASSESSMENT
SEE MATTER RESULTS
What do you want to explore?

Try Searching For "Stress" Or "Finances"

Featured Topics

Stress Management Series

All Well-Being Topics
YOU|ResponderStrong Wellness Tool

- https://you.responderstrong.org/
- Emergency Responders including Frontline Healthcare Workers and their families
- Agencies - wellness program template/content
- Free and available 24/7
- All Clear Foundation Solution
Register for ResponderStrong's Train the Trainer Workshop

**Milwaukee**
October 8, 2021 | 0900-1700
Milwaukee Police & Fire Academy, 6680 N Teutonia Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53209
(Virtual Option Available)

**Chicago**
November 3, 2021 | 0800-1600
SSC Miller Homeland Security Education Center (HEC), Room 1022, 425 Fawell Blvd, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
(Virtual Option Available)

Other Events Coming Soon: Boston, Seattle, and Des Moines
RESPOND Online

What is RESPOND?
REAL Essentials RESPOND, a CRE e-learning video series created with Responders for Responders is a series that highlights some of the common challenges we experience in our relationships and communications.

Why?
As Responders, emergency response work not only challenges us but can also impact our loved ones in many ways. Check out our REAL Essentials RESPOND Online content to empower you and yours with the skills and knowledge to strengthen and sustain your most important relationships.

How?
The RESPOND Online series provides an easily accessible taste of the popular Responding to Your Relationships catalogue designed to provide Responders and their families with valuable, tailored relationship and communications skills.

This e-learning video series focuses on some of the common challenges we experience in our relationships, both at home and in the workplace, offering both insight and workable solutions.

Content includes:
- Understanding personality styles
- More effectively managing stress
- Preventing and resolving conflict
- Growing and maintaining resilience
- Meeting our own basic human needs
- Building self-worth
- Deepening intimacy
- Creating our own personal legacy

Click here to access RESPOND Online videos
RESPOND Online Feedback

“All of it. Love Language completely explains by personal relationship issues and also my leadership issues. Communication Danger signs. Seriously, all of this is useful.”

- 98% answered “yes” to the following question
  Will you be able to apply the information you learned to your professional life?
- 98% answered “yes” to the following question
  Will you be able to apply the information you learned to your personal life?
- 94% answered “yes” to the following question
  Do you believe this content could be an effective means to promote healthy culture change within your organization?
- 96% answered “yes” to the following question
  Did you find the E-Learning Platform to be an effective learning tool for this information?
- 93% answered “yes” to the following question
  Do you see value in providing access to this and similar content to your personnel?
ALL CLEAR FOUNDATION HAS CREATED SOLUTIONS TO ADDRESS THE PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL NEEDS OF RESPONDERS AND THEIR LOVED ONES.

Our solutions directory will connect you to support resources that positively benefit your individual situation.
**HRSA Grant**

- Small, rural, and/or medically underserved communities
- Emergency Responders and Healthcare Workers
- 3 years - three 12-month cohorts of 50
- YOU|Responderstrong; Train the Trainers; Coaching Modules
- NERPSC Departmental Wellness Program
- NERPSC Clinician Certification
- IPSDI - data – translate into actionable plans
NATIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONDER & PUBLIC SAFETY CENTER™
CERTIFICATION, TRAINING, AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES
Thank you for your time!

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