

Operation Honoring and Supporting Our Modern Day Protectors

A Webinar Series Developed for Tribal Law Enforcement and First Responders

Collaborating Agencies



Mountain Plains (HHS Region 8)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Disclaimer and Funding Statement

This presentation was prepared for the Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (Mountain Plains MHTTC) under a cooperative agreement from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). All material appearing in this presentation, except that taken directly from copyrighted sources, is in the public domain and may be reproduced or copied without permission from SAMHSA or the authors. Citation of the source is appreciated. Do not reproduce or distribute this presentation for a fee without specific, written authorization from the Mountain Plains MHTTC. For more information on obtaining copies of this presentation please email david.v.terry@und.edu.

At the time of this presentation, Elinore F. McCance-Katz served as SAMHSA Assistant Secretary. The opinions expressed herein are the views of the Tami DeCoteau, Thomasine Heitkamp, Daniel Foster, Nathan Billy, and Lehman Ware and do not reflect the official position of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), or SAMHSA. No official support or endorsement of DHHS, SAMHSA, for the opinions described in this presentation is intended or should be inferred.

The work of the Mountain Plains MHTTC is supported by grant H79SM081792 from the Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Session Dignitaries

Introduction by Alec Thundercloud, MD, Director Office of Tribal Affairs and Policy,
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (Ho-Chunk Nation)



Jeannie Hovland,
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Native American
Affairs, Administration for Native Americans,
Department of Health and Human Services,
Enrolled member of the Flandreau Santee Sioux



Charles Addington,
Director for the United States Department of the
Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Justice
Services

Panelists and Presenters

Panel Host



Nathan T. Billy, M.Ed, LPC,
Deputy Director of
Behavioral Health
Choctaw Nation of
Oklahoma, Enrolled member
of the Choctaw Nation of
Oklahoma

Presenter



Thomasine Heitkamp, LCSW,
PI and Co-Director, Mental
Health and Addiction Technology
Transfer Centers, Chester Fritz
Distinguished Professor,
University of North Dakota

Presenter/Panelist



Daniel Foster, PhD,
Supervising
Psychologist, Fort
Belknap Tribal Health

Panelist



Cpt. Lehman Ware,
Program Coordinator,
United States Indian
Police Academy, Enrolled
member of the Kiowa
Tribe

Pursuing Self-Care during Challenging Times

Presentation developed by:

Tami DeCoteau, PhD

Owner, DeCoteau Trauma-Informed Care & Practice

Enrolled Member of the Mandan Hidatsa Arikara Nation



Types of Law Enforcement Stressors

• External Stressors

- *Shortage of law enforcement workers*
- *Inadequate resources and support*
- *Media Scrutiny*
- *Community distrust*
- *Exposure to crimes and subsequent victims*
- *Trained to see the negative*
- *Always being in threat assessment – threat response mode*
- *High Level of responsibility – work can be “life or death” situations*
- *Concern about making the wrong move/unintentional harm/being blamed or scrutinized*

• Covid-19 and Other Stressors

- *Expected to be brave and strong and not show signs of “weakness”*
- *Rotating shiftwork – difficult to create routines in daily life and sleep.*
- *Work is all encompassing – seen by others as “on duty” all the time in small communities – while attending school functions, shopping for groceries, etc. Cannot let your guard down.*
- *COVID19 – concern about exposure to the virus on the job*
- *COVID19 - Personal life concerns such as finances, family illness, children not attending school, etc.*

The Perfect Storm

The current combination of stress (work) + threat (COVID19) + reduced support (public) + lack of control & predictability (constantly changing environment/information) create the “Perfect Storm” for stress and illness.

What Tools are Law Enforcement Provided to Deal with Work-Related Stress?

- ☐ *Trainings*
- ☐ *Flexible Work Schedules*
- ☐ *Counseling, support, etc.*
- ☐ *Others?*

What Does Stress Look & Feel Like?

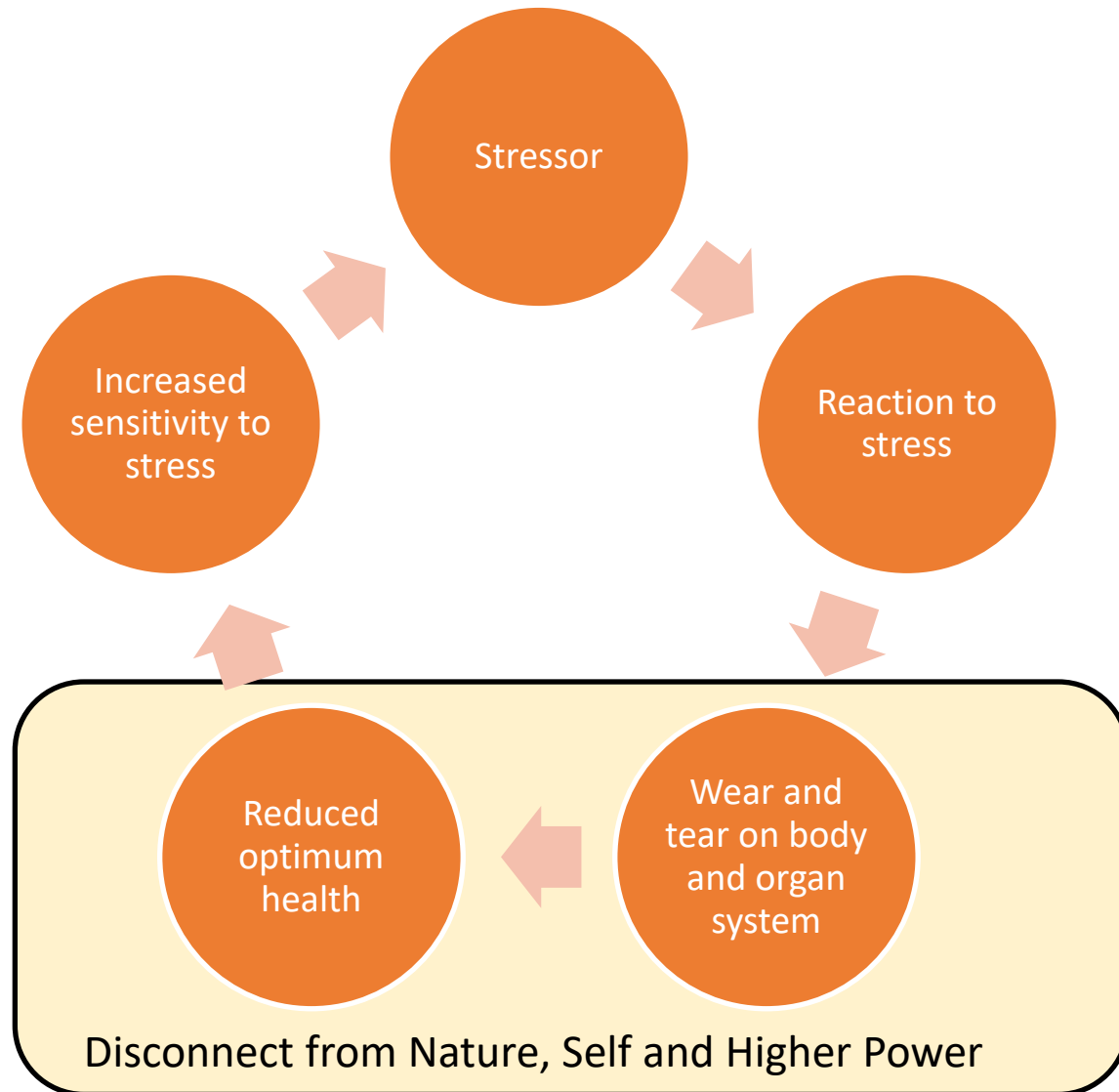
- *Withdrawal*
- *Exhaustion*
- *Loss of empathy or compassion*
- *Substance use*
- *Sleep problems*
- *Relationship problems*
- *Difficulty with memory or concentration*
- *Irritable/angry mood*
- *Changes in diet or appetite*
- *Feeling keyed up or on edge, restless*
- *Sad, depressed or anxious*
- *Dissatisfaction with job*
- *Resistance to change*
- *Defensiveness*
- *Reduction in work performance*
- *Addictions – drugs, alcohol, gambling, sex, porn, risk-seeking behavior, etc.*

Compassion Fatigue - “The cost of caring for others in emotional pain”

Symptoms are NORMAL Responses to stress

- Physical Signs of Stress
 - Headache
 - Dry Mouth
 - Chest Pain
 - Upset Stomach
 - Cold or Sweaty Palms
 - Muscle Pain
- No One is Immune to Stress

Stress Response Cycle



- *Stress response is meant to be there during threat and then diminish/recover after threat*
- *Chronic stress breaks down bodily functions and leads to illness, disease and problems with mood, etc.*
- *The only way to prevent these is through routine self-care – regular practice – just like you have regular practice for law enforcement skills*

