

Welcome back. Part B of this lesson on Stress Management focuses on the workplace. We discuss the factors, impact, and ways to cope.

As we continue the lesson, let's think about how we can better help ourselves and our colleagues.

Stressors at the Workplace

- High demands on physical and emotional strength
- Smells, sounds and sights that can be very intimidating
- Dangerous situations
- The constant tug of war between life and death
- The cruel side of human nature
- Peer pressure from co-workers or guilt over decisions that could have gone wrong





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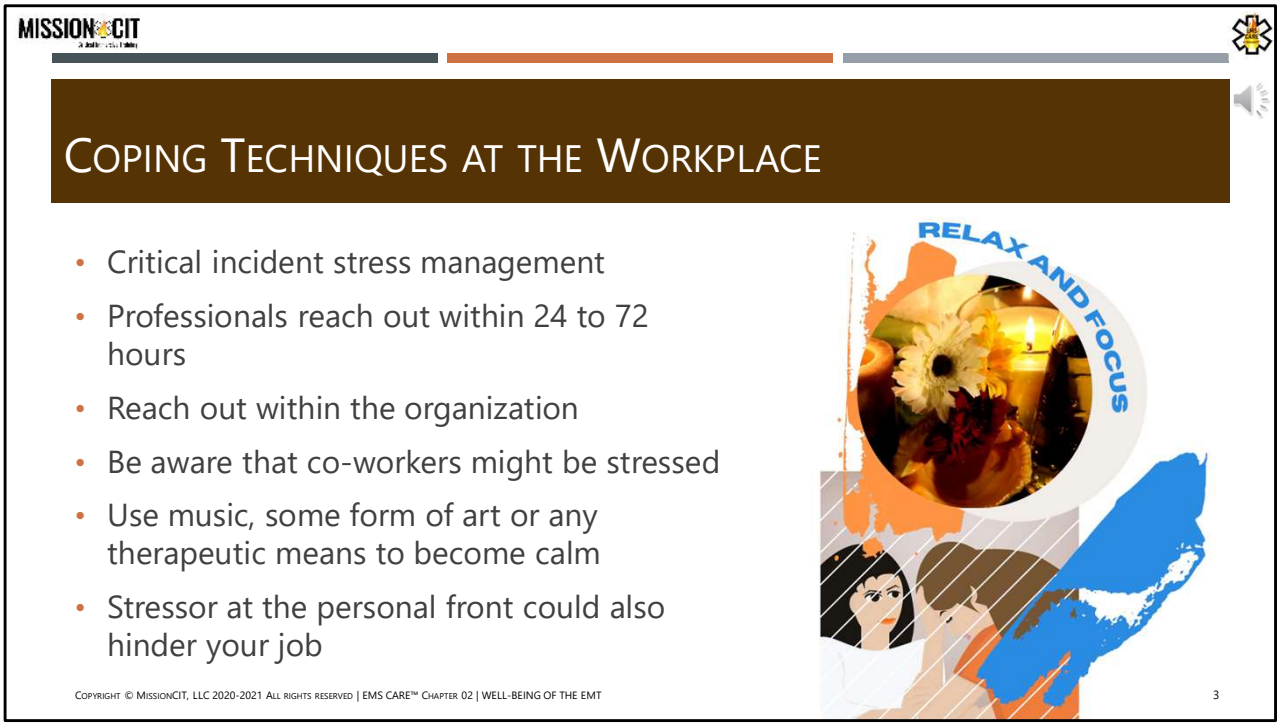
Our stressors at the workplace come from many places, including:

- Unpredictable difficult situations.
- Handling patients who fight for their life.
- Continuous demand of physical and emotional strength.
- The cruel side of human nature.
- Smells, sounds, and sights that can be very intimidating, and
- Situations, which can place us, or those around us, in danger.

We also deal with different reactions and emotions like anger, guilt, shock, or revenge that might be running high among bystanders or family members.

