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Got a Minute?



Are you feeling tired?

When was the last time you got a good night's sleep?

Do you find yourself trying to "catch up" on your sleep on your days off?

Is your job impacting your sleep schedule?



Data

Sleep is imperative. It helps restore us, both physically and mentally. When you do not get enough sleep, it is lost—it is gone! It is not something we can make up.

As a law enforcement officer, you could be putting yourself and others at risk when you miss out on adequate, quality sleep.

So, instead of reaching for more caffeine or an energy drink, try cutting down on caffeine and setting a strict bedtime schedule for yourself to make sleep more of a priority.



Resources

If you are consistently struggling to get to sleep, consider talking to your family physician, a family member, or a friend or consulting with your agency's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for professional assistance.

If you have a sleep condition, your doctor can help.



Agency EAP:

Agency Chaplain:

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Visit valorforblue.org and safleo.org for additional resources on sleep deprivation.

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Do you feel like the weight of the world is on your shoulders? Do you feel like you are reaching your limit?

Are you directing irritability toward others that may be unwarranted? Do you find yourself clenching your jaw or teeth?

Are you becoming excessively frustrated?



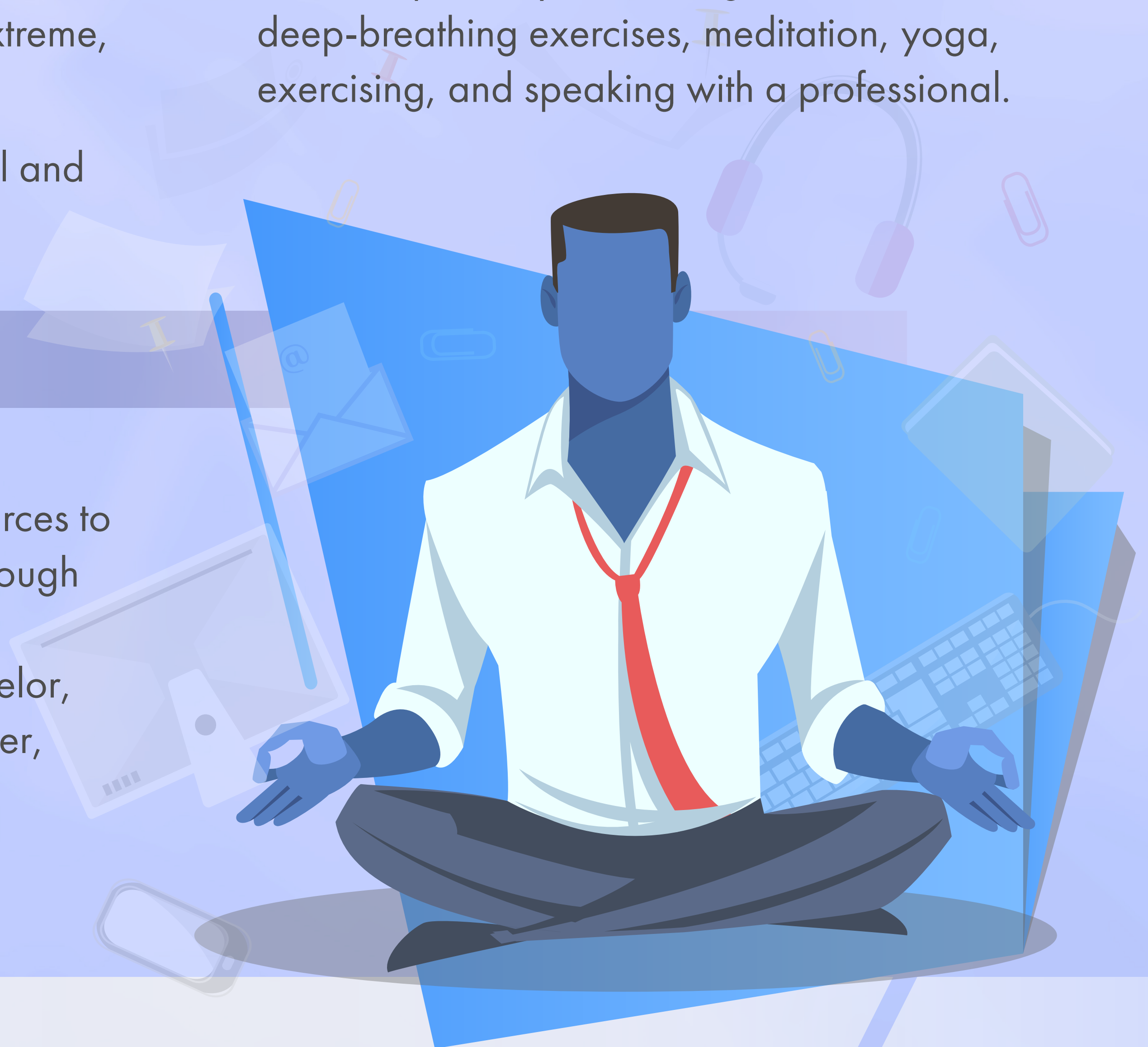
Data

Do not allow your stress to go unchecked.

- Stress can be the result of events on and off duty. It becomes a concern and affects your personal and professional life if it is not managed properly.
- No one is immune from stress, but for law enforcement officers, the strains and tensions experienced at work are unique, often extreme, and sometimes unavoidable.
- Too much stress can have serious physical and emotional effects.
- Stress management is critical. Recognize and be aware of the stressors you have in your personal and professional life and develop individual healthy coping strategies.
- Some helpful ways to manage stress include deep-breathing exercises, meditation, yoga, exercising, and speaking with a professional.

