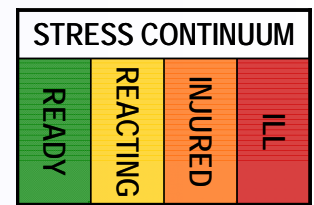




COSC Intervention Framework and Spirituality Interplay

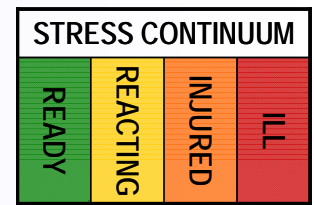


**LCDR J. Michael Hakanson, CHC, USN;
Deputy Wing Chaplain, First Marine Air Wing, Okinawa**

- **Master of Divinity, Andrews University, 1988**
- **Master of Theology (Christian Spirituality and Trauma),
Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, 2006**
- **Naval Sub-Specialty Code: 1440 (Pastoral Counseling)**
- **Author of: *The Spiritual Side of Traumatic Stress: Christian Spirituality and Social Neuroscience considerations for Clinicians and Military Chaplains*, Waldport Press, 2008**



Why approach the COSC Continuum from "Spirituality"?



COSC incorporates elements recognized as within the domain of Spirituality:

Among Americans, recent Gallop polls indicate that almost 80% profess a belief in the Divine.

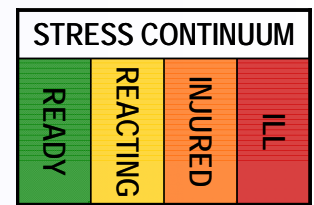
While many Americans today might not consider themselves religious, their professed beliefs show they have integrated spiritual elements into assumptions about life, morality, right, wrong, justice and self worth.

Chaplains or lay psychological first responders may consider symptoms of stress as primarily a spiritual problem rather than primarily a stress reaction.

Clinicians who are not trained in the languages of faith may be looking past vital tools to bring Marines and Sailors back to the ready posture.



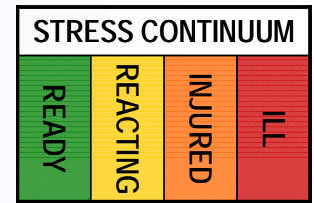
Workshop Outcomes



- **Recognize Spirituality interplay within COSC**
- **Recognize the impact of Spirituality on the continuum**
- **Understand how spiritual issues can make both positive and negative contributions to stress injuries**
- **Understand how the impact of a loss of faith affects the COSC continuum**
- **Take away tools for working with stress-injured individuals from the perspective of Spirituality**



Religion [vs.] Spirituality



[S]pirituality as the subject matter or material object of the discipline is “the experience of conscious involvement in the project of life-integration through self-transcendence toward the ultimate value one perceives.” Sandra Schneiders – *Minding the Spirit: The Study of Christian Spirituality*

Religion

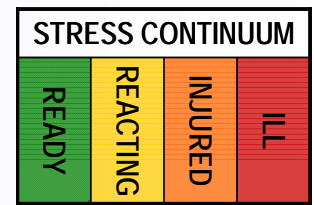
- Denominational Affiliation
- Doctrinal Tenants
- Cultural Saliency

Spirituality

- Deeply Held Beliefs/truths
- Religious Practices
- Moral Foundations
- Meaningful Observances
- Motivators to Action



Spirituality and the "Assumptive World"



**“Assumptive World: A strongly held set of assumptions about the world and the self which is confidently maintained and used as a means of recognizing, planning and acting.”
Charles Parks – British Journal of Medical Psychology, 48, (1975):32**

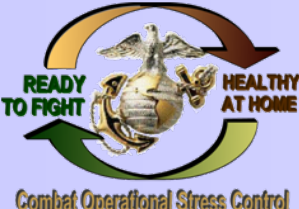
Puts our life into a larger framework

- **“My life makes sense; I have peace”**

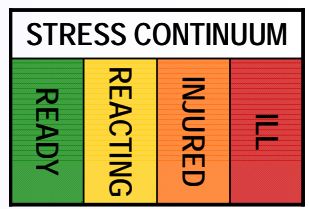
Explains the “big picture”