We may also experience violent situations caused by natural disasters, criminal activities, or Civic disturbances. We may even feel that a co-worker performs better than us or feel guilty about specific decisions that went wrong.

A small tip that can help is to remember that others' emotions are not directed against us personally but towards the situation.



The EMS system is well aware of the stress we undergo, and we don't have to deal with it alone. There are many coping techniques:

- Critical incident stress management is in place to deal with post-traumatic stress disorder. It is intended to reduce the impact of the stressor, and make the natural reactions of the person more manageable.
- It includes critical incident stress debriefing, where trained professionals dealing with mental health will meet the EMTs within 24 to 72 hours after an incident, which could have critically impacted their emotions or their body.

- We can always reach out within the organization to discuss what is troubling us.
- We also need to be aware that co-workers might be stressed and be conscious about the best way to help them. Each person might require help in different ways.
- We can use music, some form of art, or any therapeutic means to calm ourselves and bring the focus back into the job.
- Sometimes it could be personal stress that is hindering our job performance. In that case, we can remove the stressor, discuss with the supervisor if possible, about changes, or seek professional counseling.



Gale Encyclopedia defines Stress management; as the set of techniques and programs intended to help people deal more effectively with stress, in their lives by analyzing the specific stressors, and taking positive actions to minimize their effects.

There are many techniques to manage stress. We need to follow a suggested one or one that connects to us and makes a difference.

The techniques though not exhaustive, are listed here:

- Sometimes, to even start these techniques might be overwhelming. Get professional help or start small and then slowly increase it, but be consistent.

- Try to identify the stressor, and move away or eliminate them.
- Talk about how you feel to someone you are comfortable with and can listen without being judgmental.
- Start following an exercise routine. Change work schedule, and switch partners.
- Bring in changes to the work-life schedule, that you get time for yourself and your family.
- Consciously, follow a healthy diet.
- Try not to resort to alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs to escape stress. They will never help but only worsen the situation.

