

# INTENTIONAL vs PASSIVE

Why do many first responders remain passive when it comes to exercising their free will to heal? There are a variety of answers to this question – a few are listed below. Check the boxes beside any of these with which you identify most strongly.

- ☐ **ALTRUISM** *"My job is to sacrifice myself for others."*
  - ☐ **PRIDE** *"There's nothing they can throw at me that I can't handle."*
  - ☐ **FIRST RESPONDER CULTURE** *"We don't complain. We don't have problems. Buckle up and drive on."*
  - ☐ **DENIAL** *"I'm fine. It's all those other jokers around me that need help."*
  - ☐ **FEAR** *"If my co-workers or command sense that I'm struggling, I'll lose their trust. I could get benched or lose my job. Gotta keep this quiet."*
  - ☐ **DEFEATISM** *"Nothing I've tried has worked. I won't be able to change."*
  - ☐ Other reasons?
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## elements of INTENTIONALITY

1. Having a compelling goal or reason to do something

2. Taking appropriate action



## Officer Green's Story

Officer Green was a big-city law enforcement officer. During his early years, he reveled in the adrenaline rush of a high speed chase, confronting a suspect with warrants, and protecting vulnerable citizens from bad guys. But department politics, graveyard shifts, forced overtime, and public anti-police sentiment began wearing him down. During his eleventh year, he responded to a call that shook him to his core – a deranged man had barricaded himself in his home with his six-year-old son. Officer Green was the first to make it into the house, only to find that the perp had shot himself and his

son. Soon after, he began having nightmares and explosive anger. His relationship with his wife had been rocky over the past few years, but it got much worse. She moved out. He began to resort to pornography to distract from his loneliness, and before long, he began connecting with women over the Internet. This led to multiple adulterous affairs, and his wife filed for divorce. Due to budget cuts, he was let go from the department, and he got a job with a smaller municipality. This meant a big cut in income which made it difficult to pay child support for his three children. Barely able to make ends meet, he started drinking heavily and found himself in the darkest pit of his life.

## DESTRUCTIVE CHOICES

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## HEALING CHOICES

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# Go-To PAINKILLERS

The struggle you face is not only PTSD but also a larger spiritual disorder involving your free will. Freedom from this disorder starts with becoming more aware that all of us have veiled habits and “go-to painkillers” that we use to help us cope with the pain caused by our past.

Think of ways stress and trauma have attacked your life. What are some of your “go-to painkiller” behaviors? Check the boxes by the following behaviors you turn to currently or have resorted to in the past.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I shut people out and don't share what I'm really thinking | <input type="checkbox"/> I sit at home all day when I know I should be doing something |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I take unnecessary risks in search of a high               | <input type="checkbox"/> I blame the “broken system” when it may be me that is broken  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I drink to cope  | <input type="checkbox"/> I buy things to make myself happy                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I abuse my medications or other substances                 | <input type="checkbox"/> I pick up hobbies but don't stick with them                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I play video games to escape                               | <input type="checkbox"/> What else?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I hop from relationship to relationship or sleep around    | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I use pornography  | _____  |



# What INTENTIONAL ACTIONS do I need to take?

How do the following actions – which are common for a first responder – give us some ideas about how we need to act toward first responder stress and trauma?

- *Getting medical attention when you are injured*
- *Calling for backup when you need it*
- *Training*
- *Keeping physically fit*
- *Developing alliances*
- *Debriefing after a traumatic call*
- *Keeping all your equipment in top working order*
- *Situational awareness*

What are three ways you plan to involve God intentionally in the process of your healing?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE

Pray for the three goals you wrote above at least five times in the coming week. Be prepared to share at least one of your goals with the group next week and report on any progress or answers to your prayers.