



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Wellbeing & Resilience



Wellbeing & Resilience

Mental Wellbeing

Feeling good
Functioning well
Self care
You get out what you get in

Psychological Resilience

Cope with adversity
"competent functioning"
Cope with stress & hardship



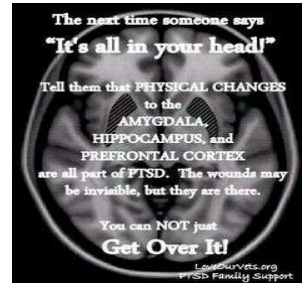
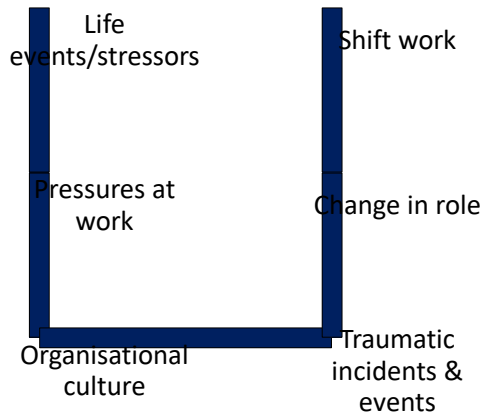
QTS – what does well-being mean to you?

QTS – what does psychological resilience mean to you?

- Feeling happy is a part of mental wellbeing. But it's far from the whole. Sense of wellbeing = we feel good and function well. Feelings of contentment, enjoyment, confidence and engagement with the world and self-esteem are all a part of mental wellbeing.
- Functioning well i.e. experiencing positive relationships, having some control over your life and a sense of purpose. Your physical wellbeing is also important – self care is not selfish – taking the time to get a good nights sleep, eat well, and exercise are all important aspects of your wellbeing.
- Useful to think about "being well" as something you do, rather than something you are. The more you put in, the more you'll get out.
- Good mental wellbeing does not mean that you never experience feelings or situations that you find difficult. But it does mean that you feel you have the resilience to cope when times are tougher than usual.
- Psychological resilience is defined as an individual's ability to successfully cope with adversity and to bounce back from a negative experience with "competent

functioning” .

Challenges to Wellbeing & Resilience



Can you think of things, that as individuals and as police officers, may put a strain on your wellbeing? (list on board)

- Adversity or stress can come in the shape of family or relationship problems, health problems, or workplace or financial worries.
- Pressures of the job – especially during times of austerity where cuts are being made and demand and pressure increases.
- An organisational culture is defined as the deeper level of assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organisation, that operates and projects unconsciously an organisation's view of itself and environment.
- Shift work can disrupt a wellbeing routine.
- Whilst PTSD can occur from a one-off traumatic event, Police Complex Spiral Trauma describes the cumulative effect that can occur from 'putting it in a box'. These unprocessed traumas take their toll, until one incident – perhaps like many dealt with before can be the straw that broke the camel's back.



Financial Wellbeing



What is it??

Why is it important?

How can we improve it?

What does good financial wellbeing look like?



QTS – What is financial wellbeing?

QTS - Why is it important?

QTS - How can we improve it?

QTS - What does good

financial wellbeing look like?

Wellbeing in the workplace is a buzzword for a lot of employers, especially in regard to supporting the mental health of their employees. One area that is often overlooked, however, is the importance of their employee's financial wellbeing, and the impact that this has upon all other

aspects of their lives.

What is it?

Financial wellbeing is known by many names – like financial literacy, wellness, confidence or resilience – but put simply, it's about having a good relationship with your money.

Why financial wellbeing is important

Research indicates that having money worries heavily impacts other areas of our lives, such as personal relationships and mental health, and is often the top cause of stress for most people. People with poor financial wellbeing are more likely to lose sleep, be less productive, have more days off work, and suffer from poor mental wellbeing. This, of course, has a knock-on effect upon colleagues and the organisation.

The economic impact of Covid-19 has affected the mental health of some individuals, exacerbating a nationwide

problem.

Employers benefit from financial wellbeing

People who enjoy good financial wellbeing are more productive at work. If they are not, employers suffer too. In 2018, 11% of UK workers reported they had experienced a fall in productivity at some point over the preceding three years as a result of their financial situation.

How to improve financial wellbeing

There are multiple aspects to financial wellbeing. We break down the UK's general financial wellness into five key areas:

- Receiving a meaningful financial education (Sadly, this isn't something that we receive at school, and consequently most people enter

adulthood with very little knowledge of money, having to learn as they go)

- Saving regularly
- Using credit for everyday essentials
- Accessing debt advice, and
- Planning for and in later life.

And here's why these aspects of financial wellbeing are so important. Before the pandemic:

- 11.5 million people had less than £100 in savings to fall back on.
- 9 million people often borrowed to buy food or pay for bills.
- 22 million people said they don't know enough to plan for their retirement.
- 5.3 million children didn't get a

meaningful financial education
(Financial Capability Survey 2018).

How we measure financial wellbeing

These statistics offer a strong indication of how financial wellbeing (and generally financial literacy and financial capability) is faring in the UK. Improvements in financial wellbeing can be shown in either a decrease or increase in these key statistics.

What does good financial wellbeing look like?

- Control of month to month spending
- Capacity to absorb financial shocks, such as periods without work
- Confidence that you are going to meet your goals
- Choices to enjoy life
- Clarity and security for those you

leave behind

Although everyone's purpose when it comes to money is unique, these foundations are the cornerstone if you want to build good financial wellbeing. Simple things such as having a spending plan, building up an emergency buffer or having the right insurance, mean you will feel more in control

of your money, and most importantly have peace of mind that all will be ok if the worst happens.

Trainers to direct students to Moodle or email handouts. For SWP HO1 SWP Financial Wellbeing leaflet and HO2 SWP Financial Wellbeing Tool kit V5 detailing advice, saving options, internal and external advice and support.

For Gwent HO3 Gwent
Police Officer Wellbeing
Support Guidance. For both
forces these are available on
BOB/The Beat

Risk Factors for work related stress



- Demand
- Control
- Support
- Relationships
- Role
- Change

www.hse.gov.uk/stress



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QTS – what factors can cause work related stress?

- There **isn't one main cause** of **work related stress** – it can occur due to a **number of different factors** which vary from person to person.
- These factors are often called **stressors**, and work related stress often occurs due to a **combination of more than one stressor**.
- In order to **help employers and employees** to **tackle work related stress** and identify it at the source, the Health & Safety Executive has produced **Stress Management Standards**.
- These standards focus on **six key areas** of work that, if not properly managed, can lead to work related stress. Each standard contains **simple statements** about **good management practice** in each of the key areas, which can then be **applied in the workplace**.

Demand - This includes issues like **workload**, **work patterns**, and the **work environment**.

Control - This deals with how much **influence** the **person** feels they have on the **way they do their work**.

Support - This includes the **encouragement**, **sponsorship** and **resources** provided by the **organisation**, **line management** and **colleagues**.

Relationships - This includes **promoting positive working** to **avoid conflict** and

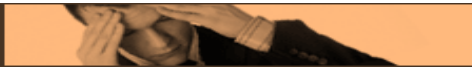
dealing with **unacceptable behaviour**.

Role - This deals with whether **people understand their role** within the organisation and whether the **organisation** ensures that the person does not have **conflicting roles**.

Change - This deals with how **organisational change** (large or small) is **managed** and **communicated** within the organisation.

Signs of Stress

Physical



Behavioural



Emotional



Mental



• **Stress** can have many **different causes**, and **signs of stress** can take **different forms**.

• If you can **recognise the signs of stress** in yourself and others, you can start to develop a strategy to **combat it**.

• **Stress manifests** itself in **different ways** in **different people**. Some people may show a very **dramatic reaction** to stress, while others may display the signs **over a period of time**. Everybody has a **different stress threshold**.

• It is **important** that you are able to **identify** whether you are **displaying** some of the **signs of stress** so that you can identify the problem and **start to solve it**.

Group discussion – what are some signs of stress?

As well as identifying signs of stress in yourself, you should also try and **pay attention** to the behaviour of your **colleagues** in case they are also **suffering from stress**.

Many of the **signs of stress** in individuals should be **noticeable** to **managers and colleagues**. You should **look out for**:

- Declining/inconsistent performance - failure to meet deadlines or complete projects - Uncharacteristic errors
- Loss of motivation - loss of commitment
- Poor concentration - memory lapses - Repeated checking - Evasiveness
- Presenteeism (staying in work longer than usual) - Failure to take holidays
- Absenteeism - Poor time-keeping
- Accidents at work – research 50% attributable to stress

Managing Stress



Work/life balance – take all A/L entitlement, leave work at work, maintain outside interests

Put yourself first

Simplify your life

Be organised

Teamwork

Enjoy the moment



Group Activity 1 - Trainer to instruct students to make a list of daily things they do to look after their well being

QTS – what are the important factors at home?

QTS – what are the important factors at work?

Work-life balance is one of the major challenges facing people today. It causes stress to the individual concerned, and those around them. Many workers feel guilty even if they take time out for lunch. Organisational culture leads people to resent the fact that their bodies need refueling. Our bodies get physically tired, need exercise & refreshment so as to keep blood & oxygen circulating to maintain health and mental clarity – but how to fit this into workday deadlines? In addition we are social beings, relationships provide support essential for well-being – all of which takes time away from the desk.

