FRONTLINE FRAMEWORKS

FORTIFY THE FRONTLINE

GROUNDING TECHNIQUES UNDER PRESSURE



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OVERVIEW

EMOTIONAL REGULATION ON THE JOB
PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

THIS TOOLKIT OFFERS CLEAR, FIELD-TESTED STRATEGIES TO HELP MANAGE EMOTIONAL INTENSITY DURING HIGH-STRESS CALLS, SHIFT WORK, OR CHALLENGING INTERACTIONS.

USE THESE TECHNIQUES IN REAL TIME TO REGAIN FOCUS, STAY SAFE, AND SUPPORT TEAM COMMUNICATION.

KEY TOOLS INCLUDED:

GROUNDING TECHNIQUES UNDER PRESSURE
BREATHWORK GUIDE
QUICK MENTAL CHECK-IN PROMPTS
PRINTABLE CALM-DOWN ROUTINE

USAGE RECOMMENDATIONS

USE DURING SHIFT CHANGE, AFTER TOUGH CALLS,
ON SCENE WHEN SAFE.
PRACTICE REGULARLY TO BUILD MUSCLE MEMORY
FOR HIGH-PRESSURE MOMENTS.

USE BEST JUDGMENT WHEN PRACTICING THESE TECHNIQUES.
ALWAYS PRIORITIZE SAFETY AND YOUR OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

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WHAT IS GROUNDING?

GROUNDING IS THE PRACTICE OF ANCHORING YOUR ATTENTION IN THE PRESENT MOMENT. IT INTERRUPTS SPIRALING THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONAL OVERWHELM.

QUICK GROUNDING TECHNIQUES:
5-4-3-2-1 METHOD

5 THINGS YOU SEE
4 THINGS YOU CAN TOUCH
3 THINGS YOU HEAR
2 THINGS YOU CAN SMELL
1 THING YOU CAN TASTE

SAY IT TO NAME IT:

SAY WHAT YOU'RE FEELING: "I'M STRESSED. I'M ANGRY."
REDUCES EMOTIONAL CHARGE BY ACKNOWLEDGING IT.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANCHOR

FOCUS ON ONE DETAIL IN YOUR ENVIRONMENT (E.G., PATCH ON A UNIFORM, TEXTURE OF A GLOVE).

USE THESE DURING CALLS, IN VEHICLES, ON SCENE, OR WHILE DEBRIEFING.

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USE THIS WHENEVER YOU FEEL TENSION RISING
OR BEFORE YOU RE-ENTER HIGH-STRESS TASKS:

BREATHWORK GUIDE

WHY BREATHWORK?

BREATHING EXERCISES CALM THE NERVOUS SYSTEM, LOWER STRESS HORMONES, AND IMPROVE DECISION-MAKING.

SIMPLE TACTICAL BREATHING



INHALE FOR 4 COUNTS
HOLD FOR 4 COUNTS
EXHALE FOR 4 COUNTS
HOLD FOR 4 COUNTS
REPEAT FOR 3–5 CYCLES

ALTERNATE METHOD:

INHALE SLOWLY THROUGH NOSE FOR 4 COUNTS
EXHALE THROUGH MOUTH FOR 6–8 COUNTS

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QUICK MENTAL CHECK-IN PROMPTS

USE THESE BEFORE, DURING, OR AFTER CALLS:
“WHAT AM I FEELING RIGHT NOW?”
“IS THIS ABOUT NOW, OR SOMETHING ELSE?”
“WHAT DO I NEED IN THIS MOMENT?”
“WHAT CAN I CONTROL RIGHT NOW?”
“HOW DO I WANT TO SHOW UP FOR MY TEAM?”

WRITE THESE ON CARDS OR KEEP THEM IN YOUR NOTES APP FOR FAST REFERENCE.

CALM-DOWN ROUTINE

FIELD-READY CALM-DOWN STEPS:

1. PAUSE.
2. 3 SLOW, STEADY BREATHS.
3. NAME WHAT YOU FEEL.
4. GROUND WITH 5-4-3-2-1.
5. CHOOSE YOUR NEXT BEST ACTION.

PRINT FOR LOCKERS, DASHBOARDS, CLIPBOARDS, OR WALLETS.

USE BEST JUDGMENT WHEN PRACTICING THESE TECHNIQUES. ALWAYS PRIORITIZE SAFETY AND YOUR OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES