

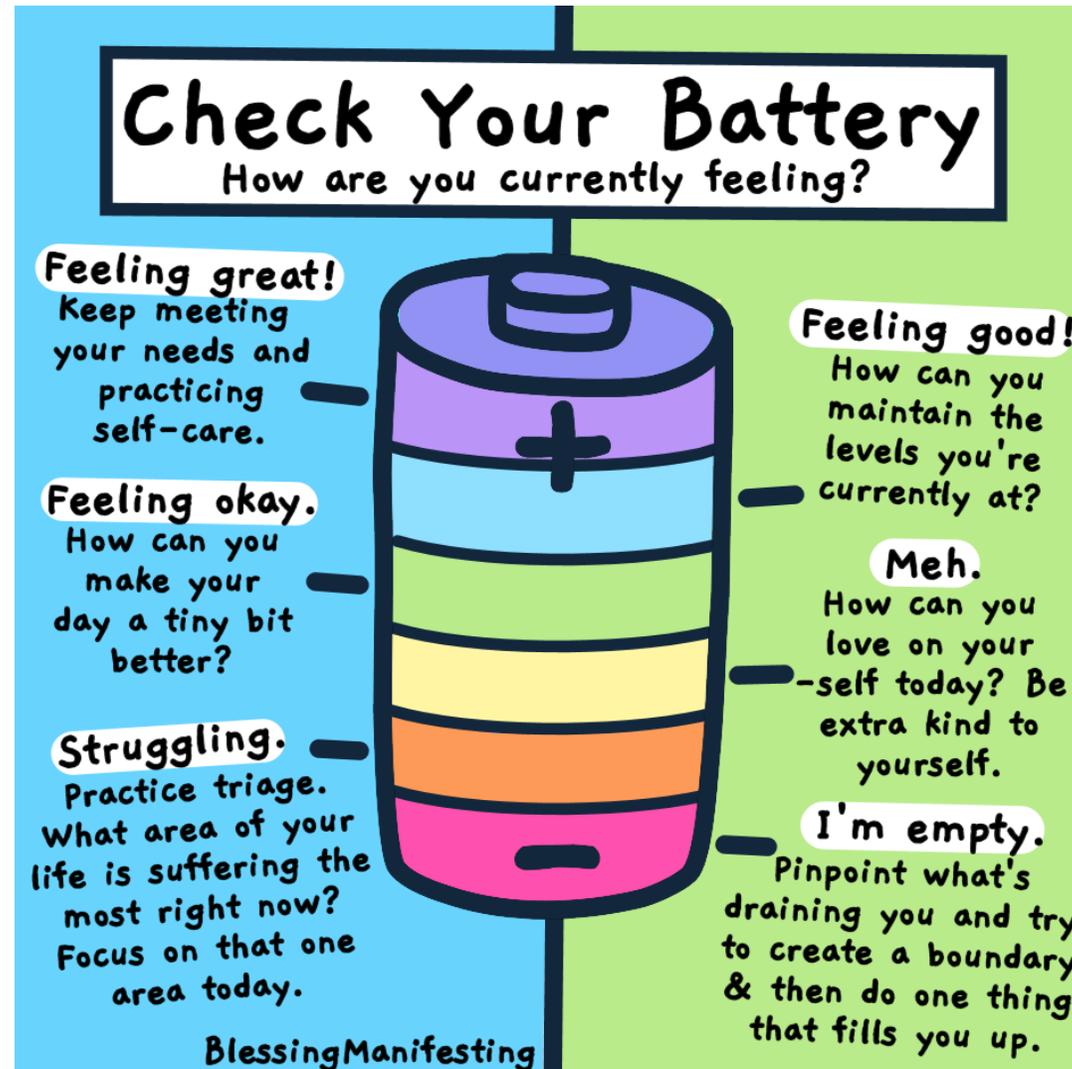
Self-care: Evidence-based strategies to cope with stress and trauma, especially in a global pandemic

Adapted from trainings and work done by Amanda L. Farrell, Ph.D., and Timothy J. Ainger, Ph.D.

What exactly IS self-care?