Yourself first

- People often put themselves last and think they are being sensible in doing so. Think of “put on your own oxygen mask” – you are no good to anyone if you are exhausted!
- Identify – what does it take for you to care for yourselves and to feel your personal best

- Make a list of actions – you need to take on a daily basis to look after your well-being e.g. eating a good breakfast, taking a walk at lunchtime, leaving enough time in between meetings so you don't feel so stressed.

Simplify your life

It's very easy to get sucked into a busy routine. Many people cram their lives so full that they forget how to stop and relax.

- What is essential? Challenge if fact or subjective decision.
- What is luxury and life enhancing? Is it actually giving you pleasure –

Harley Davidson

- What is hassle?

Identify what is important at work and home. What are the key activities at work – what is the best use of mind, experience and skill? What and who is the most important at home? Focus your time and energy on the things that matter most and seek activities on which you can cut down.

Be organised

- Not being able to find crucial information amidst the physical clutter of paperwork, filing, household items, eats up valuable time.
- Plan time to go through their desk/home/office so you know where things are and can free your mind for more vital activities. Identify one thing to help you become more organised both at home and work.

Team work

Achieving w/l balance requires teamwork in all areas. Soldiering on not asking for help = sense of isolation, martyrdom and exhaustion.

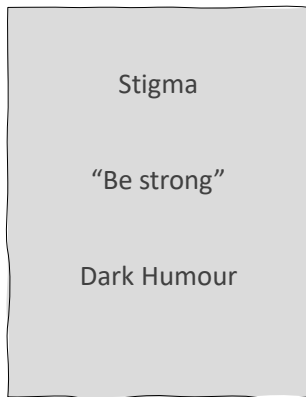
Build a mind map of your own support system at home and work, identifying the specific talents and strengths each person could bring to help you achieve work-life balance.

Enjoy the moment

When people are stressed and pulled in many directions, they lose the ability to stop and enjoy the moment. They can be with their partner, but be worrying about a deadline in work, they can be on a tropical beach and worrying what will be on their desk when they get home, They can be in work but worrying about a sick relative – or just the pile of housework that needs to be done. All these can cause stress.

Relaxation techniques can help people to stop, breathe and live in the moment. Think about specific tasks to help you focus on what matters to you. E.g. take sometime to admire a view, pay attention to what colleagues are trying to say.

Police Culture & Personality



QTS – what do you know about the police culture?

QTS – How are officers viewed?

We all know that the culture in the police is one of camaraderie and solidarity, which are really protective factors. However, I'm just going to highlight some of the aspects of police culture, which if we're not mindful of, could potentially be quite damaging to our mental wellbeing.

Too often, perhaps because of the nature of cops, the job, and police culture, officers going through personal crisis may feel they have nowhere to turn because the stigma attached to admitting the need for help would be taken as a sign of weakness or indication they are no longer fit or trustworthy to do the job.

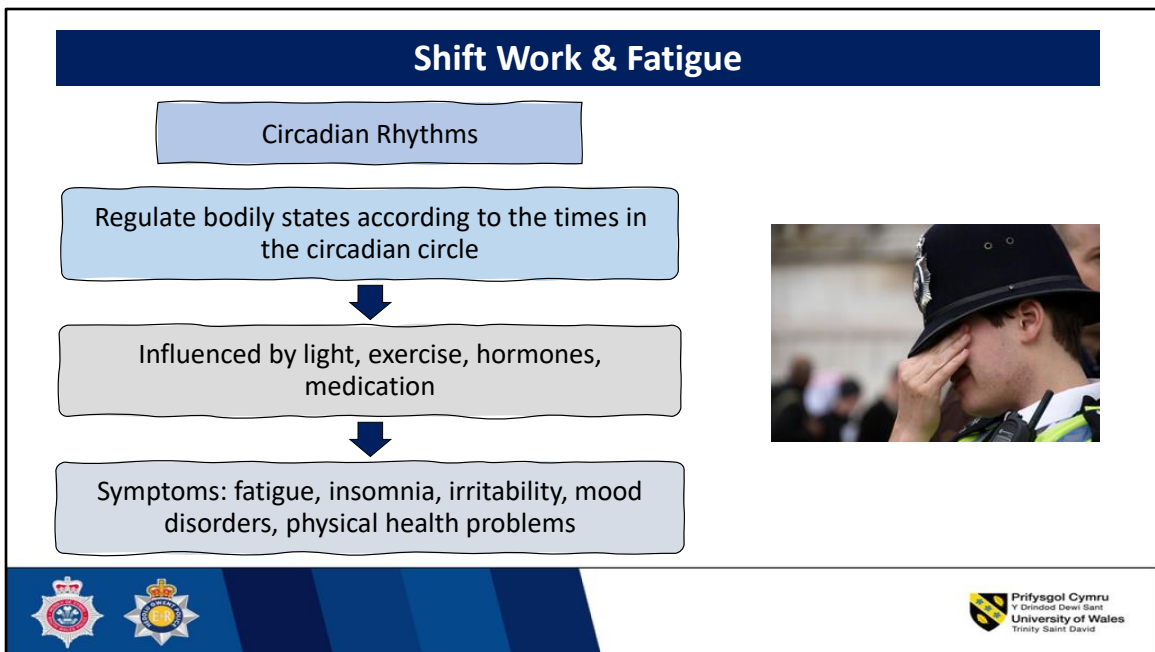
Sometimes the justification for this fear is entrenched in official policy. Some agencies require officers seeking or receiving mental health treatment, or who take psychotropic drugs, to inform the department and even face duty restrictions while under such care. It is this type of stigma or misunderstanding that perpetuates false information and traps cops in a prison of depression or anxiety.

However, a good chunk of this stigma often lies within officers themselves. Law

enforcement is a profession that values and requires emotional and physical toughness. Strength of body and mind is an institutional value and a legitimate source of pride for most officer. However, the job that requires such strength is also capable of chipping away at it.

Counselling – benefits and limitations of confidentiality...

I'm also just going to touch on dark humour. Humour acts as social glue however when it comes to dark humour what makes one person laugh can make someone else recoil. Shared humour requires a degree of shared experience. By normalising a situation through humour, a stressful encounter can be made more manageable – humour allows people to control feelings of fear or vulnerability. It's a case of "if we don't laugh, we may cry", which I totally appreciate. However, it's important to be mindful of the fact that though it may be cathartic for the person using it, there may be a negative impact on others in the group.



QTS – has anyone ever worked shifts before?

QTS – How did you feel?

QTS – what strategies did you use to help deal with fatigue?

Shift work tends to be classified as any work schedule that involves hours that are irregular or unusual in comparison with the traditional daytime work schedule that usually occurs between 6 am and 6 pm.

Most of the processes that occur in the mind and body follow natural rhythms. Those with a cycle length of about 1 day are called circadian rhythms.

Bodily states affected by circadian rhythms include body temperature, wakefulness and certain hormone levels. These are controlled by the suprachiasmatic nuclei (SCN) situated in the middle of the brain, which regulate these bodily states according to various times in the circadian cycle, sometimes referred to as the circadian clock, or "body clock."

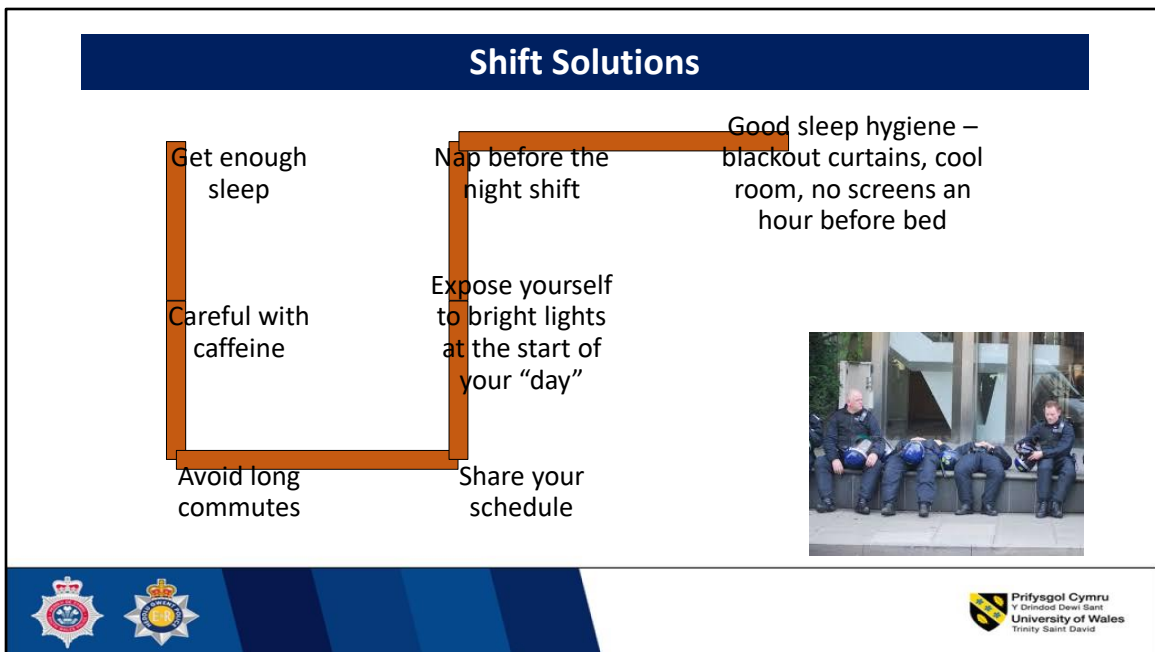
For example, body temperature rises toward the end of sleep and falls at around the time that sleeping normally occurs.

