

COPING WITH MORAL INJURY IN THE WAKE OF SYSTEMIC INJUSTICE

National Health Care for the Homeless Virtual Symposium

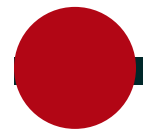
April 6, 2022

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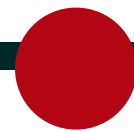
Learning Objectives

By the end of this session,
participants will be able to:



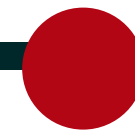
1

Compare and contrast the foundational principles related to post traumatic stress disorder, burnout and moral injury



2

Discuss the role of homeless healthcare teams with law enforcement activities and interactions



3

Discuss how systemic injustice contributes to moral injury.



4

Recognize potential ways to leverage the witnessing experience into effective advocacy

Ground Rules for Meaningful Discussion

1

I am a facilitator

5

We are all in evolution

2

Trigger warning

6

**Complicated problems
require humility**

3

Words matter

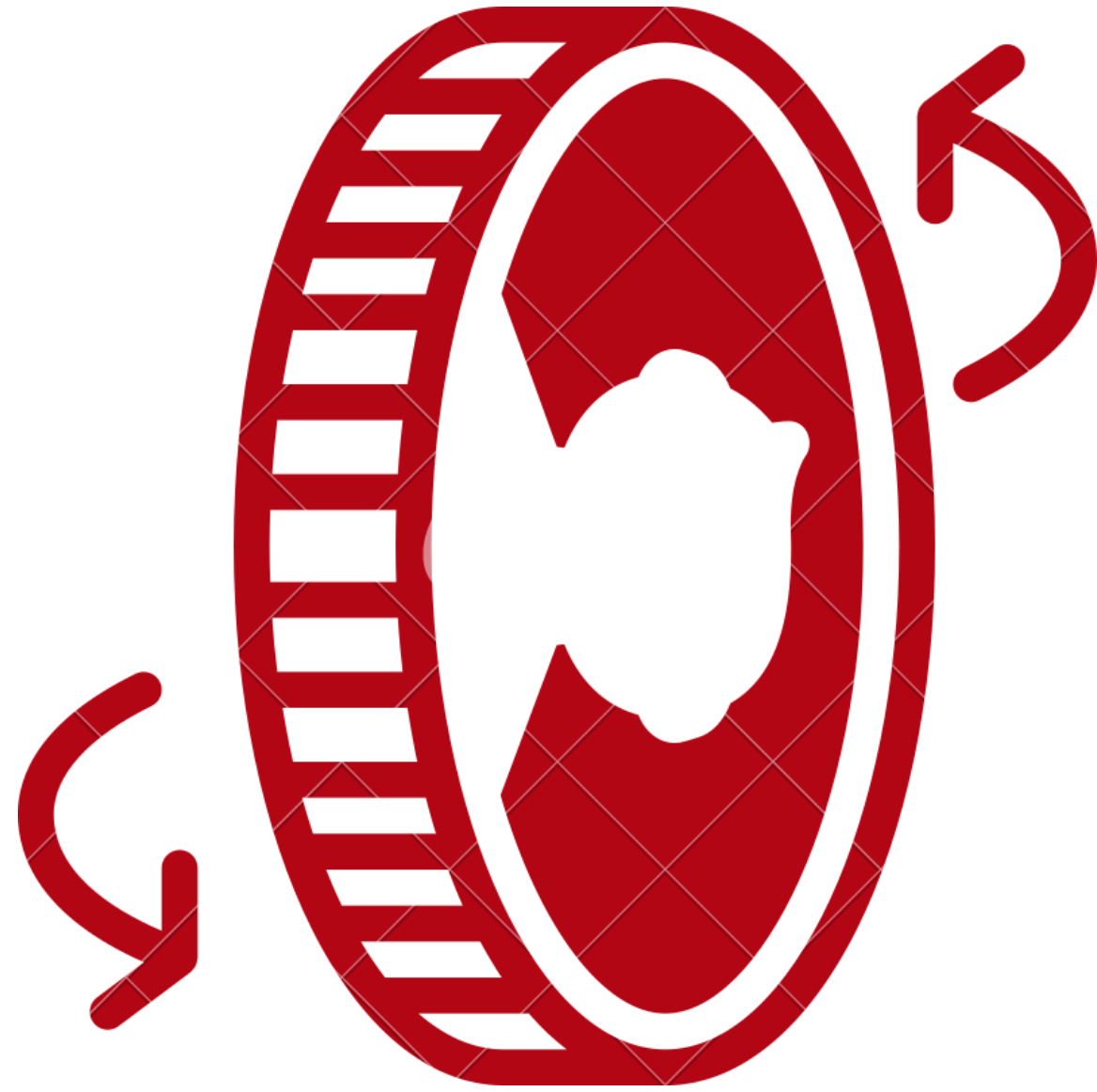
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Name your assumptions

