

Lesson 3.11



Stress Management

Lesson at a Glance

Aim

To inform peacekeeping personnel about the particular threat stress poses to their health and the stress management techniques and coping methods to apply in stressful situations.

Relevance

- The UN works in high-risk areas and crisis operations
- Individuals must prepare to carry out their functions without adverse effect
- It is important to have a work-life balance

The UN operates in high-risk or crisis areas. Individuals need to prepare to do their work without negative effects.

You can try to have a professional attitude, which means respecting your own limits and those of your colleagues. You can demonstrate this attitude by:

- Respecting **work-life balance**
- Keeping a sense of humour
- Being realistic about work
- Always being security conscious

Learning Outcomes

Learners will:

- Identify the warning signs and symptoms of negative stress
- List sources of stress
- Explain the different types of stress
- Describe stress management techniques and coping methods

Lesson Map

Duration: 45 minutes total

20 minutes: presentation

25 minutes: interactive exchange or activity

The Lesson	Pages 3-35
Starting the Lesson	Intro Slides
The Importance of Stress Management	Slide 1
Definition of Stress	Slide 2
Useful versus Harmful Stress – Positive versus Negative Stress	Slides 3-4
Sources of Stress	Slides 5-11
Types of Stress	Slides 12-16
Coping with Stress	Slides 17-25
Additional Help and Resources	Slide 26
Summary	Page 35
Learning Activity Options	Pages 36-43
3.11.1 Personal Stress Response Profile	Page 37
3.11.2 Relax	Page 40
Learning Evaluation	Pages 44-58

The Lesson



Starting the Lesson

Introduce the following (using the Introductory Slides):

- Lesson Topic
- Aim
- Relevance
- Learning Outcomes
- Lesson Overview

The Importance of Stress Management

Slide 1



Key Message: Occupational stress is inherent in UN peacekeeping work. The issue is getting more attention lately, as UN peacekeeping personnel increasingly confront situations without coping skills.

Awareness is low on the negative effects of stress. Negative effects include:

- A decline in alertness, performance and judgment decline
- Operational mistakes which can result in loss of life
- Harm to health of personnel

People who manage emergency and disaster situations experience strong emotions. Police, fire fighters and emergency medical personnel are examples. UN peacekeeping personnel join them. Peacekeeping personnel often encounter traumatic situations.

All UN field staff need full briefings on stress and stress management. They need to manage stress as a continuing health risk. These enable staff to carry out their difficult work without adverse effect.


Stress management is important for both the physical and psychosocial well being of staff.



Ask participants if they remember what “psychosocial” means from the previous lesson. Recall and move on.

Definition of Stress

Slide 2



Definition of Stress

- **Stress:** any change or demand that the human system (mind, body, spirit) is required to meet or respond to
- Stress is simply the body's response to changes that create taxing demands
- Stress is not always a bad thing

Key Message: Stress is the body's response to changes that create taxing demands. Stress can be good or bad.

Stress: any change or demand the human system (mind, body and spirit) is required to meet or respond to.


Normal stressors keep life going: breathing, blood circulation, walking, eating, talking and playing.

These are part of life for everyone. You would die without these stressors and other physical demands on your human system.

In daily life, we often use the term "stress" to describe negative situations. People think all stress is bad, but this is not true.

Useful versus Harmful Stress – Positive versus Negative Stress

Slide 3



**Useful versus Harmful Stress –
Positive versus Negative Stress**

- In the presence of a threatening or dangerous situation, the person reacts with the "fight or flight" response
- **Distress:** any stress that occurs too often (frequency), lasts too long (duration) and is too severe (intensity)
- A consequence of long-term distressors or daily cumulative (negative) stress is "breaking down"

Key Message: Stress can be positive or negative. Life presents both. Positive stress is useful. Negative stress is harmful.

Stress becomes a problem and distress when it:

- Occurs too often - frequency
- Lasts too long - duration
- Is too severe - intensity

Distress: Any stress that occurs too often (frequency), lasts too long (duration) and is too severe (intensity). In other words, negative stress.

A basic life-protecting reaction helps explain the different effects of positive and negative stress.

Fight or Flight Response

In 1936 Dr. Hans Seyle made an important discovery: when threatened, the body always reacts with the same general adaptive mechanism fight or flight. Sometimes the fight or flight response is called fight or flee.

He identified three phases in the fight or flight response:

- Alarm phase
- Adaptation phase
- Exhaustion phase

The alarm phase:

- **In the presence of threats and danger, a person reacts with the "fight or flight" response. This reaction spikes our adrenaline and prepares us to run or to fight.**
- If we respond physically, the stress-produced fear, anger or hostility lessens or dissipates. Running, fighting, even responding with verbal aggression have the same effect.
- The "fight or flight" response is a primitive physical protective reaction. Physical responses to today's threats are often not possible or fitting.

The adaptation phase:

- When stressors continue without resolution, the alarm stimulus is lessened but not lost. The person enters the adaptation phase.
- When a person feels a survival threat, the whole being funnels resources to help: biochemical, physiological, psychological and spiritual changes happen to help a person cope. However, adaptation or adjustment to a persisting situation are not solutions.

The exhaustion phase:

- Long-term stressors or "cumulative stress" lead to the person showing typical signs of breakdown. Symptoms of distress involve physical, mental and behavioural conditions.

Slide 4

Common Symptoms of Negative Stress		
Physical	Psychological	Behavioural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fatigue ▪ Back pain ▪ Headache ▪ Ulcer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Memory loss ▪ Poor concentration ▪ Decrease in esteem ▪ Depression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Verbal outburst ▪ Increased smoking ▪ Increased alcohol use ▪ Eating disorders

Key Message: Some common symptoms and warning signs of negative stress or distress include:

- **Physical symptoms:** fatigue, back pain, headache, Ulcer
- **Psychological symptoms:** memory loss, poor concentration, decrease in esteem, depression
- **Behavioural symptoms:** verbal outburst, increased smoking, increased alcohol use, eating disorders

Positive and Negative Stress

Dr. Lazarus built on Dr. Selye's work. In 1974 he suggested that there is a difference between positive stress or eustress, and negative stress or distress.

Positive stress, has the following characteristics:

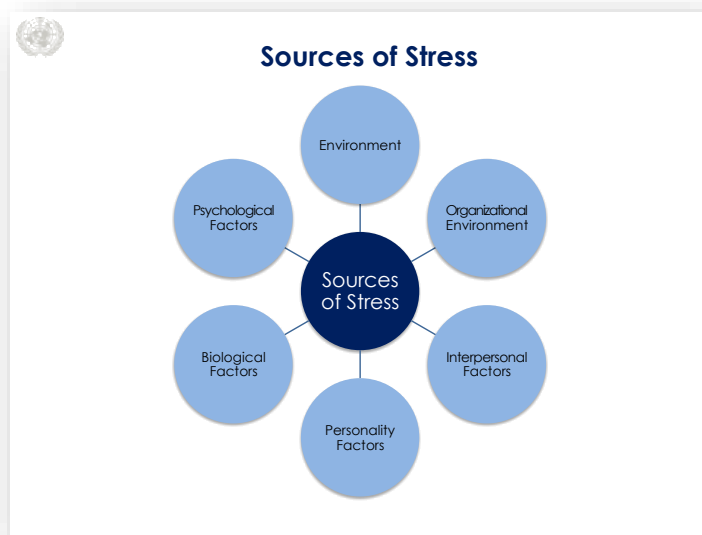
- Motivates, focuses energy
- Is short-term
- Seems manageable – we can cope
- Feels exciting
- Improves performance

In contrast, negative stress or distress, has the following characteristics:

- Causes anxiety or concern
- Is short-term or long-term
- Does not seem manageable – we do not feel confident to cope
- Feels unpleasant
- Decreases performance
- Can lead to mental and physical problems

Sources of Stress

Slide 5



Key Message: Having stress is not bad. In small quantities stress is good. What is bad for people is experiencing prolonged stress.

Stress is a part of life. People handle it differently.

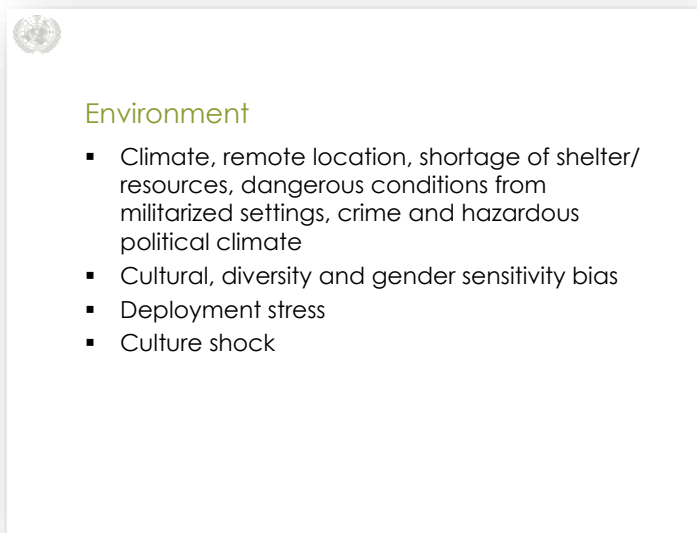
The best thing you can do to prevent stress overload and health consequences is know your stress symptoms and warning signs. When you recognize the symptoms of stress, you can get to the source. Sources of stress are also called “stressors”.

