Beyond the Response: Addressing Compassion Fatigue and Behavioral Health Needs for Healthcare Providers

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ASPR's Priorities: Building Readiness for 21st Century Threats

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Why ASPR TRACIE?

ASPR TRACIE was developed as a healthcare emergency preparedness information gateway to address the need for:

- Enhanced and rapid technical assistance
- A comprehensive, one-stop, national knowledge center for healthcare system preparedness
- Multiple ways to efficiently share and receive information between various entities, including peer-to-peer
- A way to leverage and better integrate support (force multiplier)
- Helping prepare deployed and field staff via our technical resources and subject matter experts

ASPR TRACIE: Three Domains

TECHNICAL RESOURCES

- Self-service collection of audience-tailored materials
- Subject-specific, SME-reviewed "Topic Collections"
- Unpublished and SME peer-reviewed materials highlighting real-life tools and experiences

asprtracie.hhs.gov

ASSISTANCE CENTER

- Personalized support and responses to requests for information and technical assistance
- Accessible by toll-free number (1844-5-TRACIE), email (askasprtracie@hhs.gov), or web form (ASPRtracie.hhs.gov)

1-844-5-TRACIE

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

- Area for password-protected discussion among vetted users in near real-time
- Ability to support chats and the peer-to-peer exchange of user-developed templates, plans, and other materials

askasprtracie@hhs.gov

Behavioral Health Resource Examples

- Disaster Behavioral Health Resource Page
- Self Care Modules for Healthcare Providers
- Resources at Your Fingertips
- Mental/Behavioral Health (non-responders) Topic Collection
- Opioids: Frequently Asked Questions
- The Exchange Issue 4: Disaster Behavioral Health and Resilience
- Tips for Retaining and Caring for Staff after a Disaster

  https://asprtracie.hhs.gov/dbh-resources

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Goals

- Describe how to identify healthcare provider compassion fatigue and secondary traumatic stress

- Identify methods for healthcare executives to conduct stress management assessment, implement mitigation efforts, and improve work satisfaction for providers

- Describe ways to develop and implement a Cognitive Strengthening Preparedness Program

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What is Stress?

A response characterized by physical and psychological arousal arising as a direct result of an exposure to any demand or pressure on a living organism.

Continuum of Stress: Where are you?

Ready | Reacting | Injured | ill

Performance (y-axis)

Stress Level (x-axis)

Continuum of Stress: Where are you?