- What is self-care?
 - Self-care is any activity that we do deliberately in order to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health. Although it's a simple concept in theory, it's something we very often overlook. Good self-care is key to improved mood and reduced anxiety. It's also key to a good relationship with oneself and others.
- What isn't self-care?
 - Knowing what self-care is not might be even more important. It is not something that we force ourselves to do, or something we don't enjoy doing. As Agnes Wainman explained, self-care is "something that refuels us, rather than takes from us."
 - Self-care isn't a selfish act either. It is not only about considering our needs; it is rather about knowing what we need to do in order to take care of ourselves, being subsequently, able to take care of others as well. That is, if I don't take enough care of myself, I won't be in the place to give to my loved ones, my work, my friends, my clients, etc., either.

What exactly IS self-care?



THE 8 AREAS OF SELF-CARE

Self-care - "activities and practices we engage in on a regular basis to reduce stress and enhance our well-being" – unknown

At Habits for Wellbeing, we focus on the following 8 areas of self-care...

- 1 PHYSICAL SELF-CARE**
Physical self-care involves movement of the body, health, nutrition, sleep, rest, physical touch, and sexual needs.


- 2 PSYCHOLOGICAL SELF-CARE**
Psychological self-care involves learning new things, applying consequential thinking, engaging intrinsic motivation, practising mindfulness and creativity.


- 3 EMOTIONAL SELF-CARE**
Emotional self-care involves enhancing emotional literacy, navigating emotions, increasing empathy, managing stress effectively and developing compassion for self and others.


- 4 SOCIAL SELF-CARE**
Social self-care involves having a supportive group and network of relationships around you whom you trust and turn to when required. Having caring and supportive people around you builds a sense of belonging and connectedness.


- 5 FINANCIAL SELF-CARE**
Financial self-care involves being responsible with your finances (i.e. living expenses, income, insurances, savings etc.) and having a conscious relationship with money.


- 6 SPIRITUAL SELF-CARE**
Spiritual self-care involves the beliefs and values that are important to you and guide your life. This includes pursuing your noble goals and the practices that support you developing spiritual awareness.


- 7 ENVIRONMENTAL SELF-CARE**
Environmental self-care involves having an organised, well maintained and clutter-free work, business and home environment, having clean clothes and a clean and well maintained mode of transport. Also minimising waste and monitoring technology time.


- 8 PROFESSIONAL SELF-CARE**
Professional self-care involves sharing your strengths and gifts, having clear professional boundaries, whilst living your purpose.



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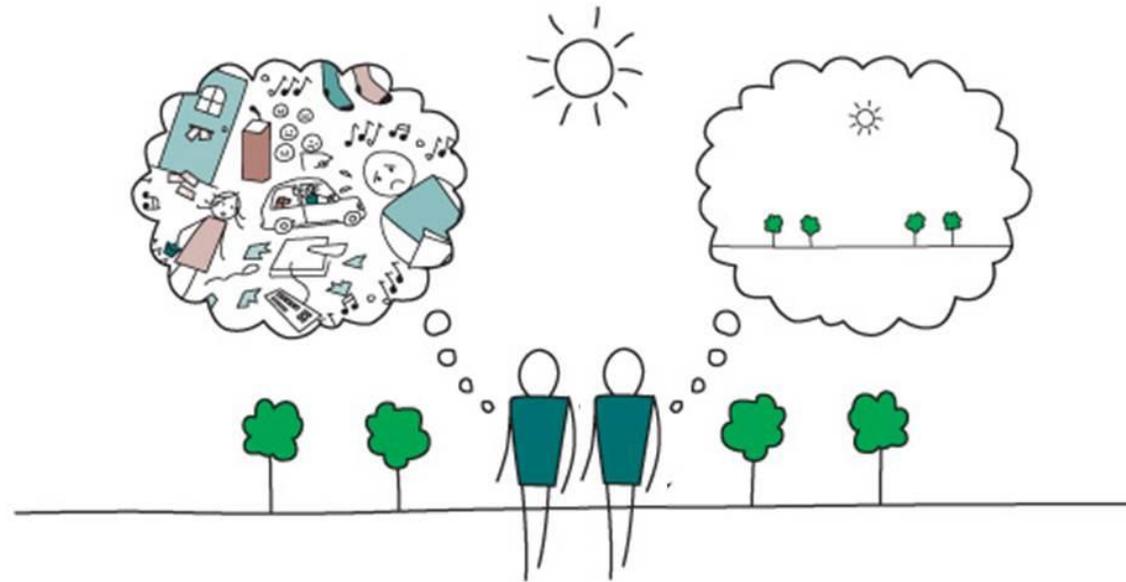