Different people react differently to the same experience. This makes it difficult to say definitely that certain stressors cause positive and negative stress. Some stressors are experienced by most people as positive or negative, most of the time.

Sources of stress fall under several categories:

- Physical environment
- Organizational environment
- Interpersonal factors
- Personality factors
- Biological factors
- Psychological factors

Slide 6



Key Message: Environmental stress may result from:

- Climate
- Remote location
- Shortage of shelter and resources
- Dangerous conditions - militarized settings, crime and hazardous political climates

Environmental stress also results from bias and discrimination linking to:

- Culture
- Diversity
- Age
- Sex and gender

Deployment stress:

The UN requires peacekeeping personnel to serve away from their families for a period of time.

Deployment stress may result from the physical and emotional demands of deployment.

Both separation and reunion place extra demands on individuals and families.


Culture shock:

Peacekeeping personnel deploy into new cultural environments – of the host country and the mission.

Overall symptoms of culture shock include:

- Anxiety
- Homesickness
- Helplessness
- Boredom
- Depression
- Fatigue
- Confusion
- Self-doubt
- Feelings of inadequacy
- Unexplained fits of weeping
- Paranoia
- Physical ailments and psychosomatic illnesses

Slide 7



Organizational Environment

- Elements of hierarchy, bureaucracy, management style, allocation of resources and the assignment
- Job stress – in addition, UN staff are exposed traumatic situations/critical incidents
- **Trauma or critical incident (CI):** an event outside the range of normal experience which is sudden and unexpected, disrupts one's sense of control, involves the perception of a life threat and may include elements of physical or emotional loss

Key Message: Some organizations develop an environment that causes stress for the work force. Contributing influences are:

- Hierarchy
- Bureaucracy
- Management style
- Allocation of resources
- An assignment

Causes of job stress include:

- Lack of control
- Increased responsibility
- Low job and performance satisfaction
- Confusion about work roles
- Poor communication
- Lack of support
- Poor working conditions
- Exposure to traumatic and critical incidents on-the-job

Trauma or critical incident refers to an event outside the range of normal experience. The event is:

- Sudden and unexpected
- Disrupts one's sense of control
- Involves the perception of a life threat
- May include physical or emotional loss

Types of critical incidents include:

- Natural disasters
- Multiple-casualty accidents
- Sexual or other assault

- Death of a child
- Hostage-taking
- Suicide
- Shocking death of family member or close friend
- Duty-related death of co-worker
- War-related civilian deaths
- Bombing of buildings, mining of roads
- Attacks on vehicles and convoys
- Armed attacks and robberies
- Direct or indirect intimidation and threats

Any person can be involved accidentally in a critical incident. They happen everywhere. People in high-risk occupations have an increased risk of exposure. They include:

- Fire-fighters
- Emergency health-care workers
- Police officers
- Search and rescue personnel
- Disaster relief and humanitarian aid workers
- UN peacekeeping personnel

Slide 8



Interpersonal Factors

- At isolated postings, includes forced intimacy and lack of social and recreational choices
- Staff conflicts, abrasive or unskilled supervision, dysfunctional colleagues, dissatisfied receivers of your service and unhealthy relationships with others
- Family problems, problems at home

Key Message: Interpersonal stress may rise from:

- Staff conflicts
- Abrasive or unskilled supervision
- Incompetent or ill colleagues
- Dissatisfied receivers of your service
- Family problems
- Unhealthy relationships with others

Sources of interpersonal stress at isolated postings may be:

- Forced intimacy
- Lack of social and recreational choices

Problems at home contributing to stress include:

- Financial problems
- Strained family relationships
- New marriage
- Broken marriage
- Break up with girlfriends, boyfriends
- Family illnesses
- Children's education
- Death of a spouse, close relative or friend

Slide 9



Personality Factors

- Qualities of idealism and altruism increase vulnerability to stress
- Perceptions of the world and general disposition

Key Message: Perceptions of the world and general disposition are important factors in what we view as stressful and how we manage stress.

Many people who choose to work for the UN bring with them qualities of idealism and altruism. We set high personal standards, focus on results and expect to make a difference with our efforts.

These very qualities increase vulnerability to stress. In particular, vulnerability is increased when needs are overwhelming, resources are limited and assistance is frustrated. We may identify closely with success or failure of our work.

Slide 10



Biological Factors

- Internal factors that address or affect your stress level
- Includes physical factors such as degree of fitness, illness, allergy, injury, trauma or simple fatigue and exhaustion

Key Message: Internal biological factors can address or affect your stress level. Biological sources of stress may include physical factors:

- Degree of fitness
- Illness or condition
- Allergy
- Injury
- Trauma
- Fatigue and exhaustion

Slide 11



Psychological Factors

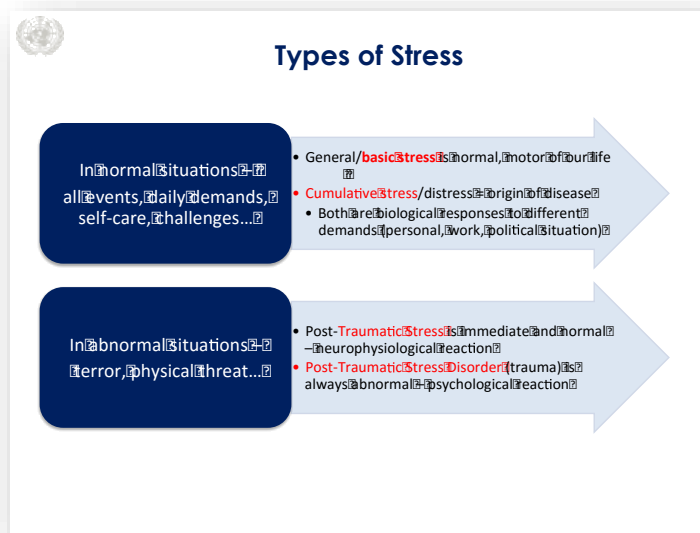
- Previous work-related or personal experiences
- Threats of physical harm
- Traumatic experiences of the past and present
- Attacks on self-esteem, lack of self-confidence and feelings of insecurity

Key Message: Sources of psychological stress are:

- Previous work-related or personal experiences
- Threats of physical harm
- Traumatic experiences past and present
- Attacks on self-esteem
- Lack of self-confidence
- Feelings of insecurity

Types of Stress

Slide 12



Key Message: The UN recognizes distinctions between four types of stress:

- General stress
- Cumulative stress
- Traumatic stress or critical incident stress
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

General Stress: everyone copes with this, day and night. This form of stress usually resolves within a day or two.

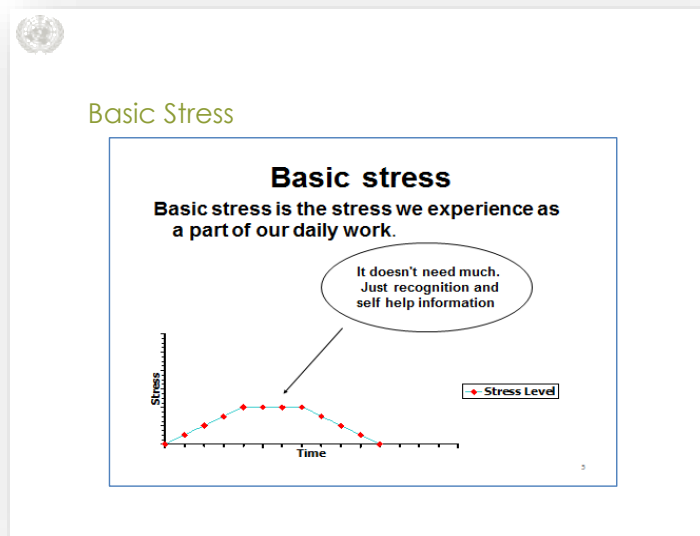
Cumulative stress: prolonged stress, which builds up after time and can lead to adverse mental and physical effects.

Traumatic Stress or Critical Incident Stress: Critical Incidents are abnormal events that produce a normal reaction of considerable psychological distress.

Post-Traumatic Stress disorder (PTSD): PTSD results from unresolved Critical Incident Stress. It is severe distress produced only by severe psychological traumatization. PTSD:

- Makes lasting changes in a person's life and work
- Needs professional assistance
- Can only be diagnosed and treated by a specialist

Slide 13

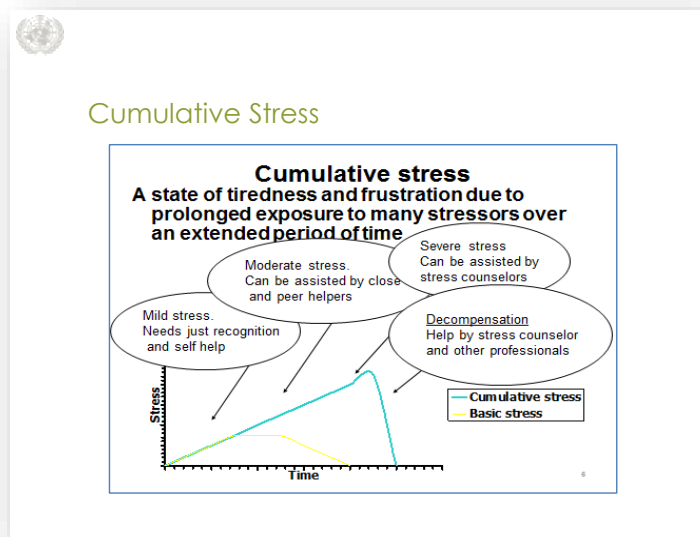


Key Message: Stress is part of our daily lives and important for our motivation. Day-to-day stress occurs as you manage competing demands of personal maintenance, transport and workload.

