

# STRESS AND YOU

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Stress: a state of mental or emotional strain resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances.

The top 5 stressful life events are:

- Death of a loved one
- Divorce
- Moving
- Major Illness
- Job loss

When you add the challenges of being a police officer, the risk for stress even Burnout is high.

Here are some things you need to know about stress and steps to take care of yourself and others

The following are some **SIGNS** (behaviors) include:

Irritability

Easily angered

Avoiding work

Unable unwind

Isolation

Increased alcohol and drug use.

**SYMPTOMS** (physical) include:

Depression

Chest pain

Headaches

High blood pressure

Teeth grinding

Fatigue

If the above list of Signs and Symptoms look familiar to you, the next step is an **ASSESSMENT**.

This step allows you to get feedback from yourself and trusted others:

- Take a stress self assessment test online. I recommend **Test Your Stress/Be Mindful**.
- Ask trusted others if they have noticed any changes in your mood/actions.
- See your doctor and share how you have been feeling and behavior changes.
- Ask family members for feedback.

- Talk to a therapist.

POPPA has screened and can refer you to therapists that have experience working with police officers.

## **PLAN and PRESERVATION**

The suggestions listed below are actions you can plan to help you preserve your well being when stressed:

- Plan a vacation
- Schedule time with friends
- Schedule the appointment you have been avoiding with your doctor or dentist.
- Work out
- Plan to see a movie or play with a someone.
- Take a class in something you enjoy or complete your degree.
- Update your resume.

**SEE A THERAPIST.** When you are in therapy you learn how to overcome your personal and relational

struggles by developing long term goals with a trained and licensed mental health professional.

These are some basic tools to help you identify what stress may look like, get feedback from others and create plan of self care. You may have your own healthy techniques and strategies so please use them.

**IT'S TIME TO TAKE CARE OF YOU!!**