

Helping the Helpers: Strategies to Mitigate Secondary Trauma *Resources*

Apps

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Books

The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma
By Bessel van der Kolk M.D.

The effects of trauma can be devastating for sufferers, their families, and future generations. One of the world's experts on traumatic stress offers a bold new paradigm for treatment, moving away from standard talking and drug therapies and towards an alternative approach that heals mind, brain, and body.

Wherever You Go, There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation In Everyday Life
by Jon Kabat-Zinn, Ph.D.

In this book, the author maps out a simple path for cultivating mindfulness in one's life. It speaks both to those coming to meditation for the first time and to longtime practitioners—anyone who cares deeply about reclaiming the richness of his or her moments.

Foundations and Organizations

Survive First, <https://survivefirst.us/>

Survive First is a nonprofit foundation for first responders whose mission is to assist first responders and families who need mental health support from the impact of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and substance abuse. Through education and appropriate treatment planning and placement, Survive First walks with brothers and sisters on the road to wellness and recovery. The organization's vision is to reduce first responder suicide and save lives by ensuring that first responders receive the mental health support they need to live healthy and happy lives. Survive First is a resource to help first responders and their families speak confidentially with former law enforcement officers, fire fighters, first responder professionals, and/or mental health care providers who are familiar with this very specific line of work and can provide comprehensive assistance and planning for mental health support. All communication is confidential. The website also houses a range of online resources and materials.

VALEAP, <http://valeap.org>

The Virginia Law Enforcement Assistance Program (VALEAP) is a nonprofit organization committed to serving law enforcement officers and first responders who have undergone traumatic critical incidents in the line of duty or in their personal lives. Established in 2008, in the wake of the mass shooting at Virginia Tech, the organization has served more than 500 officers from more than 60 Virginia agencies and trained more than 150 law enforcement peers to date.

The program implements proven methods of peer support and mental health services to provide psychological and emotional healing to all participants. VALEAP's services include Critical Incident Stress Management and Post Critical Incident Seminars.

No one understands cops like other cops. That is why the organization is run by a dedicated team of volunteers who are trained law enforcement professionals, including municipal police officers, sheriffs' deputies, college/university law enforcement, state troopers, and a law enforcement chaplain.

VALEAP is one of many such organizations across the nation.

Online Resources/Websites

Mindful, www.mindful.org

Mindful is a mission-driven nonprofit dedicated to inspiring, guiding, and connecting anyone who wants to explore mindfulness—to enjoy better health, more caring relationships, and a compassionate society. From the flagship bimonthly *Mindful* magazine and [mindful.org](http://www.mindful.org) to our conferences and collaborations, associated activities support people seeking to learn more as well as those leaders working to bring genuine mindfulness practices into the mainstream. The *Mindful* audience learns from leaders in the field about effective techniques for mindful living and the science that points to their benefits.

Firestrong, Firestrong.org

The mission of Firestrong is to be a point of reference and to offer mental, emotional, and physical support to all members of the fire department and their families by providing educational tools, resources, crisis intervention assistance (crisis line), and peer support services. Most of this site is available to anybody and is unrestricted. However, departments can use this site as a starting point for their members and include their departments' personalized resources for additional support. Firestrong can also offer departments a tailored log-in process.

Tailored Local/Community Resources

Albuquerque Area Fire Fighters IAFF Local 244 Membership Assistance Program (MAP), <http://www.iaff244.org/>

Training (Online, In-Person, and In-Service)

Mindful Schools, www.mindfulschools.org

Building capacities for awareness, attention, connection, and compassion is an essential skill for educators and students of the 21st century. Mindful Schools' research-backed professional development trainings are based on our work in schools and more than a decade of experience training educators. Mindful Schools courses are designed to empower educators to develop and deepen their mindfulness practices and to access K-12 curricula and adaptable strategies to spark positive change in their work. This online curriculum offers foundational classes, continuing studies, and a course to prepare for Mindful Teacher Certification.

International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) Peer Support Training, <https://www.iaff.org/my-resources/programs/health-safety/pst-information-guide/>

Peer support programs have been demonstrated to be an effective method for providing support to occupational groups, including fire fighters. After completing the IAFF training, members will become IAFF-trained peer supporters with the necessary knowledge and skills to provide support to their peers; educate brothers and sisters about behavioral health (e.g., PTSD and resilience); serve as bridges to behavioral health programs and community resources; and build or enhance their peer support programs.

To lay a foundation for the IAFF Peer Support Training, participants must complete the online IAFF Behavioral Health Awareness course. The two-hour course is self-paced and tailored for the fire service. A link will be emailed to participants in advance so that they can complete the course prior to the live training. Subsequently, members will participate in the two-day interactive course taught by experienced peers from the fire service and behavioral health clinicians. Instructors will use small group learning methods and skill-building exercises to encourage student participation and mastery of the material.

Yoga for First Responders, <https://www.yogaforfirstresponders.org/>

Yoga for First Responders (YFFR) provides yoga training that is job-specific and culturally informed. The techniques and drills taught using YFFR's unique protocol trains participants in a skill set for processing the inevitable stress of a career in emergency services; building mental, physical, and emotional resilience; and enhancing optimal levels of job performance, from decision making to tactical skills. Yoga for First Responders builds elite fire fighters, law enforcement officers, emergency medical technicians, and telecommunicators for long, survivable, and rewarding careers.

Treatment and Recovery Facilities

International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) Center for Excellence for Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery, <https://www.iaffrecoverycenter.com/>

Designed with the firehouse in mind, the IAFF Center for Excellence makes treatment as comfortable and “at home” as possible, incorporating familiar furnishing and other touches throughout the common areas and residences.

The 15-acre facility, located just outside Washington, DC, in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, is furnished with comfortable residential accommodations and more than 60 beds. It offers a wide range of indoor and outdoor amenities to encourage physical activity and mental clarity to heal the mind, body, and spirit. Each treatment program at the IAFF Center of Excellence is backed by scientific research. During treatment, clients will form relationships with doctors, nurses, and other clinicians who will help them on their way to recovery. Clients are recommended for appropriate levels of care based on their individual needs, ranging from medically monitored detox to inpatient, partial hospitalization, and intensive outpatient treatment.

Chateau Recovery (for first responders and veterans), <https://chateaurecovery.com/firstresponders/>

Chateau Recovery believes in serving those who serve and protect us. Utilizing the Arbinger Institute’s philosophy and training, Chateau Recovery helps first responders build resiliency by addressing underlying issues and bringing about a fundamental shift in mind-set. This approach allows first responders to address trauma, shame, guilt, and stress and to heal the relationships that have inevitably been impacted. To effect lasting change, we address the six dimensions of wellness through the lens of shifting mind-set. First responders gain the tools to build resiliency, process stress, and cope with trauma.

On-Site Academy, <http://www.onsiteacademy.org>

The On-Site Academy is a nonprofit residential treatment and training center helping those in the law enforcement, fire service, emergency medical service, and other human service disciplines get back to the job or on to a new beginning and quality of life with the tools necessary to master critical-incident stress management (CISM). The On-Site Academy has a skilled staff of licensed clinicians, CISM Advanced-trained peers, national trauma consultants, and support staff from the service disciplines. Scheduled groups involve all phases of the debriefing process, Thought Field Therapy (TFT), Alpha-Stim, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), and (when applicable) substance abuse/addiction treatment.