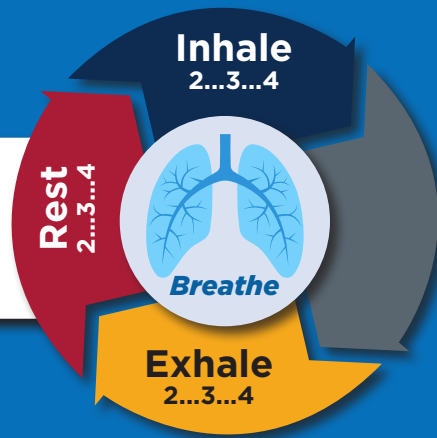


RESILIENCE STRATEGIES FOR STATE POLICE & HIGHWAY PATROL

As a state police or highway patrol officer, your role is essential to community safety. Patrolling the highway, driving most of your shift, and having little interaction with peers for long stretches of time can all hurt your emotional and physical health. You can help counteract these challenges by emphasizing physical and mental protective factors.

| STRESSOR | RESILIENCE STRATEGY |
|--|---|
| <p>Spending long hours isolated from peers</p> | <p>ACKNOWLEDGE that the job is demanding and often requires you to spend long hours on the road, away from your department and fellow officers. Feelings of isolation can lead to negative thinking traps and impact your social life. Develop and maintain positive and fulfilling social relationships outside of work to achieve balance and prevent burnout.</p> |
| <p>Experiencing Prolonged Tension Due to Long Hours on the Road</p> | <p>Spending most of the workday on the road can be mentally and physically taxing. PRACTICE mindfulness activities—such as breathing exercises, listening to music, meditating, or journaling—and incorporate exercise, a healthy diet, and positive sleeping habits into your daily routine. Take stretch breaks and move throughout the day when possible.</p> |
| <p>Responding to Traumatic Incidents</p> | <p>Traumatic incidents on the road, such as traffic accidents and fatalities, can lead to stress, anxiety, and PTSD. SET ASIDE time each day for yourself, even just a few minutes, to decompress and refocus. To process these events, use departmental resources such as employee assistance programs, chaplains, psychologists, and peer support.</p> |
| <p>Handling Difficult Subjects</p> | <p>IDENTIFY your character strengths—such as honesty, approachability, kindness, and empathy—and leverage these to encourage positive interactions. Focus on what you can control and understand that others' attitudes reflect their feelings about the situation and are not about you as a person.</p> |

Reduce anxiety and improve focus and energy with **deliberate breathing**



LOOK FOR THE GOOD

NOTICE and REFLECT on everyday positive experiences in your role as a state police or highway patrol officer. Consider not only how you have helped others, but also how others have helped you, and prioritize taking note of the good in the world. Deliberate recognition of even the smallest of good things can cultivate gratitude, which can lead to many benefits including improved mental health, increased sleep, and higher productivity.



**YOUR
TURN**

To build resilience and practice gratitude, identify and reflect on *THREE* positive experiences or benefits from a recent challenging experience. This can include experiences during the workday, in the community, or with your family.

For more resilience skills and wellness practices, contact OSW@theIACP.org or visit www.theiacp.org/osw.

