

Human Elements Training

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Course Objectives

- Identify manners in which the culture of our work impacts stress.
- Identify what makes the impact of stress vary from person to person / situation to situation.
- Identify ways to effectively cope with the stress encountered in our work.

Questions?

- ✓ What is your stress level in your department right now? What do you think the stress level is for others in your department?
- ✓ What kinds of stress responses have you observed in others during your career in police work? What kinds of stress responses have you observed in yourself?
- ✓ What can you do to help prevent these employees cope with their reactions and keep it from impacting their lives?

Definitions of Stress terms

- **Stress:** Pressure for action or change
- **Eustress:** stress as a positive, motivating force which may lead to increased health and performance.
- **Distress:** stress as a negative dysfunctional force which may lead to disease and erosion of health.
- **Traumatic Stress:** stress resulting from exposure to an acute overwhelming event.

Typical Lifestyle in 2014

- Everyone is in a hurry – how busy we are
- Fast food and convenience stores
- Everything is so fast paced, we set ourselves up for stressful lifestyles – at home and work.”
- Cumulative over time: “frustrability”

Overload and Underload Causes of Stress

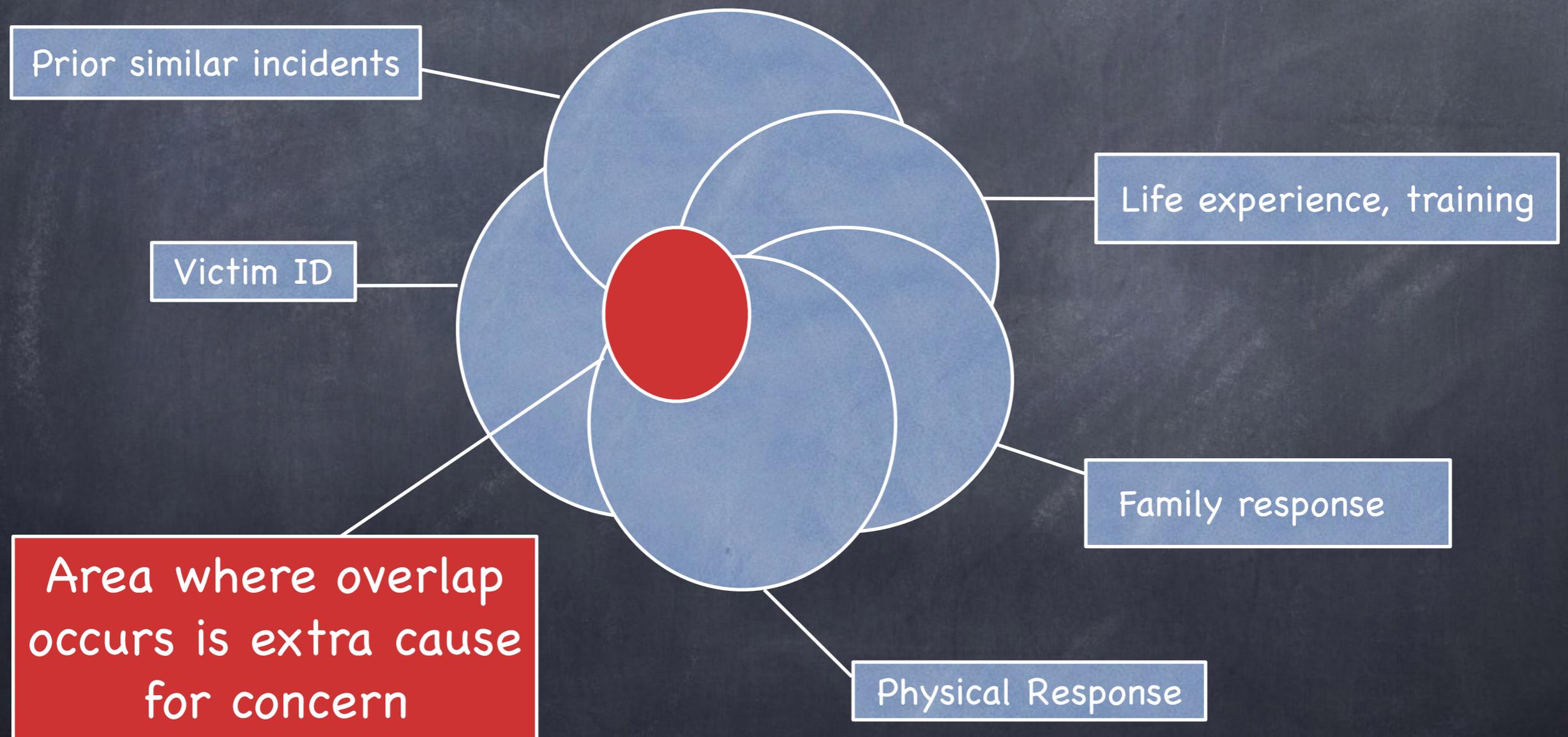
- Tendency to deny our stress - "I can handle anything"
- Resort to quick fixes - want to feel better so we buy things, use /abuse alcohol, get involved in affairs
- Recognize that stress is unique to the person, what bothers one person may not bother another - it is not the event but the reaction.

