

TAKING CARE OF YOU...

.....REMEMBER.....

**YOU MATTER
YOU COUNT**

EMERGENCY SERVICE PERSONNEL

- Special personalities
- Special training
- Special equipment
- Accept challenges
- Expose themselves to difficult situations
- Extraordinary tasks
- Physical and psychological demands

GENERAL PERSONALITY TRAITS OF EMERGENCY PERSONNEL

- Need to be in control
- Obsessive (desire to do a perfect job)
- Compulsive (tend to repeat the same actions for every similar event; traditional)
- Highly motivated by internal factors
- Action oriented
- High need for stimulation
- Have a need for immediate gratification
- Easily bored
- Risk takers
- Rescue personality (always rescuing)
- Highly dedicated
- Strong need to be needed

PERSONALITY STRESSORS

- The inability to say “no” to someone
- The need to be liked
- Guilt Feelings when we are not helping someone else
- Anxiety over our own professional competence
- A mental outlook when we see everything as negative
- Personal sensitivity to criticism
- Extremely high expectations of ourselves
- Guilt over mistakes or not doing a perfect job, etc.

PSYCHOSOCIAL STRESSORS

- Family relationships
- Conflicts with fellow workers
- Conflicts with administration
- Lack of appreciation
- Abusive patients
- Media at the rescue..... etc

ENVIRONMENTAL STRESSORS

- Noise
- Dirt / dust
- Overcrowding at the station
- Temperature extremes
- Clutter
- Weather conditions
- Spectators in the way
- Speed on calls
- Confined space
- Lighting
- Pressures of rapid response
- Rapid decision making

STRESS REACTIONS

➤ **ACUTE**

➤ **DELAYED**

➤ **CUMULATIVE**

ACUTE SIGNALS OF DISTRESS

➤ **COGNITIVE**

➤ **PHYSICAL**

➤ **BEHAVIORAL**

➤ **EMOTIONAL**

DELAYED STRESS SYMPTOMS

- Crying spells
- Irritability
- Guilt
- Grief & Depression
- Poor Concentration
- Sleep Disturbances
- Changes in personal habits
- Marital conflict
- Isolation from loved ones

COGNITIVE SYMPTOMS

- Decision making difficulties
- Confusion
- Disorientation
- Memory loss
- Unable to perform multiple tasks
- Flashbacks

EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS

- Feelings of numbness
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Feeling detached from reality
- Anger
- Resentment
- Grief
- Guilt
- Melancholy

BEHAVIORAL SYMPTOMS

- Decreased performance
- Withdrawal
- Outbursts
- Excessive humor
- Excessive talkativeness
- Hyperactivity
- Prolonged silence

PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

- Sweating
- Muscle tremors
- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Loss of coordination
- Nausea
- Upset stomach

EXTREMES OF HUMAN STRESS

- Divorce
- Chronic sleep disturbances
- Distressing dreams and memories
- Changes in personality
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Substance Abuse
- Suicide

DYNAMICS OF FEAR

“Here Comes Trouble”

“Fight or Flight”

Alarm

“Oh-Shit”

Immediate Fear (unknown)

“I’m gonna die” (Vulnerability, awareness of what might happen)

Time Freezes (hole in stomach)

“I’ve Got to do Something” SURVIVAL

Focus shifts from internal to external, mobilize, think tactically

Readiness

About to respond

“Here Goes” RESPONSE

Feeling strong

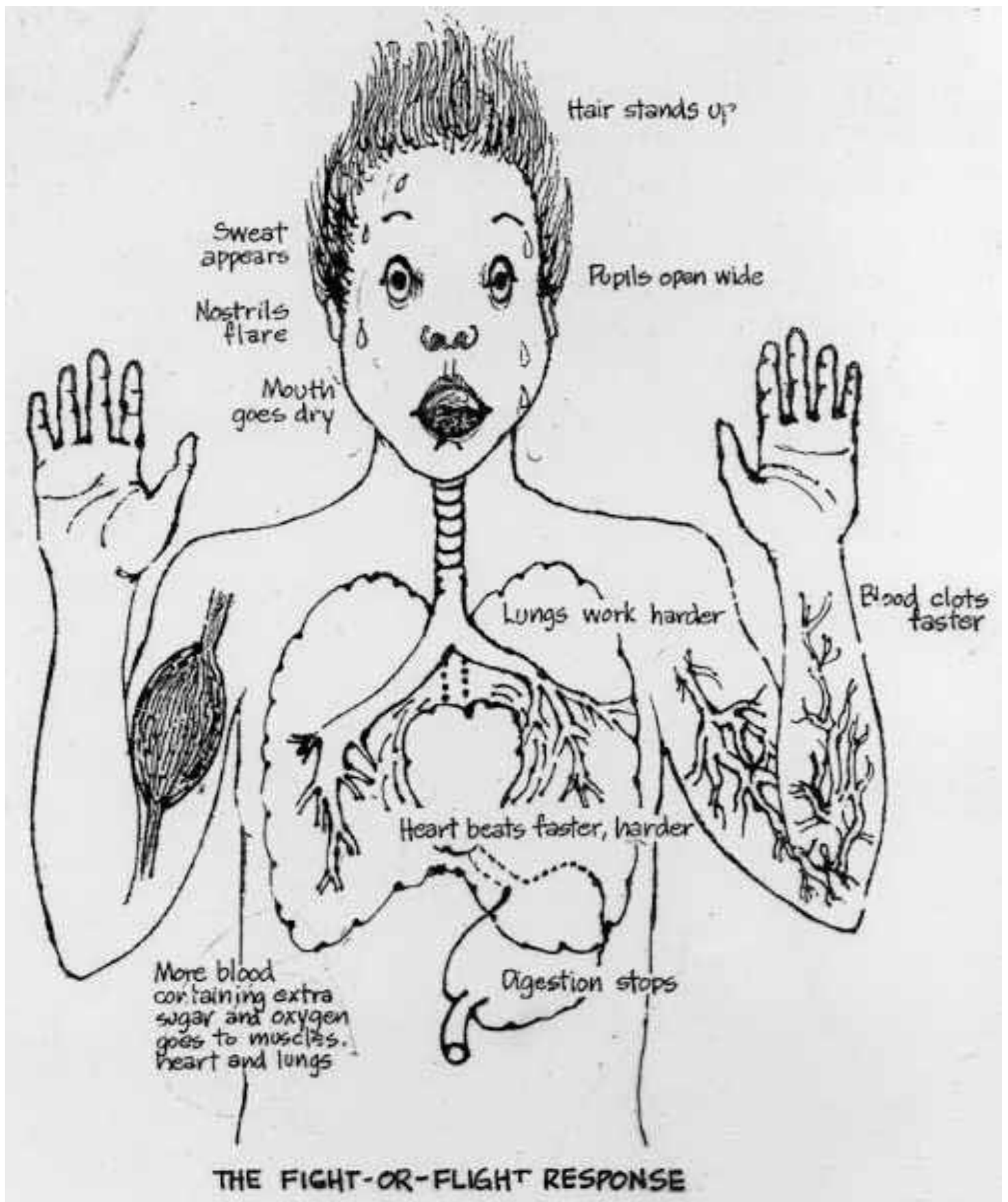
Action mode

Go!

STRESS

The body's non-specific response to any event which temporarily threatens to overwhelm the organisms ability to cope.

Hans Selye'



HUMAN STRESS RESPONSE

“FIGHT OR FLIGHT”: Cannon

TENSION: Steinhaus

- Learned
- Autonomic

STRESS, DISTRESS, EUSTRESS: Hans Selye'

- Balance in the body
- Homeostasis, maintaining a steady state
- Force & resistance: The immune system
- Strain, adaptation, and tolerance:
The notion of thermostat & temperature regulation

CRITICAL INCIDENTS IN RANK ORDER

1. Line of Duty Death / Serious Injury
2. Suicide of a Working Colleague
3. Death/Serious Injury to a child
4. Prolonged Failed Rescue
5. Mass Casualty Disasters
6. Victim Known to the Responder
7. Personal Safety Unusually Jeopardized
8. Administrative Betrayal
9. Excessive Media Coverage