Self-Care

B	I	N	G	O
Fed myself	Exercised	Got a massage	Took time for myself	Danced
Practiced gratitude	Played with an animal	Did a hobby	Meditated or prayed	Spent time in nature
Went for a walk	Talked with a friend	FREE SPACE	I showered today	Took a nap
Took quiet time out	Played an instrument	I did nothing	Read for fun	Brushed my teeth
Brushed or did my hair	Listened to music	Bathed	I wrote down my feelings	Stretched

Mindfulness

- What is mindfulness?
 - Non-judgmental attention to present-moment experiences
 - Mental training
 - Geared toward enhancing self-regulation
- “We don’t do that woo-woo stuff here” or “I don’t have time for that”



Mind Full, or Mindful?

What IS mindfulness?

- Mindfulness ties in to self-care and serves as adjuncts to other approaches
- **PLEASE NOTE:** these are ***NOT*** to substitute for appropriate mental health care and interventions
- Mindfulness practice, like physical exercise, requires repetition and time to produce noticeable changes in everyday life
- Mindfulness is practiced mainly through consciously focusing one's attention on a particular object, such as the breath, body, emotions, thoughts, or sounds, or by bringing an open and receptive attention to the coming and going of thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations. The opposite of mindfulness is forgetfulness, wandering attention, or autopilot. A Harvard study found people's minds are wandering an average of 47% of the time, and that "a wandering mind is an unhappy mind."
- When practicing mindfulness, the attention will naturally be pulled to stimuli that are greater than our capacity to stay focused on a chosen object (e.g. breath or body sensations). This will happen again and again. At some point, we notice or wake up to the fact that our attention has moved into such places as daydreaming, our to-do list or a recent argument with a friend. This is the crucial moment when one crosses over from automatic pilot to mindful awareness. Only then can we bring our attention back to our intended object of focus. This act of returning our attention, over and over again, is the central practice, the thing that builds our mindfulness.
- The beneficial effects of meditation and mindfulness-based therapies are supported by a growing body of evidence. Over two decades of clinical research has shown that it can benefit people suffering from anxiety, recurrent depression, chronic pain, substance abuse and other conditions. Benefits include:
 - Stress reduction
 - Reduced rumination
 - Decreased negative affect (e.g. depression, anxiety)
 - Less emotional reactivity/more effective emotion regulation
 - Increased focus
 - More cognitive flexibility
 - Improved working memory

Mindfulness



Mindfulness is awareness cultivated through meditation and other mind-body practices to regulate and shape our attention and emotions.

AUTOPILOT

Automatic thoughts & feelings trigger unhelpful habits of mind & lead us to react in unskillful ways.

stimulus > reaction

MINDFULNESS

Mindful awareness disrupts automatic tendencies to create space to choose a different response.

stimulus > mindfulness > response

Mindfulness trains our minds, which over time, trains our brains.



- o Reduces stress & anxiety
- o Improves mood & working memory
- o Prevents relapse of depression
- o Increases emotional intelligence
- o Develops awareness & resilience

Physical Movement with Mindfulness

- Yoga
- Tai Chi
- Rock Climbing**
- Running**
- Focused Muscle Relaxation
- Other physical activities
 - Hiking
 - Taking the dog for a walk
 - Gardening
- Many practices have beginner/try at home tutorials on YouTube!



Physical Movement with Mindfulness



Mindful Yoga

- 1 Set aside at least 15 minutes in a quiet, open and airy space for your yoga practice.
- 2 Instead of treating your practice like a session at the gym, treat it like a meditation where you bring your full awareness to both your physical and emotional sensations as you move through the poses.
- 3 Observe how the physical sensations from each pose give rise to emotional sensations like released tension leading to relaxation, or even feelings like pain leading to frustration.