The feeling of being stressed usually comes from isolated events and changes.

- Everybody experiences it
- Related to normal conditions of life, “engine” of our lives
- Equips us to face challenges, meet obligations, cope with daily life
- Basis of our human survival mechanism
- Can be positive
- Can be negative
- Most people deal with it daily and recover

Slide 14



Key Message: Most people suffer from cumulative stress, which results from a build-up of stress over time. Some issues are large, with long duration. Other small stressors happen as part of regular life.

Daily repeated frustration that can lead to cumulative stress are:

- **Housing:** lack of privacy or comfort, noise, shortage of water, cold, heat
- **Travel:** risks, threats, roadblocks
- **Food:** shortages, unfamiliarity, lack of variety
- **Immobility, lack of activity**
- **Colleagues**

Cumulative stress first leads to unproductive hyperactivity, then to physical and emotional exhaustion and finally to burn-out. Cumulative stress is:

- Accumulated, unresolved general stress
- Takes time to develop
- A destructive pathway of stress
- Produces negative changes in:
 - Mental and physical health
 - Performance
 - Relationships
 - Personality

Learn to deal with cumulative stress before burnout.

Signs of cumulative stress

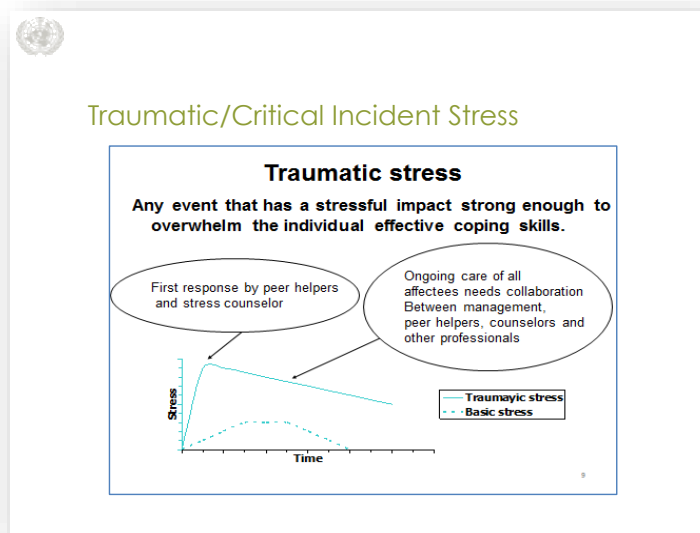
Pay attention to these signs in yourself, colleagues and partners. Use your knowledge to shape your responses when colleagues or partners show these signs. Do not take stress

behaviour personally. Reactions may occur earlier in those who have come directly from other similar assignments. Reactions multiply with unmanaged stress.

Typical cumulative stress reactions include:

- Physical complaints, headaches
- Sleep disturbance
- Negativism, cynicism
- Feeling pressured, overwhelmed
- Loss of sense of humour
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling indispensable, obsessions
- Irritability, blaming others
- Unwillingness to take leave
- Increased alcohol consumption and/or substance abuse
- Disillusionment
- Disregard for security, risky behaviour

Slide 15



Key Message: Traumatic or critical incident stress is a normal reaction to an abnormal situation. Critical incident stress is:

- An event outside the range of normal experience
- Sudden and unexpected
- Disrupts one's sense of control
- Involves perception of a threat to life
- May include physical or emotional loss

Reactions may be physical, emotional or cognitive. Reactions may also develop over time.

Immediate reactions are:

- **Physical:** nausea, muscle tremors, sweating, dizziness, chills, rapid heart rate, hyperventilation, high blood pressure
- **Emotional:** anxiety, anger, fear, irritability, guilt, grief, hopelessness
- **Cognitive:** confusion, inability to decide, impaired thinking, memory loss

Delayed reactions are:


- **Physical:** fatigue, startle response, substance abuse, sleep difficulties, nightmares, restlessness
- **Emotional:** feeling abandoned, resentful, alienated, withdrawn, numb, depressed
- **Cognitive:** decreased attention span, poor concentration, memory problems, flashbacks

The severity of an individual's reactions to a critical incident depends on:

- **Factors related to the incident:** suddenness, intensity, duration, available social support
- **Factors related to the person:** past experience, personal loss, perception of threat, personal coping abilities

Untreated effects of critical incident stress may lead to PTSD.

Slide 16



Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

- If symptoms of critical incident stress last more than a month they may lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- A more serious condition – compared to a wound not healing naturally
- Diagnosis and treatment must be carried out by a specialist

Key Message: If symptoms of critical incident stress last more than a month, they may lead to PTSD. This condition is more serious. Psychological stress is complicated. PTSD is similar to a physical wound that will not heal naturally.

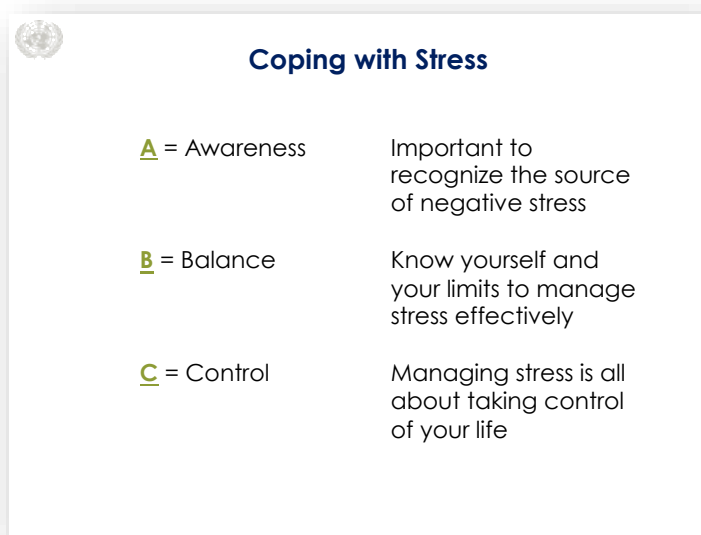
For PTSD diagnosis, these factors must all be present:

- Trauma
- Persistent reliving of the trauma - memories, nightmares, flashbacks, intense emotional reactions to trigger events
- A tendency to avoid any thought, emotion or activity that reminds one of the traumatic event
- Marked hyperactivity, exaggerated startle reaction, quick temper and sleep disorders, especially when falling asleep
- At least one month of persisting symptoms

A specialist must diagnose and treat PTSD.

Coping with Stress

Slide 17



Coping with Stress

A = Awareness	Important to recognize the source of negative stress
B = Balance	Know yourself and your limits to manage stress effectively
C = Control	Managing stress is all about taking control of your life

Key Message: It is important to realize that stress will be present in various forms throughout your assignment. To manage stress, it is important to learn your sources of stress. When you know major sources of stress, develop a strategy to avoid them.

As a rule, stress management plans will include learning to do some old tasks in a new way.

A = Awareness

- **Key is recognizing sources of negative stress for you.** This first step is practical. It is not an admission of weakness or inability to cope.
- What causes you stress? How do you react?
- Learn your major stressors – before they occur.
- Learn to recognize problems as they occur.

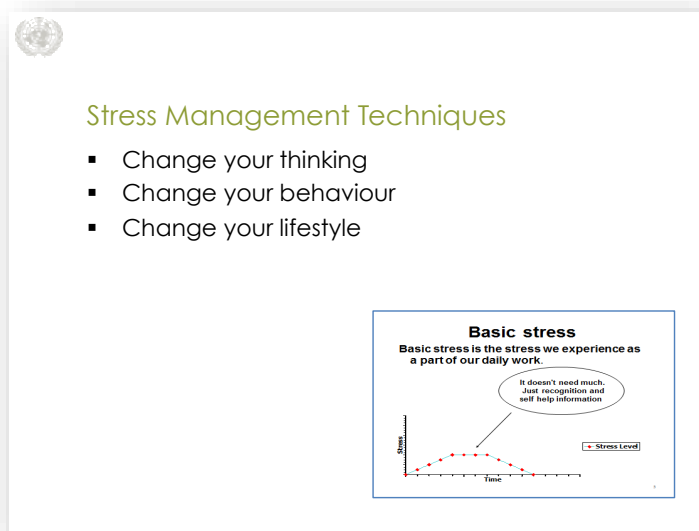
B = Balance

- There is a fine line between positive and negative stress. **Knowing yourself and your limits may be the most important way to manage stress effectively.**
- How much can you cope with? When does stress become negative for you?
- Manage to re-balance before stress becomes negative.

C = Control

- Stress can be created by you.
- Work to keep situations in perspective.
- What can you change in your life to better manage stress?
- The realization that you are in **control of your life** is the foundation of stress management.

Slide 18

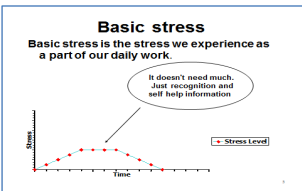


Stress Management Techniques

- Change your thinking
- Change your behaviour
- Change your lifestyle

Basic stress
Basic stress is the stress we experience as a part of our daily work.

It doesn't need much. Just recognition and self help information



The graph shows a red line representing 'Stress Level' on the y-axis against 'Time' on the x-axis. The line starts at a low level, rises to a peak, and then gradually declines. A speech bubble points to the peak of the curve.

Key Message: Managing stress is all about taking control:

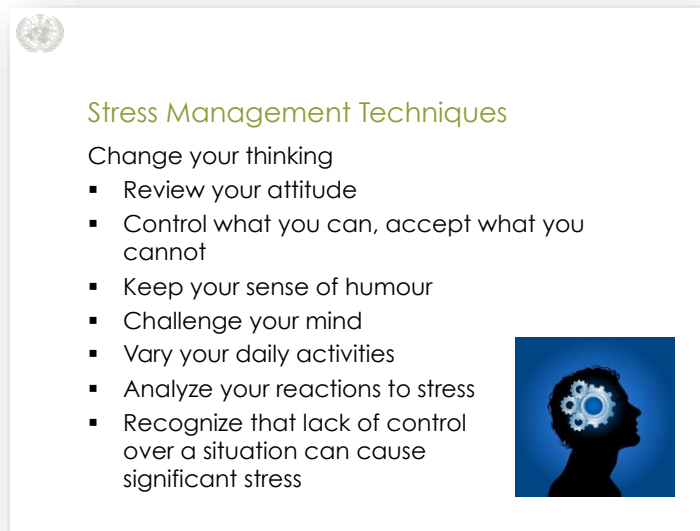
- Taking charge of your thoughts
- Your emotions
- Your schedule
- Your environment
- The way you deal with problems

Stress management involves different activities and positive attitudes that combat negative effects of cumulative stress. Many of the steps you take to keep your body healthy also relieve stress.

The following guidelines have been effective in stress management:

- Change your thinking
- Change your behavior
- Change your lifestyle


Slide 19

A presentation slide titled "Stress Management Techniques" in green text. It lists eight techniques under the heading "Change your thinking". To the right of the list is a small image of a person's head in profile with gears inside, symbolizing thought or stress. The slide has a white background and is set against a dark blue gradient background.

Stress Management Techniques

Change your thinking

- Review your attitude
- Control what you can, accept what you cannot
- Keep your sense of humour
- Challenge your mind
- Vary your daily activities
- Analyze your reactions to stress
- Recognize that lack of control over a situation can cause significant stress



Key Message: Change your thinking. Nobody can create stress in your mind. You are responsible.

Helpful techniques are:

- Re-framing
- Positive thinking
- Accepting creative challenges

Mental resistance: Here are some ways to increase your mental resistance to stress:

- Review your attitude – how you view life events. Do you become angry when caught in traffic? Upset when it rains? Adjust your expectations.
- Control what you can, accept what you cannot.
- Keep your sense of humour.
- Take courses, read books – challenge your mind.
- Vary your daily activities. Often just having something different to do will lower stress levels.

- Analyze your reactions to stress. Pay attention to what triggers your negative stress. Every person is different.
- Recognize that lack of control over a situation can cause significant stress. Work on adjusting your expectations.

Slide 20



Stress Management Techniques

Change your behaviour

- Become assertive
- Get organized
- Engage in healthy pleasures
- Manage your anger
- Manage tension
- Manage your time



Key Message: Change your behaviour.

You must:

- Be assertive not aggressive
- Organize yourself
- Practice venting or expressing strong emotions in positive ways
- Use your sense of humour

Diversion and distraction: Engage in healthy pleasures. These diversions will help you restore yourself and manage stress at the same time.

Managing anger:

- Three steps to success are: relaxation, positive self-talk, assertiveness
- Remind yourself “What do I have to do?”
- Take a surge of anger as a signal: “I am slightly angry, time to relax now”
- Keep the goal in sight, not anger: “I need to do it, I can do it, I have done it before”

Managing tension:

- Relax the mind by relaxing the body
- Relaxing by paying passive attention to verbal cues
- Experience an imaginary pleasant scene with all senses

Managing time:

- Manage your time well
- Fix a routine
- Make lists:
 - What MUST be done
 - What SHOULD be done
 - What I would LIKE to do
- Learn to drop unimportant activities
- Say no or delegate
- Concentrate on true priorities

Slide 21



Key Message: Change your lifestyle. Live well.

The most effective stress management technique is building healthy activities into your daily routine. Healthy, fit people are resistant to all types of distress.

Diet:

- Additional stress comes from skipping meals, forgetting to drink fluids, overindulging on sugar, fatty snacks, alcohol and coffee.
- Try to eat three well-balanced meals a day.
- Keep healthy snacks available at work.
- Eat well – different kinds of food, portioned right for your activities.
- Avoid caffeine, a stimulant.
- Lessen salt intake – use it in moderation.

Smoking and Alcohol:

- Things we do for fun can have negative impact on our health, relationships or other areas of our lives – especially if taken to extremes.
- Alcohol, caffeine, sex and food are pleasures for most people. In excess, they can cause serious problems including addiction.
- Cigarette smoking is addictive and can cause cancer and death.
- Avoid excessive use of alcohol, caffeine and nicotine. Moderate consumption.

Exercise:

- Exercise is key to strength and tension relief with many good effects:
 - Uses up excess energy released by the 'fight or flight' reaction
 - Improves blood circulation
 - Lowers blood pressure
 - Clears the mind of worrying thoughts
 - Improves self-image
 - Makes you feel better about yourself
- Physical and mental fitness go together. Your physical qualities of strength, flexibility and reliability translate to your mental attitudes as well.
- Exercise for endurance and strength at least three times a week.
- Some locations may present limited choices, but even 20 minutes of an activity will have benefits. You do not need a gym to exercise. Use stairs, walk around the compound, etc.

Rest and Sleep:

- Tiredness makes it hard to cope.
- Rest and sleep are good stress reducers. You awake refreshed after a night's sleep and have plenty of daytime energy. Get the sleep you need.
- Rest and sleep requirements vary among individuals. Few people can function with less than six hours of sleep a night. The relentless and urgent demands of providing assistance in certain locations can lead to fatigue and exhaustion of peacekeeping personnel.

Work/Life Balance:

- Balance your official and private life, at work and during away from the mission.
- You should not feel essential to the team 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Leisure:

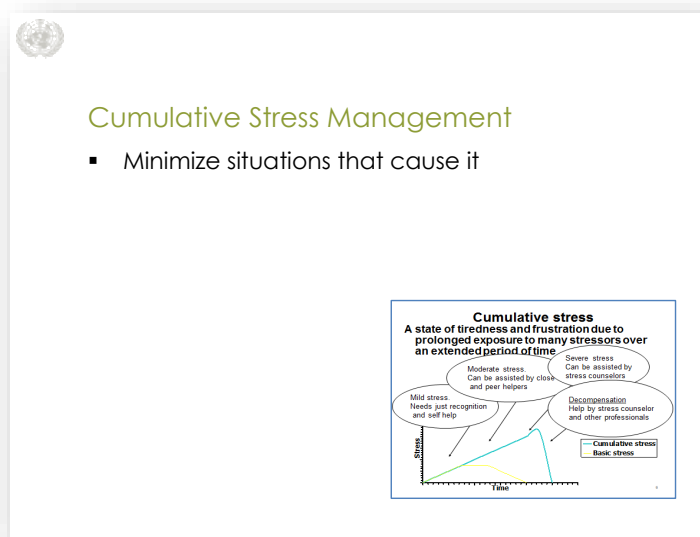
- Plan your free time positively. Follow healthy interests.
- Each work site will have music lovers, game players and those who find solace in nature.
- Relaxation and healthy pleasures are individual choices to meet your needs for time out. This gives you a 'break' from stressors, provides an outlet for relief and provides social contact.

Faith/Religion:

- Know and practice your philosophical approach to life.

Relaxation:

- Relaxation lowers blood pressure, combats fatigue, promotes sleep, reduces pain, eases muscle tension and decreases mental worries.
- Learn the healing value of relaxation and meditation.
- When you have racing thoughts at work and you do not know what to do first, try focusing on your breathing.
- In some situations, concentrating on deep breathing may help manage acute pain. Deep breathing also has an important role in controlling panic.
- Other relaxation exercises will help you manage stress – muscle relaxation or yoga.

Slide 22

Key Message: Cumulative stress results from a build-up of stress over time. One basic way to prevent cumulative stress is minimize situations that cause it.

Stress is inherent to field duty. You're responsible for managing your stress. Cumulative stress first leads to unproductive hyperactivity, then to physical and emotional exhaustion and finally to burnout. Treat it with the same attention you do your other professional duties. You must have self-discipline and know your limits.

Make sure you:

- Accept you cannot take care of others without taking care of yourself
- Sleep enough
- Deal positively with work setbacks, for example not being promoted
- Improve your time management skills for the heavy workload, many deadlines
- Contribute to a positive office environment
- Prepare for different types of weather situations

- Understand other people to increase your tolerance and improve your personal relationships
- Make enough time for family, friends and yourself
- Take care of yourself, mindfully



Recall examples of critical incidents from participants.

Slide 23

Critical Incident Stress Management

- Talk about the event
- Talk about your reactions
- Practice stress management techniques
- Participate in critical incident stress **defusing** and critical incident stress **debriefing**

Traumatic stress
Any event that has a stressful impact strong enough to overwhelm the individual's effective coping skills.

First response by peer helpers and stress counselor

Ongoing care of all affected needs collaboration between management, peer helpers, counselors and other professionals

Key Message: Remember – reactions to a critical incident are normal symptoms experienced by normal people following an abnormal event. These symptoms can temporarily interfere with a person's ability to cope at work or at home.

Coping mechanisms are an important part of recovery. However, untreated consequences of critical incident stress may lead to PTSD.

Actions before, during and after a critical incident can help minimize its effects.

Before:

- **Good mental and physical health before exposure to critical incidents enables a person to better cope with the stress related to such incidents.**
- Unresolved family or personal problems complicate critical incident stress and reduce your ability to respond effectively.
- Peacekeeping personnel unaware of mission conditions and risks may react more strongly to an incident.

- Pay careful attention to any pre-mission briefings and training related to critical incidents. They will help prepare you to resolve issues of critical incident stress when they occur.

During:

- A critical incident may be brief or prolonged. Often the situation does not allow the individual experiencing the incident to immediately stop and resolve it. The best solution is recognize the critical incident, and carry on with essential tasks.
- **During a critical incident:**
 - Recognize the signs of critical incident stress
 - Maintain a positive attitude
 - Try to control breathing - slow and regular
 - Focus on the immediate task
 - Stay in contact with others, keep talking
 - Care for yourself - food, water, clothing, rest
 - If exposure is prolonged, take breaks and rotate tasks

After:

- Talk about the event, what you saw, heard, smelled, did
- Talk about your reactions, especially how you felt
- Practice stress management techniques:
 - Deep-breathing exercises
 - Progressive relaxation
 - Meditation
 - Physical activity
 - Music, reading
 - Humour, to facilitate acceptance of reactions
- Participate in **critical incident stress defusing** as soon as possible after the event and later in **critical incident stress debriefing**

Critical incident stress defusing:

- Critical incident stress defusing is a group meeting of those involved in the critical incident. It takes place directly after the event.
- The purpose is to:
 - Let those involved describe what happened and talk about their reactions
 - Provide information about normal stress reaction, support services and details for a follow-up critical incident stress **debriefing**



Stress the difference between "defusing" and "debriefing".

Critical incident stress debriefing:

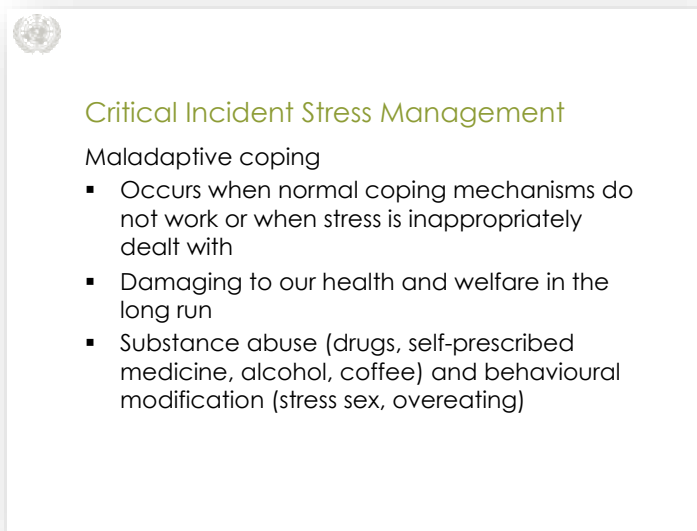
- Critical incident stress debriefing is a process designed to lessen the impact of a critical incident.

- It is a more formal debriefing - a safe opportunity to react to a stressful, traumatic situation. It takes place 48 to 72 hours after the critical incident. It is lead by a team with special training to manage critical incident stress.
- Talking about reactions helps people deal with them and validates them.
- The debriefing helps mitigate long-term effects of critical incident stress.
- They should be in a safe, quiet place.
- Debriefings are confidential. They are not counselling.

Most people's symptoms diminish in intensity and frequency in a few days or weeks. Formal debriefing and informal discussions with trusted family and friends help.

People struggling with critical incident stress need a trusted relative, close friend or trained counsellor to talk through concerns. Relatives, friends and co-workers should be familiar with the delayed reactions common to critical incident stress.

Slide 24



Critical Incident Stress Management

Maladaptive coping

- Occurs when normal coping mechanisms do not work or when stress is inappropriately dealt with
- Damaging to our health and welfare in the long run
- Substance abuse (drugs, self-prescribed medicine, alcohol, coffee) and behavioural modification (stress sex, overeating)

Key Message: Sometimes normal coping mechanisms do not work. People may ignore stress symptoms or not address them effectively. Maladaptive coping strategies result.

Maladaptive coping strategies help us instantly feel better and therefore may make us think that we are coping. In fact, such strategies damage health and welfare.

Examples of maladaptive coping strategies:

- **Substance abuse:** This includes taking a substance regularly. For example, drugs, self-prescribed medicine, alcohol and coffee. Certain substances can create addiction quickly. Dependence on a substance can also take time to develop.
- **Behavioural modification:** This involves comfort behaviours, such as stress sex and overeating.

Slide 25



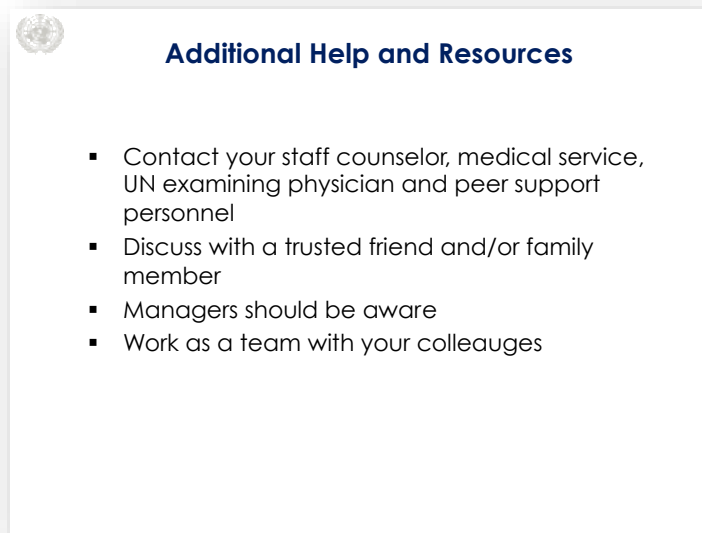
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

- If the symptoms of critical incident stress last more than a month, they may lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- A more serious condition
- Diagnosis and treatment of PTSD must be carried out by a specialist

Key Message: If the symptoms of critical incident stress last more than a month, they may lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). A specialist must diagnose and treat this more serious condition.

Additional Help and Resources

Slide 26



Key Message: Trauma can overwhelm effective individual coping skills. You are not alone. Help is available.

Many of us need assistance to help get through difficult episodes in our lives. Ask for help, without fear.

Accessing Help:

- Call for help or support as soon as you feel you need it.
- As UN personnel, you have access to various mental health resources. Contact your staff counselor, medical service, UN examining doctor and peer support personnel for information and resources.

Your staff counselor will not undertake any action on your behalf without your agreement.

Friends and Family:

- If no trained individual is available, discuss your situation with a trusted friend. Discuss or write about the incident, the nightmares or troublesome thoughts.
- **Friends and family can:**
 - Listen carefully
 - Spend quality time offer help and a listening ear
 - Reassure that you are safe and normal
 - Help with routine tasks like cleaning and cooking to allow you some private time
 - Empathize with and understand you

Managers:

- Managers need to be aware how stress affects subordinates and help with prevention.
- Encourage staff to talk to stress counselors, take rest and recreation, cut back work time.

Colleagues:

- In many ways, your health and welfare depend on:
 - Working as a team with your colleagues
 - Supporting each other – checking in
 - Keeping relationships positive
- Respecting your colleagues also means protecting your own health and safety so they will not have to face the stress of organizing your evacuation.

Summary

Sources of stress:

- Physical environment
- Organizational environment
- Interpersonal factors
- Personality factors
- Biological factors
- Psychological factors

Different types of stress:

- **General stress:** everyone has this type of stress all the time – day and night. This form of stress usually resolves within a day or two.
- **Cumulative stress:** prolonged stress which builds up after time and can lead to adverse mental and/or physical consequences.
- **Traumatic stress or critical incident stress:** produces considerable psychological distress. It is a normal reaction to an abnormal event.
- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder:** severe distress produced only by severe psychological traumatization. Can produce lasting changes in person's life and work. Produced by unresolved critical incident stress. Generally needs professional assistance.

Warning signs and symptoms of negative stress:

- **Physical:** fatigue, back pain, headache, ulcer
- **Psychological:** memory loss, poor concentration, decrease in esteem, depression
- **Behavioural:** verbal outburst, increased smoking, increased alcohol use, eating disorders

Stress management techniques and coping methods:

ABC strategies

- **A = Awareness.** It is most important to recognize the source of negative stress.
- **B = Balance.** Knowing yourself and your limits may be the most important way to manage stress effectively.
- **C = Control.** Managing stress is all about taking control of your life.
- Change your thinking
- Change your behaviour
- Change your lifestyle

Learning Activities

Detailed instructions for each learning activity may be found below. Here is an overview of learning activities for the instructor to choose from:

Number	Name	Methods	Time
3.11.1	Personal Stress Response Profile	Individual Exercise	15 minutes
3.11.2	Relax	Exercise, guided visualization	15 minutes

3.11.1 Personal Stress Response Profile

Method

Individual exercise

Purpose

For each participant to create an individual stress response profile, deepening understanding of stress management and its relevance

Time

15 minutes

Introduction	2 minutes
Individual work	12 minutes
Close	1 minute

Preparation

- Prepare a flip-chart sheet or a slide by dividing into four parts with headings.

Sources of Stress	Warning Signs

- Identify sources of support for participants who want to change their patterns of stress response. Information, exercises, counselling, and a buddy system are possibilities.

Instructions

1. Introduce the activity. Stress can become so familiar, we get used to it. Preparing an individual profile of stress response helps us see patterns of behaviour more clearly and cope with stress more effectively.
2. Show the slide or flip-chart sheet and go over the four parts:

Sources of stress: things that cause you stress or increase it

Warning signs: symptoms, indications that your stress level is too high, too long

Negative practices: ways you deal with stress that have harmful consequences

Positive practices: ways you manage stress that help your overall health

3. Encourage all participants to use their stress response profiles to strengthen positive practices. Invite people who are worried about their personal stress profile to speak with you privately. Direct them to the sources of support identified in preparation.

Variation

- Prepare a handout of a single sheet with the same four parts and headings. See example in Support. Copy for all.
- Get pairs of people to share information from their stress response profile. Consider this variation when groups have a strong, positive dynamic and people trust each other.

Personal Stress Response Profile – Individual

<p>(1) Sources of your stress</p>	<p>(2) Warning signs/symptoms for your stress</p>
<p>(3) Negative practices for managing your stress</p>	<p>(4) Positive practices for managing your stress</p>

3.11.2 Relax

Method

Exercise, guided visualization

Purpose

To explore the healing value of relaxation and meditation, starting with breathing basics.

Time

15 minutes

Preparation

- prepare steps in a guided visualization, e.g.
 - An introduction
 - Reflection on when each person last felt truly, totally relaxed
 - Introduction to *breathing* as the backbone of managed relaxation
 - Description of *deep breathing* – focusing on the physical steps
 - Slowing down the mind – focusing on calming mental effects
 - When deep breathing can help – in emergencies, in acute pain
 - Back to the group
- practice speaking *slowly* through the guided visualization steps – half-speed, in a relaxed tone
- make sure the room is big enough for all to have some private space

Instructions

1. Introduce the exercise. Get people to spread out.
2. Move through prepared steps, at a slow and easy pace. Give people time to relax at the beginning, easing them into the exercise. Relaxing is a process, not an on-off switch. People in high gear may not have experience relaxing. Be encouraging. Maintain a calm, easy pace and relaxed voice.

Variation

- Participants may have experience with mindfulness and meditation. Check with the group. Invite anyone with that experience to guide the exercise.
- Integrate deep breathing and guided relaxation exercises through a course, not only in one exercise. More practice, more likely to use these positive practices.

Support for 3.11.2 Can You Relax?

Step in Guided Visualization	Sequence of Points
An introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our minds are always active • sometimes our thoughts race • they can carry us away with them • learning to relax can help us cope • learning to relax <i>before</i> a crisis can prepare us • settle into your chair comfortably • turn inward – close your eyes if you like • for the next 15 minutes, follow my directions to let yourself slip into a relaxed state
Reflection on when each person last felt truly relaxed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • try to clear your mind of clutter, still the voices in your head • think of a clean wind and open space • turn your mind to your own life • when was the last time you felt really relaxed? Think back. Remember. Recreate that feeling ... • was it at a beach? on a mountain? at home? on a trip? • were you alone? with another person? other people? • reach back, to recapture that feeling – feel it in your body, and your mind • let the tension go from every muscle • as thoughts come into your mind, let them go as you become conscious of them
Introduction to <i>breathing</i> as the backbone of managed relaxation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focus on your breathing – in (1,2,3), and out (1,2,3); <i>repeat several times</i> • now concentrate on your stomach. Inhale, and feel your stomach rise. Push out your stomach as you inhale, to get a deeper breath. Consciously pull in your stomach as you breathe out (in 1, 2, 3, 4; out 1, 2, 3, 4 <i>repeat</i>) • feel your chest rise naturally as the space you create in your abdomen lets your lungs fill. Don't stick your chest out. Keep your stomach rising and falling. • open your mouth just a little, and breathe in through your nose, and out through your mouth (in 1, 2, 3, 4; out 1, 2, 3, 4 – to a steady rhythm).
Description of <i>deep breathing</i> – focusing on the physical steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • notice how deeper breathing has helped your body still and relax • when you inhale, imagine the air flowing right down into your toes. As you exhale, gently blow the air from your toes and thighs and stomach back out into the air (in, 2, 3, 4 and hold; out 2, 3, 4 and hold; <i>repeat</i>) • as you inhale, feel the air filling every part of your body – your legs, your torso, your lungs, your chest, your back, the back of your head • as you exhale, concentrate on getting out all the dead air in your lungs, freeing up space for fresh oxygen and renewed energy
Slowing down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shift your attention to your mind as regular, slow, deep breathing

the mind – focusing on calming mental effects	<p>helps relax your physical muscles; let your whirling thoughts go, as you empty your mind</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set an envelope of calm around yourself; feel your breathing calm everything in that envelope
When deep breathing can help – in emergencies, in acute pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1, 2, 3, 4 hold; out 1,2,3,4 hold. You are relaxed, driving in a car. Suddenly, smash! An accident! Imagine it. Fill in the details. Experience it. Your breathing rate will speed up. Make yourself breathe deeply again. In 2,3,4 hold; out 2,3,4 hold. Count the inhales and exhales. Slow it down. Feel your pulse rate even out. • In 2, 3, 4 hold; out 2,3,4 hold. Bring back the accident image. Imagine your first reaction when you know you are seriously hurt. You're in pain. Again, you imagining this traumatic event will speed up your heart-rate and your breathing. Slow them down, deliberately, consciously, mindfully. In 2,3,4 hold; out 2,3,4 hold. • Being able to control your breathing can help you control panic and pain. In 1, 2, 3, 4 hold; out 1, 2, 3, 4 hold. Repeat. Concentrate on your breathing.
Back to the group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go back in your mind to when you last felt relaxed. Feel your body go soft and limp, as if you are drifting into sleep. • Imprint that memory. Place it carefully in your memory banks. You'll be able to find it when needed. • Bring your attention back to the classroom. Increase your awareness of people around you. Open your eyes if you closed them. • Practicing deep breathing is one of the most practical things we can do to improve our stress management. Each of us breathes. Everyone one of us can practice deep breathing to help relax in everyday as well as challenging situations. • Staying calm in crisis helps you and others. Strengthening your capacity to manage stress and respond to stress without "losing it" will make you a better peacekeeper. • Try to practice deep breathing, regularly. It works!

Variations

1. Confirm that all participants have completed the required course, Basic Security in the Field II. If not, get them to do it. Introduce the variation by noting that Module 6 covers Well-being and includes techniques for managing stress. Ask people what they remember from that module. Note points on the flip-chart. Have they been practicing it? Why or why not?

Possible points from Module 6

- our breathing patterns change when we are stressed – faster and shallower
- relaxation exercises help you get control of your breathing, re-establish physiological balance
- deep breathing is a simple and valuable exercise
- instructions are
 1. find a quiet, comfortable place where you won't be interrupted
 2. concentrate on your breathing

3. breathe from the stomach area, not high in your chest
4. try to clear your mind of thoughts
5. say to yourself, "Breathe in. Breathe out" in a regular rhythm
6. keep doing the exercise for at least five minutes
7. try it at your desk, in your car, on the bus, at home, anywhere – at least several times a day
8. clearing your mind can be a challenge – practice makes it easier
9. practicing deep breathing means in an emergency or crisis, you'll be able to call on that practice to manage panic or pain, and stay calm

Evaluation

Notes on Use: Types of learning evaluation questions are:

- 1) Narrative
- 2) Fill in the blank/sentence completion
- 3) True-False

Combine in different ways for pre-assessment and post-assessment. Each evaluation type covers different content. No sub-set covers all learning outcomes. Make sure you include learning evaluation questions for each learning outcome when you combine them.

Three main uses of evaluation questions are: a) informally ask the whole group, b) semi-formally assign to small groups or c) formally give to individuals for written responses.

