

**SHIFT**  
**Supporting Heroes In mental health**  
**Foundational Training**  
Nevada Family Jurisdiction Judges 2020 Conference  
Bishop, CA

*Judicial Vicarious Trauma:*  
*Wellness Tools For Your Personal Toolbox*

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# Objectives

- Introduction to SHIFT
- Understand and acknowledge signs and symptoms of traumatic stress
- Understand the neurological and physiological impacts of traumatic stress
- Understand how traumatic stress may be impacted by our wellness practices



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# SHIFT

## What SHIFT is:

Awareness/Education  
Preventative  
Believe you are healthy



## What SHIFT isn't:

Treatment/Counseling  
Screening  
Prescribed Interventions



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# Stress and Trauma: Signs and Symptoms



**Physical**  
Fatigue  
Digestive Problems  
Headaches  
Sleeping difficulties  
Eating habits  
Weight loss/gain  
High blood pressure  
Loss/Decrease in libido



**Intellectual/Cognitive**  
Decision making problems  
Loss of concentration  
Confusion  
Forgetfulness  
Low productivity  
Negative attitude  
Loss of sense of humor



**Emotion**  
Excessive emotion  
Numbing  
Mood swings  
Increased irritability  
Anger  
Sadness  
Fear and worry  
Loneliness-Isolation  
Crying spells



**Behavioral**  
Shutting down  
Risk-taking  
Drinking  
Substance abuse  
Driving fast-angry  
Extramarital affairs



**Spiritual**  
Extreme Religiosity  
Blaming or Feeling Abandoned by God  
Difficulty Praying  
Obsession on Fate  
A Change in Views of God, Your Life, or Your World

↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓  
Family/Friends, Work Production, Communication, Habits, Sexual Life



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## Judge's Most Identified Symptoms

Short term:

- Sleep disturbance
- Intolerance of others
- Physical complaints

Long Term:

- Sleep disturbance
- Depression
- Sense of isolation



Jaffe et al, 2003



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## Your brain on traumatic stress....



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## Brain Science

- Central Nervous System (CNS)
  - Brain
  - Spinal cord
- What is the nervous system's role?
  - Gather information
  - Analyze and interpret
  - Respond
  - 'Command Center'



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## Brain Science

**Frontal Lobe**

- Problem solving
- Emotional traits
- Reasoning (judgment)
- Speaking
- Voluntary motor activity

**Parietal Lobe**

- Knowing right from left
- Sensation
- Reading
- Body orientation

**Occipital Lobe**

- Vision
- Color perception

**Temporal Lobe**

- Understanding language
- Behavior
- Memory
- Hearing

**Cerebellum**

- Balance
- Coordination and control of voluntary movement
- Fine muscle control

**Brain Stem**

- Breathing
- Body temperature
- Digestion
- Alertness/sleep
- Swallowing

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http://www.bestmassageinlucson.com/page/491891804

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## Brain Science and Traumatic Stress

- Limbic system takes charge
  - Amygdala in overdrive
- Adrenal glands secrete stress chemicals:
  - Adrenaline, epinephrine, norepinephrine and cortisol
- Voluntary action is limited

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## Brain Science and Traumatic Stress

- Produces survival responses
  - 'fight/flight/freeze'
- Frontal cortex activity is decreased
- Reduced connection between right (emotional) and left (cognitive) brain function

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## Brain Science and Traumatic Stress

- Psychological responses are intense and limited
- Storage of information (memory) changes



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## Brain Science: Traumatic Stress

What this means:

you CAN'T think your way out of trauma...

You CAN:

- Notice your responses
- Use skills to address them
- Pay attention to self care



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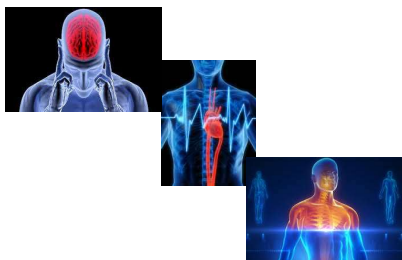
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## Brain Science: Addressing Trauma

- Acknowledgement of body changes



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## Brain Science: Addressing Trauma

- How do we stop a trauma response when not in danger?
  - Posture, Tension, Breath
  - Movement
- What can we do to reset brain function?
  - 20-20-20
  - Smell a lemon or orange
  - Yawn (seriously!)
  - Shake your right hand, then shake your left hand



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## Brain Science: Addressing Trauma

- Focus on task, not traumatic material
- Leave the trauma behind
- Smile/laugh
- Give or get a hug (or THINK about getting one)
- Interests outside of work
- Let others support you



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## Nutrition and Traumatic Stress

- Our bodies/minds crave **Fast Food** and **Comfort Foods**
  - Fast chemical dump – sugar, carbohydrates, fat
  - Fuels fight, flight, or freeze in physical threat
  - Impacts blood sugar levels
  - Mood swings
  - Inflammation



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## Nutrition and Traumatic Stress

- Liver production adds blood sugar (glucose)
  - Thirst
  - Excessive urination
  - Long term: Tissue and organ damage
- Body reabsorbs what isn't used
  - Converts to fat
- Potential risk for Type 2 diabetes
- Short term fix = long term problems



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## Nutrition and Traumatic Stress

- Our bodies/minds crave - **Caffeine**
  - Irritability
  - Restlessness
  - Muscle tremors
  - Insomnia



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## Nutrition and Traumatic Stress

- Our bodies/minds crave – **Alcohol and Drugs**
  - Increased anxiety
  - Depression
  - Memory loss
  - Addiction
  - Suicide



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## Nutrition for Managing Stress

- Drink LOTS of water
- Get plenty of sunshine = Vitamin D
  - Pack your own healthy snacks
- Remember to include protein and complex carbs
  - Drink alcohol and caffeine in moderation



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## Nutrition for Managing Stress

- Nuts and salmon
- Dark Chocolate
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Complex carbohydrates



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## Emotion and Traumatic Stress

### Mood changes

- Lability
- Intense sadness
- Helplessness or hopelessness
- Depression
- Numbness or inability to feel
- Anger



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## Emotion and Traumatic Stress

- Behavioral changes
  - Irritability
  - Frustration with others
  - Defensiveness
  - Withdrawal/Isolation
  - Emotional Reactivity
  - Numbing (Dissociation or Substance use)



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## Skills for Emotional Responses

- What can we do to reset our emotion?
  - Sense where the stress is in your body
  - Movement
  - Artistic endeavor
  - Listen to music
  - Unplug from electronics
  - Sleep



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## Skills for Emotional Responses

- To refocus our emotional responses on the present
  - Grounding Exercise: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1
  - Acknowledge five things you see
  - Acknowledge four things you can touch
  - Acknowledge three things you can hear
  - Acknowledge two things you can smell
  - Acknowledge one thing you can taste



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## Skills for Emotional Responses

- What can we do to reset our emotion? (cont.)
  - Reframe your thoughts
  - Connect with others
  - Set reasonable standards
  - Remember the positive
  - Practice gratitude
  - Remember why you do this work



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## WELLNESS

- If we don't focus on our own wellness, who will?
  - Challenges in personal life
  - Health concerns
  - Children
- Marathon vs sprint



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Anyone can slay a dragon, she told me,  
but try waking up every morning  
& loving the world all over again.  
That's what takes a real hero.

Brian Andreas



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## Wrapping Up

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What did we miss?

Questions?



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[www.Shiftwellness.org](http://www.Shiftwellness.org)

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