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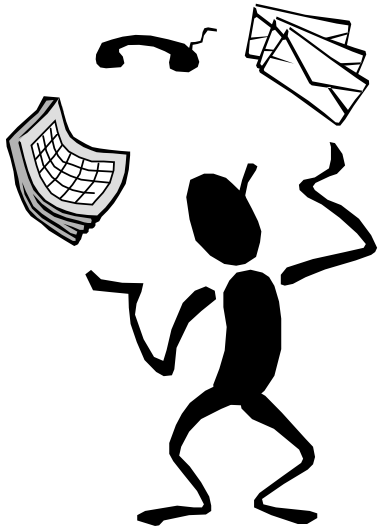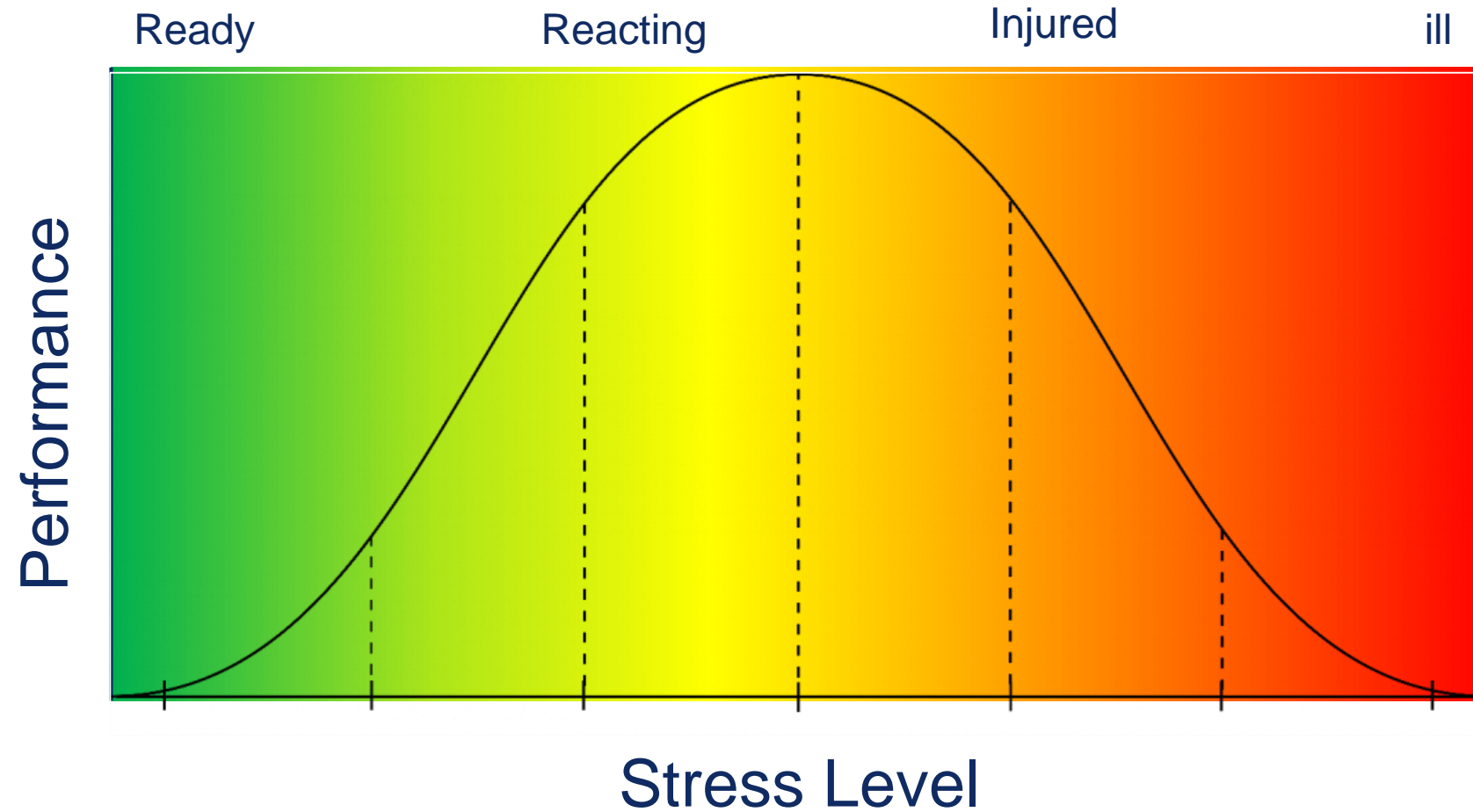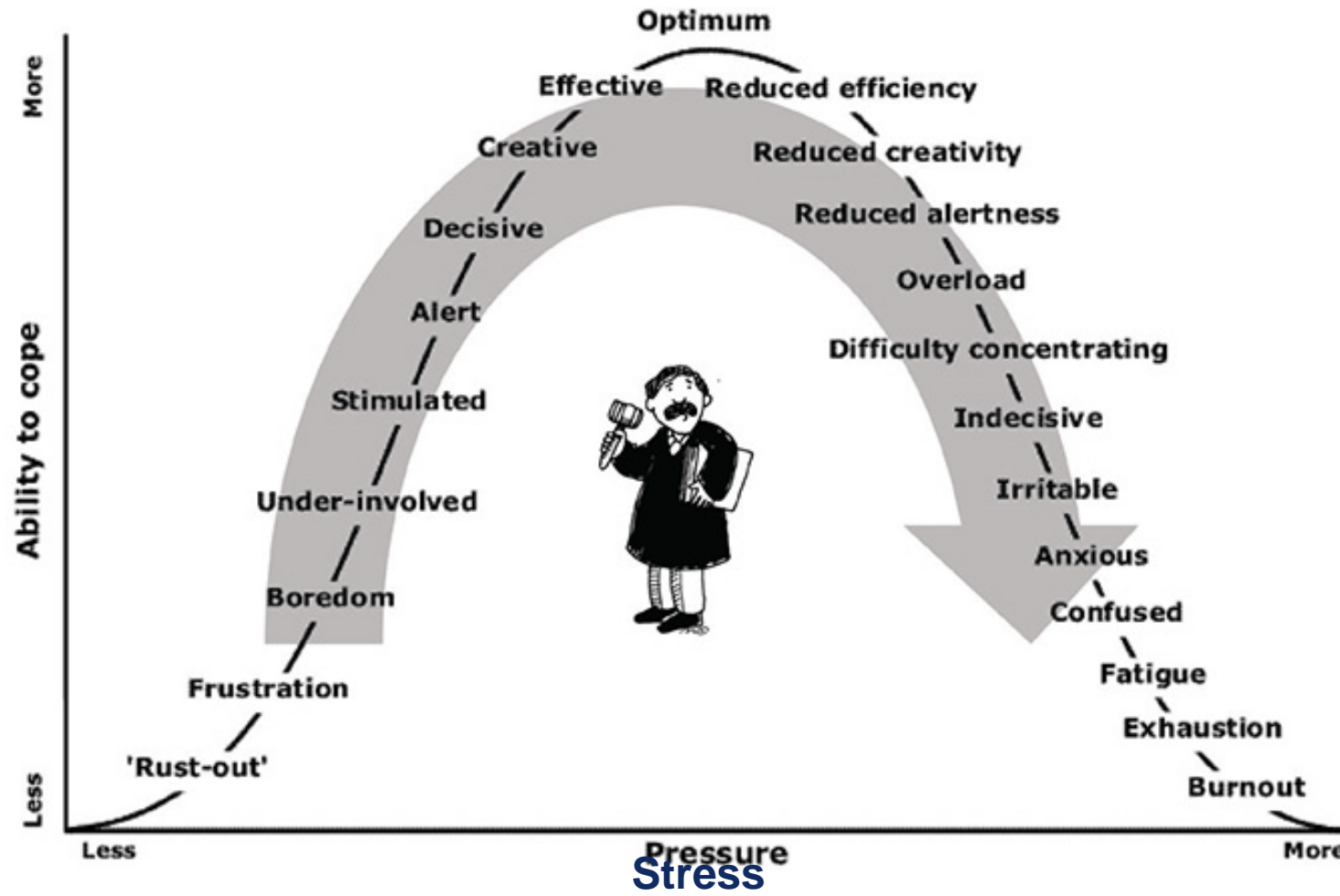
Defining Stress