Circadian clocks are determined by a number of factors. Light appears to play a

significant role by providing a time cue. Circadian clocks can also be influenced by factors such as exercise, hormones and forms of medication.

However, there are numerous things that can disrupt people's circadian rhythms and cause them problems. The most common example is [jet lag](#) caused by traveling across a number of different time zones as circadian clocks would not match up with the time of the country they ended up in.

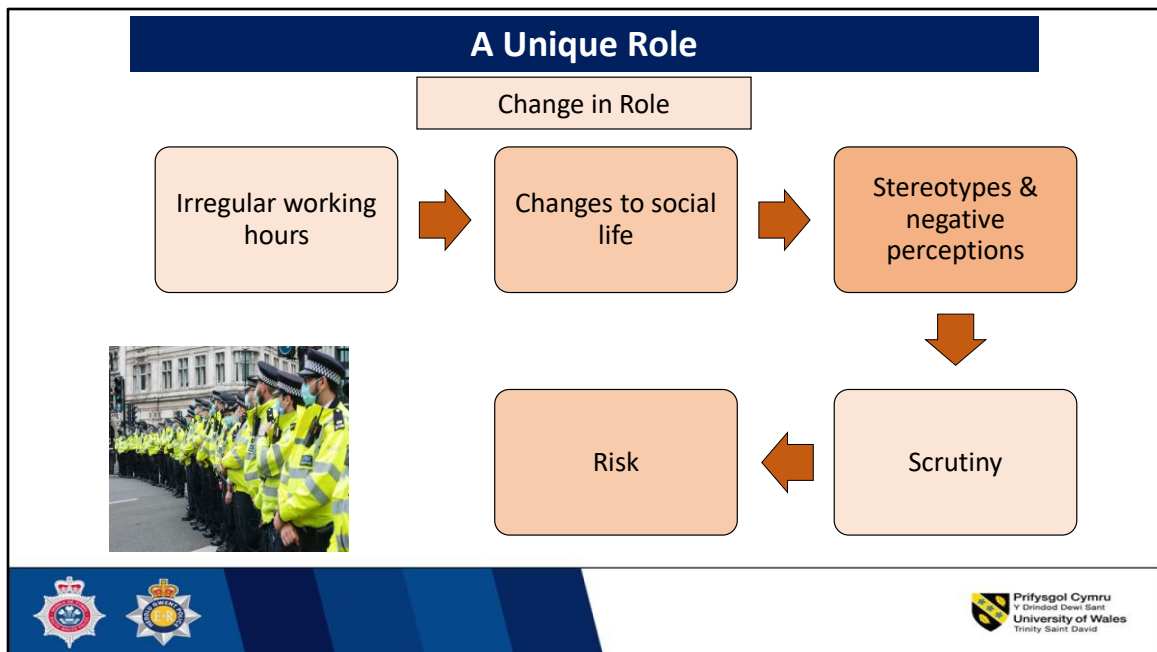
People that work shifts can experience similar problems to jet lag. Symptoms of circadian disruption include [indigestion](#), irritability and reduced concentration. shift workers are prone to experiencing circadian disruption much more frequently.



QTS – what strategies can help manage the effects of shift work?

- Maintain a regular sleeping schedule: Keep your sleep schedule consistent to give your circadian rhythm the ability to adjust and stick with your sleeping schedule.
- Get enough sleep: Be careful not to skimp out on sleep hours, giving yourself enough time to rest and refresh.
- Be careful with caffeine: It's a good idea to drink coffee at the start of your shift to improve alertness, but avoid caffeine later in your shift, as this can interfere with sleeping when you're ready to head home.
- Avoid long commutes: Give yourself as much rest time as possible by avoiding long commutes. If possible, avoid bright light or stopping for errands on your way home from work, which will only make you more alert and hinder falling asleep.
- Expose yourself to bright light at the start of your "day": Bright light tells your brain that it's daytime and time to be alert. Using bright light can help you train your body to recognize the start of your night-time shift as day.
- Take a nap before the night shift: A quick nap before you go in for your night shift can improve alertness and help you catch up on any missed sleep.
- Limit disturbances during sleep hours: Use blackout curtains or blinds to block out light during the day, turn off your phone, and ask family to limit noise and visitors while you're sleeping.

- Share your schedule with family members: Be sure that family members are aware of your schedule and understand that it may mean not being involved in daytime activities. Encourage them to plan around your schedule.



As each of you are well aware, having been through a rigorous admission process, joining the police is not something that people enter into lightly. There are incredible positives which come with being a police officer, benefits and pay tend to be good and secure, and there's a great deal of personal gratification involved with the job as well. You are in the hugely privileged position of serving your community. However, it's important to point out some of the difficulties you may face, especially if entering the police is a change of career for you.

One of the major changes from other roles would likely be a change to irregular working hours, for all the reasons we've just touched upon; as a result, this may also change your routine, and your social life. Relationships may also alter as a result or changes in working hours, and more effort may be required to maintain them.

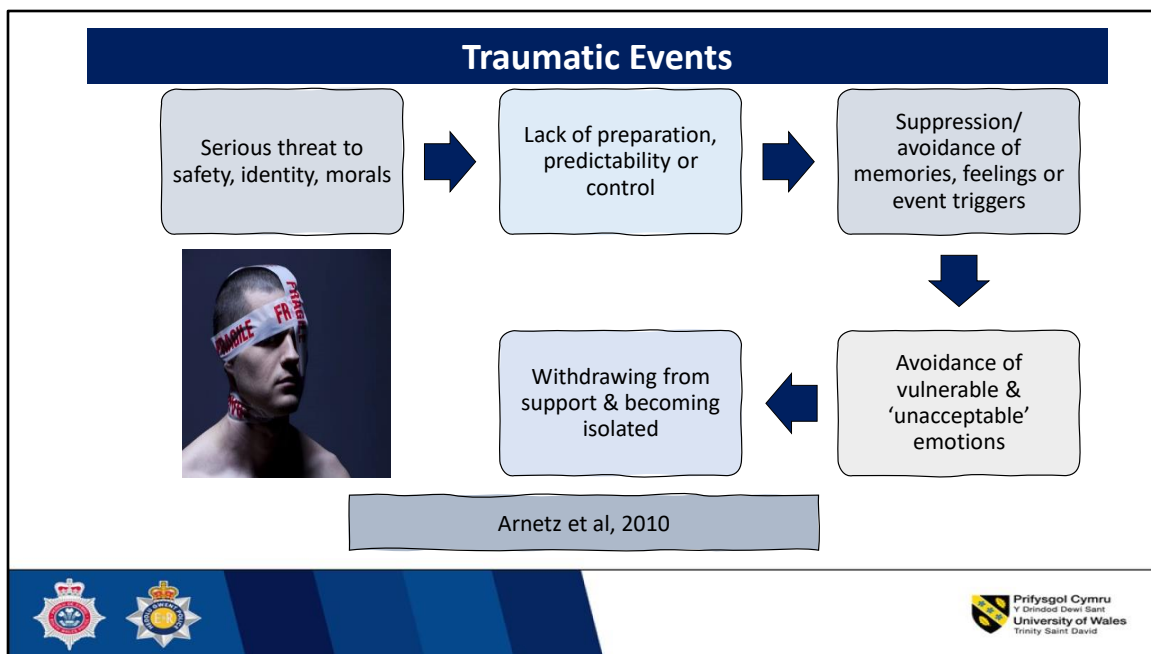
There are so many stereotypes about police officers out there, and television and movies often do more harm than good unfortunately this can lead to a lot of misperceptions and misunderstanding about police officers which can sometimes be a difficult thing to contend with.

Police officers are scrutinized by the public perhaps more than any other profession, with very few exceptions. Everything an officer does, whether on or off duty, can be

fair game for public complaints and even internal investigations. That's a level of scrutiny you won't find in most any other job.

As officers, there is no denying that you are placing yourselves in more high risk situations than a great deal of jobs, and potentially as a result, may experience increased exposure to trauma.

Knowing that these challenges exist, and knowing that you may need a period of adjustment will be helpful in itself. Also, taking the time to prioritise your self care by way of diet, exercise, and building a support network will all be important factors in maintaining your wellbeing.



QTS - What sort of things might lead an officer to experience trauma on the job?