4

**Solidarity requires
respectful discourse**











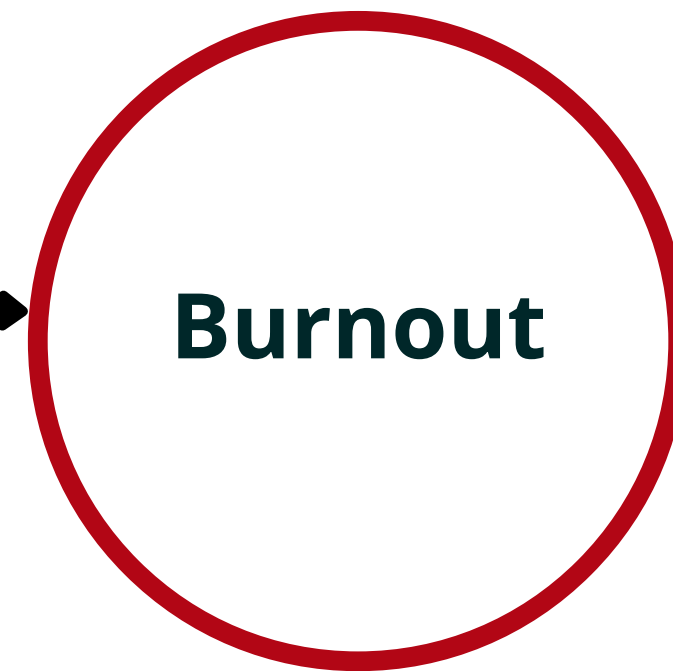
Checking the Pulse



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Code: 9216 7928

labels and definitions



PTSD

Develops as a result of experiencing something shocking, dangerous, scary; hears details

Hallmarked by **ongoing sense of threat to one's life/wellbeing**

- At least 1 re-experiencing symptoms (flashbacks, bad dreams, intrusive memories)
- At least 1 avoidance symptom
- At least 2 arousal/reactivity symptoms
- At least 2 cognition and mood symptoms

Treatment target is specific, individual

PTSD CheckList – Civilian Version (PCL-C)

Client's Name: _____

Instruction to patient: Below is a list of problems and complaints that veterans sometimes have in response to stressful life experiences. Please read each one carefully, put an "X" in the box to indicate how much you have been bothered by that problem in the last month.

No.	Response	Not at all (1)	A little bit (2)	Moderately (3)	Quite a bit (4)	Extremely (5)
1.	Repeated, disturbing memories, thoughts, or images of a stressful experience from the past?					
2.	Repeated, disturbing dreams of a stressful experience from the past?					
3.	Suddenly acting or feeling as if a stressful experience					

**Vicarious
trauma**

**Secondary
trauma**

Burnout

**Compassion
Fatigue**

Foundational principles: Burnout



Job Burnout

Professional Quality of Life

Compassion Satisfaction

Compassion Fatigue

Burnout: physical/emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, decreased sense of accomplishment

Secondary traumatic stress: intrusive emotional responses of work-related exposure to traumatized people; anger/arousal, fear, avoidance, mood/cognition changes, intrusive thoughts ****

Job Burnout

Waegemakers Schiff J, Lane AM. PTSD Symptoms, Vicarious Traumatization, and Burnout in Front Line Workers in the Homeless Sector. *Comm Ment Health*. 2019

472 'front line workers', Canada, 96% response rate

Used PROQoL (compassion satisfaction/fatigue, burnout) and PCL-6 (PTSD screen)