Mental or emotional strain resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances.

Acute → Chronic → Traumatic

Severity of Symptoms

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Overview of Stressors

Responders/Providers

- Time Away from Family
- Personal Safety
- Emotional Strain
- Case-load
- Work Guilt
- Work Pressure

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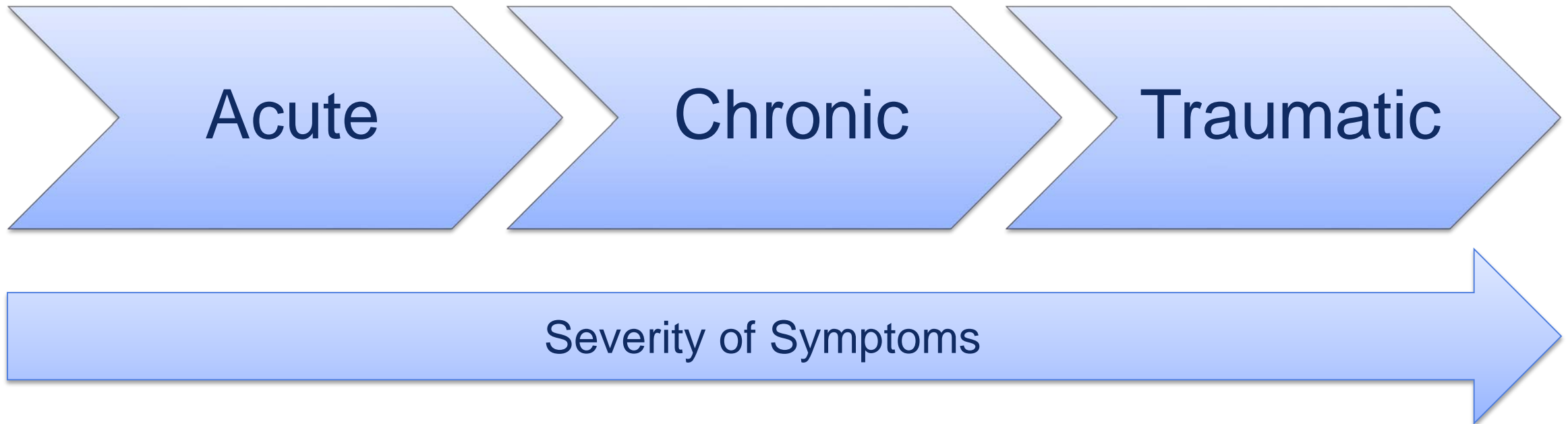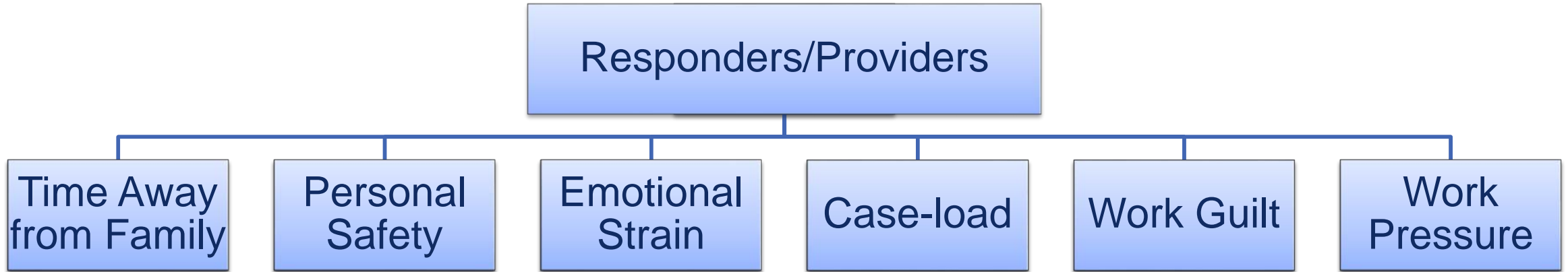
Signs & Symptoms of Stress

- What are possible signs and symptoms of stress? (This can be from knowledge or experience)

- How do you know when you are stressed?

- What would others notice?

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Signs & Symptoms

- Diversity in presentation of signs and symptoms
- Self reflection
- Methods for self check?

