

42nd Annual InterCourt Conference



Session 4F: The Five Pillars
of Officer Wellness

March 13, 2026
Hilton Columbus at
Easton Town Center
Columbus, OH

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES

STEVEN M. CLICK serves as the Director of First Responder Wellness for the Ohio Department of Public Safety, Law Enforcement Initiatives. Prior to his current position, he served as the First Responder Liaison for Ohio Mental Health & Addiction Services. Steve is a retired lieutenant from the Ohio State Highway Patrol where he served for 36 years, completing his career assigned to the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Office of Personnel / Ohio ASSIST program. Steve has been involved in peer support since 1992 and oversaw the Ohio State Highway Patrol's Member's Assistance Team (MAT) from its inception in 2002 and previously served as the Operational Commander.

In 1992, he received the Ohio Distinguished Law Enforcement Valor Award, the highest award for valor in Ohio.

The Five Pillars of Officer Wellness

Steven M. Click

*Director, First Responder Wellness
Ohio Department of Public Safety*





Personal Wellness; Self Care

Steven M. Click, Director
First Responder Mental Wellness
Ohio Department of Public Safety

Assume Best Intent...

When we talk about stress and trauma, we can be reminded of events from our own lives that may cause discomfort, feelings of anxiety or other emotions.

Please assume that if there is anything you see or hear that causes you concern or uneasiness, it was not meant to and the only intent is to share information in an open and honest fashion to save lives.

Self Care

- *Everyday, we are faced with trauma, stress and sometimes, emergency situations*
 - *In addition to work, life happens*
 - *Home*
 - *Kids*
 - *Health*
- *All too often, our focus is on helping and taking care of others, not ourselves*
- *We must remember that WE are important too...*

Bears & Ducks...



Self Care

So, what can we do to help ourselves and others?

- Exercise (in moderation based on previous levels of exercise)
 - Structure your “free” time
- Accept the event has changed your “old normal” and know that there will be a “new normal,” but that you are NOT crazy
 - Talk, talk, talk
- Avoid self-medication with drugs or alcohol
 - Let people help you



Self Care



- Spend time with others
- Co-workers who were involved in the same incident(s) can benefit from talking about their shared experience
- Let yourself have bad days or hours. It’s OK
 - Journal if it helps get things out
- Do things you enjoy. *Its not only OK to be happy, smile and laugh, it’s imperative!!!*
- You are not the only one feeling stress from the event: family, friends and co-workers

Self Care

- Don't make big life changes: relationships, buy a car/bike/boat, sell or buy a house, etc.
- Make as many decisions about your personal life as you can.
Take back control.
 - **Rest!!!**
- Reoccurring thoughts, dreams or flashbacks are a normal reaction. Don't fight it, let the mind process the event
- Do the best you can to eat a healthy and well-balanced diet



Self Care

Limit "Screen" Time

- *Laptops, tablets, phones & TV*



Limit time watching "News"

- *Stay informed but don't "live" on the news*
 - ❖ *Same 3 minutes of news*
 - ❖ *More dramatic each time*

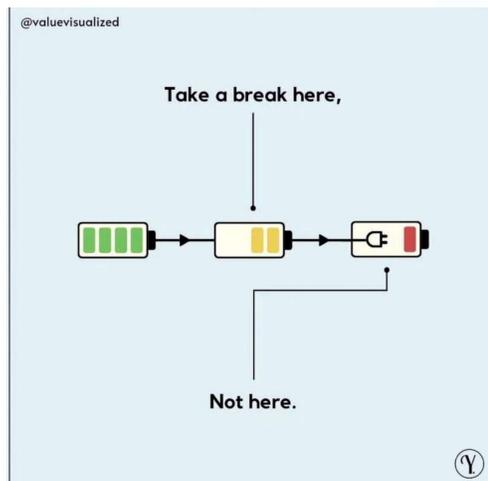


How can Family and Friends Help?

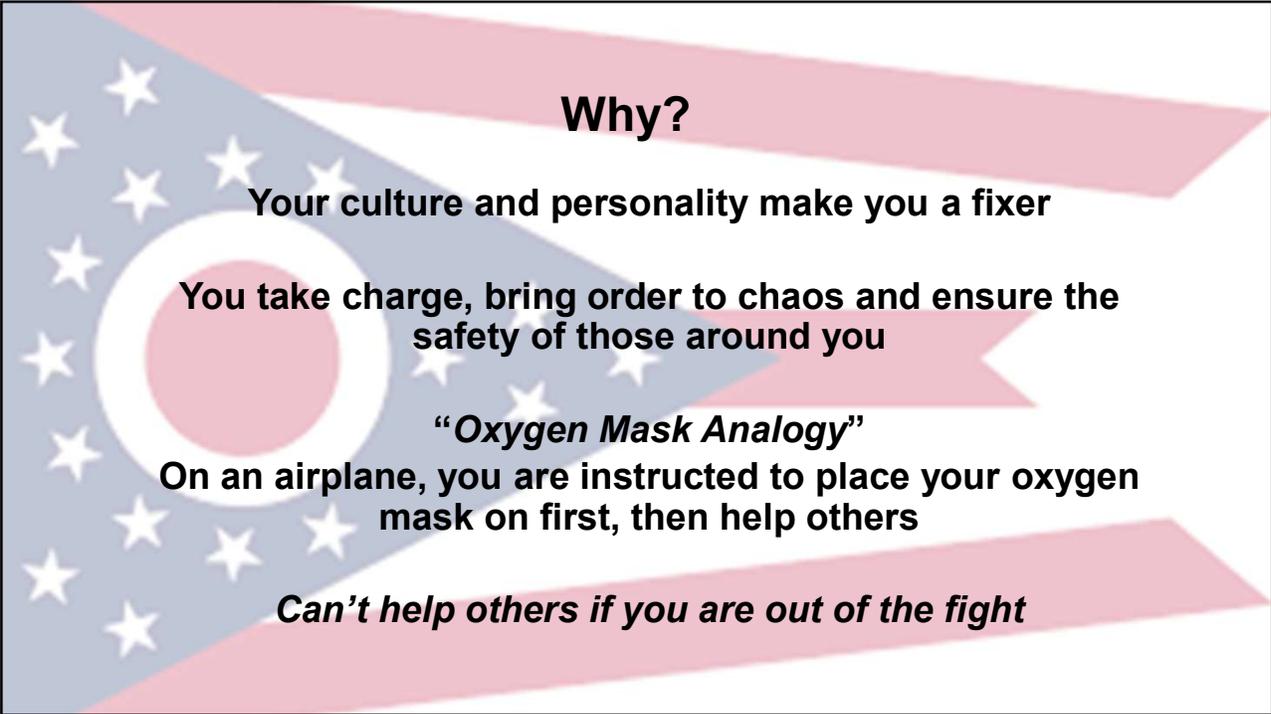


- Listen. Best thing they can do
- Spend time with the person. They don't REALLY want to be alone all the time
 - Reassure them that they are safe
- Help with tasks around the house but don't take over
- Give them some personal time but be available if they want company
- Their anger, fear and frustration may not be aimed at you

If you don't, who will?



- Your personal mental health and well being is YOUR responsibility
- You have a responsibility to yourself, your family and even your co-workers
- You have to be 100% everyday
- If not, you or someone else can get hurt, or worse
- People within the agency care
- Take the initiative to take care of yourself and others you care about



Why?

Your culture and personality make you a fixer

You take charge, bring order to chaos and ensure the safety of those around you

“Oxygen Mask Analogy”

On an airplane, you are instructed to place your oxygen mask on first, then help others

Can't help others if you are out of the fight



Contact Information

Steven M. Click, Director

First Responder Mental Wellness

Ohio Department of Public Safety

Public Safety Initiatives

1970 West Broad Street

Columbus, Ohio 43215

614-466-4470 Desk

614-206-3374 Cell

STClick@dps.ohio.gov

