



APCO International's

# 9-1-1 Wellness Summit

February 6, 2024 | Atlanta, GA

# *Journey To* **RESILIENCE**

BY BECKI GREEN and CASSIE SEXTON



# My Story

I hope this story to be one of hope, and resilience to those that hear it. To encourage those to reach out when hurting and know you are not alone. That there ARE resources out there for people like us, and that you don't have to suffer in silence.

This job is hard, this life is hard, and it is okay to NOT be okay... and it is most important to know it is normal to feel what you are feeling.

**YOU ARE ENOUGH. YOU DESERVE TO BE HERE.**

With love,

Cassie Sexton



# My Story

**Perhaps you've been assigned this  
mountain...  
to show others that it can be moved.**

Rebecca "Becki" Green

# WHAT DOES PTS LOOK LIKE?

- CHANGE IN ACTIVITY
- HYPERVIGILENT
- INSOMNIA/OVER SLEEPING
- CHANGE IN APETITE
- EMOTIONAL OUTBURST
- NUMBING / DISASSOCIATION
- NIGHTMARES OR FLASHBACKS
- FALSE SENSE OF SUCCESS
- ISOLATION
- INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS
- WEIGHT GAIN/LOSS
- LACK OF CONCENTRATION
- AVOIDANCE

## **BEHAVIORAL**

- Change in activity
- Disconnection with loved ones
- Emotional outbursts
- Change in appetite
- Decision fatigue
- Inability to rest
- Antisocial acts / not wanting to talk to people
- Alcohol increase / substance abuse
- Erratic movements
- Startle reflex intensified
- Pacing
- Cynicism and apathy
- Seeing all people as bad people

## **COGNITIVE**

- Blaming someone
- Confusion
- Poor attendance
- Poor decisions
- Heightened or lowered alertness
- Poor concentration
- Memory problems
- Hyper vigilance
- Loss of time, person, or place
- Nightmares
- Intrusive images
- Increased or decreased awareness of surroundings

*Other*

## **EFFECTS THIS JOB HAS ON US**

## **EMOTIONAL**

- Anxiety
- Guilt
- Grief
- Denial
- Severe panic
- Fear
- Depression
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Intense anger
- Irritability
- Agitation
- Inappropriate emotional response
- Loss of emotional control

## **PHYSICAL**

- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Muscle tremors
- Twitches
- Chest pain\*
- Difficulty breathing\*
- Rapid heart rate
- Headaches
- Grinding of teeth
- Dizziness
- Chills
- Profuse sweating
- Digestion issues
- Disconnection with loved ones
- Decision fatigue
- Cynicism and apathy
- Seeing all people as bad people
- Not wanting to talk to people

# GROUNDING

*tools*

## GROUNDING YOUR SENSES

5-4-3-2-1

Pick something and describe it slowly

Colors and Shapes

Stand in the grass / sand / earth / snow

Carry a small item with you

Bi-lateral Music

## COGNITIVE SHUFFLE

Categories

Sleep game - Word - Letters

Positive affirmations

## BREATHING EXERCISES

Box Breathing - Tactical Breathing



# SELF-CARE, SELF-CARE, SELF-CARE



## Fill Your Cup

Know what fills  
YOUR cup!

If you don't  
know  
start exploring!



## You Deserve it!

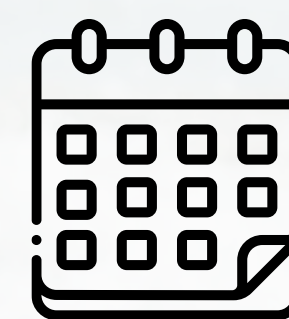
You **DESERVE**  
to take care  
of **YOU!**



## Oxygen Required

Place **YOUR**  
Oxygen mask first  
before placing  
others.

This allows you to  
help more people!



## Schedule it

Schedule it, like a  
doctor  
appointment, or a  
meeting, or time  
with a friend.

Be your own friend.