Insomnia

Libido Changes

Anxiety

Social Isolation

Irritability

Personal Hygiene

Aches & Pains

Low Energy

Frequent Sickness

Mood Swings

Increased Acne

Depression

Headaches

Appetite Change

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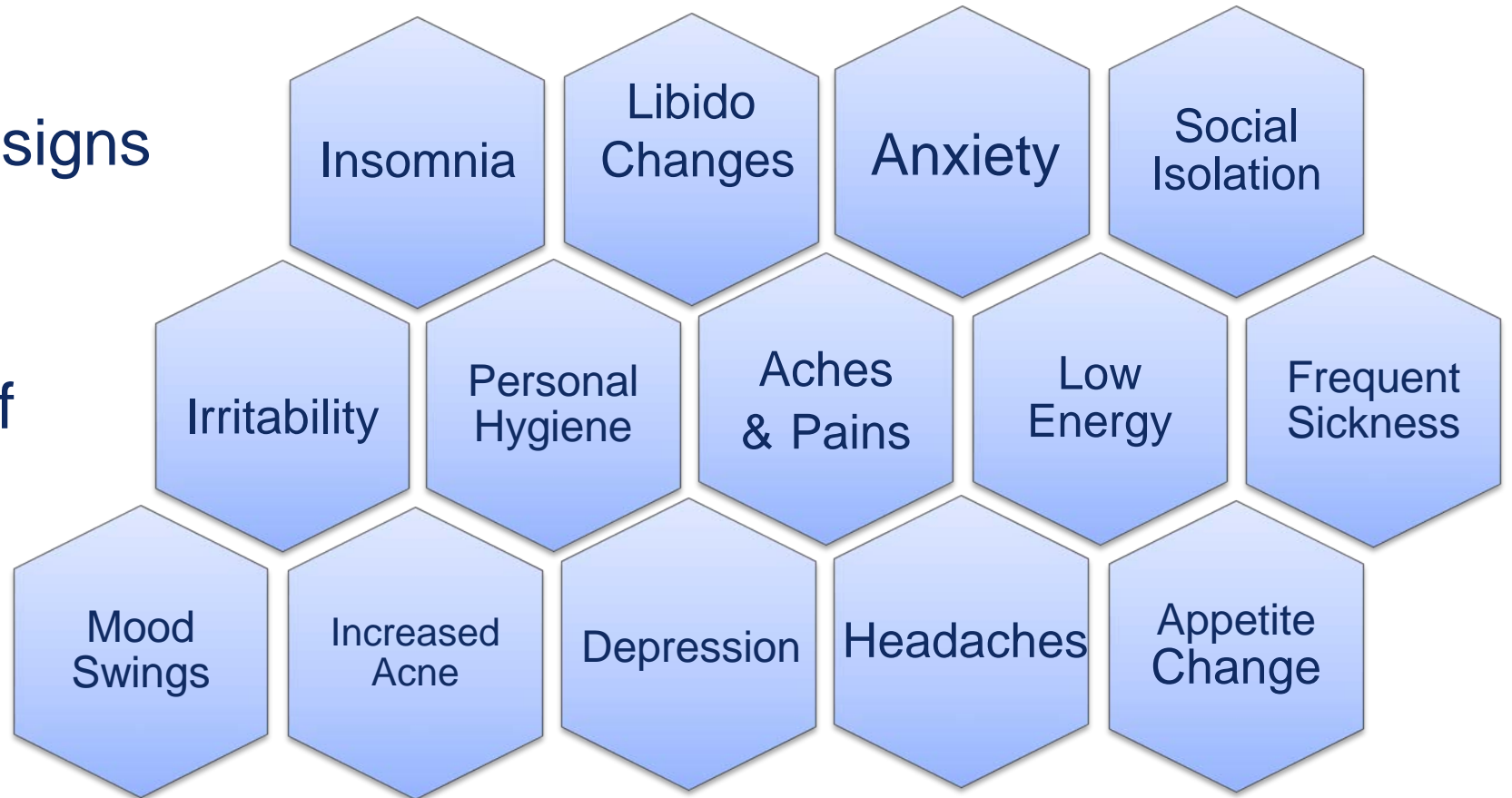
Consequences for Responders/Providers

- Impacts on decision making
- Increased risk of mistakes
- Professional burnout
- Impact on systems outside of work (family, friends, etc.)
- Mental/physical health implications

Secondary Trauma

- Traumatic event ➡ Secondary trauma
- Risk for health care responders/providers?

Patients

Disaster Environment

Employment Pressures

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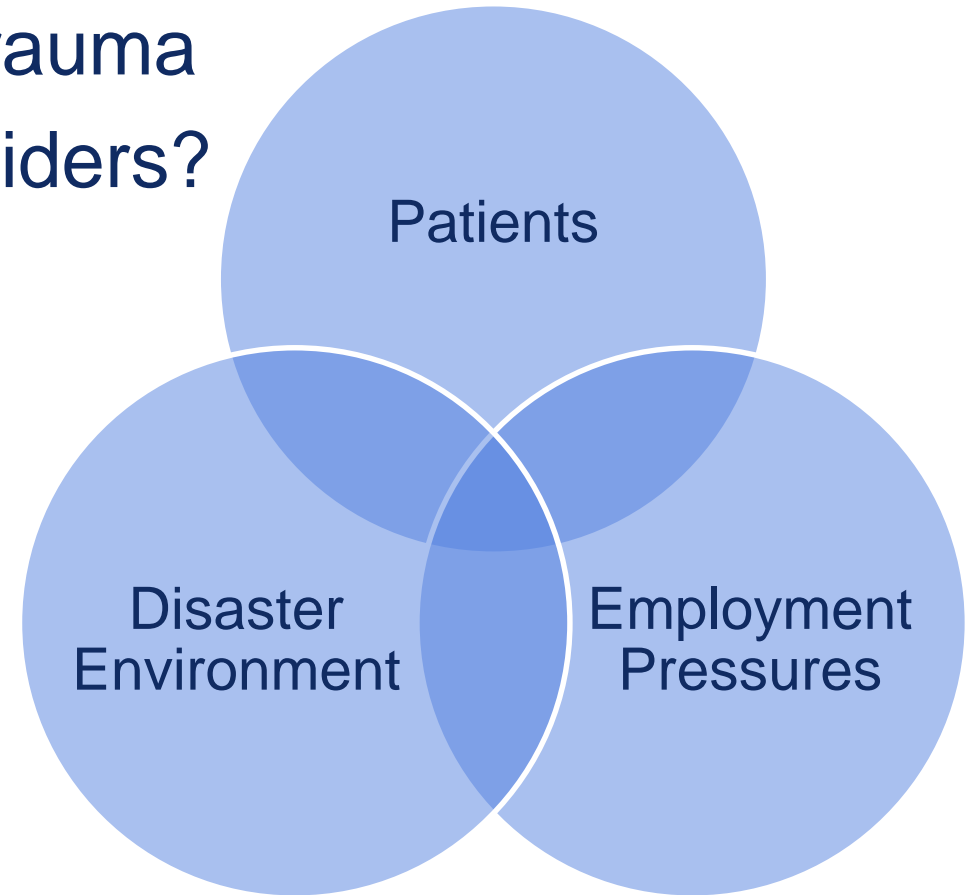
Consequences: Burnout

- Cumulative emotional exhaustion and withdrawal as a result of workload and institutional stress.
- Occurs over time.
- Presents:
    - Decreased performance
    - Increased absenteeism
    - Poor morale/attitude

Consequences: Compassion Fatigue

- Related to exposure working with those suffering from traumatic or distressing events.
- Onset can be early
- Prolonged exposure = ⬆ Risk for responders/providers
- Presents:
  - Detachment or numbing,
  - Over-engagement
  - Blurred boundaries/roles
- Often very hard to self-diagnose

Post the Symptoms!

- List symptoms of stress on Post-Its

- These can be symptoms experienced personally or ones you've seen.

- Match the symptom to the "condition"

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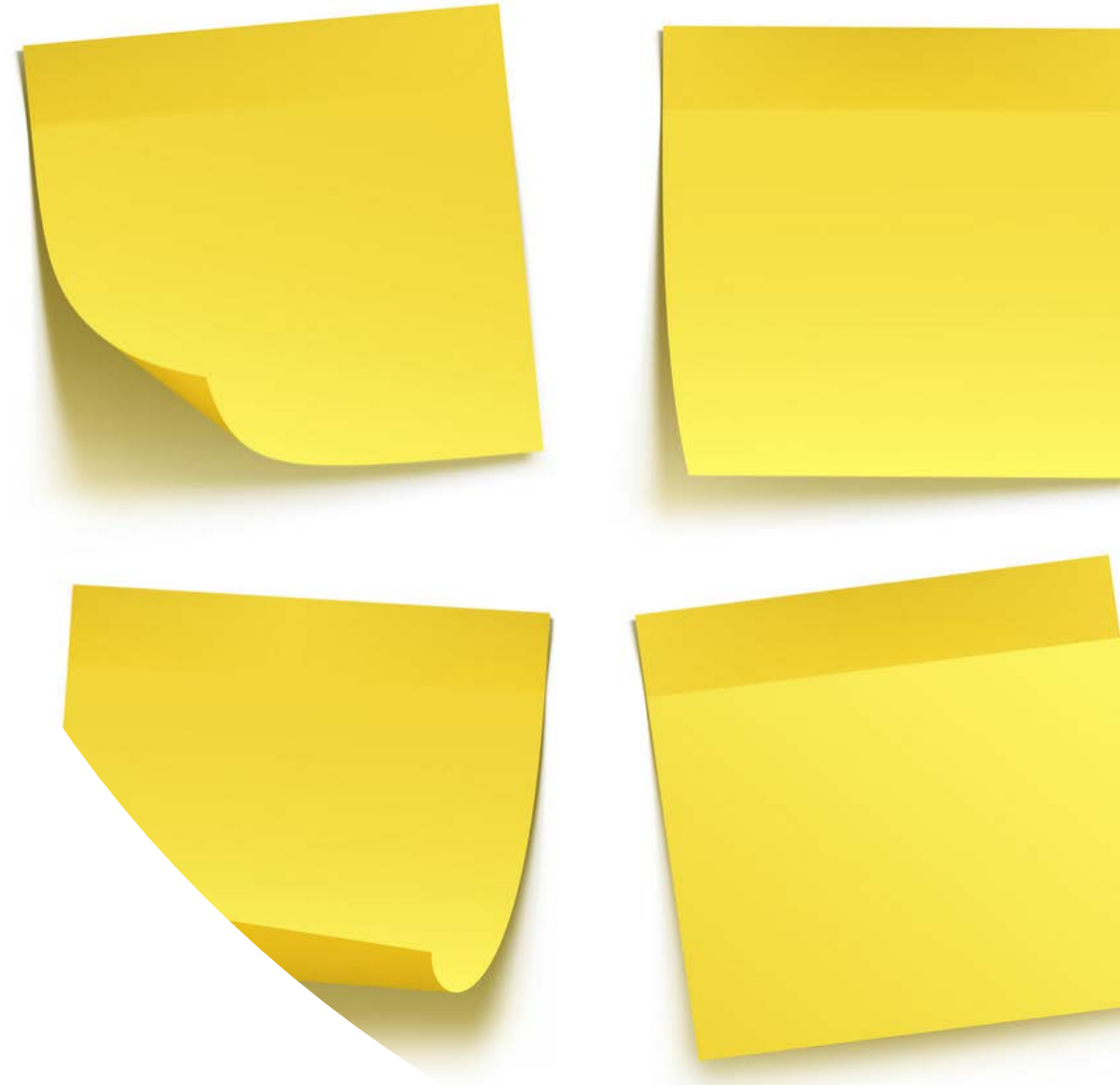
Individual Coping Mechanisms