Coping in a Nutshell

- ***Support Your Body:***

- Sleep – 9 to 10 hours of uninterrupted sleep each night. Follow a sleep routine. Shut off the electronics!
- Food – Nourish your body with healthy foods. Avoid junk food and energy drinks.
- Water – hydration improves sleep quality and attention!
- Exercise – Move your body every day for 30 minutes.
 - Lift something heavy
 - Use weighted items

- ***Support Yourself:***

- Connection – Spend time with people who care about you.
- Ask for help – Ever body needs help sometimes.
- Talk to a professional – Talk to a counselor if your symptoms are messing up your life or bothering you quite a bit.

Dealing Effectively With Stress

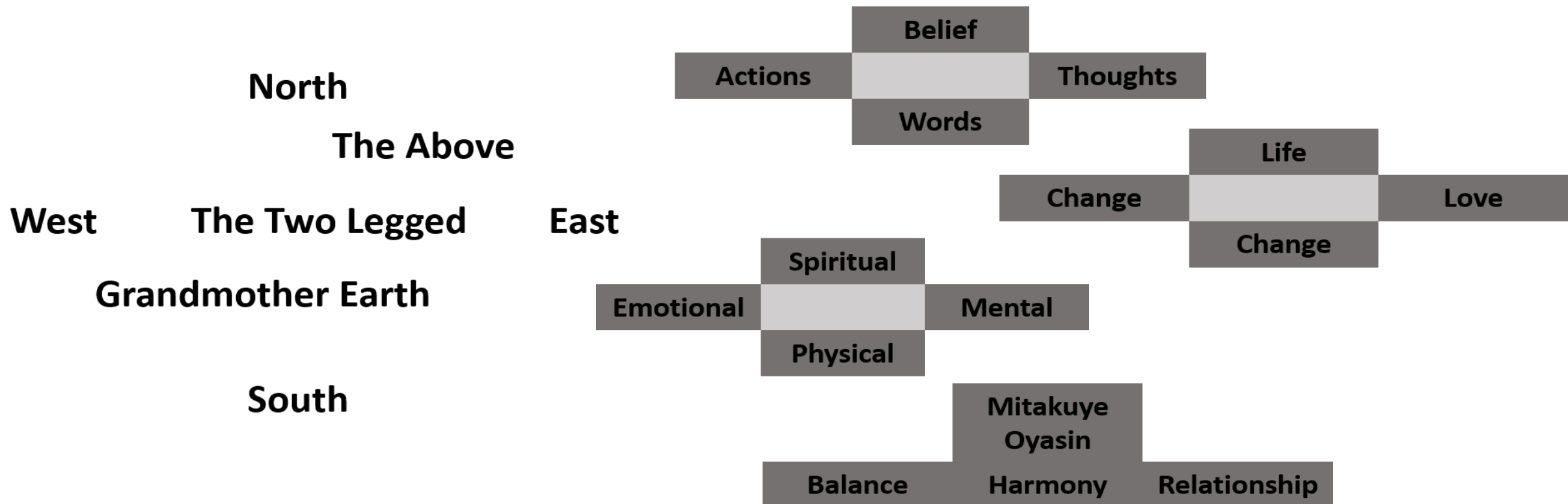
- Nutrition
- Hydration
- Sleep
- Routine medical checkups and screening
- Take necessary medications/vitamins daily
- Daily movement and stretching
- Reduce intake of processed food, soda, alcohol and caffeine
- Debrief with co-workers. Have a place to share frustrations and receive support from people who understand.
- Participate in hobbies and fun activities with family and friends
- Socialize outside of work
- Practice mindfulness, meditation, (prayer, yoga, fishing, ceremony, nature)
- Imagine washing off or dumping all the stress from each day and replace it with positive thoughts and feelings.
- Set boundaries and take time off when you need it
- Think long term – the meaning and purpose of law enforcement work
- Try to reduce stress in other areas, and don't take on new stress (minimize)
- Recognize that stress and stress responses are normal
- Know when to get help

Please wait and read aloud with Dr. Foster Three Times:

- *Finished Files are the Result of years of scientific effort and endeavor.*

A Culturally Informed “Self Care” Approach

- *The Sacred Seven Directions from Wolakota*



Panel Discussion and Q&A

- Nathan Billy
- Lehman Ware
- Daniel Foster