- **“I can still be happy when others suffer”**

Life’s Boundaries of possibilities and probabilities

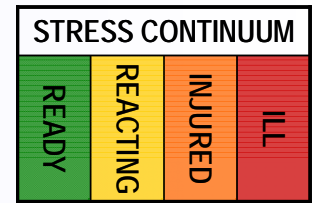


Self-Assessment Summary

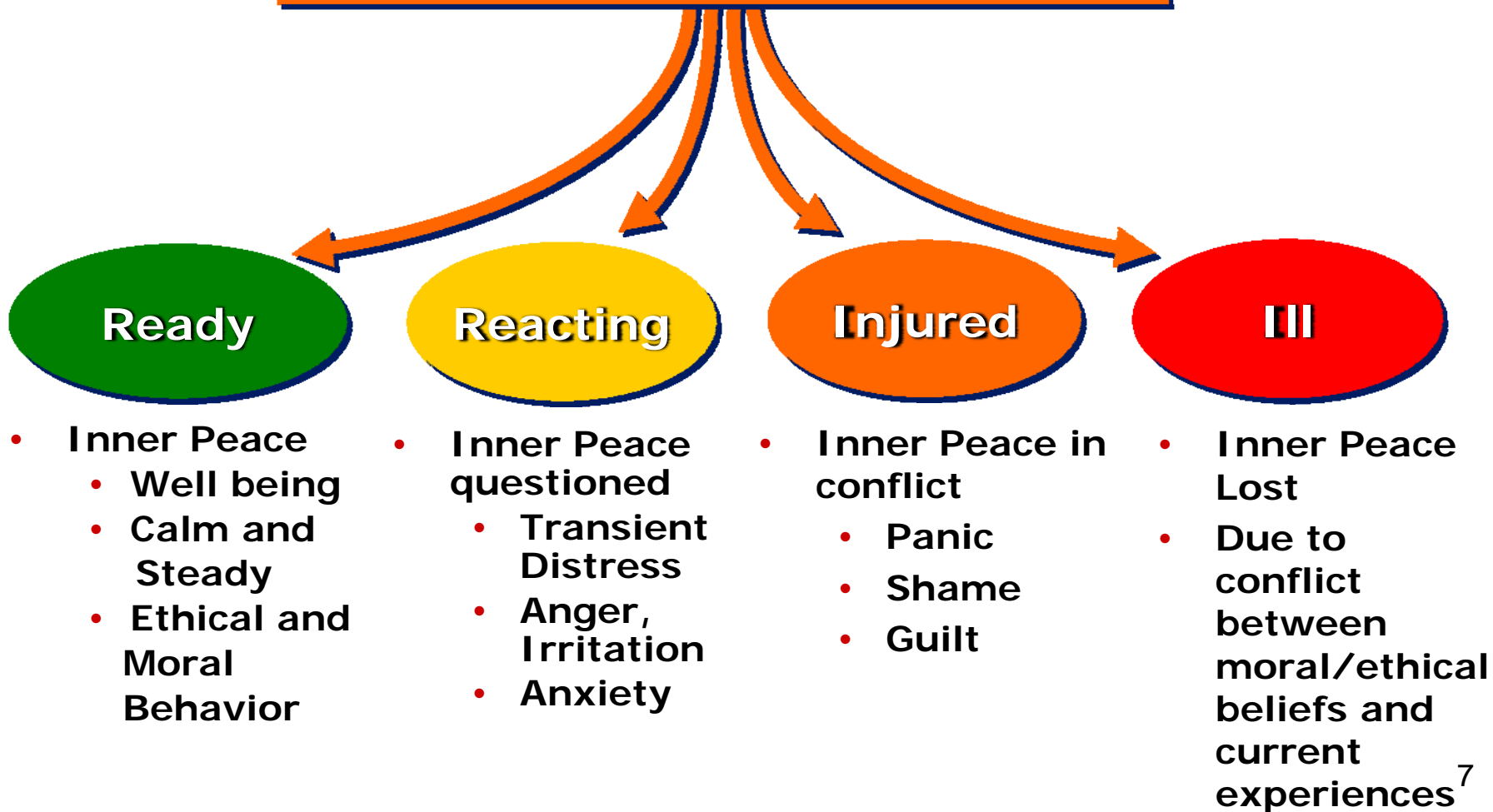


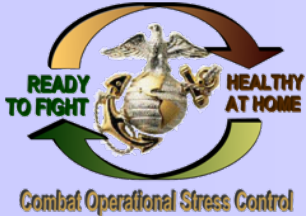
	Okay	Needs Work	Needs Help
Relationships	Open Communication	Tension	Coldness or Fighting
Work function	Effective	Indifferent	Hostile environment
Public behavior	Patient, calm	Aggressive, irritable	Risky, hostile
Substance abuse	Not an issue	Could be an issue	Is an issue
Money and finances	Under control	Financial worries	Financial trouble
Physical and mental health	Healthy and fit	Indifferent	Disturbing thoughts, feelings
Roles in life	Balanced, comfortable	Out of balance	Pulled apart
Spirituality	Connected, peaceful	Something's missing	Empty, lack of "moral compass"

