

Awareness & Compassion

Pathway to Authentic Warriorship, Trust & Legitimacy

Gateway to Resiliency & Performance



“Put plainly, when cops mess up, the explanations offered tend to be ethical and political, when the more empirically solid explanations are much simpler than that—they are basic failures of human performance under stress,” says Jonathan Wender, a sociologist at the University of Washington and former police officer and sergeant. “We need evidence-based, human performance training that starts in the academy and continues across every career phase, so when you’re tired, scared or stressed, you still do the right thing.”

Equanimity

“Even Mind”

Neither apathy nor indifference, but rather warmly engaged in the world but not troubled by it... A kind of space around experiences- a buffer between you and your feeling tones. (Hansen 2009)

“Equanimity is a perfect, unshakable balance of mind.”

-N. Thera

Warrior Ethos

"Instead of panicking or returning to business as usual, commit to grounded compassion, pragmatic wisdom, and skillful action.

Let awareness be your weapon...Be there for those who have suffered more than we have.

Step beyond yourself and be of use to someone. Be courage in uncertainty. Be love in chaos."

-Richard Strozzi-Heckler



Table 1 *Various Definitions of Mindfulness*

Study	Definition
Bishop et al. ²⁹	A process of regulating attention to bring a quality of nonelaborative awareness (often termed “nonjudgmental”) to current experience and a quality of relating to one’s experience within an orientation of curiosity, experiential openness, and acceptance.
Shapiro et al. ³⁰	The three axioms of mindfulness—intention, attention, and attitude—are not separate stages. They are interwoven aspects of a single cyclic process and occur simultaneously. Mindfulness is this moment-to-moment process.
Szalavitz ³¹	The awareness that arises through paying attention on purpose in the present moment, nonjudgmentally.
Brown and Ryan ³²	A receptive attention to and awareness of present events and experiences.
Jha et al. ³³	Mental mode characterized by full attention to present-moment experience without judgment, elaboration, or emotional reactivity.

Relevancy

"Mindfulness and the awareness that underlies it are inherent brain capabilities that can be honed through training. It can be helpful for many professional and personal activities, and appears to be beneficial for enhancing resilience and overall health. Its use as a tool to better prepare current and future leaders for a dynamic and uncertain future should be seriously considered."

(Deuster & Schoomaker 2015. Journal of Special Operations Medicine.)

Effects of Meditation

- Increases grey matter – insula, hippocampus, prefrontal cortex (Holzel 2008; Lazar 2008)
- Reduces cortical thinning (Lazar 2008)
- Improves psychological functioning- attention (Carter 2005), compassion (Lutz 2008), empathy (Lazar 2005)
- Improves activation of left frontal regions, enhancing mood (Davidson 2004)
- Decreases stress related cortisol (Tang 2007)
- Strengthens immune system (Davidson 2004; Tang 2007)

Cycle of Predictable Outcome

Critical Incidents

Chronic exposure to suffering

Cumulative organizational stress

Public Perception & Misperception

Legal challenges...lawsuits

Culture of apathy and/or fear



Family pressures

Maladaptive coping strategies

Propensity for problems on duty



*Challenging cycles of behavior, fed by
self, culture, system, and community*



Organizational Approach to Occupational Stress

*Historically, we have **delegated** stress management to the officer*

*(CISM, EAP, FFD- All **REACTIVE**)*

Facilitating holistic wellness through resilience building strategies is a new concept (organizationally and culturally)

*Resilience is hampered or enhanced by organizational leadership & management**



Stinchcomb, J. Searching for Stress in all the wrong places: Combating Chronic Organizational Stressors in Policing. *Police Practice & Research*. July, 2004.

Landscape of suffering

- ✓ Police officers forfeit seven to ten years of their life for their vocation (Violanti 1996)
- ✓ Higher risk of Sudden Cardiac Death (Joseph, Violanti, Donahue, Andrews, Trevisan, Burchfiel, & Dorn, 2009; McCraty & Atkinson, 2012)
- ✓ Higher rates of depression (Wang et al., 2010), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD; Marmar et al., 2006), and alcohol use disorders (Rees & Smith, 2008)
- ✓ more likely to die from suicide than in the line of duty & LEO; those with 15 to 19 years of experience have the highest rates of completed suicides (Miller, 2006)
- ✓ Higher risk for developing diabetes, obesity, and metabolic syndrome (O'Hara, Violanti, Levenson, & Clark, 2013; Paton, Johnston, Clarke, Violanti, Burke, & Deenan, 2008)

Buffalo Cardio-Metabolic Occupational Police Stress

BCOPS Study 2004 - 2009

- ✓ four times more likely to suffer sleep deprivation
- ✓ among the poorest CVD profiles of any occupation
- ✓ 40 percent of police officers suffer from obesity (BMI 30+)
- ✓ prevalence of depression nearly double
- ✓ Speculation that the inflammatory process initiated by stress is a major factor in poor health

Violanti, et al (2011)

"In summary, the results of this study show that as sleep quality gets worse, depressive symptoms do as well.

