

A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
SWORN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS' POST-ACADEMY
TRAINING AND STRESS MANAGEMENT SKILLS

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

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Date


To the Associate Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School:


I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Sheryl Anne Brewer, entitled "A Study to Determine the Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Officers' Post-Academy Training and Stress Management Skills." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Health Education.

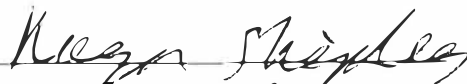



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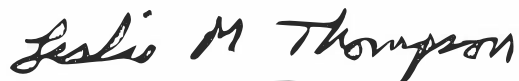




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Accepted



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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the memories of Allen Frank Brewer, Jr., my father who had the faith in me to succeed in whatever I attempted. To my grandparents, Allen F. Brewer and Maurine M. Brewer, who believed in me and gave me their unconditional love and support. To Gerri Poteet, my friend and mentor, who continually told me “this day would come”. She gave me her unconditional love and support, proofed all my graduate papers and listened to me through my graduate career. And to my friend, mentor, colleague, and supervisor, Charles E. Harris, C.S.W.-A.C.P. who was there to pick me up when things seemed too hard and who had the emotional support for me to lean on. Each of these persons understood the importance of this work and believed in me.

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ABSTRACT

COMPLETED RESEARCH IN HEALTH SCIENCES

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Brewer, S.A. A Study to Determine the Effectiveness of Sworn Law Enforcement Officers' Post-Academy Training and Stress Management Skills. Ph.D. in Health Education, 1997, 85 pp. (J. Baker).

Law enforcement officers face many stressors in both their occupational and personal lives. Not only do officers have to cope with a variety of societal problems but also must attempt to prevent these stressors from affecting their family lives. The purpose of this study was to assess the attitudes of sworn law enforcement personnel regarding the effectiveness of their post-academy training, with a focus on resulting stress management skills. Data were collected from 38 sworn law enforcement personnel from a major sheriff's office in Florida and from a major metropolitan police department in Texas. Analyses of the data indicated that law enforcement officers utilized a variety of coping skills, both positive and negative, to deal with the stress in their lives. Significant correlations and ANOVAs were obtained from the Stress Management Checklist and the Recent Life Change Questionnaire. In addition, a qualitative component included open-ended survey questions as well as a focus group. Implications for health education, health-related issues, and stress management training are discussed.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Law enforcement officers face many challenges in their work environment. These challenges include the increasing violence on the streets, difficult schedules, and demands made on them by the bureaucracy and the public (Anson & Bloom, 1988). The Director of the Institute for Stress Management, Timothy J. O'Brien (1995, p.1), stated that "as the pace of society accelerates, it takes with it many people's sense of certainty and control. Many of the changes manifest themselves as stress."

Even in the popular literature, Jean Auel (1980) addressed the stress of coping with life in the changing environment in the beginnings of the human race. Selye (1982) reported that during pre-historic times, humans experienced stress through starvation, physical disease and injury, and prolonged exposure to environmental elements such as heat and cold. Not only do police officers have to work in all types of climate, they are expected to accommodate the demands of addressing a variety of societal problems and working with people of diverse cultures.

As early as 1978, Selye (cited in Ellison & Genz, 1983, p.40), stated that "police work ... ranks as one of the most hazardous professions, even exceeding the formidable stresses and strains of air traffic control." Since that time, stress among law enforcement officers has become more recognized, with recent literature examining physical aspects such as irritable bowel syndrome, alcohol/drug dependency, and chronic headaches as well

as a variety of psychological components (Burke, 1994; Ellison & Genz, 1983; Nakajima, 1994; O'Brien, 1995). Given the known stressors of law enforcement work, attention to the stress management needs of law enforcement personnel is warranted.

One widely used scale for measuring stress levels is the Recent Life Changes Questionnaire (formerly the Social Readjustment Rating Scale) developed by Holmes and Rahe (1967). These researchers noticed that certain life changes produced a predictable level of stress; however, responses to stress tend to be very individualized. Another instrument is the Stress Management Checklist developed by IOX Assessment Associates (1988). The Stress Management Checklist has been used by a variety of government agencies to assist in the evaluation of programs for teaching stress management skills within individual government agencies (IOX Assessment Associates, 1988).