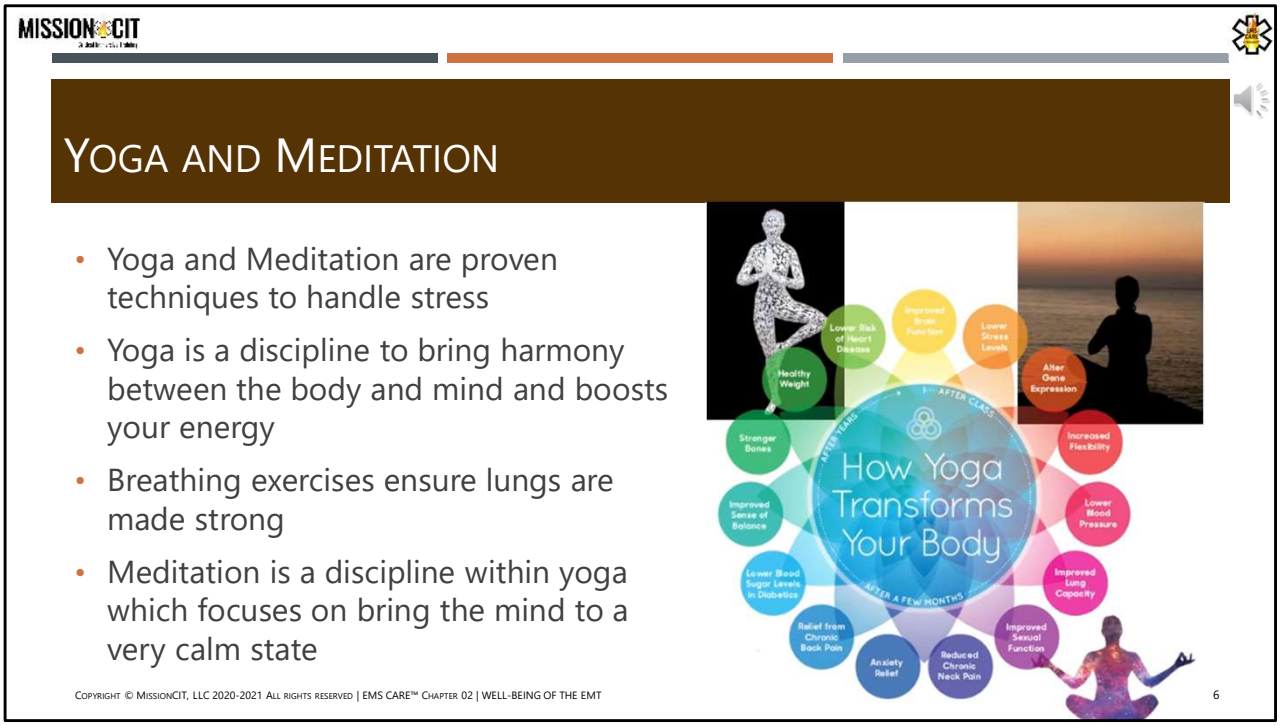
Stress & its Impact on our Family

- Stress can impact those who are close to us too
- They may not be able to fully grasp what is happening to you



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Another essential aspect of Stress Management is understanding how our stressors affect our family and close acquaintances.
They may not be able to grasp what is happening to us entirely. And might blame themselves when we get withdrawn or show our emotions.
We discuss later in the lesson how to make them feel inclusive and secure their support.



We learn to manage violent and painful incidents with more maturity as we encounter and gain experience through coping techniques.

- Yoga and meditation are proven methods to handle stress when done consistently. Yoga is essentially a spiritual discipline, which focuses on bringing harmony between mind and body. It is an art and science of healthy living.
- Health promotion programs and substance abuse treatment plans apply Yoga techniques. They act as a complementary therapy for diseases like anxiety disorders, depression, coronary heart disease,

cancers, and HIV AIDS.

- One example is breathing exercises, which increase oxygen flow to the entire body.
- Meditation is a discipline within yoga that focuses on bringing the mind to a very calm state. The literal definition is taking the mind to pure consciousness. It's about training in awareness and getting a healthy sense of perspective. You're not trying to turn off your thoughts or feelings. Instead, you're learning to observe them without judgment. And eventually, you may start to understand them better as well.

Please remember that yoga and meditation have to be taught in person by certified instructors.

Death and Dying

Human emotions go through different stages, when faced with death

- Stage 1: The denial stage
- Stage 2: The anger stage
- Stage 3: Bargaining stage
- Stage 4: The depression stage
- Stage 5: The acceptance stage