In a profession that requires high levels of alertness, as well as sometimes requiring instantaneous decisions, it would be optimal if police officers were well rested, and thus have fewer depressive symptoms and correspondingly higher cognitive skills."

Slaven, et al (2011)

The Troubling Trifecta

Technology

Covering the root problem

Training

Knowledge v. Skills

Traditional Thinking

Group think

Culture driven

Reactive v. Proactive

Suffering as Armor



NIH Funded Study 2015-16

Mindfulness-Based resilience training

60 Police Officers

8 weeks & Immersion training models

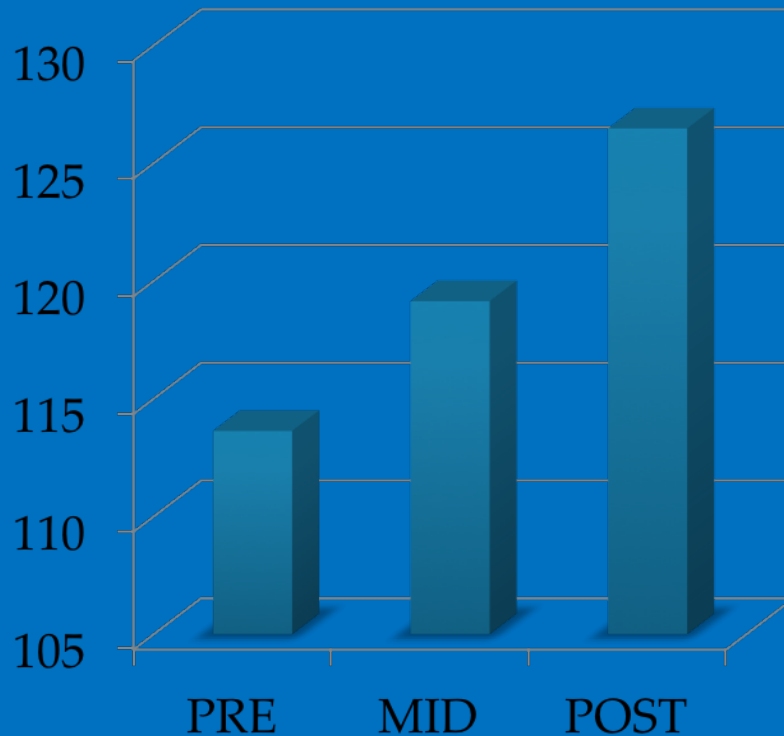
- *Lower levels of*
 - *Alcohol Use*
 - *Aggression*
 - *Burnout*
 - *Experiential Avoidance*
 - *Cortisol*
- *Higher levels of mindfulness*
- *More data being analyzed*