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to determine if post-academy training meets the needs of the sworn law enforcement personnel of a major sheriff's office in Florida and a major metropolitan police department in Texas to build and maintain effective stress management skills. Information about stress levels, stress management skills, and training was collected from 38 law enforcement personnel. Data collected were used to rate stress levels, assess coping mechanisms, and to determine if the law enforcement personnel believe their post-academy training provides them with the necessary skills for stress management.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the attitudes of sworn law enforcement personnel regarding the effectiveness of their post-academy training, with a focus on resulting stress management skills. This study used the Recent Life Changes Questionnaire to determine stress levels. The Stress Management Checklist, open-ended questions, and a focus group discussion were used to determine the type and frequency of the stress management techniques utilized and to elicit the perceptions of law enforcement personnel regarding the effectiveness of post-academy training.

Research Questions

The study was designed to address three research questions.

1. Does post-academy training meet the needs of sworn law enforcement personnel to build and maintain effective stress management skills?
2. What characteristics are positively associated with stress management skills?
3. What characteristics are positively associated with high stress among sworn law enforcement personnel?

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined for the purpose of this study:

1. Coping. According to Webster, coping is “to strive or contend (with) successfully or on equal terms” (McKechnie, 1983, p.403). Coping represents the

behaviors that people do to deal with life events that they encounter (Fain & McCormick, 1988).

2. Adaptive. “To change (oneself) so that one’s behavior, attitudes, etc. will conform to new or changed circumstances” (McKechnie, 1983, p.21).

3. Adaptive coping mechanism. The ability to comprehend and relate to the situation successfully by adjusting to environmental factors when faced with everyday stress.

4. Maladaptive coping mechanism. The inappropriate use of alcohol, drugs, sex and cynicism as well as manifestations of deviant behaviors (Fain & McCormick, 1988) when faced with everyday stress.

5. Post-academy training. On-going training for sworn law enforcement personnel to update and maintain specific skills necessary to perform their job. This training may be acquired through the continuing education opportunities or from other community resources.

6. Focus group. “ A carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, nonthreatening environment” (Krueger, 1988, p.18).

7. Stress. “The nonspecific...result of any demand upon the body, be the effect mental or somatic” (Selye, 1982, p.7). Stress can be classified as either positive or negative.

8. Sheriff. “a usually elected officer responsible for law and order in his county” (Cayne, 1987, p. 917).

Limitations

The study was limited by the following:

1. Members of each focus group are familiar with one another and may discuss the study with each other before all data can be collected (Krueger, 1988).
2. Focus group interaction “provides a social environment and comments must be interpreted within that context” (Krueger, 1988, p.46).
3. Focus groups do not allow the investigator to be as directive as in one on one interviews (Krueger, 1988).
4. Transcription and data analysis from a focus group is more difficult than information derived from a standardized evaluation (Krueger, 1988).

Delimitations

The study was delimited by the following:

1. Only sworn personnel permitted to carry a gun listed as employed by a major sheriff's office in Florida or a major metropolitan police department in Texas were included as subjects.

Assumptions

For the purpose of this study the following were assumed:

1. Each participant maintained the confidentiality of the other participants and did not discuss their focus group experience with others.
2. All participants were honest in their answers.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The following review of the literature examines four areas of research: 1) general concepts of stress and the effect of stress on the body, 2) stress in law enforcement officers, 3) the nature and effectiveness of coping mechanisms, and 4) the role of skills training in reducing stress in law enforcement personnel.

General Concepts of Stress

The literature reveals that stress has been a part of the lifestyle of humans since pre-historic times (Selye, 1982). Stress can be defined as any demand or force exerted on the mind/body that alters the balance of the system. This loss of homeostasis can result from a variety of different events or situations. These stressors can take the form of physical, psychological, or social pressures or changes such as temperature extremes, injury, loss of a close friend, or difficulty with a relationship (Nakajima, 1994; Sandbek, 1989; Selye, 1982). The way an individual responds to stress is dependent upon the unique characteristics of that individual. Moreover, that individual's response to a given event may vary over time (Hills & Norvell, 1991; Steinmetz, Blankenship, Brown, Hall, & Miller, 1980).

Responses to stress can be positive or negative. Short term exposure affects the emotional, cognitive, physiological, and behavioral aspects of the individual. These combined changes can actually enhance performance by heightening awareness, increasing

perception, and exerting an overall stimulatory effect on the body. However, the body will eventually succumb to continued stress of sufficient intensity. The results may be disease or illness such as heart disease or hypertension. The stress may also manifest through behavioral/emotional disorders including eating disorders, drug and alcohol addictions, depression, and various forms of mental illness. In addition, the effects of prolonged stress may appear cognitively as thought disorders and memory disturbances (Ellison & Genz, 1983; Madden, 1996; O'Brien, 1995; Sandbek, 1989).

