“...journalists who are equipped to care for themselves emotionally can stay in the field longer, deliver more compelling reports and return home with fewer problems.” (Sharon Schmickle)
Due to nature of their job Journalists are prone to mental health issues including:

- Stress
- Depression
- Psychological Trauma
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

If not taken care of it can affect badly in long-term
Case Study

Kevin Carter Suicide Note

I am depressed ... I am haunted by the vivid memories of killings and corpses and anger and pain ... of starving or wounded children, of trigger-happy madmen, often police, of killer executioners ...
What is Trauma?
TRAUMA IS A PSYCHOLOGICAL INJURY JUST LIKE A PHYSICAL INJURY?

“One can be traumatized being exposed events such as violence, unusual death or threat which causes overwhelming feelings of helplessness, horror, fear, shame, guilt that overpowers the minds defenses and causes emotional injury”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMMEDIATELY</th>
<th>AFTERWARDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trembling</td>
<td>Anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>Numbness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crying</td>
<td>Hyperactivity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Trauma & Self Care for Journalists

## Trauma Checklist – Red Flags

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exposed to Violent Event</th>
<th>Red Flags</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thinking a lot about it</td>
<td>Feel numb when exposed to disaster or violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nightmares about it</td>
<td>Feel jumpy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel upset when thinking about it</td>
<td>Difficulty in concentrating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart pounding, sweaty when thinking about it</td>
<td>Back aches or pain since event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel distant from others</td>
<td>Trouble sleeping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbursts of anger</td>
<td>Any change behavior since event</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have any of these, apply self-care skills.
SELF CARE CAN PROTECT YOU
Trauma & Self Care for Journalists

SUPPORT” IS KEY – Remember B.D.A Principle

Before
• Pre Assignment Preparation

During
• Support / Apply Skills

After
• Support / Follow Up & Monitoring
Group Activity

You are going for coverage of a bomb blast scene how would you apply a B.D.A. Principle?
Trauma & Self Care for Journalists

Before

- Pre plan if you can (picture your action)
- Imagine what you going to see there
- Be prepared to see blood, body parts etc
- Rehearse what you will do in different scenarios.
- Speak to someone who has done it before
- Organize support system
  - Organization
  - Senior
  - Peers, Friends
Trauma & Self Care for Journalists

During

- Focus on the Job
- Avoid disturbing scene where possible
- Work in Group
- Communicate
  - Organization
  - Peers, Senior
- Deep Breathing
- Have Prayer (God keep me safe)
- Think alternate for coverage
Trauma & Self Care for Journalists

After

• Talk it out
• Walk it out
• Social Support Friends & Family
  ➢ Friends
  ➢ Family
• Do activities you like most
• Exercise, Sports
• Nutritious Food
• Monitor – If problem persists more than 6 weeks get help
Trauma & Self Care for Journalists

Stress Thermometer

10 – Very stressed, tense, out of control

...at 7 little time to react before 10 when confronted with stressful situation

0 – The most relaxed & peaceful you can imagine

...at 3 you have more time to react before 10 when faced with stressful situation
Trauma & Self Care for Journalists

What is your Current Stress Level?

How Can we Reduce Stress?
Stress Management Techniques

Safe Place
Stress Management Techniques

Physical Activity
Social Support

- Family
- Friends
- Peers
- Restaurant
- Mosque

Research shows that a significant buffer to stress is active social support
Stress Management Techniques

Progressive Muscle Relaxation And Meditation

**RELAXATION ROUTINE**

1. **SIT ON A CHAIR**...
2. **"SCRUNCH" UP YOUR FACE**...
3. **TENSE YOUR ARMS**...
4. **TENSE UP YOUR SHOULDERS AND CHEST**...
5. **TENSE UP YOUR LEGS**...
6. **BREATHE IN RELAXATION**...

...THEN RELAX!

...BREATHE OUT TENSION
Stress Management Techniques

Nutritious Food for Stress Management

**Vitamin B**
Meat, grains, eggs, lentils, nuts, corn

**Vitamin C**
Citrus, mango, tomato, green leafy, capsicum

**Amino Acid**
Egg, meat, fish

**Magnesium**
Nuts, dairy, vegetable, fruits, fish, whole grain
Stress Management Techniques

Following Increases Stress

- Artificial sweeteners
- Food colouring/Additives/Preservatives
- Sugar
- Caffeine – none after 2.00pm
- Drugs / Nicotine
- Alcohol

Stimulate heart rate, change mood, addictive, raise blood sugar – then crash
Stress Management Techniques

• You are resilient
• **YOU** can use strategies to build mental fitness
• Nutrition
• Social support
• Belly breathing
• Healthy thinking
• Reading your own signs
• Physical exercise

• Reactions to trauma ARE NORMAL but need to be dealt with
Stress Management Techniques

There is no shame in seeking professional help…
Questions?