2014 Study ~40 Officers

- *Less anger*
- *Perception of op/admin stress*

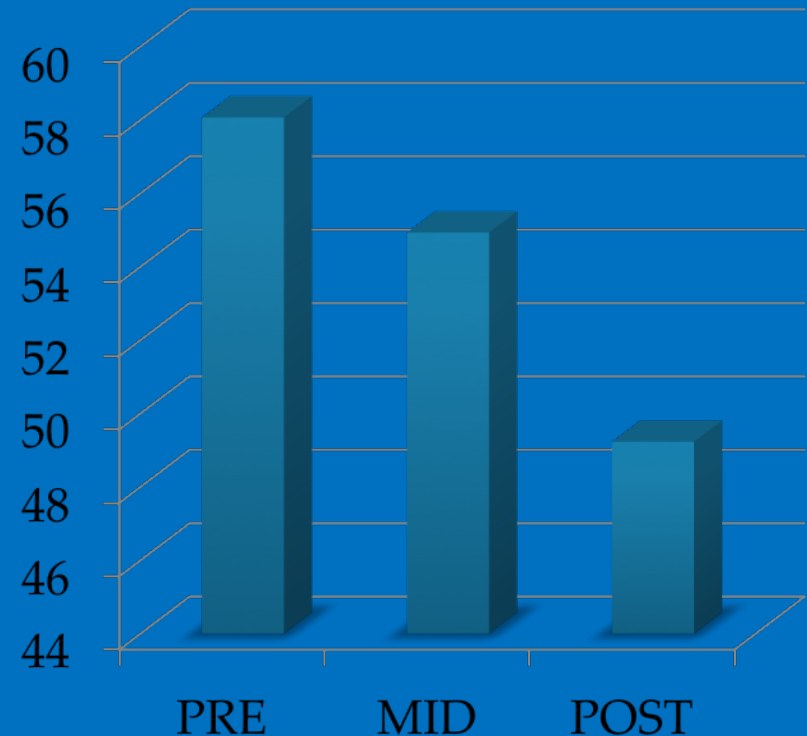


Emotional IQ



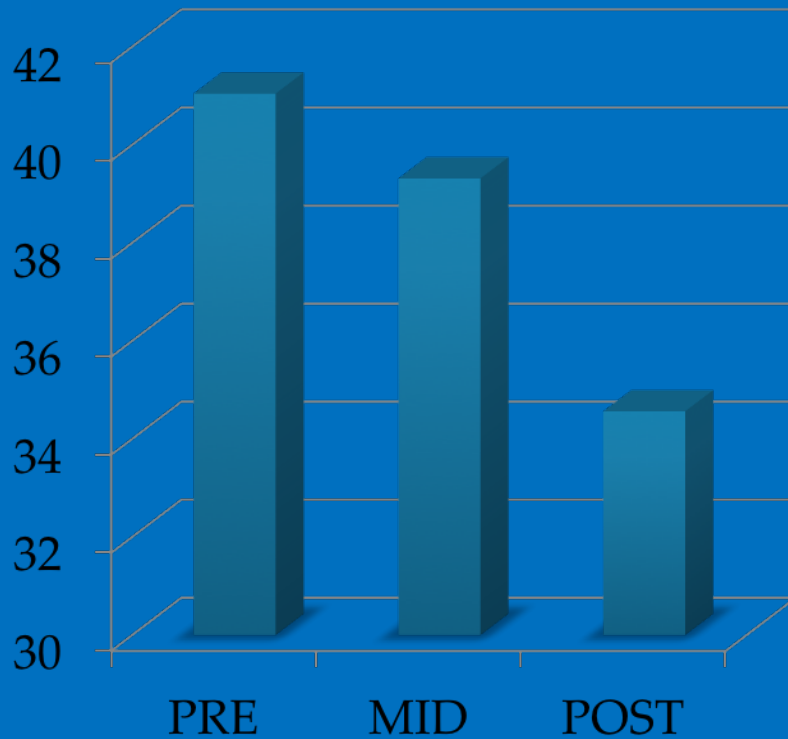
$p < .0001$; $\eta p^2 = .31$

Difficulty in Emotion Regulation (N=18)



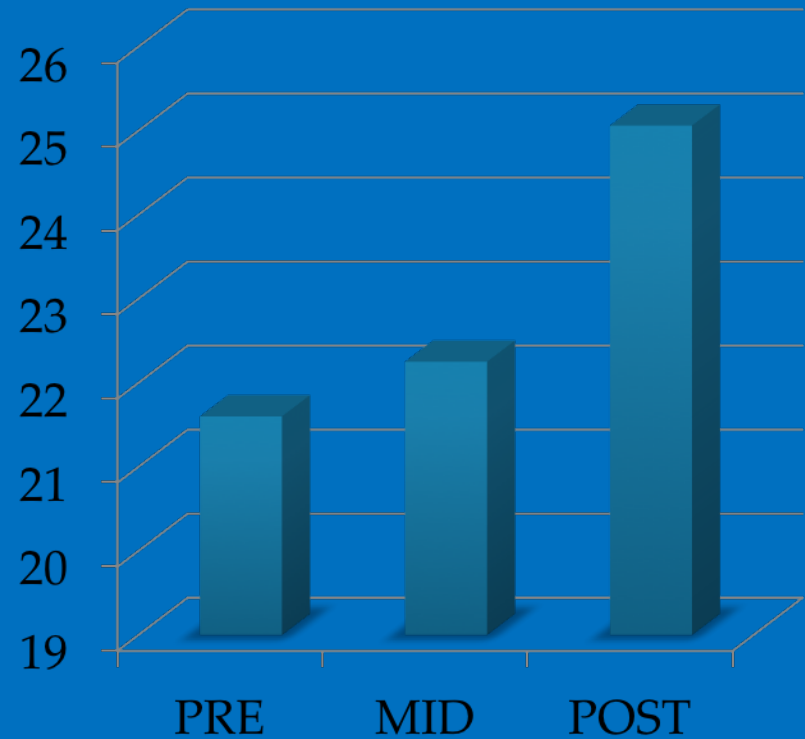
$p = .027$; $\eta p^2 = .23$

BURNOUT



$p < .0001$; $\eta p^2 = .33$

RESILIENCE



$p < .0001$; $\eta p^2 = .34$

Mindfulness training proved that integrating the practices provided me with skills to enhance my cognitive performance in times of high stress and a surprising outcome is that pathways to my ability to empathize have been enriched. My mind and body are more resilient after significant events and my readiness is boosted to continue to serve without disruption. - Sylvia. Chief of Police

The training helped me understand how to keep a balance, how to measure my ability not by a scale made up from a chart or a study but from my own ability to handle my thoughts, my trauma, and how to help others with it. –Gabe. Police Officer

...provided me a completely different framework to place my professional life into. Half way in, I was fat...discouraged...and essentially "done." After applying some of the lessons when I got home, I find myself a full 60lbs lighter, and with a vastly different perspective on most everything. Recharged and refocused, I'm ready for the next phase. -Ian Deputy Sheriff

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