- An event or experience that poses serious threat to safety, bodily integrity, sense of self or identify, sense of right / wrong
- Lack of readiness or predictability: When we don't feel prepared, or feel powerless during a situation, it is more likely to be traumatic
- Lack of control over the situation
- Lack of emotional awareness and desire to avoid emotions, especially vulnerable emotions (fear, guilt, shame, sadness) but also sometimes anger (for some people).
- Suppression of these emotions tends to lead to problems
- "putting it in a box is not helpful" - Attempts to avoid, suppress, or block memories and feelings and things (stimuli) related to the experience.
- Withdrawing from support and becoming isolated

Mental Health Warning Signs



- **Group Activity 2** - Trainer to split the class into 4 groups and discuss warnings signs that would help identify if the wellbeing of yourself or a colleague was being compromised? Students to record answers on a flipchart

Mental Health Warning Signs

Long lasting
sadness or
irritability

Extremely high &
low moods

Excessive fear,
worry, or anxiety

Social withdrawal

Dramatic changes
in eating or
sleeping habits

Strong feelings of
anger

Delusions or
hallucinations
(seeing/hearing
things that are not
really there)

Increasing inability
to cope with daily
problems &
activities

Thoughts of
suicide

Denial of obvious
problems

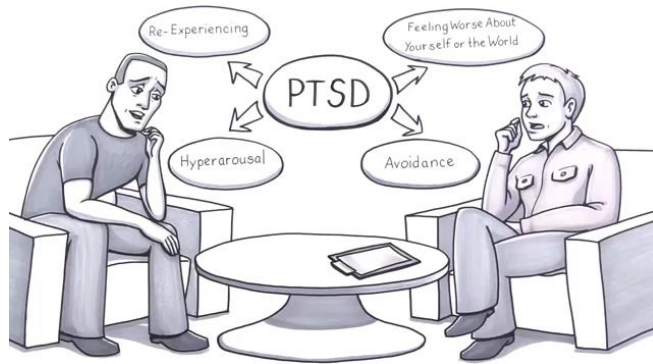
Many
unexplained
physical
problems

Abuse of drugs
&/ or alcohol



Symptoms of mental disorders vary depending on the type and severity of the condition. These are some general symptoms that may suggest a mental health problems.

Symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)



QTS – what do you know about PTSD?

Following a traumatic incident, many people will experience an immediate psychological reaction. Such as -

- 1) Re-experiencing
- 2) Avoidance
- 3) Feeling worse about yourself or the world
- 4) Hyperarousal

This is a natural response to an abnormal situation while your brain is trying to process what happened and file it away as a memory. For the majority of people, these symptoms settle down within a month. However, for some, this process can get stuck and become chronic. In these cases PTSD may be present.

I'm going to play a short animation to bring these symptoms to life and help you know what to look for in yourself and others.

(Click to start animation)

Increasing Resilience & Wellbeing

Resilience & regeneration

Risk factor malleability

Predisposing & protective factors

Better functioning control regions of the brain = higher resilience



- The good news is that your brain has a fantastic capacity for resilience and regeneration!
- Research has shown that mental imagery and effective coping skills can reduce improve wellbeing and resilience – even to traumatic incidents. ReTrain.
- Pretrauma predictors - continuum of “risk factor malleability.”
- Predisposing factors for PTSD and poor wellbeing include general negative cognitive bias, rumination and avoidance when coping with difficult circumstances.
- Essentially, the better you cope with traumatic incidents, the better the flow between regions of the brain – leads to better resilience longer term.

Abstract malleable

Beliefs that individuals hold about whether emotions are malleable or fixed, also referred to as **emotion malleability beliefs**, may play a crucial role in individuals' emotional experiences and their engagement in changing their emotions.

What is the best definition of malleable?

1 : capable of being extended or shaped by beating with a hammer or by the pressure

of rollers. 2a : capable of being altered or controlled by outside forces or influences. b : having a capacity for adaptive change.

Common Protective Factors

Reliable support and discipline from caregivers.

Following rules at home, school, work.

Emotional self-regulation.

Good coping skills and problem solving skills.

Subjective sense of self-sufficiency.

Optimism.

Post Traumatic Coping Strategies Group Discussion



Group Activity 3 – Trainer to split class into 4 groups to discuss coping strategies that you can use when dealing with post - traumatic stress. Students to record answers on a flipchart

Introduction of Post-Stressor Coping Strategies:

(This will begin to examine how officers respond AFTER going through difficult experiences, and teach methods to respond more adaptively to these emotionally stressful experiences.)

“Although the imagery exercises that we have been doing are designed to help you reduce your reactions to stressful situations, it is still emotionally challenging to deal with such situations when they are encountered. Officers will often still have thoughts, feelings, and memories that might bother them. Today we’ll explore some better ways to cope with these feelings.” There are also more in your pack for you to refer to.

“So, what are the various ways that you or other officers deal with the stress of these emotional situations? What are some things that people think or do to try to deal with

their feelings?”

10 minutes: Have group generate a list and write their responses down (on a board if available). The list should include both maladaptive and adaptive coping strategies (avoidance strategies and approach strategies) (it might helpful to organize their responses into two columns while you record them, and once the list is generated, label the columns: “approach” and “avoidance”).

Eight studies examined various coping and response styles before traumatic exposure. Results revealed that a general negative cognitive bias when coping with difficult circumstances (Constans et al., 2012) well as ruminative (Nolen-Hoekseman & Morrow, 1991), emotion- focused (Gil, 2005), avoidance (Gil & Caspi, 2006; Lengua, Long, & Meltzoff, 2006), global (Soet et al., 2003), low repressor coping (McNally et al., 2011), and cognitive coping (Asarnow et al., 1999) were predisposing risk factors for PTSD symptoms. (Di Gangi, Gomez, Mendoza, Jason, Keys & Koenen, 2013)

How can these six types of pretrauma predictors be used to inform futurework and, ultimately, clinical interventions? Perhaps, these cate- gories of predictors are best conceptualized along a continuum of “risk factor malleability.” At one end of this continuum are the categories that represent fixed predictors, which based on previous research are generally stable across the lifespan; Such predictorswould include: per- sonality and cognitive abilities (e.g., Costa &McCrae, 1988). Toward the other end of the continuum are the predictors that previous research suggests are more malleable, including coping styles and life stressors (Ekkers et al., 2011)

What Is the Negativity Bias?

Remember traumatic experiences better than positive ones.

Recall insults better than praise.

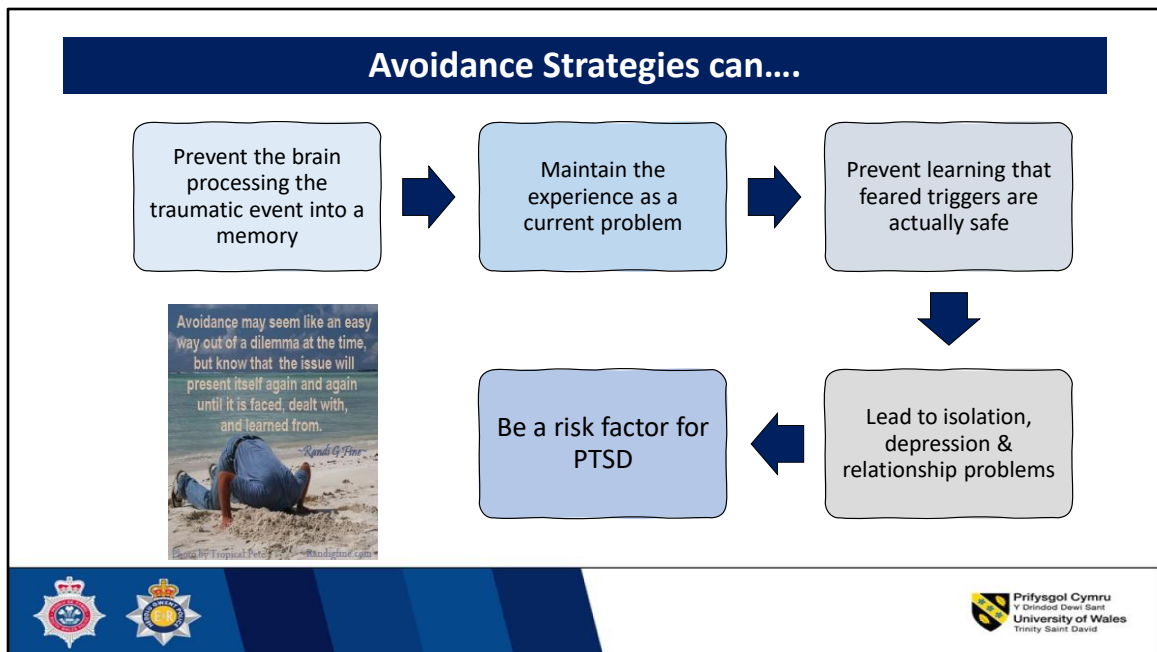
React more strongly to negative stimuli.

Think about negative things more frequently than positive ones.

Respond more strongly to negative events than to equally positive ones.

What is negative cognitive bias?

The negativity bias, also known as the negativity effect, is the notion that, even when of equal intensity, things of a more negative nature (e.g. unpleasant thoughts, emotions, or social interactions; harmful/traumatic events) have a greater effect on one's psychological state and processes than neutral or positive ...



In psychology, avoidance coping, escape coping, or cope and avoid is a maladaptive coping mechanism characterized by the effort to avoid dealing with a stressor. Coping refers to behaviours that attempt to protect oneself from psychological damage.

PTSD develops because the trauma experience was so distressing that we want to avoid any reminder of it. Our brains don't process the experience into a memory, so the experience stays as a current problem instead of becoming a memory of a past event. Each time we are reminded of the event, the 'flashbacks' mean we experience the trauma again, as though it is happening again, right now. That is very distressing, so we do our utmost to stop the flashback, and avoid any further reminder of the event, so the event remains un-processed

Why are Triggers, Avoidance, and Safety Behaviours Important?

Avoiding things that make us feel anxious or uncomfortable is only natural. Unfortunately, when dealing with triggers, avoidant behaviour does not work to our advantage in the long run. Avoidance reduces our ability to effectively manage real life challenges and responsibilities. Avoidance may reduce emotional distress for a little while, but in the long run avoidance makes PTSD worse.

Why? Because most triggers are not inherently dangerous. They feel dangerous, but they aren't actually dangerous. But when you avoid those triggers, you never get to

learn that they are actually safe. The amygdala continues to label them as associated with trauma and they continue to have the power to produce fear. In fact, the fear can grow over time.