Stress and Law Enforcement

Anson and Bloom (1988) noted that police officers “rank high on the consequences of stress, (in other words, ulcers, heart disease, alcoholism, suicide) rather than stress per se” (p.232). Along with the physical manifestations of burnout, such as loss of sleep, irritability, and not thinking clearly, law enforcement officers tend to take their frustrations out on their family members, on the public with whom they are working, and on their fellow officers. Kroes, Margolis, and Hurrell found officers also have difficulty with administrative policies and following orders from authority figures (as cited in Ellison and Genz, 1983).

Researchers have utilized a variety of measures to rate the nature and degree of stress in law enforcement officers and other populations, including the Recent Life Changes Questionnaire, formerly the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (Holmes & Rahe, 1967), the Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, Kamarck, & Merelstein, 1983), the Job

Descriptive Index (Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969), and the Police Stress Survey (Spielberger, Westberry, Grier, & Greenfield, 1981). While there is considerable overlap between these different instruments, each has been used to examine a unique facet of stress in this population.

The Police Stress Survey, developed by Spielberger et al. (1981), was used by Martelli, Waters and Martelli (1989) to identify sources of stress in law enforcement officers. They investigated the application of a standardized stress scale to evaluate the components of stress in law enforcement work and to examine the relationships between occupational stress and job related attitudes. The major implication of their findings was that the critical first step in an effective stress management program is the accurate identification of the factors which contribute to occupational stress.

Multitudes of factors have been examined for their contribution to the overall stress of law enforcement officers. Foremost among these are the occupational stressors of an intensely violent or traumatic nature predisposing officers to the type of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder similar to that seen in Vietnam veterans (Kuch, Travis, & Collins, 1995; McCafferty Domingo, & McCafferty, 1990; Weisaeth, 1994). Violanti and Aron (1993) investigated sources and types of police stressors, job attitudes, and psychological distress. They found that organizational stressors, (i.e., bothersome events precipitated by police administration), were perceived as 6.3 times more stressful than inherent stressors such as violence, crime, and other potential dangers. They concluded

that sources of stressors may be important determinants of individual distress in police officers.

Several studies of law enforcement officers examined the role of perceived stress on job satisfaction and physical and mental health. Kirkcaldy and Cooper (1995) found organizational processes of the department to contribute significantly to perceived stress. More specifically, these processes included inadequate guidance and support from supervisors, ineffective or inadequate communication, and covert discrimination and favoritism. Norvell, Belles, and Hills (1988) determined that officers' dissatisfaction with the nature of their work and dissatisfaction with interpersonal interactions correlated significantly with global perceptions of stress.

Anson and Bloom (1988) examined exposure to stress over time in several high stress occupations. They compared chronic stressors, those experienced continuously in the occupational setting, to episodic stressors, those that cause irregular disruptions and require more personal adjustment. In this study, firefighters were found to experience less stress than police officers, prison guards, or probation officers. Police officers experienced the chronic stress of an external environment of hostility, exposure to suspects, and pressure to process people through the system quickly. Firefighters, the researchers concluded, are oriented toward maintaining their equipment, spend more time interacting with one another, and are protected by the confines of the station house, thereby, minimizing their exposure to stress.

In 1994, Burke proposed a rather elaborate model as an organizational framework for examining stress and law enforcement personnel. Burke examined five predictor variables on work outcome and psychological well-being: (a) individual demographic and situational variables, (b) stressful events, (c) coping responses, (d) work-family conflicts, and (e) components of psychological burnout. In this self-report study, the predictor variable for work outcome and psychological well being showed more variance than physical health and lifestyle behaviors. Overall findings indicated a slight correlation to measures of work attitudes and emotional well-being and a stronger correlation to physical health measures. Stressful events related to all variables. Work-family conflict, with a negative effect, had a correlation to work attitudes and emotional well-being; however, the self-reported physical health and lifestyle behaviors had no relationship. Coping responses did show a relationship to emotional well-being and lifestyle behaviors, but no relationship to work attitudes. Psychological burnout had a correlation to work attitudes and emotional well-being; however, the self-report of health and lifestyle behaviors reported no relationship. As a predictor variable for job satisfaction and intention to quit, the non-significant coping response indicated that participants tended to rely on certain methods to manage the tension and strain of day-to-day living. Some individuals reported using alcohol/drugs as a way to relieve stress; others discussed sharing with a close friend, sleeping, exercising regularly, and problem-solving.

Herbert (1994), however reported just the opposite. He found that stressed persons sleep less, exercise less, have poorer diets, and use more alcohol, drugs and tobacco than non-stressed individuals. These conflicting findings underscore the complexity of the issues involved in examining the role of stress in law enforcement.

