

Understanding the Challenges Facing our First Responders: Treating Those Who Are Suffering from Trauma and Stress Brought About by Acts of Terrorism

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Feeding the Mind, Body, and Soul

Faculty

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Our Mission

- The mission of the Alabama Department of Public Health is to provide caring, high quality and professional services for the improvement and protection of the public's health through disease prevention and the assurance of public health services to resident and transient populations of the state regardless of social circumstances or the ability to pay

Our Mission

- The State Office of Minority Health has a goal to improve the health status of minority populations, improve access to quality health care services for minorities and underserved populations, to promote minority presence and participation in health planning and policy formation and to promote public awareness of the health care need of minorities

Final Overview

- Office of Minority Health – Health Disparities
- The Symptoms Cycle During and Following a Traumatic Event
- Mind, Body and Soul: Self Management Tasks and Tools for Living with Stress After Trauma

Final Overview

- **Let's Make it Personal**
- **The Four Agreements**
- **Food for Thought**
- **Mindfulness Meditation**

Alabama Health Disparities

- **Experienced by survivors of stress and trauma**
 - **Cardiovascular Disease**
 - **Heart attack vs. anxiety attack**
 - **Infant Mortality**
 - **Pregnant mothers and newborns**

Alabama Health Disparities

- **HIV/AIDS and STD's**
 - **High risk sexual behaviors**
- **Cancer**
 - **Access to chemotherapy and radiation**
- **Diabetes**
 - **High and low blood sugars**

Alabama Health Disparities

- **Mental Health**
 - **PTSD, anxiety / panic disorders, adjustment disorders, etc.**

Minority Groups Impacted by Stress and Trauma After Acts of Terrorism

- **Alabama Minority Groups**
- **Hispanic / Latino**
- **African American**
- **Asian**
- **American Indian**
- **Vietnamese**
- **Korean**

Subpopulations of Minority Groups Impacted by Terrorist Attacks

- **Immigrant and migrant workers**
- **Active and recovering substance abusers**
- **Persons who are diagnosed with mental illness**
- **Individuals who are homeless**

Subpopulations of Minority Groups Impacted by Terrorist Attacks

- Incarcerated and ex-offenders
- Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered, and Questioning Individuals
- Commercial sex workers

The Impact of Social Determinants on Stress After a Traumatic Event

- Communication barriers for non-English speaking persons
- Translation and interpretation challenges
- Undocumented citizenship

The Impact of Social Determinants on Stress After a Traumatic Event

- Dependency on mood altering drugs, alcohol, and other tobacco related products
- Depression, bipolar illness, and other mental health challenges
- Varying literacy levels

The Impact of Social Determinants on Stress After a Traumatic Event

- Inadequate and limited access to healthy and nutritious foods

Social Determinants

- Criminal and addictive thinking
- Ex-felons who are re-establishing personal and professional identity
- Differing sexual preferences and alternative lifestyles
- Trading sex for survival
- Overeating and / or not eating enough as a coping strategy

The Symptom Cycle Experienced During and After a Disaster

- Tense muscles
- Pain
- Stress / anxiety
- Difficult emotions
- Depression
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue

The Mind

- Identify difficult emotions
- Reprogram your mental computer
- Change your thinking
 - Positive / negative
- Perceptions vs. reality
- Clear the clutter

The Mind

- Try to leave the baggage behind
- Think about what you're thinking about

The Body

- Take care of your emotional health and well being
- Learn more about your mental and physical health problem
- Eat healthy, nutritious, and balanced meals

The Body

- Learn about coping strategies and benefits
- Talk to your doctor or health care provider
- Take PART

The Soul

- Rest, relaxation, and solitude
- Prayer and meditation
- Support systems
- Praise, worship, and fellowship
- Singing

The Soul

- Manage emotional changes
 - Anger, uncertainty about the future, changed expectations and goals, relationships with family and friends

Take PART

- Prepare
 - Keep track
 - Of symptoms and monitor what's going on in between stressful moments

Take PART

- Report
 - Other treatments and medications that are being used to assist you when dealing with trauma
- List
 - Main concerns and questions – everything is important

Take PART

- Ask questions
 - Diagnosis of depression or other mental illness
 - Stress and anxiety tests
 - Consider multiple options for treatment
 - Follow ups with doctor, psychologists, or therapist, etc.

Take PART

- Repeat
 - Back key points that were discussed
 - Diagnosis and prognosis to reflect understanding
 - Next steps for progressing and moving forward

Take PART

- Treatment alternatives and options
- Allows for an opportunity to correct miscommunications and misunderstandings

Take PART

- Take action
 - Identify challenges and barriers to following suggestions and recommendations
 - If so, let the doctor know . . . communicate
 - Ask your provider to write instructions down if appropriate

Managing Your “Mind, Body and Soul”

- Increase exercise and physical activity
- Take medications appropriately
- Manage fatigue
- Plan better
- Practice better breathing

Managing Your “Mind, Body and Soul”

- Work with your support system and health care provider

Mind, Body, and Soul

- Carry out normal activities
 - Maintain contact with trusted / supportive friends, family, and associates
 - Plan ahead for social outings and special events
 - Get out of the house everyday
 - Do something nice for yourself

Mindfulness Meditation

- Developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn
- Pioneer and leader in the field of mindfulness and health
- Paying attention in a particular way:
 - On purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally
- Paying attention to our feelings and our senses without judgment

Mindfulness Meditation

- 4 Step Process:
 1. Planning
 - Create an opportunity for meditation at least 30 minutes a day
 - Some may prefer 10-15 minutes

Mindfulness Meditation

2. Posture
 - Be very comfortable but don't fall asleep
 - Legs can be crossed or straight
 - Spine should be upright
 - Identify a pose that can be maintained without discomfort

Mindfulness Meditation

3. Thoughts

- Allow thoughts to come and go
- They are normal
 - Embrace them and don't try to control them

Mindfulness Meditation

4. Breathing

- Focus on your breathing
- Take gentle breathes through the nose
- Focusing on the sensation of your breathing will quickly bring you into the present and connect your mind with your body

Mind, Body and Soul: Make It Personal

- “The Four Agreements” by Don Miguel Ruez
 1. Be impeccable with your word
 2. Don't take anything personally
 3. Don't make assumptions
 4. Always do your best

Mind, Body and Soul “Food for Thought”

- Discover the power of your thoughts and words
- Let go of the past
- Live to give
- Find strength in adversity
- Choose to be happy!!!!

-Joel Osteen - "Your Best Life Now"