Emotional Outlets	Nutrition	Fitness
Personal Hygiene	Meditation/ Faith	Sexual Health
Social Life	Safe Space	Creating Boundaries

- What are your stressors?
- How do you know when you are stressed?
- Consider feasibility of coping mechanisms/strategies
- Do they fit you and your lifestyle?
- How will you follow through?

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Reaching Out and Reflecting

Personal

- Who can you turn to?
- Existing support systems?
- What are you already doing?
- One thing you could change/do

Consider

- What other tools could assist you?
- Are there resources you need?

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Organizational Stress Management The Executive Leadership Level

- Dedication to cause
- Managing staff not just tasks
- Fostering collaboration
- Developing strengths

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Organizational Stress Management The Executive Leadership Level
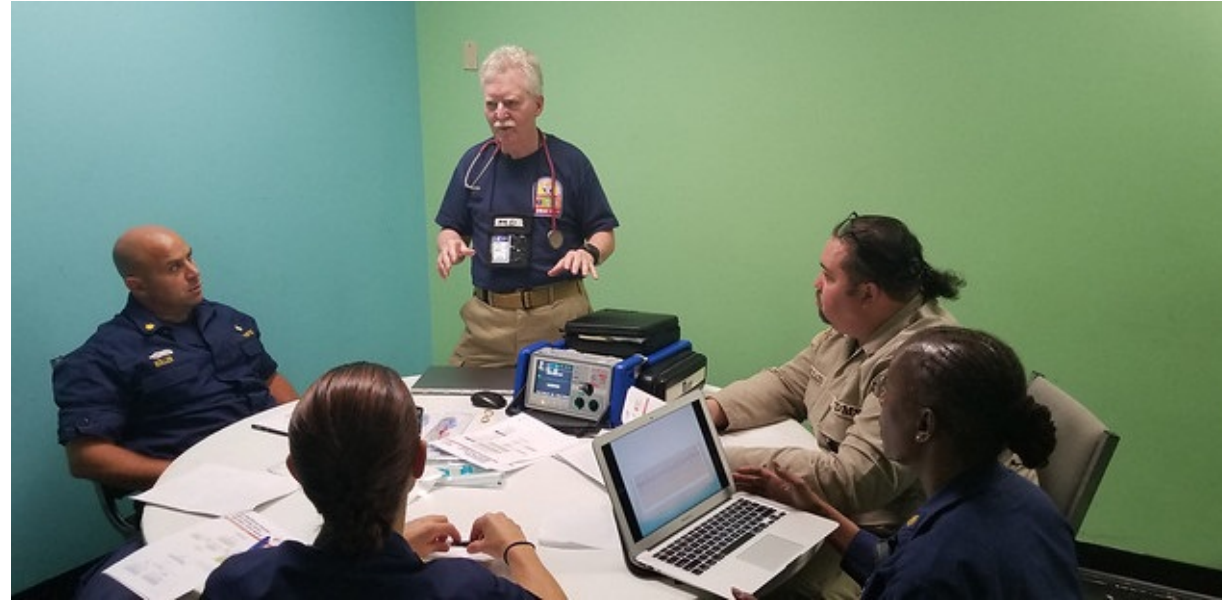
- Clear mission, roles, and responsibilities