Health Benefits:

- Reduced stress
- Enhanced concentration
- Improved memory and performance

Why it works to reduce stress:

In addition to all the benefits of a mindful meditation, mindful yoga adds a physical element that provides a boost of energy and positive chemicals in the brain.

Sensory Deprivation

- Flotation-REST
- Facilitating focus and mindfulness by depriving the mind and body of all outside sensory input
- Research demonstrates consistent reduction of negative variables as well as increase in positive variables



Kjellgren, A., & Westman, J. (2014).
Driller, M.W., & Argus, C.K. (2016).
Jonsson, K., & Kjellgren, A. (2016).
Feinstein et al. (2018).
Farrell, A., & Ainger, T.J. (2020)

Sensory Stimulation

- Aromatherapy
 - With seasonal allergies and respiratory issues, please try this with caution!
 - Can come in many forms (inhalers, lotions, oils, bath products, roller balls, etc.) or you can add a few drops of essential oils to lotions, bath water, etc.
 - Lavender (stress reduction/calming) most commonly studied and supported in the literature
 - Literature is mixed
 - Largely beneficial or neutral
 - Possible subconscious olfactory memory impact
 - Possible significant impact on multiple neurobiological and cognitive measures
 - Cortisol, alpha and delta wave, BDNF, depression and anxiety scores
 - Do your research and use appropriately
 - For example, **DO NOT** diffuse tea tree oil
 - Learn what can and cannot be used around pets



Aromatherapy

Eight
AROMATHERAPY
Scents
The Farmacy

ROSEMARY
Thought to stimulate the brain and mental performance.



LAVENDER
One of the most widely used oils, lavender is uplifting and relaxing.



PEPPERMINT
Used to relieve mental fatigue, enhance alertness, and enhance memory.



JASMINE
Used to fight stress and anxiety.



LEMON
The uplifting aroma of lemon has been known to enhance mental clarity and reduce stress and depression.



THYME
May help improve memory and concentration. Also known to relax the nervous system.



EUCALYPTUS
Most commonly used to open the sinuses and bronchial passages. Also used to relieve headaches and mental fatigue.



SANDALWOOD
Used to calm the nerves and induce relaxation.





Using Essential Oils Around Your Pets

Essential oils are natural but we may be worried that the wrong essential oil can trigger a negative reaction in our pets. However, aromatherapy can be just as beneficial to our companion animals as it is for ourselves. So if you are worried about using essential oils around your pets or are curious about the benefits of essential oils for your pets, here is a simple guide that can help answer your questions.

Be Careful With These Essential Oils

CATS	DOGS
<p>Cats are particularly sensitive to essential oils that contain polyphenolic compounds because they interfere with their liver detoxification processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> cinnamon tea tree thyme wintergreen oregano 	<p>These essential oils can trigger a range of issues from allergies and skin sensitivities to interference in their natural body processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> anise clove garlic horseradish juniper thyme wintergreen yarrow