Avoidance of people and activities leads to isolation, which can contribute to depression and relationship problems.

Learning to overcome the urge to escape/avoid and to face your fears directly without relying on safety behaviors is what helps make PTSD better.

-Adapted from Atlanta VAMC Trauma Recovery Team (2009)

Avoidance is a common way of managing trauma-related pain. The most common way is to avoid situations that serve as a reminder of the trauma, such as the place where it occurred. Often situations that are less directly related to the trauma are also avoided, such as going out in the evening if the trauma occurred at night. Another way we reduce distress is to try to push away painful thoughts and feelings. This can lead to a state of numbness which makes it difficult to feel any type of emotion. The fearful and negative feelings are pushed away, but so are pleasant and loving feelings. Sometimes the painful thoughts or feelings may be so intense that the mind blocks them out altogether, along with some memories of the trauma itself

Avoidance, escape, and the use of safety behaviors may make you feel better in the moment, but in the long run they prevent PTSD from getting better. That is because they prevent your brain's alarm system from learning what is really dangerous and what isn't.

In fact, over time, the use of avoidance, escape, and safety behaviors can increase fear, irritability, and distress.

On the other hand, repeated exposure to the memories and real-life situations that we fear (while resisting the use of safety behaviors) makes PTSD better, because it allows the brain's alarm system to recalibrate.

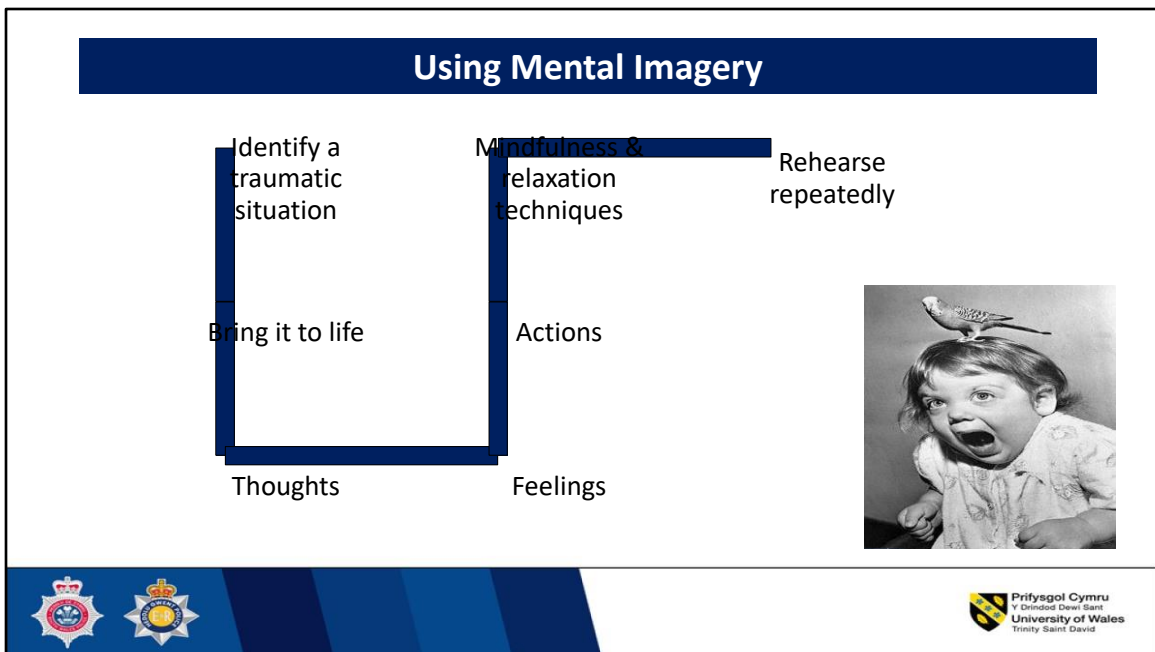
You must repeat the same exposure exercise many times for it to work. Our brain's alarm system is stubborn!

Therapist tip: A helpful metaphor for explaining the rationale for exposure is standing up to a bully. If one avoids the bully (with PTSD the bully is anxiety), the bully becomes stronger. However, when one faces the bully, the bully loses its power. Another way to illustrate how exposure works is to discuss how someone might get over a fear of dogs

Point out avoidance strategies on the board.

- Avoidance strategies are thoughts or actions designed to take your mind off of feelings and memories, or away from them, or to reduce the feelings directly:
- (Have the group give examples) – 5 minutes
- Examples: Distraction such films, or reading, relaxation, drinking, exercise, working harder, trying to “not think about it,” staying away from reminders of it, not talking about it, getting away

•



SLIDE 18

QTS – what is mental imagery?

We use the term 'mental imagery' to refer to **representations and the accompanying experience of sensory information without a direct external stimulus**. Such representations are recalled from memory and lead one to re-experience a version of the original stimulus or some novel combination of stimuli. Eg, if you close your eyes and visualise an apple, what you experience is mental imagery – visual imagery.

Common examples of mental images include **daydreaming and the mental visualization that occurs while reading a book**. Another is of the pictures summoned by athletes during training or before a competition, outlining each step they will take to accomplish their goal

QTS - Why is mental imagery important?

Many have argued that it is one of the primary human mental events that allow us to

remember, plan for the future, navigate, and make decisions. In addition, mental imagery plays a core role in many mental health disorders and plays an increasingly important role in their treatment.

Studies have shown that imagery can help the mind and body relax. It can also help **manage anxiety, stress, and depression**. Can help reduce pain.

Mindfulness is.....



Living fully in
the present
moment

Paying
deliberate
attention
to what
you are
doing

Accepting
rather than
judging or
trying to
change the
experience

Being aware
of the details
which are
important
for police
work



QTS – what is mindfulness?

Practicing mindfulness can help you feel more grounded and in control. Essentially, mindfulness is an antidote to the tunnel vision that we can experience when stressed or in a traumatic situation.

It's about living fully in the present moment by paying attention to what you're doing, as you do it, without judging or trying to change the experience. This helps keep your mind focused on what's happening right now, and allowing you to perceive things that you would otherwise miss.

To put mindfulness into perspective, imagine you're running late for your shift, but you're really hungry so you grab a sandwich. As you're eating, all you're thinking about is how much trouble you'll be in if you're late. Your mind has drifted to the future, worrying about events that you can't control. Worrying about being late for work doesn't help you move any faster – it actually means you're not able to pay attention to other things. If you're in a big enough rush and have gone into autopilot, chances are you probably won't even notice the taste of your sandwich!

Although the taste of a sandwich is not particularly important, you may find yourself in

stressful situations where the little details can be. Keeping your mind on what's happening in the moment, helps you not miss important details, like what a suspect has in their hands.

“Coolness of thought under pressure”



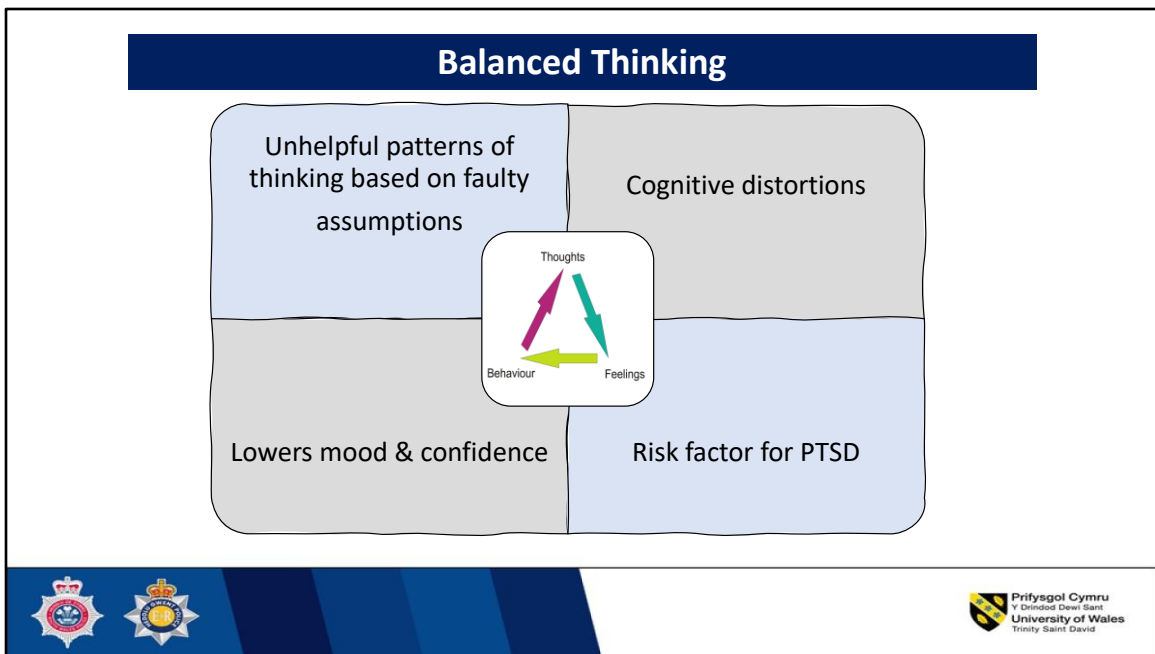
Mindfulness is not about slowing everything down, it's about taking everything in. Officers on the trauma resilience course felt a lot calmer and in control when they used mindfulness during trauma scenarios. One participant described mindfulness as 'coolness of thought' under pressure – and for me that sums it up perfectly.