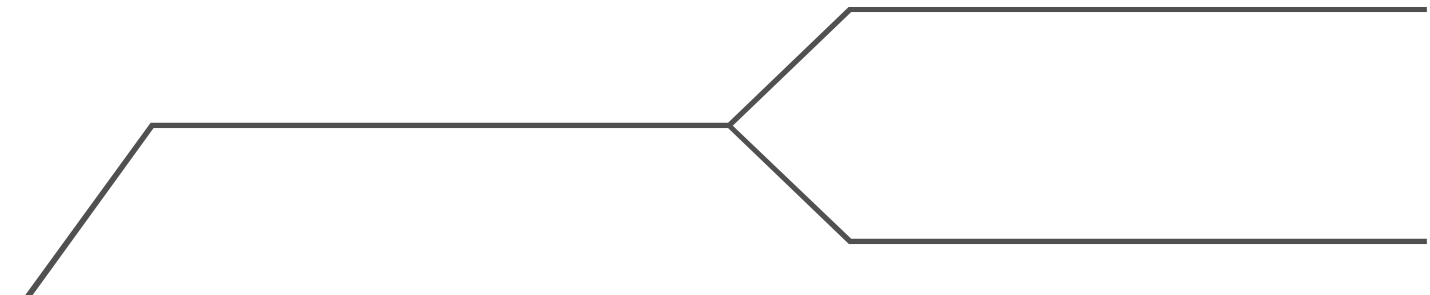
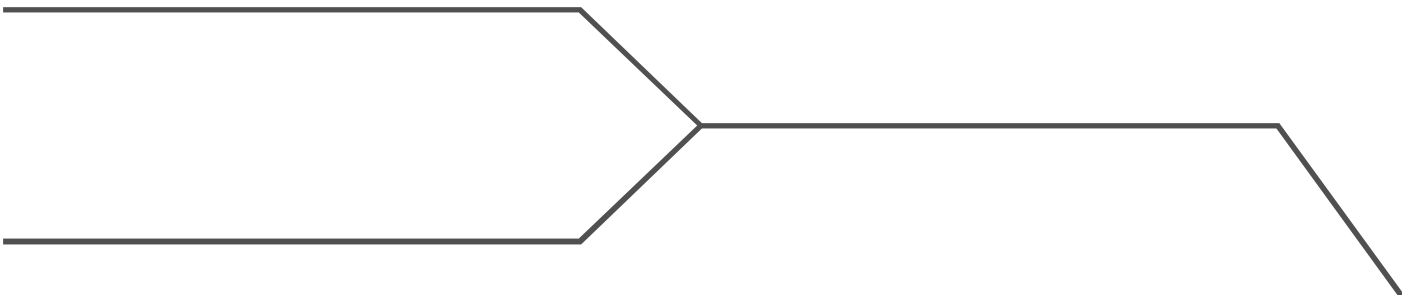
75% < 5 years of experience in sector, 50% < 2 years

Average level of burnout compared to other social services sectors, unexpectedly higher PCL scores (33% in danger zone vs 10-14% in other fields)

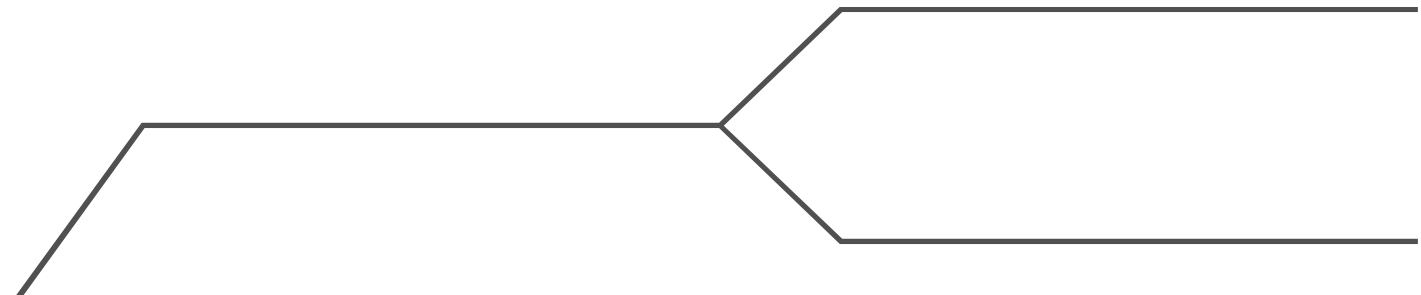
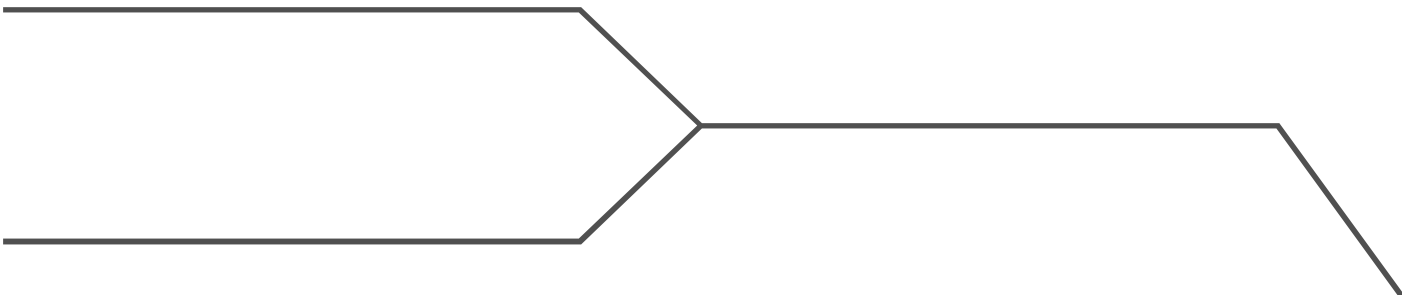
About 25% had very concerning symptoms - time to step back