Interplay of Spirituality with Continuum



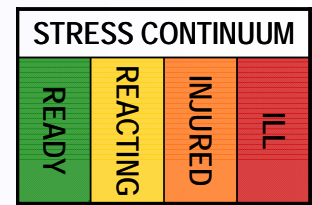
Elements of Spirituality in each sector





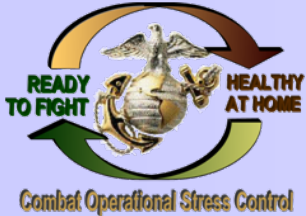
Four Sources of Stress

Injury



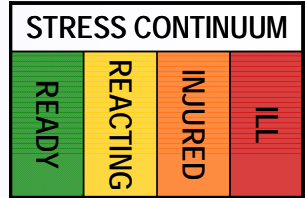
Intense or Prolonged Combat or Operational Stress





8. Spirituality

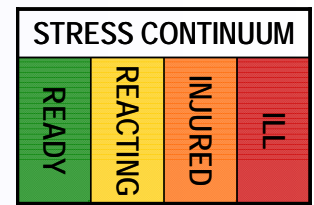
Creativity, order, connection



Okay	Needs Work	Needs Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoy worship <input type="checkbox"/> Happy with fellowship <input type="checkbox"/> Happy with spiritual expression <input type="checkbox"/> Able to give and receive love <input type="checkbox"/> Appreciating beauty <input type="checkbox"/> Creative <input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable with your place in world <input type="checkbox"/> Connected, peaceful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Less tolerant of different beliefs <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling distant from God; want to get closer <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know how to love or feel loved <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling distant from others <input type="checkbox"/> Struggling to understand others <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure where you fit in <input type="checkbox"/> Something's missing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> No reverence for anything outside self <input type="checkbox"/> Alone and wandering aimlessly <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritually empty <input type="checkbox"/> Don't care about others <input type="checkbox"/> Nothing seems important <input type="checkbox"/> Feel powerless to change life <input type="checkbox"/> Out of touch <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of purpose <input type="checkbox"/> Lacking a "moral compass"



“Established” Neurologically?

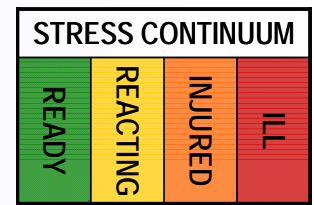


How many “Big Picture” assumptions are established genetically? How many environmentally?

- Assumption that snakes are dangerous – Hardwired
- Assumption that small children are not dangerous
- Assumption that good eventually wins over evil
- Assumption that if you are careful you will live long
- Assumption that God is with us and will protect us
- Assumption that bad things do happen to good people but not too often



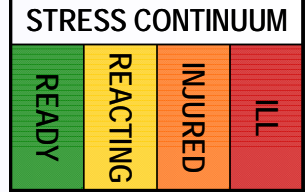
“Established” Neurologically?



Neurological pathways for the most common things people think and do are likely already in place in the infant – but in order to remain, they must fire. Source: Niels Jern, 1960 Nobel Prize recipient in immunology.

- **When an infant is nurtured, what neuro pathways are being strengthened?**
- **When the “fight or flight” system is activated, part of the brain is shut out.**
 - **Afterward, the brain tries to make sense of the experience.**
 - **Imagine if the experience is “over the top”**
 - **Imagine if the experiences pile up**

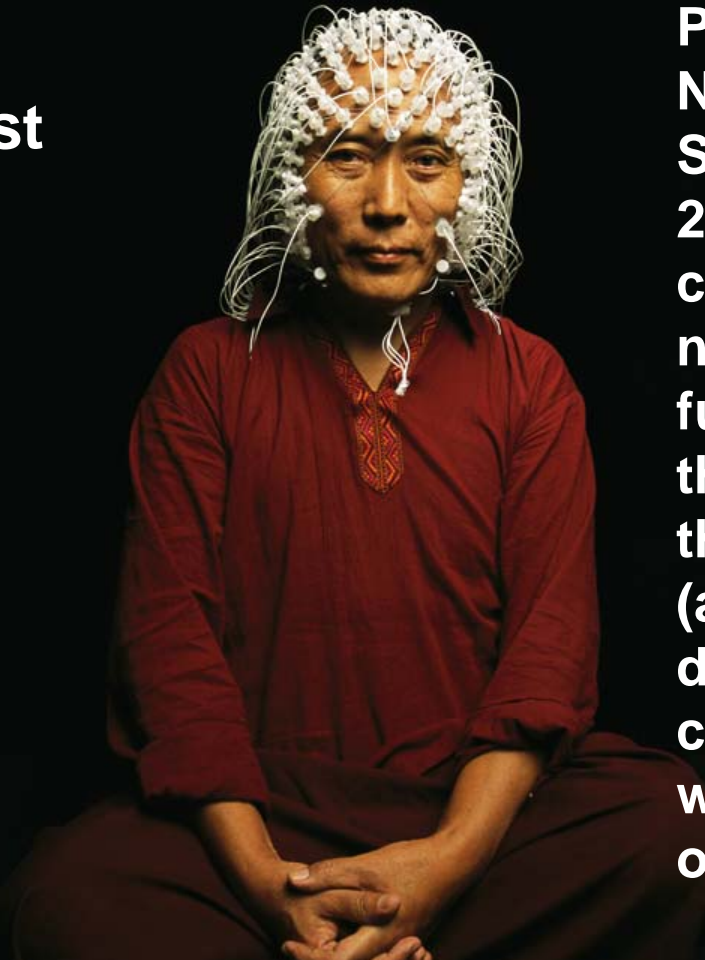
Wired to use Spirituality?