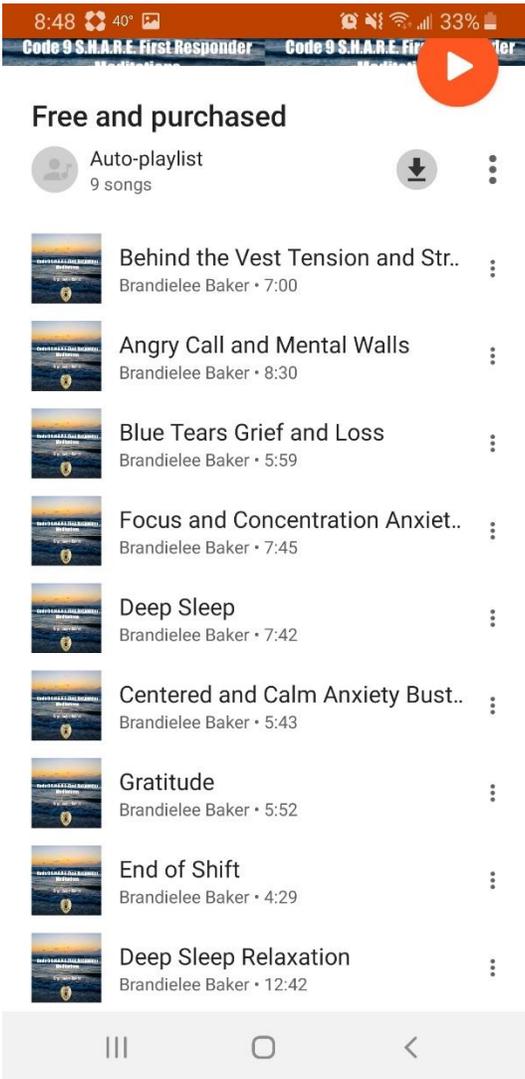
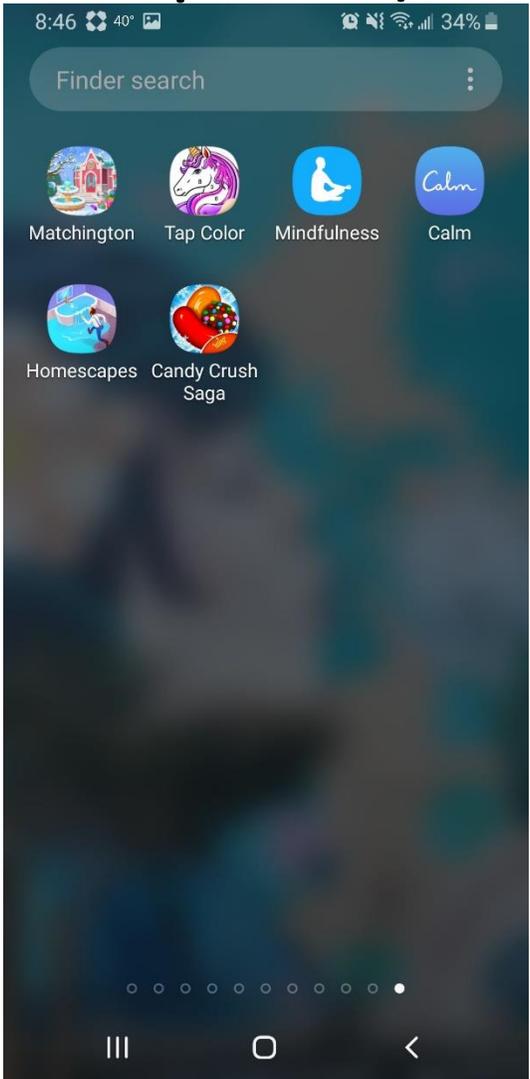


Essential Oils That Are Great For Pets

<p>Sweet Basil Great at fighting odors with its natural anti-viral, antifungal and antibacterial properties.</p>	<p>Cedarwood Helps repel pests and promote healthy skin and coat.</p>
<p>Myrrh Can help fight allergies and promote health skin and coat.</p>	<p>Clary Sage Calms nervousness and excitability.</p>
<p>Carrot Seed Supports healthy skin as a topical treatment for dryness.</p>	<p>Peppermint Soothes the pain from arthritis and hip dysplasia and repels pests.</p>
<p>Helichrysum Used topically can help with pain relief and skin issues.</p>	<p>Ginger Relieves pain from arthritis and supports healthy digestion.</p>

www.organicaromas.com

Technology, ain't it grand? (no endorsements, just examples from a personal phone)



Some examples to try now:

- [https://www.calm.com/blog/take-a-deep-breath?utm_source=lifecycle&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=difficult times subs 03 1720](https://www.calm.com/blog/take-a-deep-breath?utm_source=lifecycle&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=difficult%20times%20subs%20031720)
- Headspace free for a year for health care professionals (with an NPI number):
<https://www.theverge.com/2020/3/16/21181773/headspace-free-health-care-provider-public-health>
- **PLEASE NOTE: Wasil et al (2019) have found that the common treatment elements for depression and anxiety are commonly missing from mental health (MH) apps (and obviously absent from the non-MH apps, like coloring or puzzles) as compared to psychotherapy protocols (i.e. treatment), but did note that most apps contain at least one common element, with an average of three, with the most common being psychoeducation, relaxation, meditation, mindfulness, and assessment.**

Other Available Resources

Many of these are general resources or have been developed for traditional first responders, but can provide helpful training and be adapted to forensic science professionals. This list is by no means exhaustive, but provides a starting point for both individuals needing assistance and agencies seeking to become trauma-informed.

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) - 1-800-950-NAMI (6264)
- NAMI Crisis Text Line - Text "NAMI" to 741-741
- National Domestic Violence Hotline - 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
- National Sexual Assault Hotline - 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)
- Veteran Crisis Line - 1-800-273-TALK (8255);
Press 1
- Veteran Crisis Text Line - Text to 838255
- 24/7 Confidential Police Officer Hotline - 1-800-267-5463

Other Available Resources

- National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) - 1-866-615-6464
(830a-530p EST)
- MentalHealth.gov (8a-8p EST) - 877-726-4727
- National Center for PTSD Information Voicemail - 1-800-296-6300
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
(SAMHSA) National Helpline - 1-800-662-HELP (4357)
- Alcoholics Anonymous - www.aa.org

****During the Pandemic, Pause A While is hosting a free conference call for AA meetings daily at 2pm.
Dial in number: 425-436-6360, Access Code: 422932#**

- Disaster Responder Assets Network (DRAN) - www.dranetwork.org

****DRAN is running Peer Support Meetings on Zoom Regularly for Healthcare and First Responders.
Check the website for details****

- Narcotics Anonymous - www.na.org
- Al-Anon - <https://al-anon.org>
- Survive First - <https://survivefirst.us/>

Other Available Resources

- FTCoE's Special Initiatives: Vicarious Trauma
 - Forensic Workforce Resiliency- <https://forensiccoe.org/special-initiatives/>
 - Psychological Survival in a Violent Career- <https://forensiccoe.org/webinar/workforce-resiliency-psychological-survival-violent-career/>
 - Handling Difficult and Disturbing Forensic Cases for Coroners and Medical Examiners- <https://forensiccoe.org/webinar/handling-difficult-and-disturbing-forensic-cases-for-coroners-and-medical-examiners/>
- The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit- <https://forensiccoe.org/webinar/vicarious-trauma-toolkit-evidence-resource/>
- International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) - <https://icisf.org/>
- First Responder Support Network (FRSN.org) - www.frsn.org
- The Code 9 Project - <https://www.code9project.org/>
- Code 9 S.H.A.R.E. Meditations - <https://www.code9project.org/share-meditations.html>
- The Code Green Campaign - www.codegreencampaign.org
- Mindful Badge Initiative - <https://www.mindfulbadge.com/collaborative>
- The Pause First Project - <https://www.pausefirst.com/about>
- EMDR Institute, Inc. - <https://www.emdr.com/>

About Amanda L. Farrell, Ph.D.

Dr. Amanda L. Farrell is an Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at Marymount University in Arlington, Virginia, and recently served as a consultant, technical writer and SME to the Department of Justice working on the *Needs Assessment of Forensic Laboratories and Medical Examiner/Coroner Offices*.

Her experience in the criminal justice field is varied and started at an early age as a member of a first-responder family. As an undergraduate, she interned with the Metropolitan Police Service in the United Kingdom. During her MSc and PhD programs, she interned with a mid-sized police department, primarily in the detective division and with field forensics. This internship spanned just over six years, working anywhere from eight to 60 hours per week, dependent on agency needs and her teaching and class schedules. She has worked many crime scenes with forensic personnel and other investigators, informally consulted on several homicide investigations in various jurisdictions, assisted with instruction at both the police academy and in-service training, and has been a guest lecturer on practitioner partnerships to research stress and trauma at the FBI's National Academy. She has also been Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) trained and has completed the three ICISF courses recommended for peer support and basic Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) teams. During the last year of her doctorate, she was an ORISE research fellow for the FBI assigned to the Behavioral Analysis Units (BAUs) under the Critical Incident Response Group (CIRG), where she worked on projects related to abducted and murdered children, violent crimes against adults, and mass shooting/mass casualty incidents.