# Self-Love

*Language*

## The 5-Love Languages

book by Gary Chapman

PHYSICAL TOUCH

ACTS OF SERVICES

QUALITY TIME

GIFTS

WORDS OF AFFIRMATION



**SCAN  
ME**



*self-love*  
**SELF-CARE**  
*ideas*

### QUALITY TIME

- GARDEN
- Nature walk/hike
- Watch a favorite movie/show
- Enjoy a sunset/sunrise
- Read a favorite book

### PHYSICAL TOUCH

- SPA DAY
- Move your body (exercise, stretching, yoga, somatic)
- Give self a mani/pedi
- Take a bubble bath
- Eat or drink a healthy snack

### GIFTS

- TREAT YOURSELF
- Invest in your favorite hobbies
- Enjoy your favorite coffee, snack, meal
- Enroll in your favorite class
- Do your favorite activity

### WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

- POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS
- Keep a gratitude jar or journal
- Watch an inspirational video or TED talk
- Compliment yourself

### ACTS OF SERVICE

- DECLUTTER OR TIDY UP YOUR SPACE
- Set goals/to-do list
- Meal prep your lunches
- Keep a habit tracker/journal
- Donate items/to charity

# HOW TO... ACTUALLY FIT IN

*Self-care*

## AT WORK:

- Do a Brain Dump (5-10 Min)
- Take a Walk/Move Your Body (15 Min)
- Breathing or Grounding Exercises (5 Min)

## AT HOME:

- Spend a quiet moment with yourself (5 Min)
- Listen to your Favorite Song (5 Min)
- Take a Hot Shower or Bath (15-45 Min)
- Do Something Creative (30 Min)

## OUTSIDE:

- Sit and Breathe (or Meditate) (10 Min)
- Move Your Body (20 Min)
- Spend Time With Your Friends/Family (30-60 Min)



# DIFFICULT *Conversations*

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

**Recognize**- peer has a stress injury.

**Act**- if you see something say something.

First should be to the distressed person. If communicating to the distressed person is outside your role then coordinate with a trusted support person.

**Connect**- know at least 2 trusted resources to offer the person in distress OR refer them TO peer support.



# Know your RESOURCES



There are many First Responder specific resources available to you.

## LOCAL

This Varies for Everyone

### EMDRIA

### EMDRia.org

[Find Therapist > search by location > select population served]

### FOP

<https://fop.net/officer-wellness/providers/>

FOP Vetted Therapists

OTHER peer support teams

## NATIONAL

### First Responder Wellness

Newport Beach, CA

888-443-4898

### Warriors Heart

Texas

888-598-4895

### Shatterproof - FHE

Florida

866-768-9792

### Center of Excellence

IAFF, Maryland

855-900-8437

## HOTLINES

Suicide and Crisis

988

Crisis Text Line

741741 "blue"

Firefighter and Family

844-525-3473

Copline

800-267-5463

Safe Call Now

206-459-3020

### First Responder Support

Network -FRSN

<https://www.frsn.org/>

Note: there are many First Responder specific resources (and some non-specific) available to you and your family, including treatment, therapists, retreats, and support groups. I do not work for any of these organizations.



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**THANK YOU**  
*for being here*

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# Meditation

BY CASSIE SEXTON

# Meditation

## THAT WOO-WOO STUFF...

Warrior Meditation

Guided, Silent, Music, Sounds

Walking, Sitting, etc.

Applications: Calm, Insight Timer (free), Youtube (free), many different sleep apps that have sleep meditations and sleep sounds.

There are MANY different forms of meditation.

Stay open minded.



SELECT YOUR

*thoughts*



# WARRIOR

*meditation*

APP USED: INSIGHT TIMER

## HOW TO:

### PHASE 1:

FINGER TAPPING-THUMB TO EACH FINGERTIP, WHILE SAYING “AH-VAH” IN YOUR MIND

### PHASE 2:

DISCONTINUE FINGER TAPPING, CONTINUE “AH-VAH”, AH – DEEP BREATH IN, VAH – DEEP BREATH OUT.

### PHASE 3:

DISCONTINUE “AH-VAH”, SIT WITH YOUR FEELINGS, SENSATIONS, AND PHENOMENA.

IF AT ANY TIME YOU WISH TO RETURN TO A PRIOR STAGE DURING THE MEDITATION, PLEASE DO.



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