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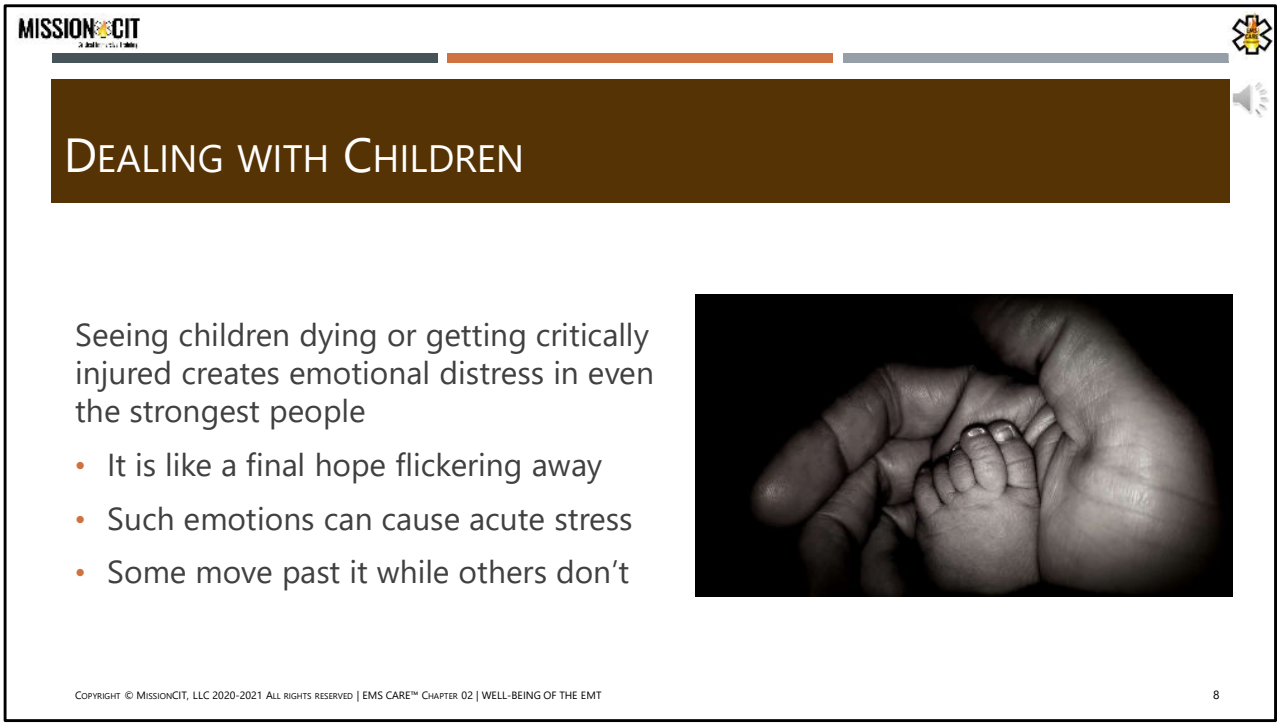
One painful reality that we too often encounter is death and dying. Death can always be shocking, unfair, and life-shattering. Human emotions seem in turmoil when faced with death.

The five stages, denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance, are a part of the framework that makes up our learning to live with the one we lost. They are tools to help us frame and identify what we may be feeling. But they are not stops on some linear timeline in grief. Not everyone goes through all of them or in a prescribed order. We hope that with these stages comes

the knowledge of grief's landscape, making us better equipped to cope with life and loss. These are:

1. Denial is the first stage that helps us to survive the loss. The world becomes meaningless and overwhelming. We are in a state of shock and denial.
2. Anger is a necessary part of the healing process. Be willing to feel your anger, even though it may seem endless. The more you sense it, the more it will begin to dissipate, and the more you will heal.
3. Before a loss, it seems like you will do anything if only your loved one would be spared. So, you bargain. After a loss, bargaining may take the form of a temporary truce.
4. Empty feelings present themselves, and grief enters our lives on a deeper level. This depressive stage feels as though it will last forever. It's important to understand that this depression is not a sign of mental illness. It is the appropriate response to a significant loss.
5. Acceptance is often confused with the notion of being all right with what has happened. It isn't the case. Most often people don't ever feel okay or all right about the loss of a loved one. This stage is about accepting the reality that our loved one is physically gone and recognize that this new reality is permanent.

Our awareness of these emotions may not make it easier to deal with but can make us more empathetic and understanding. And, at times, people in grief will often report more stages. Just remember each person's grief is unique.



Seeing children dying or getting critically injured can create severe emotional distress in even the strongest person. Naturally, we might relate an incident to children we know, making the situation difficult to process.

In EMS, we sometimes encounter children during the dying phase. We must handle both the medical and emotional aspects at the same time. When we arrive, not only do families expect the highest-quality care, but they also need the connection and the support as their world may be falling apart.

While you already know how to manage your emotions and put on the veneer when on scene. But what happens when it's over, and you are on the way back to base. Therefore, be sure to take the time to care for yourself and maybe your partner too.

And now we have come to the end of this lesson on Stress Management. Justin will be with you next to discuss Standard Safety Precautions and Protective equipment.