

USN–USMC Combat and Operational Stress First Aid (COSFA)

VA National Center for PTSD (NCPTSD)
National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)
Defense Center of Excellence for Psychological Health &
Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE)
Headquarters, Marine Corps (HQMC COSC)

William P. Nash
Patricia Watson
Brett Litz





COSFA: Where Is the Need?



DEFENSE CENTERS
OF EXCELLENCE
For Psychological Health
& Traumatic Brain Injury

STRESS ZONE	READY	REACTING	INJURED	ILL
LEADER TOOLS	Training Cohesion Leadership			
CARE-GIVER TOOLS				Diagnosis Treatment Disposition
INDIVIDUAL TOOLS				



What Fills the Gap Between Leadership and Medical Care of Physical Injuries?



- Training in prevention
("Don't play with rattlesnakes in the desert.")
- Training in recognition
("If you get bit and it swells up, that's bad.")
- Training in first aid
("Immobilize the part, loose tourniquet, etc.")
- Training in knowing when to get help
("Venomous snake, numbness, fever, etc.")



Requirements for “Stress First Aid” to Be Useful Operationally



- Must be deployable and expeditionary
- Must be a continuous process, not “one-shot”
- Must fit into the hands of all stakeholders:
 - Individual Marines, Sailors, and family members
 - Unit leaders
 - Chaplains
 - Unit medical personnel
- Must make full use of existing leadership and unit cohesion as protective & healing agents
- Must help individuals recognize when further help is needed (i.e., be based on Continuum Model)



COSFA: A Stress Toolkit



- Developed by modifying existing “Psychological First Aid” procedures developed for civilians
- Three levels of stress first aid in COSFA:
 - **Basic COSFA:** self aid and buddy aid
 - **Advanced COSFA:** unit leader or care-giver aid
 - **Continuous Care:** ongoing monitoring and follow-up
- Goals and objectives
 - Augment unit stress monitoring and identification
 - Intervene early and at lowest level
 - Reduce risk for stress injuries to become illnesses
 - Ensure treatment is received when indicated (unit case management function)



COSFA: Six Core Actions (6-C's) (Not Necessarily In This Order)



Continuous Care

- 1) **Check:** assess and reassess

Basic COSFA

- 2) **Cover:** get to safety; keep safe
- 3) **Calm:** reduce heart rate & emotional level

Advanced COSFA

- 4) **Connect:** ensure social support; listen
- 5) **Cultivate Confidence:** mentor back to duty

Continuous Care

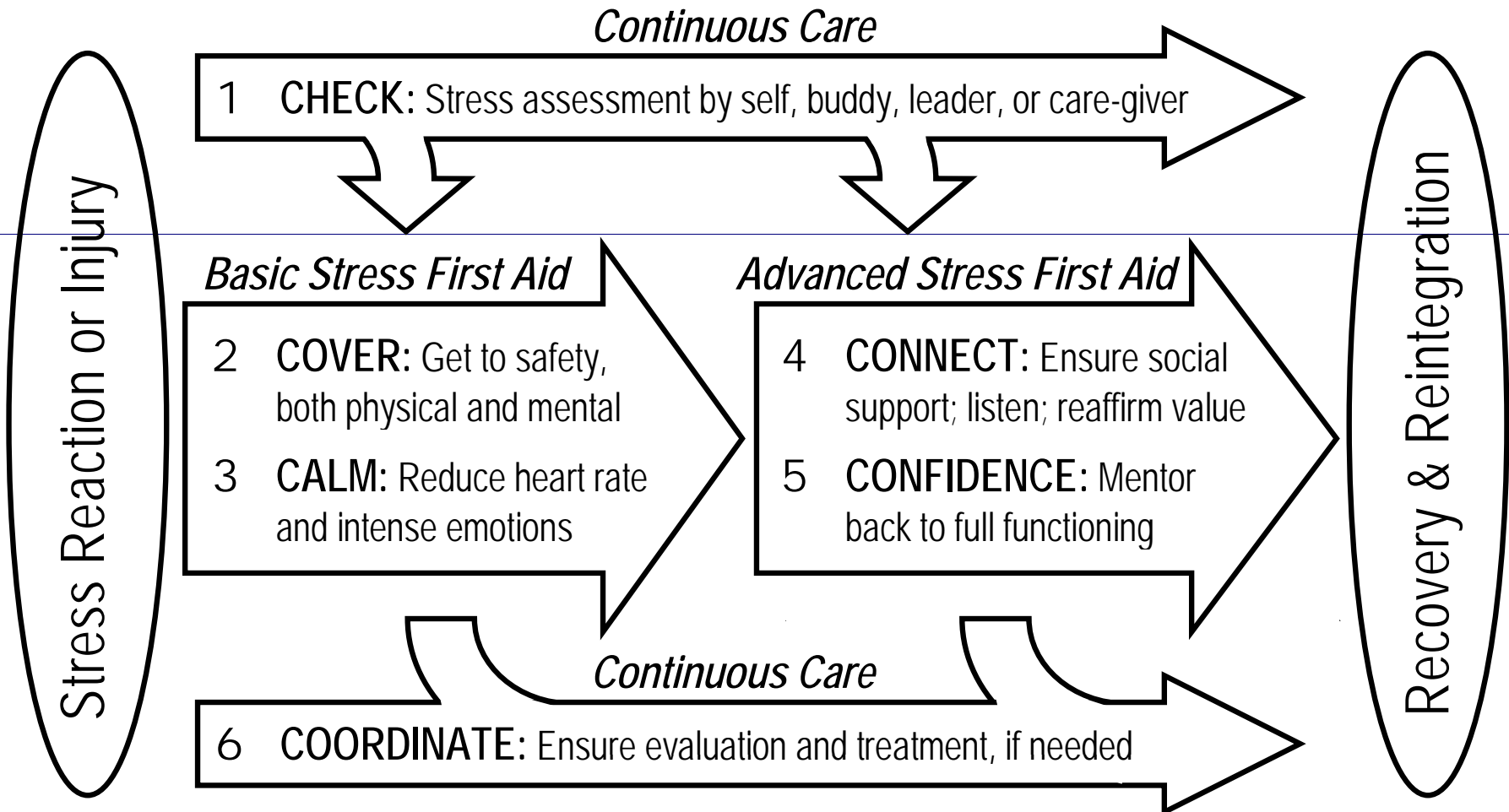
- 6) **Coordinate:** refer for needed care, follow up



COSFA: Six Core Actions (6-C's)



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COSFA: Yellow & Orange Zone Tools



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STRESS ZONE	READY	REACTING	INJURED	ILL
LEADER TOOLS	Training Cohesion Leadership	<i>Check</i> <i>Coordinate</i> <i>Connect</i> <i>Cult. Conf.</i>	<i>Check</i> <i>Coordinate</i> <i>Connect</i> <i>Cult. Conf.</i>	
CARE-GIVER TOOLS		<i>Check</i> <i>Coordinate</i> <i>Connect</i> <i>Cult. Conf.</i>	<i>Check</i> <i>Coordinate</i> <i>Connect</i> <i>Cult. Conf.</i>	
INDIVIDUAL TOOLS		<i>Check</i> <i>Cover</i> <i>Calm</i>	<i>Check</i> <i>Cover</i> <i>Calm</i>	

Questions?