Compassion satisfaction, lower burn out rates (but not STS) correlated with increased/solid peer and manager support

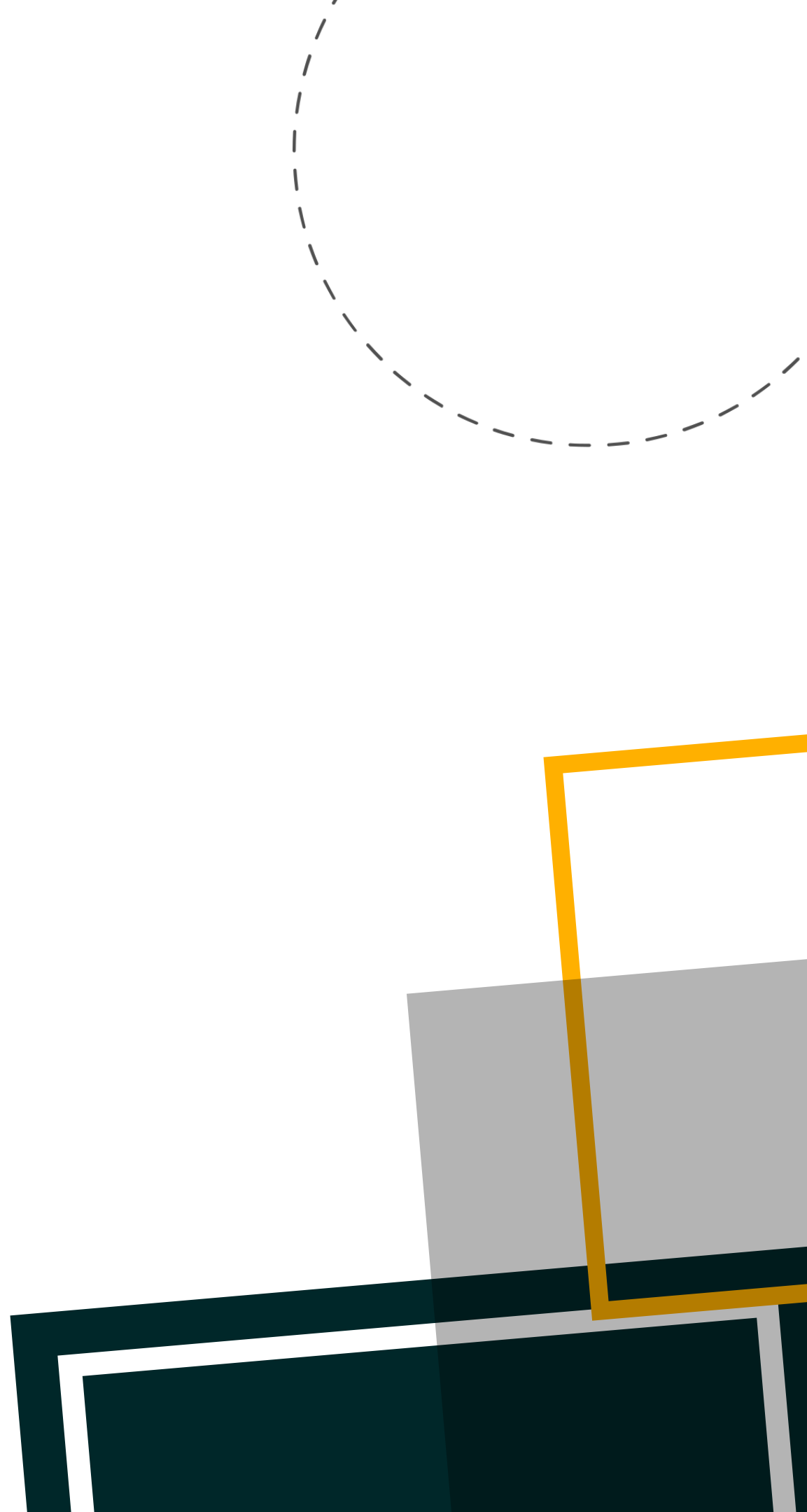
**Does Burnout/STS
Say It All?**



Does Burn Insurance Cover



Moral Injury



Moral Injury

People may perpetrate (act of **commission**), fail to prevent (act of **omission**), or **witness** events that **contradict** deeply held moral beliefs and expectations

Transgression of leadership that crossed a moral line

Guilt (I did something bad)

Shame (I am bad because I did something)

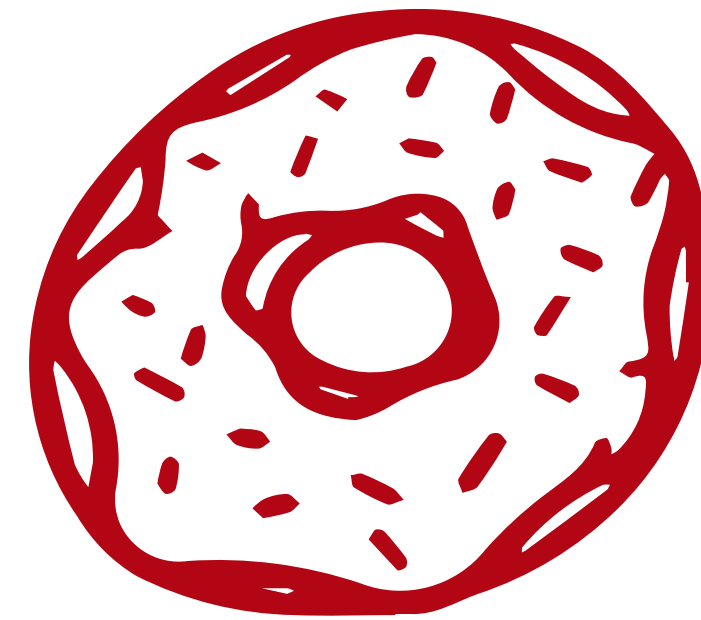
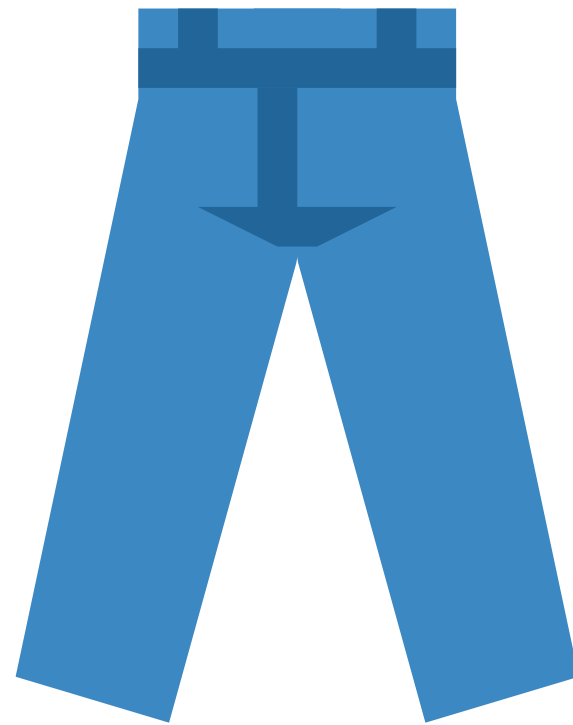
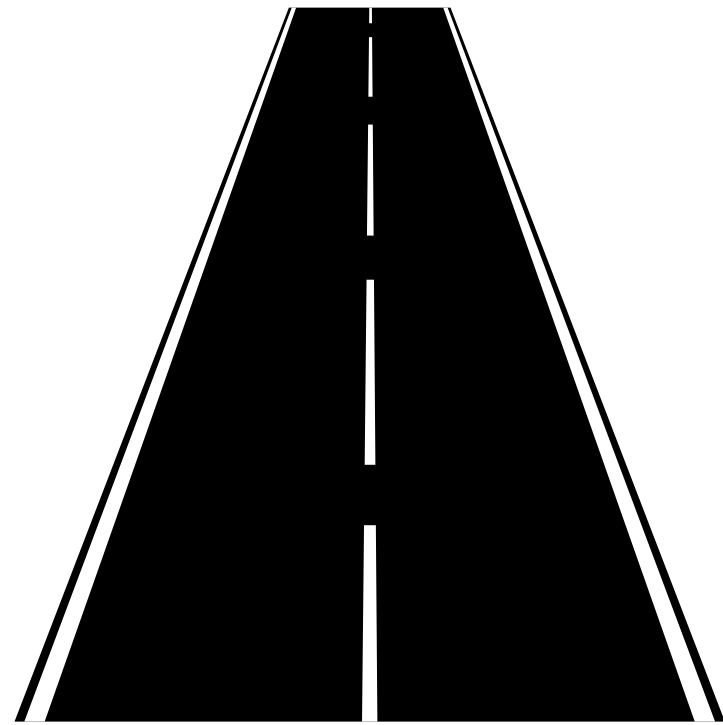
Disgust

Anger

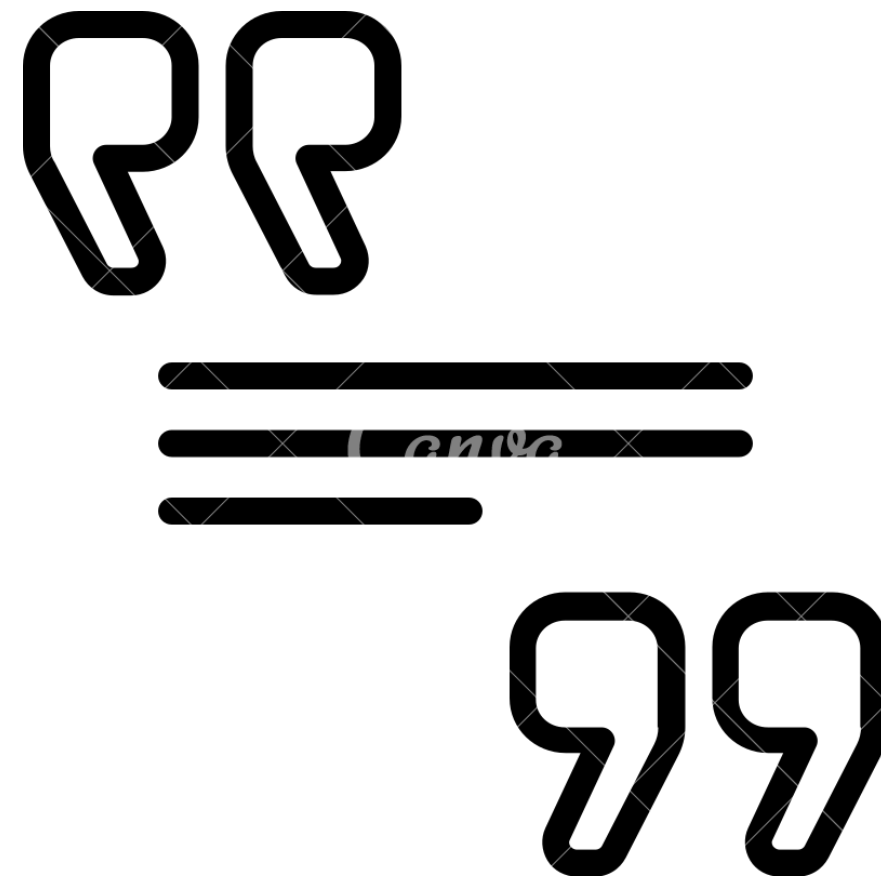
Self sabotage

Assessments: Trauma Related Guilt Inventory; Trauma Related Shame Inventory
(validated in non-military cohorts)

Moral Injury: A Case Example



Checking the Pulse



What is Our Role When Interacting with Law Enforcement?

PP

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99

Moral Injury

AMA Journal of Ethics®

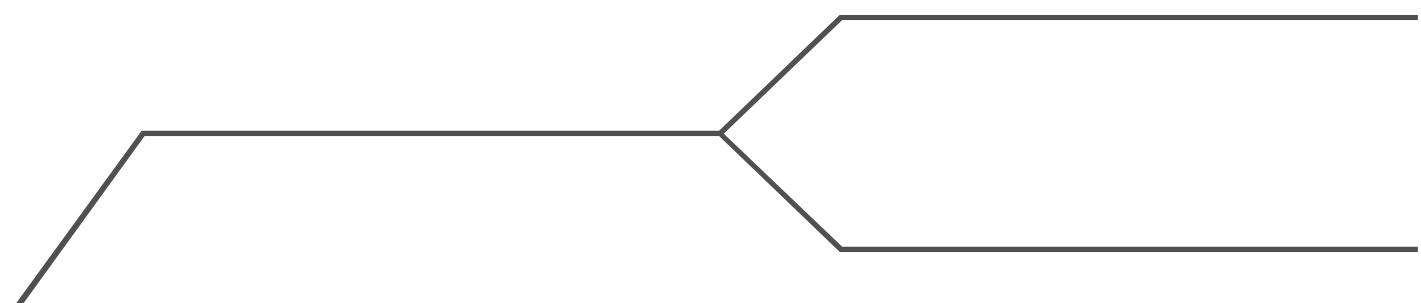
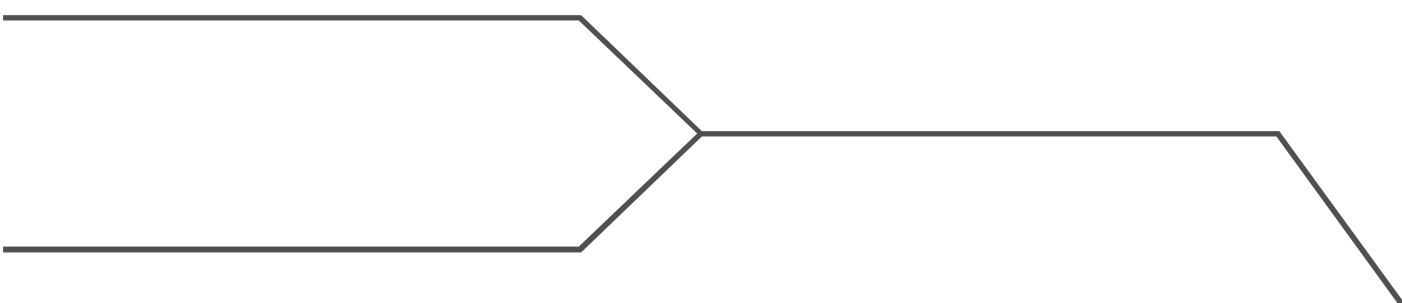
November 2021, Volume 23, Number 11: E881-886

