# Stress Continuum Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READY (Green)</th>
<th>REACTING (Yellow)</th>
<th>INJURED (Orange)</th>
<th>ILL (Red)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEFINITION</strong></td>
<td><strong>DEFINITION</strong></td>
<td><strong>DEFINITION</strong></td>
<td><strong>DEFINITION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimal functioning</td>
<td>Mild and transient distress or impairment</td>
<td>More severe and persistent distress or impairment</td>
<td>Clinical mental disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive growth</td>
<td>Always goes away</td>
<td>Leaves a scar</td>
<td>Unhealed stress injury causing life impairment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellness</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
<td>Higher risk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CAUSES</strong></td>
<td><strong>CAUSES</strong></td>
<td><strong>CAUSES</strong></td>
<td>TYPES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any stressor</td>
<td>Life threat</td>
<td>Loss</td>
<td>PTSD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEATURES</strong></td>
<td><strong>FEATURES</strong></td>
<td><strong>FEATURES</strong></td>
<td>Depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At one’s best</td>
<td>Change in focus</td>
<td>Moral injury</td>
<td>Anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-trained and prepared</td>
<td>Feeling irritable, anxious</td>
<td>Wear and tear</td>
<td>Substance use disorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In control</td>
<td>Alert for threats</td>
<td>Difficulty sleeping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically, mentally and spiritually fit</td>
<td>Muscle tension or other physical changes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission-focused</td>
<td>Misconduct</td>
<td>Symptoms persist and worsen over time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivated</td>
<td></td>
<td>Severe distress or social or occupational impairment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calm and steady</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having fun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaving ethically</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RJW 2023
### 4 Sources of Orange Zone Stress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trauma</th>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Inner Conflict</th>
<th>Wear and Tear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>A traumatic injury</em></td>
<td><em>A grief injury</em></td>
<td><em>A moral injury</em></td>
<td><em>A fatigue injury</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due to the experience of or exposure to intense injury, horrific or gruesome experiences, or death.</td>
<td>Due to the loss of people, things or parts of oneself.</td>
<td>Due to behaviors or the witnessing of behaviors that violate moral values.</td>
<td>Due to the accumulation of stress from all sources over time without sufficient rest and recovery.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### READY
- Definition: Optimal functioning, well-being, wellness
- Features: Thriving, well-rested, prepared, in control, physically, mentally & spiritually fit
- N/A

#### REACTING
- Definition: Mild and transient distress or impairment
- Causes: May stem from various sources
- Features: Increased energy, heightened vigilance, alertness

#### INJURED
- Definition: More severe and persistent distress or impairment
- Causes: Higher risk
- Features: Loss of control, symptoms of anxiety, depression

#### ILL
- Definition: Clinical mental disorder, lasting stress injury causing life impairment
- Types: PTSD, Depression, Anxiety, Substance use disorders
- Features: Symptoms persist and worsen over time, significant impairment of social or occupational function

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[https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/type/stress_first_aid.asp](https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/type/stress_first_aid.asp)
Seven Cs of Stress First Aid:

1. **CHECK**
   Assess: observe and listen

2. **COORDINATE**
   Get help, refer as needed

3. **COVER**
   Get to safety ASAP

4. **CALM**
   Relax, slow down, refocus

5. **CONNECT**
   Get support from others

6. **COMPETENCE**
   Restore effectiveness

7. **CONFIDENCE**
   Restore self-esteem and hope

https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/type/stress_first_aid.asp
CHECK ACTIONS

- Observe
  - Look
  - Listen
- Keep Track
  - Stressors
  - Distress
  - Changes in functioning
  - Response to prior SFA actions
- Examine
  - One-to-one interactions
  - Collateral information
- Decide
  - Dangerousness
  - Stress Zone
  - Needs

COORDINATE ACTIONS

- Collaborate
  - To promote recovery
  - To ensure safety
  - To get more information
- Inform
  - Chain of command
  - Family
  - Peers
- Refer
  - Recommend resources
  - Consultation
  - Direct hand-off

Continuous Aid

https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/type/stress_first_aid.asp
# Primary Aid

## Cover Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stand by</th>
<th>Make Safe</th>
<th>Make Others Safe</th>
<th>Encourage Perception of Safety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Ready to assist  
- Watch and listen  
- Hold attention | - Authoritative presence  
- Warn  
- Protect  
- Assist | - Protect  
- Warn | - Caring presence  
- Reduced chaos  
- Reduced danger  
- Listen and communicate |

## Calm Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quiet</th>
<th>Compose</th>
<th>Foster Rest</th>
<th>Soothe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Stop physical exertion  
- Reduce hyper-alertness  
- Slow down heart rate  
- Relax | - Draw attention outwards  
- Distract  
- Re-focus | - Recuperate  
- Sleep  
- Time out | - Listen empathically  
- Reduce emotional intensity |

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# CONNECT ACTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Be With</th>
<th>Promote Connection</th>
<th>Reduce Isolation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain presence</td>
<td>Find trusted others</td>
<td>Improve understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep eye contact</td>
<td>Foster contact with others</td>
<td>Correct misconceptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen</td>
<td>Encourage contact with others</td>
<td>Restore trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathize</td>
<td>Invite and include</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# COMPETENCE ACTIONS FOSTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Skills</th>
<th>Well-Being Skills</th>
<th>Social Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve occupational skills to reduce risk of stress reactions in inexperienced staff:</td>
<td>Re-establish or learn new skills to deal with stress reactions:</td>
<td>Re-establish or learn social skills to deal with stress-reactions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train</td>
<td>Calming</td>
<td>Requesting support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrain</td>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reassign</td>
<td>Health and fitness</td>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor back to duty</td>
<td>Managing trauma and loss reminders</td>
<td>Seeking mentoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# CONFIDENCE ACTIONS REBUILD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trust</th>
<th>Hope</th>
<th>Self-Worth</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust in: Peers</td>
<td>Forgiveness of self</td>
<td>Belief in self</td>
<td>Making sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Forgiveness of others</td>
<td>Self-respect</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders</td>
<td>Imagining the future</td>
<td>Accurate self-concept</td>
<td>Faith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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</table>

Secondary Aid

https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/type/stress_first_aid.asp
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SFA FUNCTIONS</th>
<th>POSSIBLE ACTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Check**     | • Assess current level of distress and functioning  
                • Assess immediate risks  
                • Assess need for additional SFA interventions or higher levels of care  
                • Reassess progress (Re-Check) |
| **Coordinate**| • Decide who else should be informed of situation  
                • Refer for further evaluation or higher levels of care, if indicated  
                • Facilitate access to other needed care |
| **Cover**     | • Ensure immediate physical safety of stressed person and others  
                • Foster a sense of psychological safety and comfort  
                • Protect from additional stress (ensure respite) |
| **Calm**      | • Reduce physiological arousal (slow down heart rate and breathing, relax)  
                • Reduce intensity of negative emotions such as fear or anger  
                • Listen empathically to the individual talk about experiences  
                • Provide information that calms |
| **Connect**   | • Encourage connection to primary support people  
                • Help problem-solve to remove obstacles to social support  
                • Foster positive social activities within crew |
| **Competence**| • Help mentor back to full functioning  
                • Facilitate rewarding work roles  
                • Arrange for retraining |
| **Confidence**| • Mentor back to full confidence in self, leadership, mission and values  
                • Help restore meaning or faith  
                • Foster the trust of coworkers and family members in the individual |

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