Resources

If you are looking for resources to help relieve your stress, you can get help through your Employee Assistance Program (EAP), your agency chaplain, a professional counselor, or a family physician or you can talk to a peer, friend, or supervisor.



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Are you experiencing frequent nightmares or flashbacks?

Do you feel an emotional numbness and/or avoidance to places, people, and activities associated with a particular event?

Data

Officers are not immune to the effects of witnessing tragedy and trauma. If these effects go untreated, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) could develop.

Symptoms of PTSD¹ can manifest physically, behaviorally, and emotionally and can include:

- Avoidance, including staying away from anything related to or similar to the event
- Panic attacks, including an elevated heart rate
- Nightmares and flashbacks
- Irritability or outbursts of anger
- Being overly alert or easily startled
- Uncontrollable shaking
- Extreme fear of harm
- Numbness

Most people who go through traumatic events may have temporary difficulty adjusting and coping, but with time and support, they usually get better. If the symptoms get worse, last for months or even years, or interfere with your critical decision making or day-to-day functioning, you should seek help as soon as possible.

PTSD is a disorder that can seriously impact your mental well-being and requires immediate medical consultation. Those experiencing PTSD are more likely to use coping mechanisms that compound or increase other issues. Reach out! It's okay. Everyone needs help from time to time.

Resources

There are many resources available, including your agency's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), a counselor, a physician, a friend, a supervisor, or a provider hotline. It's okay to talk in a confidential manner to your supervisor.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) offers 24/7, free, and confidential mental health treatment at 1-800-662-4357.

Call 988 for the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (or text "BLUE" to 741741).

¹ Coping with a Traumatic Event, Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). <https://www.cdc.gov/masstrauma/factsheets/public/coping.PDF>



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Got a Minute?



Are you having trouble getting out of bed?

Have you been feeling hopeless, helpless, or worthless?

Do you have a sense of failure?

Data

This may be a sign of depression.

Depressive symptoms have been found in law enforcement at two times the rate of the general population.¹ Common symptoms include:²

- Feeling worthless or guilty
- Loss of interest in things that were once pleasurable
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Changes in weight or appetite
- Loss of energy or increased fatigue
- Trouble sleeping
- Difficulty thinking, concentrating, or making decisions
- Thoughts of death or suicide

Do not let these thoughts and feelings linger—this is not something you will just get over. Do not be ashamed. Do not let embarrassment or fear of the unknown stop you from asking for help. You are worth it! There is hope! Things do get better.

Resources

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), chaplain programs, mental health resources outside of the agency, and 24/7 hotlines are available to you. You also can speak with a trusted friend, family physician, or family member.

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Call 988 for the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (or text “BLUE” to 741741).

¹ Hartley, T. A., Burchfiel, C. M., Fekedulegn, D., Andrew, M. E., and Violanti, J. M. (2011). “Health Disparities in Police Officers: Comparisons to the U.S. General Population.” *International Journal of Emergency Mental Health*, 13(4), 211–220. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4734372/>.

² What Is Depression? American Psychiatric Association. <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/depression/what-is-depression>.

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Visit **valorforblue.org** and **safleo.org** for additional resources on depression.



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Got a Minute?



Are you taking pills, drugs, or medication

prescribed for past injuries or medical issues to help you cope or to help you unwind?

Do you use drugs, prescribed or illicit, to help you get through the day and relax?

Has your behavior towards others become belligerent or argumentative?



Data

Law enforcement professionals are not immune to substance abuse issues.¹ Substance abuse and substance use disorders are not uncommon among law enforcement officers.

Easy access to lethal means and the need to be alert and quick-thinking in the line of duty make the ramifications of abuse more dangerous.

If you feel you have a substance use disorder, getting help early can be lifesaving.



Resources

If you think you may have a substance abuse problem, there are several steps you can take. Reach out to your physician, share with a family member or friend who will support you, or talk with a counselor.

Your agency's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) will also have resources. Resources are completely confidential and are available 24/7.

You can also reach out to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for substance treatment.

1-800-662-4357

www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline

www.AddictionCenter.com



¹ Cross, C., Ashley, L., (2004). Police Trauma and Addiction: Coping With Dangers of the Job. FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin. 72(10).

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Visit **valorforblue.org** and **safleo.org** for additional resources on substance abuse.

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Got a Minute?



Do you binge drink?

Do you end up drinking more than you intended? Have you tried unsuccessfully to reduce your drinking or to stop drinking altogether? Do you drink even though it makes you depressed or anxious? Are you drinking more frequently? Do your loved ones avoid you or tell you that you embarrass them when you drink? Are you using alcohol to cope with depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder?



Data

Alcohol¹ can:

- Increase the risk of chronic diseases
- Impair learning and memory problems
- Increase the risk of depression and anxiety
- Create dependency and addiction
- Interfere with job performance and personal relationships
- Be used as an unhealthy coping mechanism

If you have a hard time saying no to alcohol or if it is having adverse effects on your life, you may have a problem. If your gut feeling tells you that you have a problem, listen to your instincts. And if your family and friends are telling you that your drinking creates problems, listen to them, too. They care about you!



Resources

Reach out! Help is available. There are many confidential resources to help with substance abuse related to alcohol. You can reach out to your agency's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), outside addiction centers, or hotlines. You can also talk to a trusted friend or partner.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline: 1-800-662-4357

Mutual-Support Groups: Find local support through Alcoholics Anonymous at www.aa.org.

¹ Alcohol Use and Your Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
<https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/alcohol-use.htm>.



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