I'd like to play you a clip from the TV series SAS Who Dares Wins. Although it's an extreme example of when mindfulness can be useful, hopefully it will help put it into context. Just to set the scene, the recruits have been kidnapped as part of a training simulation. (play clip)

Hopefully, this demonstrates how mindfulness can be used in challenging situations. A simple exercise that you can use anywhere to become present and grounded, is to become mindfully aware of three things that you can see, taking in as much detail as you can; Then turn your attention to two things you can feel, these could be internal or external; then one thing that you can hear. You can use any of your senses, the more you practice the more effective it will be.

Using mindfulness can be particularly helpful during a traumatic incident as being grounded can protect against feelings of derealisation, which is a risk factor for PTSD.

Also, being mindfully aware of your heartbeat or the weight of your feet on the ground when you deliver a death message, can lessen the impact of the family's grief.



Another way to increase your resilience is through balanced thinking. Our thoughts, feelings and behaviours are interrelated and can have a big impact on our wellbeing.

Sometimes we can have negative or unhelpful thoughts. When we've experienced a traumatic event, or feel stressed or low we can believe a lot of these thoughts. However, these are often based on faulty assumptions, rather than fact.

When we're worried it's common to spend a lot of time ruminating. You can end up thinking about the future and predicting what might go wrong. You might blow things out of proportion, or come to expect a catastrophe. Sometimes people can ignore the positive aspects of life and their situation, focusing instead on the negatives. Unfortunately, this style of thinking stops us feeling good about ourselves, can lower confidence and can be a risk factor for PTSD.

Challenging unhelpful thoughts...

Identify and challenge unhelpful thoughts

What's the worst that can happen?

What would I say to a friend?

What evidence?

Is there another way to look at the situation?

Balanced, rational thoughts improve mood and resilience

Negative Automatic Thought (NAT) / Erroneous Belief	(What Evidence?) Alternative Thought / Belief	Behavioural Consequence
Something awful is going to happen to me ... I can't cope with feeling like this ...	I have walked this route hundreds of times and nothing has happened before I'm on a well-lit street and there are lots of people in their houses either side who could help if I needed I know these feelings will pass, it's a normal reaction to a perceived threat I am almost home now and there is less opportunity for anything bad to happen	Continued my journey home, focused on my breathing and tried to be mindfully aware



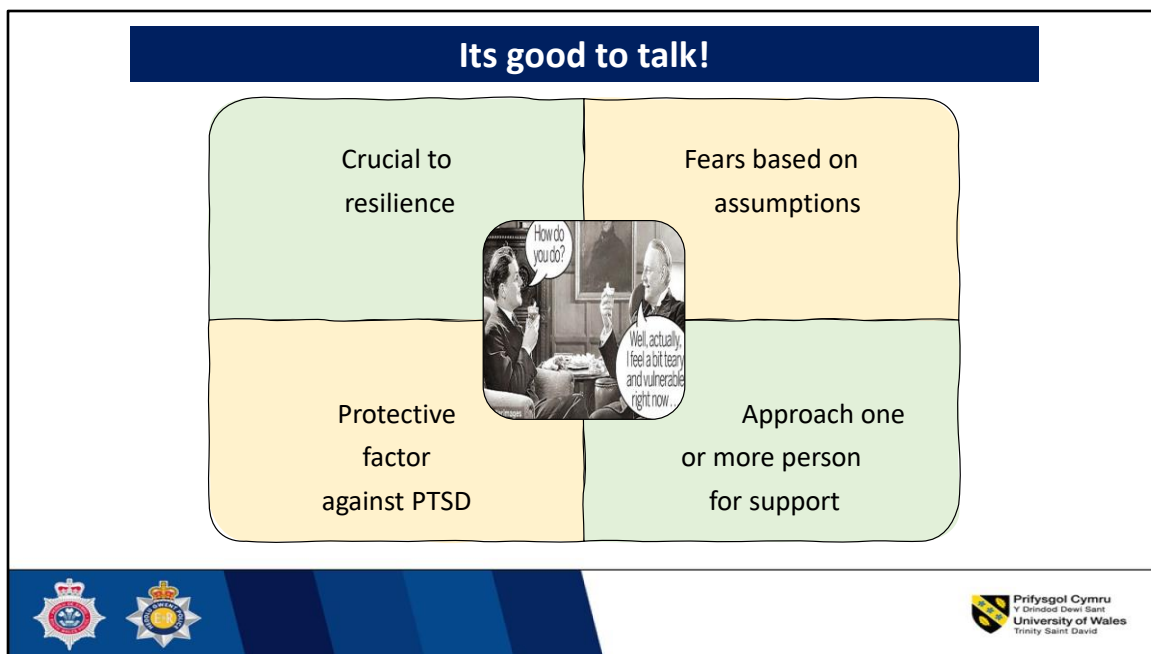
Sometimes these unhelpful thoughts are so automatic, we're not even aware of having them. We're usually alerted to them through changes in our mood, such as anxiety or feeling low, and changes in our behaviour, such as withdrawing from or snapping at people we're closest to. In these situations, it's important to identify the thought and challenge it. You could record your thoughts in the style that I've included here.

To do this, ask yourself, what's the worst that could happen and could I handle it? If the answer is no, think about what you might need to change to feel more confident about handling the situation.

Think about what you would say to a friend who had this thought in a similar situation? Would you be as hard on them as you are on yourself?

Think about whether your unhelpful thought could stand up in a court of law? Is there any evidence that contradicts this thought? Maybe there's another way to look at the situation?

Once you've asked yourself these questions, read through your answers and try to come up with a more balanced or rational view. Doing this can help improve your mood and resilience. (can refer to the slide for an example)



Having people you can talk to is crucial for your resilience. Many of us struggle because we think we have to keep things in, perhaps only hinting at problems when drinking, or through black humour. However, these can be problematic.

Sometimes fears stop us confiding in others, we may worry about being a burden or what another person may think of us. These unhelpful thoughts are often based on assumption. For instance, how would you feel if someone confided in you? You may feel good that someone trusted you enough to share how they were feeling. Isn't it possible that a trusted friend, colleague, supervisor or family member might feel the same? It's interesting that those closest to us tend to know, and worry more if they sense we're keeping something from them – by sharing what you're going through you can reduce your concerns, and theirs!

Developing trusting relationships and talking to people about your thoughts and feelings can be a protective factor against PTSD. Following a traumatic incident, you may need time to process these. Be honest with your colleagues and supervisor, they may not know that you need to talk.

People often feel vulnerable following a traumatic incident which can get in the way of accessing support. Think about at least one person you could confide in, then broach

the subject of support with them prior to being affected by an incident. That way you know that you can call on them for help.

Allow time for group discussion.

QTS – what do you think about this strategy?

QTS – Has anyone used this technique?

Make time for yourself...

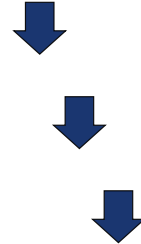


Relaxation

Exercise

Work-life balance

Techniques



Without taking the time to unwind, it is easy to feel overwhelmed and stressed. That's why it's important for your wellbeing to make time for yourself to relax and enjoy activities. Calming your body and mind can help improve your mood and sleep.

Relaxation can involve doing something that you enjoy, or just being by yourself. Whatever you choose, it should be something for you, that you look forward to and that gives you a break.

Exercise is particularly effective at helping us to relax. This is really important when you have a lot of adrenaline for instance following a traumatic incident and when you finish a set of shifts. By doing some exercise you can regulate a stepped recovery rather than crashing and feeling unable to do anything or engage with others on your first couple of rest days.

Doing an activity that you enjoy will also give you less time to spend worrying. When your role is challenging, having a good work-life balance make you feel more resilient and can help you put things into perspective.

Incorporating relaxation techniques into your life can help you feel calmer and more empowered. Drop 3 is a simple exercise that can be used anywhere, without anyone

knowing that you're doing it. You start by breathing deeply and slowly, and then drop your jaw, then your shoulders and then your stomach. If you find that your hands are shaking due to adrenaline caused by stress, you can tense and relax your fists repeatedly to alleviate this.

Journaling

Write about it:

Consider

What you experienced in your body, thoughts & feelings.

What did or did not help?

How does writing about the incident make you feel?

Whatever you write will be private.

The goal is to be honest about your feelings, even if just with yourself.

Writing helps people make sense of difficult experiences & decreases the intensity of emotional reactions.

Helps confront rather than avoid and suppress.

Reduces the frequency of intrusive memories.

Lessens stress responses.



One approach strategy that we know is effective in dealing with stress is writing about your experiences. The goal is to write about the situation AND all of the feelings related to the event. Even if you never share the things that you write, as long as you're honest about your feelings when you write them down, it's a helpful strategy. So remember, the purpose of this exercise is to **APPROACH** your feelings, so be honest and don't hold anything back.

You could write about your experience with a critical incident that included trauma or loss. In one or two paragraphs, please describe this experience briefly. As you re-visit and describe this, please also describe what you experienced in your body, your thoughts, or your feelings as well as what helped you or any problems that you experienced. Include what helped and what did not help. Do not worry about grammar or punctuation. You might also include how the experience of writing journal is influencing you now.

- Whatever you write will be completely private. You don't have to discuss what you wrote and you can rip the pages up when you're done if you'd like. Just remember, the goal is to be honest about your feelings, even if it's just being honest with yourself.

Support Your Colleagues

Acknowledge
what they've
been through

Reassure them
of good work

Be honest –
we're all human

Be aware of
changes in their
behaviour

Instigate a
conversation

Keep in touch



QTS – how can you support your colleagues?

As well as supporting yourself and getting support, you can increase your wellbeing by supporting others. Following a traumatic incident, it's important to acknowledge what colleagues have been through with compassion and understanding. I've worked with officers who have been seriously assaulted and in some cases thought they were going to die and yet they still helped make an arrest. An acknowledgement of good work from colleagues and supervisors can help them feel valued, and make a huge difference to their recovery.

After a traumatic incident give yourself and colleagues an opportunity to process your feelings honestly. By recognising it was a tough incident, you can help normalise natural reactions, thereby reducing the stigma. This protects against withdrawing, avoidance and isolation which are risk factors for PTSD. Remember, you and your colleagues are human and will have a range of human emotions.

Be aware if your colleagues start acting differently by noticing any behavioural changes. If you do, talk to them about it. It's ok to say, I've noticed you don't seem yourself, is everything ok? Do this when you have time to listen.

They may not want to talk then and that's ok, don't push it, just let them know you're there for them and check-in with how their doing every now and then, maybe arranging to meet for coffee. This is particularly important if they're absent from work.



- You can also provide support, consolation and practical help to your fellow officers.
- Try to recognise the abnormality of the trauma experience and the normality of the post-trauma reaction rather than medicalise or pathologise the reaction, or overwhelm fellow officers with information. The immediate aim is to provide informal support that merges into professional counselling support when required.
- Some people will seek formal counselling, but the majority of the support needed should come from the manager and staff members supporting each other who can encourage the exceptionally distressed to seek further help.
- The counsellors can then provide consultancy and support surrounding any critical incident.



Be aware of what are natural responses to trauma and reassure your fellow staff that what they are experiencing is natural. Give colleagues the opportunity to access counselling by providing contact details if they need them.

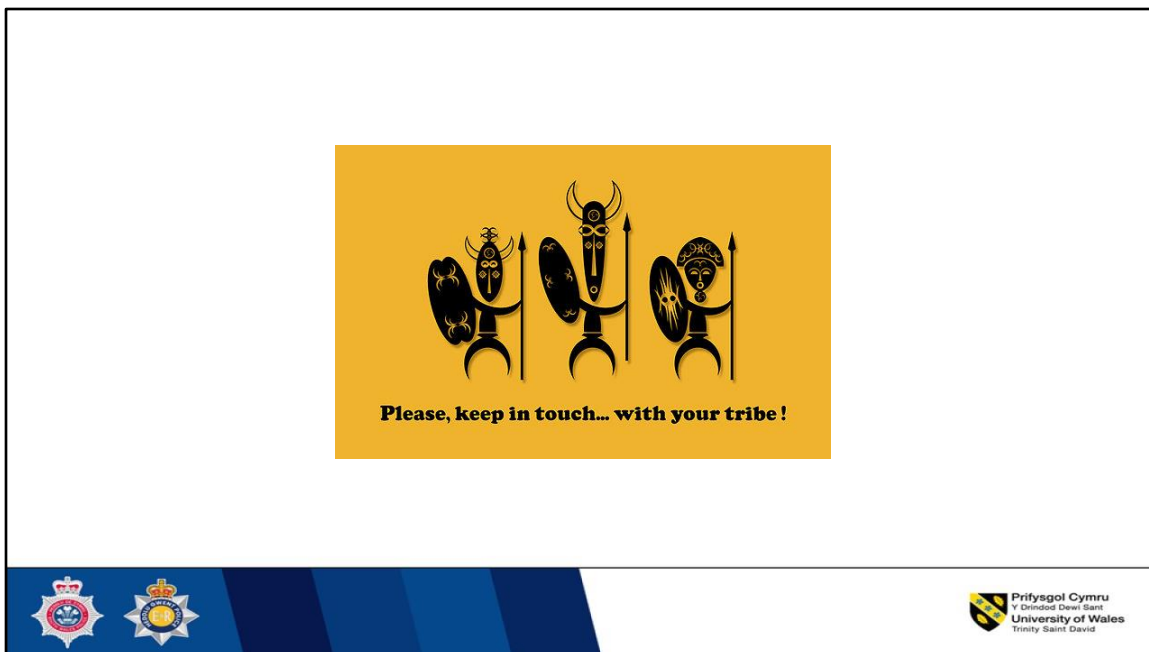
If requested, you can make a referral on behalf of a colleague.



- Be alert to colleagues with pre-existing vulnerabilities, such as states of anxiety, depression or trauma from a previous incident, and those who have particularly close involvement with the incident or those involved in it.
- Talk to your close colleagues individually, and ask how they are doing. If needed, provide contact details for the counsellor.
- Even if the offer of counselling is refused, some will note the contact and use it later.

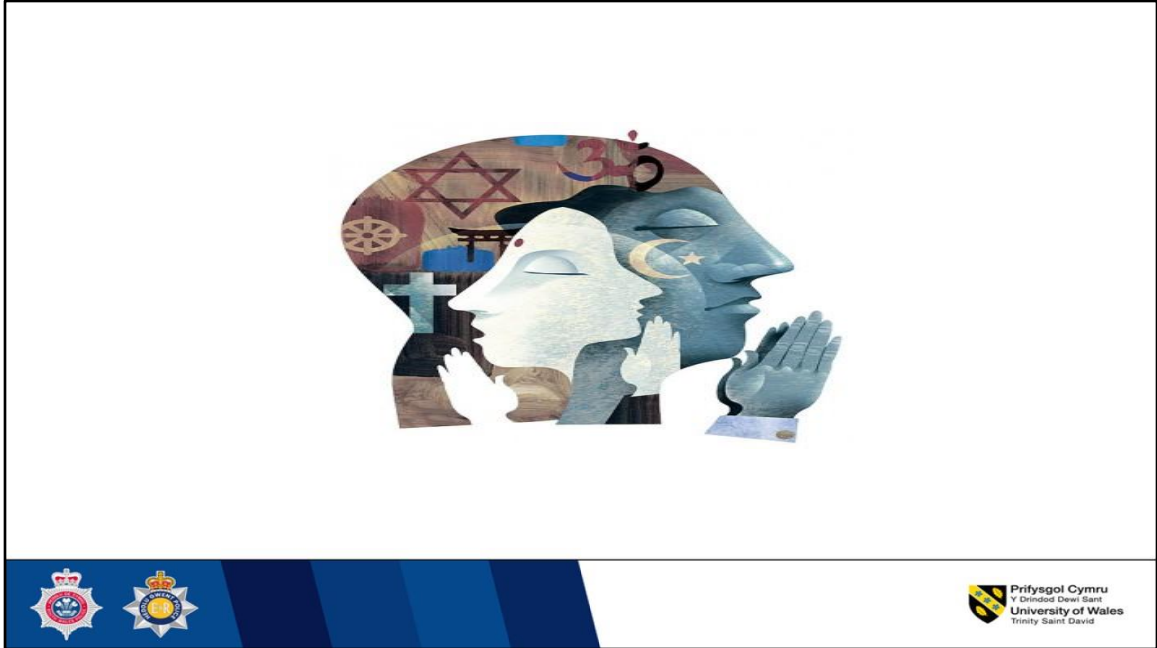


Be present and around. During work, officers will need to spend time talking to each other. This applies not only to those directly involved in the traumatic incident, but also those who witnessed it, had friends or colleagues involved. Sharing experiences in this everyday way is helpful and can reduce avoidance of emotions and memories.



In the weeks that follow an incident, individuals may be signed off by the G.P to help “get over it” and occasionally it may be important to do so.

If an officer is away from work, keep in touch by telephone, visiting and/or getting colleagues to visit. This may help officers feel connected with work which could facilitate their return, without pressurising the individual. Even working part-time or restricted hours means being back at work among colleagues. This support is helpful in preventing long-term complications.



Following an incident, officers may have different attitudes to be aware of different attitudes to death, disaster and trauma based on cultural and religious differences. It is helpful for officers when these differences are recognised and respected by their colleagues, who should encourage the same respect.



Many people take up to a month to settle down after a major trauma.

During this this, it's important for you to continue to offer informal support, encourage peer support, communication and remain flexible.

If you identify someone is struggling, you can talk to them about the possibility of counselling and encourage them to contact me. If they prefer you to make a referral, please include the officer's contact details.



Accept that for a period normal working will be disrupted.

For some officers, workloads may need to be temporarily re-assessed, less complex tasks assigned or they may need to spend sometime at the station, rather than receiving calls.

It is important for officers not to feel isolated, so if they are responding to calls, then it may be appropriate for them to be double crewed with a colleague they can talk to, and it may mean that as a team, you work together to pick up some of the flack, and support each other in times of need.

After a recovery period, it is appropriate to gently re-instate the boundaries of normal working.

T.R.I.M

TRIM is a peer delivered proactive human resource management for supporting individuals. Teams & organisations following exposure to traumatic events

TRIM should be considered following a traumatic incident

A TRIM referral will be made & the offer of a TRIM assessment will be sent via email

Based on research data, it has been identified that TRIM should take place no sooner than 72 hours following the incident or event

A TRIM practitioner will discuss the vent with the individual, & will do so again in 1 month & 3 months following the initial conversation

Depending on the score of the assessment, practitioners can signpost to appropriate networks, or refer to in house counselling. TRIM aids early intervention when needed



QTS – has anyone ever heard of TRIM?

