

# Stress Continuum



## READY

### DEFINITION

- Optimal functioning
- Adaptive growth
- Wellness



### FEATURES

- At one's best
- Well-trained and prepared
- In control.
- Physically, mentally and spiritually fit
- Mission-focused
- Motivated
- Calm and steady
- Having fun
- Behaving ethically

## REACTING

### DEFINITION

- Mild and transient distress or impairment
- Always goes away
- Low risk



### CAUSES

- Any stressor

### FEATURES

- Feeling irritable, anxious, or down
- Loss of motivation
- Loss of focus
- Difficulty sleeping
- Muscle tension or other changes
- Not having fun

## INJURED

### DEFINITION

- More severe and persistent distress or impairment
- Leaves an emotional scar
- Higher risk



### CAUSES

- Life threat
- Loss
- Moral injury
- Wear and tear

### FEATURES

- Loss of control
- Panic, rage or depression
- No longer feeling like normal self
- Excessive guilt, shame or blame

## ILL

### DEFINITION

- Condition that could benefit from mental health treatment
- Unhealed stress injury causing life impairment



### CAUSES

- PTSD
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Substance abuse

### FEATURES

- Symptoms persist and worsen over time
- Severe distress or social or occupational impairment
- Hopelessness

## THRIVING

"I've got this"

## SURVIVING

"Something isn't right"

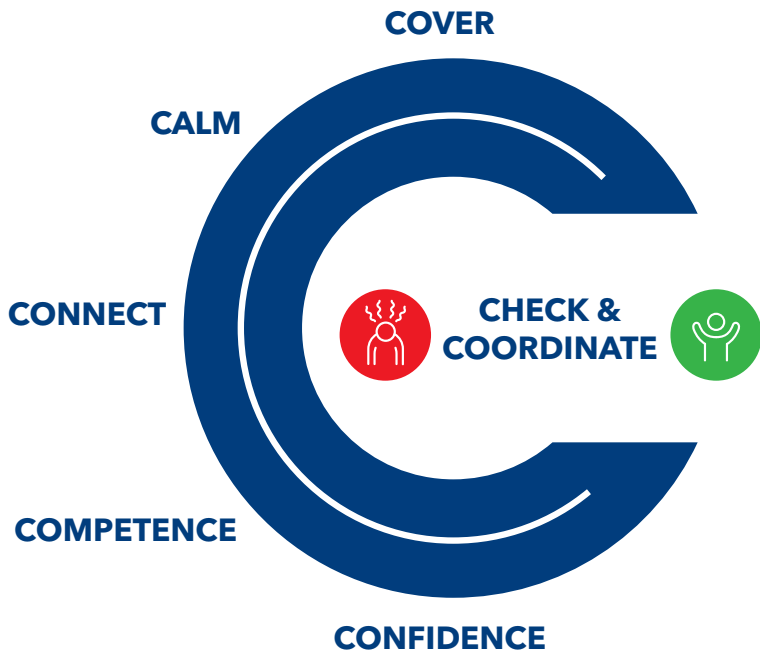
## STRUGGLING

"I can't keep this up"

## IN CRISIS

"I can't survive this"

# The seven Cs of Stress First Aid.



**Check:** Assess – observe and listen.

**Coordinate:** Get help. Refer as needed.

**Cover:** Re-establish safety.

**Calm:** Relax, slow down, refocus.

**Connect:** Get support from others.

**Competence:**  
Focus on skills and problem-solving.

**Confidence:**  
Restore self-esteem and hope.



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