Her research and teaching interests include homicide, criminal investigations, field forensics, human sexuality, and policing in general, with initial research in this area seeking to holistically explore officer mental health and resilience, particularly in the context of police use of deadly force incidents. Her recent work demonstrates expanded interest in stress/trauma and resilience, particularly with regard to more broad investigative contexts and to the forensic science workforce. She has been published as a co-author in *International Criminal Justice Review*, *Homicide Studies*, *the Journal of Investigative Psychology and Offender Profiling*, *Gender Issues*, and *Police Practice and Research: An International Journal*.

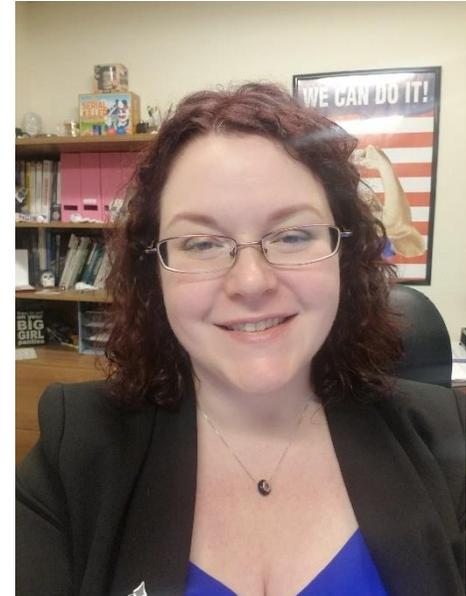
With the training team that they commonly work with on topics of stress, trauma and resilience in the expanded first responder community, Dr. Farrell and Dr. Ainger have presented workshops and/or training at AAFS (2019, 2020), MAAFS (2019), HFSC (2020), and the Masters 18-Masters Medicolegal Death Investigators Training Course (2019).

• EDUCATION

- Marymount University – B.A., Criminal Justice and Sociology (2003) and M.A., Clinical Mental Health Counseling (Degree in Progress)
- Sam Houston State University – M.A., Criminal Justice and Criminology (2006)
- University of Liverpool– M.Sc., Investigative Psychology (2008)
- Old Dominion University—Ph.D., Criminology and Criminal Justice (2014)

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About Timothy J. Ainger, Ph.D.

Dr. Timothy Ainger is a clinical neuropsychologist and an assistant professor of neurology with the UK College of Medicine and the Kentucky Neuroscience Institute. He earned his doctorate in Clinical Psychology from Gallaudet University in Washington, DC; his dissertation examined changes in executive functioning to individuals diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia remanded to long-term inpatient hospitalization.

He completed his clinical internship at the Hunter Holmes McGuire Veterans Affairs Medical and Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center in Richmond, VA, focusing on cognitive assessment and rehabilitation in veterans with multiple traumas and traumatic brain injuries. He completed his postdoctoral fellowship training in clinical neuropsychology with Cornerstone Neuropsychology (an affiliate of Wake Forest Baptist Health) in High Point, NC. He also spent three years working for the US Department of Justice.

He focuses on applied neuropsychology, examining ways to enhance the clinical conceptualization of diverse populations and diagnoses. His clinical work and research foci include primary and secondary changes in executive functioning, epilepsy, kidney and liver transplant, multiple sclerosis, resiliency and wellness, multiculturalism, psychopathy, and forensics.

He currently serves on the Neurology Department Wellness Committee and Diversity & Inclusion Committee, Graduate Medical Education Development Subcommittee, and the College of Medicine Faculty Wellness Committee.



- EDUCATION

- The University of Tennessee – B.A., Psychology
- Barry University – M.S., Clinical Psychology
- Gallaudet University – M.A., Psychology, & Ph.D., Clinical Psychology

- POSTGRADUATE TRAINING

- Clinical Internship – Hunter Holmes McGuire Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Richmond, VA
- Postdoctoral Fellowship – Cornerstone Neuropsychology/Wake Forest Baptist Health, High Point, NC

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