Discuss the TRIM process – probably similar between forces.

Knowing when to seek help

Ask yourself.....

Flashbacks or
nightmares?

More on edge &
less emotionally
stable?

Avoid thinking
about the incident
or things that
remind you of it?



Persistently blame
yourself or others?

Withdrawn from
your support
network?

***Seek professional help if symptoms are distressing or
persist longer than a month***



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

It can be useful to mental checklist to know when to seek help especially post-incident. Ask yourself, (read from slide)

If you are exceptionally distressed or it's been a month since exposure and you've answered yes to any of the questions, you may find it helpful to seek professional help.

Police Covenant






The National Police Wellbeing Service
Launched 30th April 2019
PROVIDING GUIDANCE AND PRACTICAL SUPPORT TO UK POLICE FORCES TO HELP THEM PROVIDE TOP CLASS WELLBEING SERVICES





A National Police Wellbeing Programme has recently been established. It aims to support police forces in addressing the many mental wellbeing challenges faced currently by officers, staff & their families, as well as ensuring that the police mental wellbeing 'offer' is fit for the future.








The Police Covenant

The Police Covenant has been published and enshrined in law as part of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022. The covenant is the government's pledge to recognise the bravery, commitment and sacrifices of those who work or have worked in policing.

The Police Covenant is a pledge to do more as a nation to help those who serve this country and specifically to recognise the bravery, commitment, and sacrifices of those who work or have worked in policing.

The covenant aims to ensure that members or former members of the police workforce in England and Wales are not disadvantaged as a result of working in policing.

The covenant is a recognition by government, policing and society as a whole, acknowledging the sacrifices made by those who work or have previously worked in our police forces.

It is intended to ensure that officers, staff, volunteers and their families are not disadvantaged as a result of their service in the police and seeks to mitigate the impact that this may have on day-to-day life.

In practical terms the covenant will:

- place a legal requirement on the government to report annually to Parliament on issues relating to police welfare, wellbeing and support
- aim to improve the working experience of people in policing
- help smooth the transition out of policing for police leavers
- provide support to the families of those working in policing

•The College of Policing's National Police Wellbeing Service, Oscar Kilo, will deliver many of the products offered through the Police Covenant.

National Police Wellbeing Service

The National Police Wellbeing Service is aimed at improving mental and physical health support for officers and staff and includes mental health outreach support, as well as training and toolkits to improve the provision in individual forces.

The service was introduced after research found that officers and staff, particularly those in frontline roles, did not have the time or consistent access to local support for their mental or physical wellbeing.

The National Police Wellbeing Service aims to:

- Reduce stigma around seeking support or help
- Improve knowledge, understanding of help and support available
- Encourage people to support themselves and realise their own potential Improve personal resilience and self-help skills
- Improve morale and engagement – how people feel at work
- Improve and build on the police service reputation as a good employer and a great place to work.

It provides practical support for forces in eight key areas, they are;

- Dealing with trauma, major incidents and disaster resilience (TRiM)
- Psychological screening
- Individual resilience
- Peer support
- Line management
- Leadership
- Wellbeing at work
- Mobile outreach service (Wellbeing vans)

Oscar Kilo - Bringing assessment, learning and conversation about wellbeing into one place

The mission of Oscar Kilo is to be the home of the evidence base and best practice for emergency services wellbeing.

To provide resources that can be used to not only help shape wellbeing provision, but also provoke debate and encourage collaboration and innovation.

Oscar Kilo has been initially funded by Public Health England and was created and designed to host the Blue Light Wellbeing Framework and bring together those who are responsible for wellbeing. It is a place to share learning and best practice from across emergency and blue light services so organisations can invest the very best into the wellbeing of their staff

It is the only place where officers can access the framework online, including the interactive self-assessment tool to keep track on where your organisation is up to and access discussion with peers around this critical area of business.

Initially adopted by the police service, both the Framework and Oscar Kilo online have been designed so all services can adopt and share the same approach – we want to cut across traditional organisational boundaries and empower us all to collaborate and improve our most valued asset – Our people.

Wellbeing is often just perceived as a ‘nice to have’ or an ‘add-on’ and not something that is, or should be, part of daily business.

The Police are at the early stages of what needs to be a massive culture shift, not only for leadership and management to get better at addressing the issues affecting their workforce and investing in prevention, but in seeing a change in the way that police staff perceive and consider their own physical, mental and social wellbeing. This resource and the supporting Framework are there to help facilitate this cultural shift and to support each organisation in their own endeavours to improve and enhance their wellbeing provision.

<https://oscarkilo.org.uk/about/>

Live Services

Blue Light Champions

Occupational Health for urgent/on call referrals

Red Arc (once registered) – can arrange counselling and appointment based nursing support via telephone

Federation

Police Care

Care First Employee Assistance Solutions: 24/7 Counselling: 0800 174 319, you can contact them at any time, and no need for permission or a referral.

Check you intranet for online support (password and force specific log in)

College of Policing in partnership with UK Police Memorial

The beautiful and iconic UK Police Memorial honours the courage and sacrifice of members of the police service who have dedicated their lives to protecting us all. [National Memorial Arboretum](#). Situated in Staffordshire on the edge of the National Forest, the Arboretum is the UK’s year-round centre of remembrance.

Partially visible from the NMA Visitor Centre, the Memorial gradually reveals itself as visitors approach through a wildflower meadow. Descriptive text and a Sillitoe Tartan, evoking policing, edge the path leading visitors towards the Memorial space. The space is entered through a tall doorway supporting a brass screen. The doorway represents a 'threshold' to the dangerous places where Police go and from which some never return. Open lawn space, with occasional bench seating, together with a leaf shape stage, allows people to gather for ceremonies and for quiet acts of reflection.

They are now working on Phase II of the project – the development of a Digital Remembrance Programme to commemorate the names of the fallen – a world first using the advances of a digital age to redefine remembrance.

Since 1749 and the creation of the Bow Street Runners as the world first recognised police service, 4,500 men and women have given their lives to serve and protect our communities in the United Kingdom. The Memorial will be the first of its kind to bring together physical and digital elements that tell the stories of lives lost to UK policing.

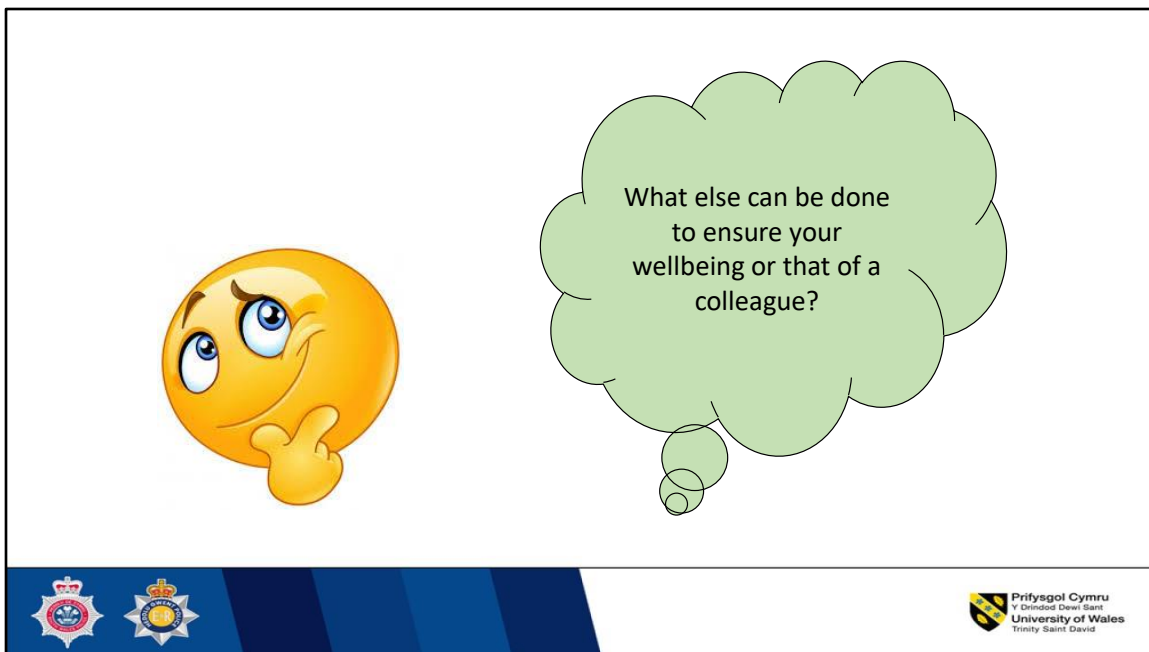
There is also a number of online support data which covers a multitude of wellbeing aspects including:

How to build support networks (blue light champions, work based counselling, friends inside and outside of work; paying for your own counselling or Red Arc supported counselling)

How to deal with PTSD – TRiM, Occupational Health, your own GP.

Focus areas – what is bothering you specifically, is it having a knock on effect to other areas of your life, are you re-living the same incident in your mind/dreams

What does it look like to feel or be better?



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**Focus areas – what is bothering you specifically, is it having a knock on effect to other areas of your life, are you re-living the same incident in your mind/dreams
What does it look like to feel or be better?**

Group discussion to lead to any questions:

What would the organisation reputation be like should they not get wellbeing 'right'?