**Richard Davidson of
University of
Wisconsin**

**- Studied Buddhist
Practitioners**

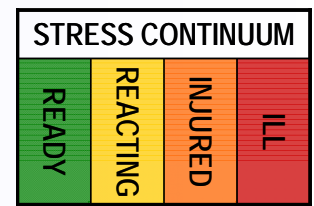
**Un-conditional
Compassion =
Grace in
Christianity**



Davidson's results from the meditation study, published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences in November 2004, took the concept of neuroplasticity a step further by showing that mental training through meditation (and presumably other disciplines) can itself change the inner workings and circuitry of the brain.



Significance of "Un-conditional Compassion"



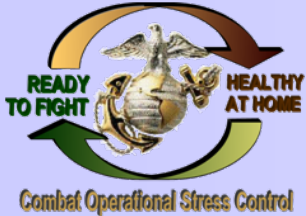
Could the object of the Buddhist Practitioner's meditation be as significant in understanding brain function as their ability?

- A large neural network was activated – a possible “Community” of neurons?

Links between Spirituality and social interaction:

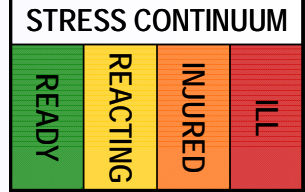
- Interpersonal Grace – both to give and receive
- Survivor guilt issues, assumptions about God.

Now reexamine “Slide 8” from Warrior Transition II



8. Spirituality

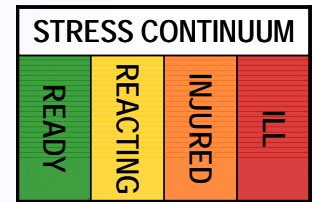
Creativity, order, connection



Okay	Needs Work	Needs Help
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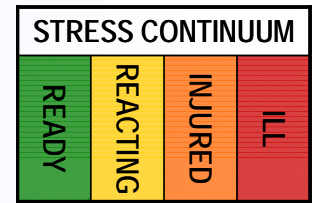
How “interpersonal Grace” affects Assumptions of Self



- I don't like what happened – but God is still just.
- I don't trust God any more – What does it mean to be good?
- I missed this deadline, but know I can make the next one
- I can't seem to perform – There is something wrong with me
- There is nothing I could have done to save her
- It should have been me rather than her



Observed results of Traumatic Stress and Spirituality

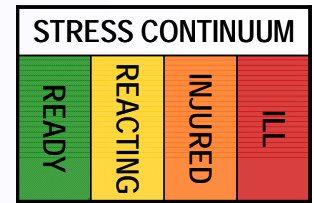


- Extreme “stress injury” often results in loss of faith
- Stressed individuals seek out a chaplain more often than a clinical counselor.
- Returning vets have a high rate of substituting their “Group” for their “church” and substituting their “clinician” for their “pastor”.
- Memorials become a “Holy” place to socially interact with loss.

***Neuropathways associated with thoughts and actions in the domain of Spirituality seem to *need* to fire in times of stress**



COSC utilizing Spirituality interplay

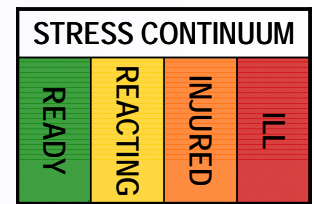


Accomplished in the “Community” associated closest to the person’s own Spirituality

- **Like-minded persons – Ref: Richard Molica**
- **Incorporate respected people of faith to assist those with stress injuries**
- **Create stories and/or memorials**
- **Professional consultation relationship between clinician and chaplain**



References and Resources



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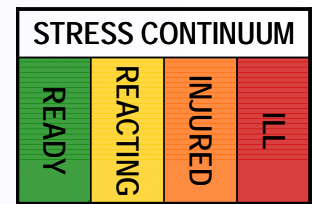
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