Risk Factors in Stress Response

What factors might determine why a critical incident is more significant to one person than another?

- Life experience and training
- Prior similar incidents, trauma
- Individual physical response, sickness
- Victim Identification
- Family response

Risk Factors in Stress Response



Peer Support and Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

- Modern Professional law enforcement agencies recognize the affects that stress can have on their employees and provide Peer Support and CISM programs to support them.
- CISM is not a critique of department operations or psychotherapy
- CISM provides an opportunity for employees to discuss their reactions to an event.

CISM Objectives

- Mediate the effects of stress
- Set safe environment for venting stress
- Provide emotional support
- Educate the employee about the situation
- Assist with immediate needs
- Return employee back to work able to adapt to the situation.

Role of CISM in Stress Reduction



Warning Signs of Stress

- Physical Signs – headaches, digestive disorders, back pain, hypertension, ulcers
- Emotional Signs – depression, frustration
- Behavioral Signs– withdrawal, loss of appetite, overeating, sleep problems, impatience, anxiety, lack of concentration

What is Compassion Fatigue?

- Compassion fatigue is a debilitating weariness brought about by repetitive, empathic response to pain and suffering, compassion fatigue is a result of absorbing and internalizing the emotions of clients and, sometimes, coworkers.

Karl LaRowe, MA, LCSW.

- It refers to a physical, emotional and spiritual fatigue or exhaustion that takes over a person and causes a decline in his or her ability to experience joy or to feel and care for others.

Compassion Fatigue

- It's an occupational hazard that may affect any professional who works day in and day out with those who are physically, mentally, or emotionally challenged or those who have been traumatized – whether by illness, violence or other tragedies.

Sound like anyone you
know?

Compassion Fatigue

Develops in one of two situations;

1. When people find out the job is not what they expected it would be.
2. They person does not have supportive relationships on the job or proper coping skills away from the job.

CARING FOR YOURSELF IN THE FACE OF DIFFICULT WORK

Our work can be overwhelming. Our challenge is to maintain our resilience so that we can keep doing the work with care, energy, and compassion.

10 things to do for each day

1. Get enough sleep
2. Get enough to eat
3. Do some light exercise
4. Vary the work that you do
5. Do something pleasurable
6. Focus on what you did well
7. Learn from your mistakes
8. Share a private joke
9. Pray, meditate or relax
10. Support a colleague

For more Information see your supervisor and visit www.psychosocial.org or www.proqol.org

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SWITCHING ON AND OFF

It is your empathy for others helps you do this work. It is vital to take good care of your thoughts and feelings by monitoring how you use them. Resilient workers know how to turn their feelings off when they go on duty, but on again when they go off duty. This is not denial; it is a coping strategy. It is a way they get maximum protection while working (switched off) and maximum support while resting (switched on).

How to become better at switching on and off

1. Switching is a conscious process. Talk to yourself as you switch.
2. Use images that make you feel safe and protected (switch off) or connected and cared for (switch on) to help you switch.
3. Find rituals that help you switch as you start and stop work.
4. Breathe slowly and deeply to calm yourself when starting a tough job.

Emotional Survival

Dr. Kevin Gilmartin

- ✓ Do we see things differently?
- ✓ Cynicism
- ✓ Core Values vs. Situational Values

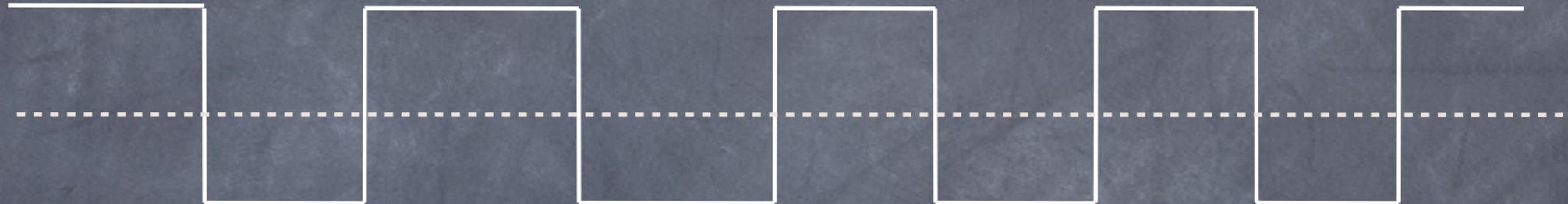
Core Values – the real us, what we are programmed with

Situational Values – based on the situation we find ourselves in

Biological Rollercoaster

Dr. Kevin Gilmartin

On duty high energy, aware



Off duty, low energy, lethargic

We judge ourselves by our
motives

but we judge others by their
actions....

Think about that....