

PTSD

Not All Wounds Are Visible

PTSD is an injury, not an illness or a weakness. The normal brain processing and functions have been seriously altered due to a traumatic experience or repeated exposure to acute stress. It's not about what's wrong with you—It's about *what happened to you*.

Though every first responder is susceptible, there are ways to prepare for and process trauma that can significantly reduce the intensity and duration of symptoms. There are also effective methods for professionals to treat PTSD.

Preparation is critical to being able to limit the intensity of the symptoms and to constructively process trauma. Symptoms include: serious sleep disorders, anxiety attacks, intrusive thoughts and memories, poor coping skills, risk taking behaviors, problems at work, relationship problems, depression, feelings of helplessness, poor concentration, anger or rage, all-encompassing fear, and physical ailments.

Training for the Spirit

It is from the spirit that we process stress, overcome trauma, and serve with compassion. It is our motivation, beliefs, character, and resiliency. Traditional first responder training neglects the spirit. "Bulletproof Spirit" focuses on training the most essential component of us all that makes us human—our spirit.

firstresponderwellness.com



Endorsements

"This book and training could save your career, your marriage, even your life."

San Diego Police Chief Shelley Zimmerman: "Bulletproof Spirit" details practical steps that are not only effective but essential to protect and ensure the wellness of those who serve. It is a *must read* for all first responders and their families."

Lt. Col. (ret.) David Grossman: "An excellent life-saving book. The tragic psychological impact of traumatic events can be avoided and prevented, and this book is a powerful and effective illumination of these vital methodologies."

Nancy Bohl-Penrod, PhD: "First responders typically do not understand the potentially devastating extent of the impact their chosen professions can have on their minds, bodies, spirits, health, and families. "Bulletproof Spirit" provides an essential and practical guide...to enable them to live and serve in health and wellness."

Kevin Gilmartin, PhD: "This book would be a valuable asset to any first responder, clinician, or peer support person working with first responders."

Bobby Smith, PhD: "...thought provoking and informative. (Captain Willis) utilizes real life stories from the warriors who have walked through the valley. His work emphasizes the significance of wellness encompassing the mind, body, and spirit, and he reminds us that it is vital not only to nurture but to be nurtured as well."

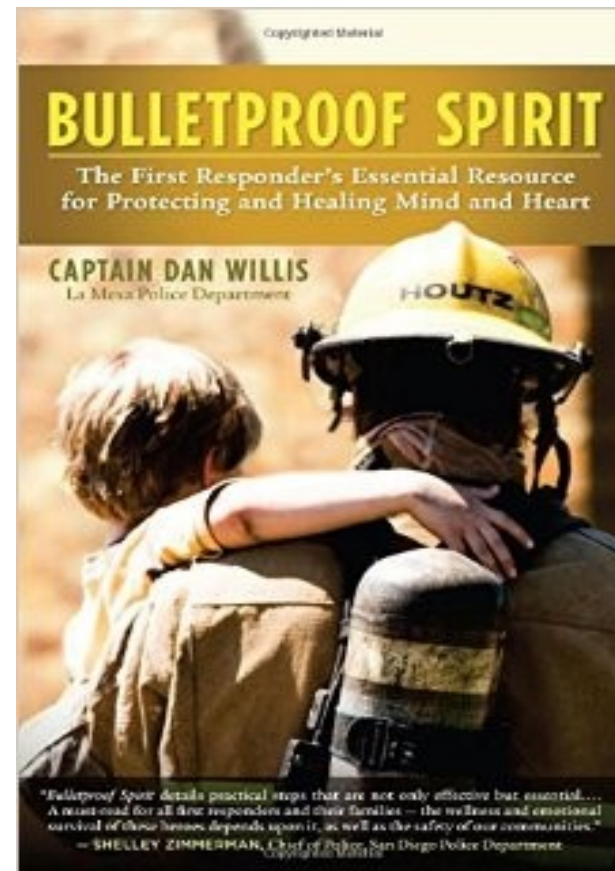
Clarke Paris "My Life for Your Life" author: ... "Read this book and think about the good people who wear the badge and the terribly inhumane things they experience. "Bulletproof Spirit" will help heal first responders and help them find purpose and happiness once again. It is an honor to endorse this book. It *will* save lives."

Catherine Butler, PhD: "Captain Willis has written a practical, extremely useful, and important guide for first responders everywhere. This is a vital resource for every first responder, care giver, and agency manager. This book offers the essential keys for preparation, protection, and healing from trauma..."

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International Academy of Public Safety

Bulletproof Spirit



*The First Responders
Essential Resource for
Protecting and Healing
Mind and Heart*

Book / Training / Online course

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Emotional Survival Guidebook

First responders (police, fire personnel, paramedics, the military, nurses and trauma workers) tend to suffer immeasurably from the inherent acute stress and trauma of their professions. Consistently being immersed in violence, tragedies, danger, and suffering can often scar their spirits, leading to self-destructive behaviors, depression, and emotional suffering that devastate their families and their own well-being.

“Bulletproof Spirit” provides essential proactive wellness strategies and wellness methods that help to protect, heal, and nurture the spirit of those who serve.

La Mesa Police Captain (ret) Dan Willis has served as an officer for 26 years. He is a former Homicide detective, SWAT Commander, and coordinator of his agency's wellness program. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy where he studied emotional survival, as well as a graduate of San Diego State University.



...A Matter of Life and Death

- The #1 cause of death for police officers every year is suicide—Nearly 200
- 120,000 (18%) working police officers suffer from PTSD...Tens of thousands more suffer from Acute Stress Disorder, major depression, emotional numbness, and anxiety disorders
- 25-30% of first responders have stressed-related health problems: diabetes, heart disease, circulatory and digestive disorders...
- 40% of all officers have a serious sleeping disorder
- First responders are twice as likely to become alcoholics than the general population
- 15-20% of first responders have addiction problems: alcoholism, gambling, prescription drugs, and others

A first responder with a damaged spirit is in danger of self-destructing...and is incapable of providing the professional service the community needs, deserves, and demands.

Don't merely “hope for the best” and wait for the job to victimize you—The proactive wellness strategies in “*Bulletproof Spirit*” can help to mitigate the adverse effects of the job and breathe life into your spirit.

**Book / In-Person Training /
Online course**
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The Warning Signs...

1. **Isolation:** There is a natural tendency to become increasingly more isolated, becoming disengaged and not wanting to make decisions away from work. They become distant, detached, and uninvolved.
2. **Irritability:** Becoming increasingly “on edge”, restless, agitated, with a short fuse.
3. **Anger:** A pattern of taking out stress and frustration on others. Anger is used to control, keep others at a distance, and to avoid being engaged.
4. **Emotional Numbness:** The tendency to eventually shut down emotionally—unable to feel anything—to become emotionally dead and indifferent to everyone and everything.
5. **Loss of Work Satisfaction/ Cynicism/ Distrust:** This, along with a sense of helplessness and hopelessness, can become overwhelming and all-consuming.
6. **Drinking** or taking other substances as a perceived need to try to sleep, relax, or to forget.
7. **Depression:** Ignored or suppressed, this may worsen to potentially become severe, resulting in substance abuse, broken family and lives, lost careers, and a host of other debilitating problems, up to and including suicide.

Book / Training information
firstresponderwellness.com
Online course