Evaluation Questions for Lesson 3.11	
Questions	Answers
Narrative <i>Note: Frame narrative evaluations as questions, requests or directions</i>	
1. Having a professional attitude means different things in different kinds of work. For stress management, the lesson notes a peacekeeper's professional attitude being demonstrated in four ways. What are they?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respecting work-life balance • keeping a sense of humour • being realistic about work – respecting one's own limits, colleagues' limits • always being security conscious
2. Explain why stress management is importance in peacekeeping.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UN works in high-risks areas and crisis operations. The personal toll on people can be high. Peacekeepers need to prepare, so they can do their work without negative effects. This includes strengthening personal stress management. • People have strong emotional reactions to emergency and disaster situations. • Awareness of negative impact on performance and health is insufficient. • Stress management is important for

	physical and psychosocial well-being of staff. Wellness.
3. Explain the three phases of fight or flight response.	<p>1. Alarm phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fight or flight reaction • adrenalin spikes, gets us ready to run or to fight • physical response lessens or dissipates the stress-producing fear, anger, hostility • running, fighting, verbal aggression have this effect <p>2. Adaptation phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when the stressor continues without resolution, the person shifts to adaptation phase • alarm stimulus lessens, but is not gone • the whole body mobilizes to deal with the threat – body, mind, spirit • but adaptation and adjustment are not solutions <p>3. Exhaustion phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the point arrives when the person shows typical signs of breakdown • time varies for different people • long-term stressors and cumulative stress lead to unresolved distress that shows up in these conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) physical b) mental c) behavioural
4. Long-term stressors and cumulative stress show common symptoms. Name some physical, mental and behavioural symptoms.	<p>1. Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fatigue, back pain, headache, ulcer <p>2. Mental</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • memory loss, poor concentration, decrease in self-esteem, depression <p>3. Behavioural</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • verbal outbursts, increased smoking, increased alcohol use, eating disorders
5. Under what three	When stress:

circumstances does stress become a problem and distress?	a) occurs too often - frequency b) lasts too long - duration c) is too severe - intensity. Distress: Any stress that occurs too often (frequency), lasts too long (duration) and is too severe (intensity).
6. Compare negative and positive stress.	Negative stress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • causes anxiety or concern • short- or long-term • doesn't seem manageable – we don't feel confident to cope • feels unpleasant • decreases performance • can lead to mental and physical problems Positive stress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • motivates, focuses energy • is short-term • seems manageable – we can cope • feels exciting • improves performance
7. Name up to five broad categories for sources of stress in peacekeeping.	1. Environment – physical, organizational 2. Deployment 3. Culture shock 4. Biological – physical 5. Psychological
8. Give examples of different environmental stress – at least three, aim for five.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • climate, • remote location, • shortage of shelter and resources, • dangerous conditions - militarised settings, crime and hazardous politics • bias and discrimination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - culture - diversity - age - sex and gender
9. The lesson identifies 12 symptoms of culture shock. Name all you can.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anxiety • homesickness • helplessness • boredom • depression • fatigue • confusion

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-doubt • feelings of inadequacy • unexplained fits of weeping • paranoia • physical ailments and psychosomatic illnesses
10. Different inter-personal factors and dynamics can be sources of stress. Give three examples.	<p>Isolated postings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forced intimacy • lack of social and recreational choice <p>Staff conflicts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • abrasive, unskilled supervision • incompetent or ill colleagues • dissatisfied receives of your service • family problems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - financial - strained relationships - new or broken marriage - break with girlfriends, boyfriends - family illnesses - children's education - death of spouse, close relative or friend • unhealthy relationships with others
11. Describe organization and job stress, with examples.	<p>Contributing influences to organizational stress – an environment that causes workers stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hierarchy • bureaucracy • management style • allocation of resources • an assignment <p>Causes of job stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of control • Increased responsibility • Low job and performance satisfaction • Confusion about work roles • Poor communication • Lack of support • Poor working conditions • Exposure to traumatic and critical incidents on-the-job

<p>12. Define and give examples of trauma or critical incident.</p>	<p>Trauma or critical incident is an event outside the normal range of experience that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is sudden and unexpected • disrupts one sense of control • involves perception of a life threat • may include physical or emotional loss <p>Examples of critical incidents, trauma:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • natural disasters • multiple-casualty accidents • sexual or other assault • death of a child • hostage-taking • suicide • shocking death of family member or close friend • duty-related death of co-worker • war-related civilian deaths • Bombing of buildings, mining of roads • Attacks on vehicles/convoys • Armed attacks/robberies • Direct/indirect intimidation/threats
<p>13. Explain biological factors as sources of stress, with examples.</p>	<p>Internal factors that address or affect your stress level</p> <p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • degree of fitness • illness • allergy • injury • trauma • fatigue and exhaustion
<p>14. Name six sources of psychological stress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • previous work-related or personal experiences • threats of physical harm • traumatic experiences past and present • attacks on self-esteem, undermining it • lack of self-confidence • feelings of insecurity
<p>15. The UN recognizes four types of stress. Name and</p>	<p>General, Basic Stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • normal

<p>describe them with examples.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • motor of our life • equips us to face challenges, meet obligations, cope with daily life • basis of human survival mechanism • can be positive or negative • most people deal with it and recover • biological responses to different demands (work, personal, politics) <p>Cumulative Stress/distress = origin of disease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repeated stress –frequent, intense • prolonged stress, builds up over time • without resolution leads to distress • most people suffer from it – build-up of stress over time • some issues are large, duration long • others stressors: daily repeated frustrations that lead to cumulative stress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - housing – lack of privacy or comfort, noise, shortage of water, cold, heat - travel – risks, threats, roadblocks, delays - food – shortages, unfamiliarity, lack of variety - immobility, lack of activity - colleagues – interpersonal stress • destructive – first unproductive hyperactivity, then physical and emotional exhaustion then burn-out • negative changes in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mental, physical health - performance - relationships - personality • also biological responses to different demands (work, personal, politics) <p>Both of the above are part of <u>normal situations</u> – all events, daily demands, self-care, challenges.</p>
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	<p>In <u>abnormal situations</u> → terror, physical threat, two other types of stress develop.</p> <p>Post-Traumatic Stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • immediate, normal reaction to a critical incident ("critical incident stress"), abnormal events • body and nervous system react – neurophysiological, psychological distress <p>Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • always abnormal • severe distress produced by severe psychological traumatization • lasting changes in a person's life • results from unresolved Critical Incident Stress • trauma, sustained • psychological reaction
16. Peacekeepers are especially vulnerable to cumulative stress. The lesson names twelve signs. Name them, in the order of what you have experienced most to least.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical complaints, headaches 2. Sleep disturbance 3. Negativism, cynicism 4. Feeling pressured, overwhelmed 5. Loss of sense of humour 6. Difficulty concentrating 7. Feeling indispensable, obsessions 8. Irritability, blaming others 9. Unwillingness to take leave 10. Increased alcohol consumption and/or substance abuse 11. Disillusionment 12. Disregard for security, risky behaviour
17. Describe immediate and delayed reactions to a critical incident – physical, emotional, cognitive.	<p>Immediate reactions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical: nausea, muscle tremors, sweating, dizziness, chills, rapid heart rate, hyperventilation, high blood pressure • Emotional : anxiety, anger, fear, irritability, guilt, grief, hopelessness • Cognitive: confusion, inability to decide, impaired thinking, memory loss

	Delayed reactions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical: fatigue, startle response, substance abuse, sleep difficulties, nightmares, restlessness • Emotional: feeling abandoned, resentful, alienated, withdrawn, numb, depressed • Cognitive: decreased attention span, poor concentration, memory problems, flashbacks
18. What five conditions must be present for a PTSD diagnosis?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trauma 2. Persistent reliving of the trauma - memories, nightmares, flashbacks, intense emotional reactions to trigger event 3. A tendency to avoid any thought, emotion or activity that reminds one of the traumatic event 4. Marked hyperactivity, exaggerated startle reaction, quick temper and sleep disorders, especially on falling asleep 5. At least one month of persisting symptoms
19. Explain the A-B-Cs of coping with stress.	<p>A – Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know your sources of negative stress • recognize the symptoms, your reactions <p>B – Balance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know yourself and your limits to manage stress effectively • know your balance point between positive and negative stress • train yourself to be aware of early warning that you've gone beyond those limits <p>C – Control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take control of your life • "The realisation that you are in control of your life is the foundation of stress management." No-one makes a person stress out – we do it to ourselves. And we can stop.
20. What is stress management?	Stress management is " <i>different activities</i>

	<p><i>and attitudes that combat negative effects of cumulative stress".</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • must be practical activities and attitudes • must be used regularly, practiced to work • staying healthy relieves stress <p>Stress management is taking control and charge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your thoughts • your emotions • your schedule • your environment • the way you deal with problems
<p>21. Prepare a "tip-sheet" on guidelines for stress management, drawing on the lesson content.</p>	<p>Change your thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-framing • Positive thinking • Accepting creative challenges <p>Increasing mental resistance to stress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review your attitude. • Adjust your expectations. • Control what you can, accept what you cannot. • Keep your sense of humour. • Take courses, read books – challenge your mind. • Vary daily activities. Often just having something different to do will lower stress levels. • Analyse your reactions to stress. Pay attention to what triggers your negative stress. Every person is different. • Recognise that lack of control over a situation can cause significant stress. Keep adjusting expectations. <p>Change your behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be assertive not aggressive. • Organise yourself. • Practice venting or expressing strong emotions in positive ways.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use your sense of humour. • Divert, distract – engage in healthy pleasures. • Manage anger: relaxation, positive self-talk, assertiveness. • Manage tension – relaxation training, • Manage time. <p>Change your life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build healthy activities into your life. • Improve your diet and eating habits – eat well, avoid the bad stuff. • Get regular exercise. • Get enough rest, sleep. • Maintain work – life balance. • Protect and use your leisure time positively. • Know and practice your philosophical or religious approach to life – don't neglect it. • Learn the healing value of relaxation and meditation.
22. How can you prevent cumulative stress management?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize situations that cause it. • Sleep enough. • Deal positively with work setbacks, e.g. not being promoted. • Improve your time management skills, for the heavy workload, many deadlines. • Contribute to a positive office environment. • Prepare for different types of weather: be comfortable. • Increase your understanding of other people – it increases your tolerance and improves personal relationships. • Make enough time for family, friends, yourself. • Take care of yourself, mindfully.
23. How can you manage critical incident stress: a) before b) during	<p>Before:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good mental and physical health before exposure to critical incidents enables a person to better cope with stress related to

c) after an incident?	<p>such incidents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved family or personal problems complicate critical incident stress and reduce your ability to respond effectively. Address them. • A staff member unaware of mission conditions and risks may react more strongly to an incident. Inform yourself. • Follow carefully the pre-mission briefings and training related to critical incidents. They will help prepare you to resolve issues of critical incident stress. <p>During:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A critical incident may be brief or prolonged; but often the situation does not allow the individual experiencing the incident to immediately stop and resolve it. The best solution is recognize the critical incident and carry on with essential tasks. <p>During a critical incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the signs of critical incident stress; • Maintain a positive attitude; • Try to control breathing - slow and regular; • Focus on immediate task; • Stay in contact with others, keep talking ; • Care for yourself - food, water, clothing, rest; • If prolonged exposure, take breaks and rotate tasks. <p>After:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about the event, what you saw, heard, smelled, did. • Talk about your reactions, especially how you felt. • Practice stress management techniques: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deep-breathing exercises - Progressive relaxation - Meditation - Physical activity - Music, reading
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Humour, to facilitate acceptance of reactions. • Participate in critical incident stress defusing as soon as possible after the event and later in critical incident stress debriefing.
24. Compare and explain critical incident debriefing and critical incident defusing.	<p>Critical incident debriefing (CISD) is a process designed to lessen impact of a critical incident:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confidential • not counselling • more formal debriefing – safe environment, safe quiet place • happens 48-72 hours after the critical incident • goal is to help people process emotions, validate them – mitigate long-term effects of critical incident stress <p>Critical incident defusing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • happens as soon as possible after a critical incident • involves the people directly affected – lets them talk about the experience, process feelings
Fill in the Blanks	
1. Basic life-protection reaction of human beings to a threat is: _____ or _____.	<p>Fight or flight</p> <p>Fight or flee</p>
2. Distress is any stress that occurs _____, _____ and _____. These define distress.	<p>1. occurs too often – frequency</p> <p>2. lasts too long – duration</p> <p>3. is too severe – intensity</p>
4. _____ stress results from physical and emotional demands of deployment.	Deployment stress
5. Qualities of _____ and _____ increase peacekeepers' vulnerability to stress.	<p>Idealism, altruism –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanting to make the world a better place, feeling the pressure when the pace is slow or the work is frustrated. • In peacekeeping, needs are overwhelming and depressing, resources are limited, assistance is often patchy at best.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peacekeepers may identify closely with success or failure of our work – too closely.
6. _____ and _____ are two important core factors in what we view as stressful and how we manage stress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perceptions of the world – beliefs, views general disposition – personality
7. Learn to deal with cumulative stress before it turns into _____.	Burn-out
8. How severely a person reacts to a critical incident depends on 2 kinds of factors: _____ and _____.	<p>Factors related to the incident</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> suddenness, intensity, duration, available social support, damage <p>Factors related to the person</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> past experience, personal loss, perception of threat, personal coping abilities
9. A _____ must diagnose and treat PTSD.	A specialist – not just a doctor or a medical professional, someone experienced with PTSD
10. The degree of stress a person experiences is affected by _____, _____ and _____.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perception of an event degree of threat felt amount of control a person has in the circumstances <p>People may also answer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> physical fitness personal or self-esteem
11. _____ coping strategies make us feel instantly better, trick us into thinking we are coping when in fact, they damage health and welfare.	<p>Maladaptive</p> <p>Substance abuse – drugs, alcohol, coffee</p> <p>Behaviours – comfort sex, over-eating</p>
3. Basic life-protection reaction of human beings to a threat is: _____ or _____.	<p>Fight or flight</p> <p>Fight or flee</p>
True-False	
1. Stress is always a bad thing that negatively affects people experienced it.	<p>False</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stress can be good or bad. Stress is any change or demand that requires a human system, person, to respond. Normal stress keeps life moving – positive stress includes breathing, walking, blood circulating, eating, walking, talking, playing.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative stress is harmful stress.
2. Culture shock is an example of an environmental source of stress in peacekeeping.	True Environmental stress, deployment stress and culture shock are three categories of stress.
3. Deployment stress happens every time a peacekeeper separates from or reunites with family and friends.	True Deployment stress does not occur only once, when a person first deploys.
4. Critical Incidents are ones that involve emergency personnel – fire fighters, search and rescue personnel	False Critical Incidents are traumatic incidents – they can happen to anyone, accidentally. Some groups are in high-risk occupations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fire-fighters emergency health-care workers police officers search and rescue personnel disaster relief and humanitarian aid workers UN peace-keepers, staff members, observers, monitors
5. Untreated effects of critical incident stress may lead to PTSD.	True
6. All types of stress a) impair our judgement of threat and risk, b) lower efficiency and c) lead to illness when not recognized and dealt with.	All true <ul style="list-style-type: none"> timely dealing with stress is important don't wait to have time – you have to make time
7. Critical incident stress <u>defusing</u> takes place between 48 to 72 hours after a critical incident.	False Critical incident <u>defusing</u> happens as soon as possible after a critical incident, and involves the people directly affected – lets them talk about the experience, feelings. Critical incident <u>debriefing</u> (CISD) is a process designed to lessen impact of a critical incident: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> confidential, not counselling more formal debriefing – safe environment, safe quiet place takes place 48-72 hours after the critical incident goal is to help people process emotions, validate them – mitigate long-term effects of critical incident

	stress
8. Most people's symptoms of critical incident stress diminish in frequency and intensity in a few days or weeks.	True The critical incident defusing, and debriefing, both help. So does talking with trusted family and friends, or a trained counsellor.

Commonly Asked Questions and Key Words

Key Words or phrases for this lesson:

Key Word or Phrase	Definition
Stress	Stress: any change or demand the human system (mind, body and spirit) is required to meet or respond to.
Distress	Distress: Any stress that occurs too often (frequency), lasts too long (duration) and is too severe (intensity).

Commonly asked questions from participants:

Possible Questions	Possible Responses
How can you avoid negative stress?	<p>Anyone can suffer negative stress, depending on a situation's frequency, intensity and duration.</p> <p>The better you understand stress, the better you can manage and control it.</p> <p>Different people find different things distressing. The degree of distress you experience is affected by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your perception of an event • The degree of threat you feel • The amount of control you have in the circumstances <p>Some factors influence how distressful events affect you are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the person you are • your experience • education • skills • philosophy of life • age • sex • physical fitness • personal or self esteem <p>All types of stress impair our judgement of threat and risk. They lower efficiency and lead to illness when not recognized and dealt with.</p> <p>Timely and effective dealing with stress is important. Waiting to have the time for stress management may lead to</p>

	<p>physical illness and decreased efficiency at work.</p> <p>You can manage and control the effects of stress. You can learn to manage excessive stress. The benefits make the work worthwhile.</p>
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Reference Materials

Below are materials which are a) referenced in this lesson, and b) required reading for instructor preparations:

- Charter of the United Nations
- United Nations Peacekeeping Operations Principles and Guidelines (also known as the Capstone Doctrine)
- United Nations Field Security Handbook, January 2006
- Basic Security in the Field: Staff Safety, Health and Welfare (ST/SGB/2003/19). United Nations, 9 December 2003

Additional Resources

UN Information

The website for UN peacekeeping: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/>

UN Documents

UN documents can be found on: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/index.html>
(Search by document symbol, e.g. A/63/100)

DPKO and DFS Guidance

The repository for all official DPKO and DFS guidance is the Policy and Practice Database: ppdb.un.org (only accessible from the UN network). Official peacekeeping guidance documents are also accessible through the Peacekeeping Resource Hub: <http://research.un.org/en/peacekeeping-community>

Instructors are encouraged to check for the latest guidance.

UN Films

UN films can be found on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/unitednations>

Additional Information

The PIP provides information on the mission and the local context:
<http://peacekeepingresourcehub.unlb.org>

Additional Training Resources

Basic and Advanced Security in the Field (B/ASITF) online Course.

<https://dss.un.org>

Where Peacekeeping Training Institutes do not have sufficient IT facilities, it is sufficient that eligible personnel are informed of their obligation to complete B/ASITF upon arrival in mission.