MEDICINE AND SOCIETY: PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLE

How Should Street Medicine Clinicians Interact With Law Enforcement Officers?

James S. Withers, MD and Eleanor Kotov, MD

What Can We Do About It?



What Can We Do About It?

**Process Within Self
(name it to tame it)**

Share the Knowledge

Share the Experience

Name It To Tame It

Process the feelings alone

Process the feelings with your team

Know your triggers and be ready with love

Tell your story





"A lack of empathy, is a failure of the imagination." Harsh Mander

Tell Your Story: Perspective

Four Divides:

You and the patient/client

You and yourself

You and a colleague

You and society



Tell Your Story: Perspective

Point of view (if multiple, how do they relate?)

Tone- how do you want to make someone feel

Diction and syntax- word choice, rhyme, repetition, metaphors

Temporality- journey across time vs snapshot

Setting- how does it frame the story, capture the imagination



Share the Knowledge

Is there a lack of basic knowledge?



Inreach

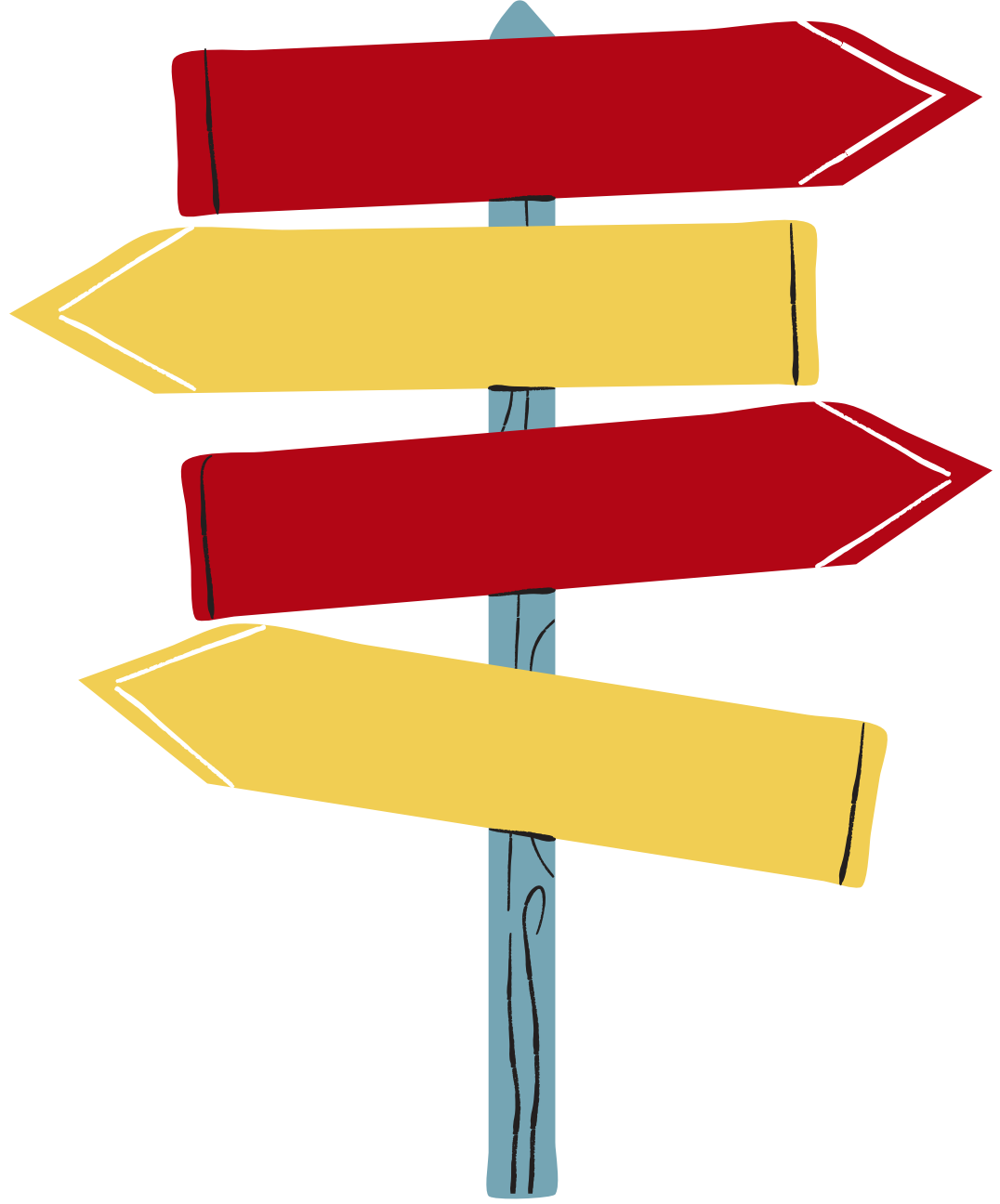
Outreach

Teach

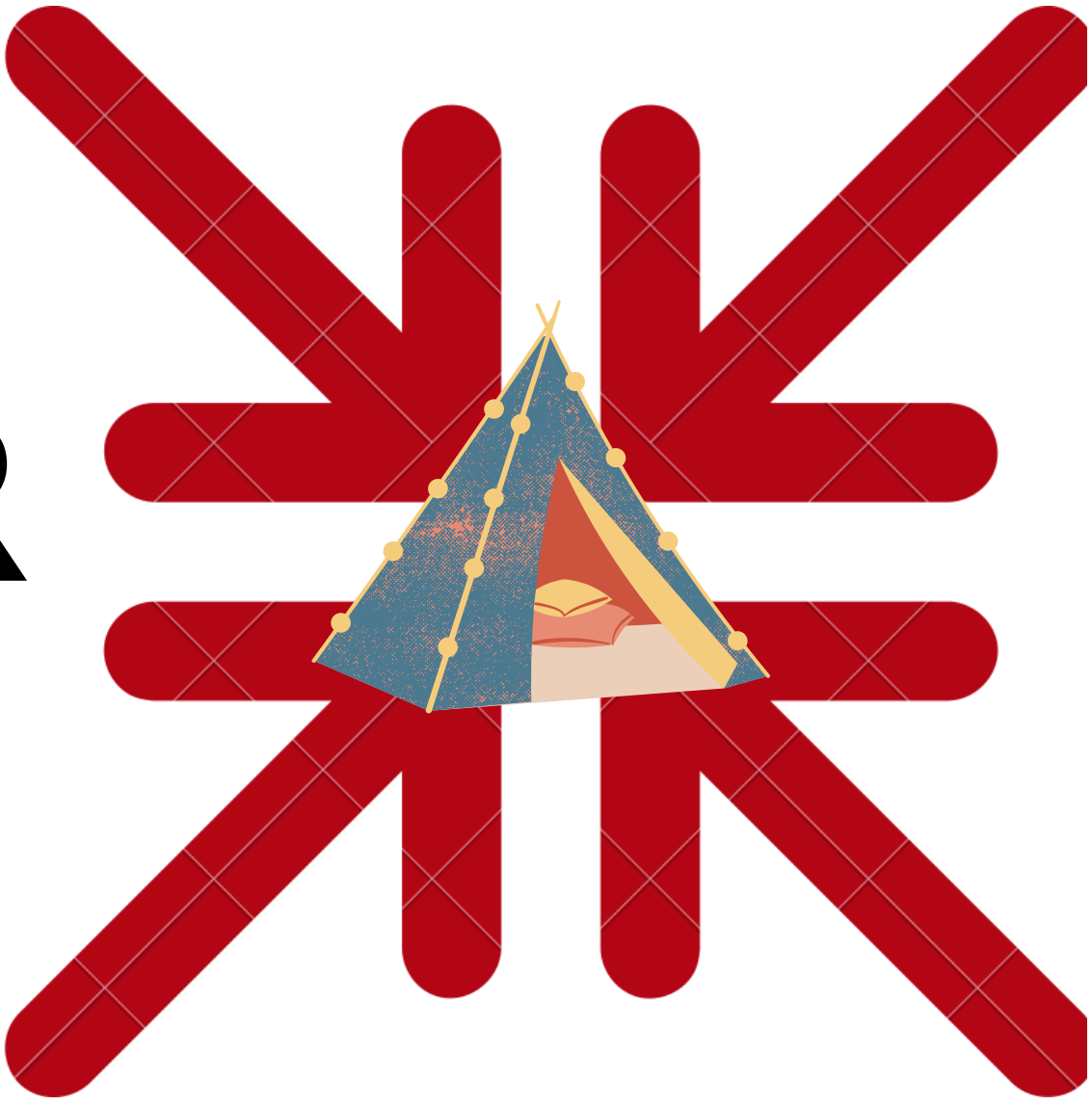
Write and Publish

Podcast

Share the Experience



OR



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