- One direct line of authority

- Avenues to express concern

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Organizational Stress Management
The Management/Supervisor Level

Supervision, Guidance, and Support

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Organizational Response to Traumatic Stress Events

- PFA
- Drills
- Referrals
- Team training
- Information / psychoeducation meetings
- Groups for highly exposed
- Individual crisis intervention
- Focus on resilience and coping

Organizational Readiness Tools

- Organizational Assessment
- Stress Audit Checklist
- ProQOL-5
- OVC Vicarious Trauma Toolkit

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Experience and Training

- Professional skills development
- Sense of confidence and competence

Cognitive Strengthening Program

- Cognitive restructuring / reframing
- Attention diversion
- Mindfulness training
- Adaptive engaging
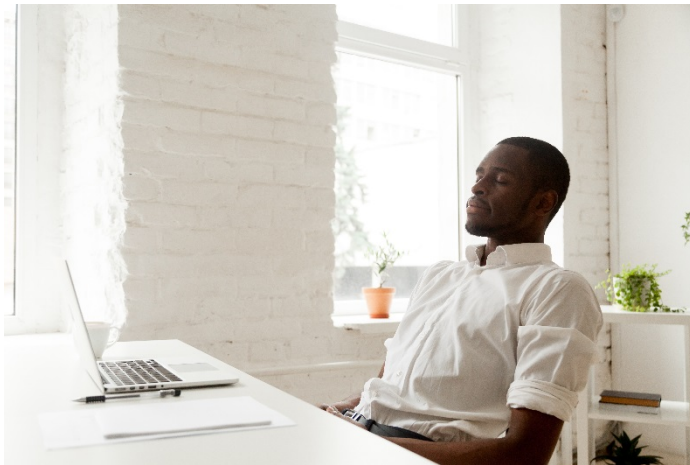- Adaptive affective expression

Stop → Look → Reframe

Attention Diversion

- Purposeful emotion regulation
- Decreases intense feelings
- Temporary

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About Mindfulness

- Cognitive strengthener
- Any level is positive
- Focus on present moment
- Acknowledge things as they are

Mindfulness Exercise

- Sit in quiet place
- Feet on ground
- Hands on lap
- Close your eyes
- Focus on breathing
- Thoughts come and go
- Inhale positivity
- Exhale stress

Adaptive Engaging

- With others who understand and accept you
- In helpful activities
    - Increase coping skills
    - Build resilience
- Maintain integrity, dignity, and civility
- Avoid toxicity
- Avoid negative coping behaviors

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Adaptive Affective Expression

✓ Identify distressing emotions

✓ Express emotions in healthy ways

✓ Identify your prodromal activities

✓ Identify and plan for triggers

Summary

- Compassion fatigue and burnout can have negative individual and organization-wide effects

- Interventions can mitigate these effects

- Organizational wellness is possible with agency-wide supports and structures

- Cognitive strengthening programs can help

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Audience Discussion and Q&A

Additional Resources

- ASPR TRACIE: www.asprtracie.hhs.gov
- Division for At-Risk Individuals, Behavioral Health & Community Resilience (ABC): www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/abc
- SAMHSA Disaster Technical Assistance Center (SAMHSA DTAC): www.samhsa.gov/dtac
- National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: www.ptsd.va.gov
- Professional Quality of Life (PROQOL): http://www.proqol.org

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