Burke's (1994) research also brought out another aspect of stress that needs to be considered. His study took a directional approach in examining the relationship between work and family conflict. It did not examine the effect of family on work. A bi-directional approach that examines the relationship between work and family conflict and the relationship between family and work conflict is warranted.

Coping Mechanisms

Few consistent reports on coping responses have been reported in the literature to date (Burke, 1994). According to the Random House College Dictionary, coping means "to struggle or contend, especially on fairly even terms or with some degree of success" (p.296). Coping refers to the way individuals handle events that come into their lives. Fleishman (1984) reported that coping consists of both overt and covert behaviors which reduce or eliminate psychological distress or stressful conditions. These behavioral events and the way the individual responds to these events determine how the individual will cope (Fain & McCormick, 1988). The inability to cope with stress can lead to mental and physical illness, as well as lack of motivation. Such consequences reduce the quality of life and optimum performance (Nakajima, 1994).

A coping mechanism is the method with which an individual struggles or contends with an event. Violanti (1992) found eight subscales of coping responses. These included: “(1) confrontive coping, (2) distancing, (3) self-control, (4) seeking social support, (5) accepting responsibility, (6) escape/avoidance, (7) planful problem-solving, and (8) positive reappraisal” (p.720). Fain and McCormick (1988) identified coping responses as adaptive or maladaptive. Adaptive coping mechanisms refer to the ability to comprehend and relate to the situation successfully by adjusting to environmental factors when faced with everyday stress. Maladaptive coping mechanisms fail to result in successful adjustment and include the inappropriate use of alcohol, drugs, sex, and cynicism as well as manifestations of deviant behaviors when faced with everyday stress (Fain & McCormick, 1988).

In the case of law enforcement personnel, the question becomes how much stress do law enforcement officers experience in their personal and professional lives and how are they handling it. Fain and McCormick (1988) did not assess the overall level of stress present in the participants of their study. They considered all participants under some degree of stress and did not consider the sources. Violanti (1992) stated that “police officers compose one of the most stressed populations in U.S. society” (Violanti, 1984, 1985, p. 718). Coyne, Aldwin, and Lazarus (1981) examined situational-environmental stress, personal distress, and coping in academy training. During training, candidates were subjected to undue stress by instructors. The recruits were watched for their particular

responses to determine how personal distress affected the number of coping strategies they use (cited in Violanti, 1992).

Stress and coping are operationalized inconsistently as reported in the literature. Coping responses are simply ways of dealing with a stressor. If stress disrupts the equilibrium, then a coping response may be engaged to help restore the equilibrium. Therefore, the response may be positive or negative. For example, alcohol or drugs may restore equilibrium for a short period of time; but in the long term, their use becomes maladaptive. More specifically, drinking alcohol may be used as a way to relax; however, when that mode of relaxing continues for several hours, days, or weeks then the coping mechanism becomes ineffective, eventually producing life changing consequences. The individual is no longer in control of her or his behavior.

While Violanti (1992) measured the number of coping responses used by subjects, he did not indicate whether these instructors helped the subjects develop self-confidence and self-esteem. Self-esteem at work refers to an individual's self-appraisal of competence and personal worth in the immediate work environment. It is the degree to which one experiences oneself as capable, successful, and worthy (Rosse, Boss, & Johnson, 1991). Macksoud (1994) reported that children who have secure attachment relationships with their parents, those taught to cope competently with stressful events, and adolescents who develop a strong sense of personal identity tend to cope better in everyday life situations. Violanti (1992) did not examine what type of attachment each of these recruits had prior

to coming into the academy, while Fain and McCormick (1988) failed to assess the stress level present in their participants.

Rosse, et al. (1991) reported that as one's self-esteem is decreased there is a greater sense of emotional burnout, and there is less interaction and personalizing with co-workers. This may actually act as a type of coping mechanism by limiting exposure to certain stressors that the individual is unable to handle. These findings and others suggest that the real issues of stress and how one copes with it are not being adequately identified.

Coping mechanisms are learned from many difference sources. Children learn to cope through secure attachment relationships with parents or other adults, through the influence of teachers, and later through training and careers. Research shows that adolescents who have developed a personal sense of identity tend to cope better with life experiences (Macksoud, 1994). Life experiences also contribute to the way individuals deal with stress and how they cope. A life experience can be anything from the birth of a child, war, taking an exam or preparing for a dissertation. Also, factors such as being female in a male-dominated society and having to deal with experiences ranging from sexual discrimination to the threat of rape affects one's ability to cope (Macellin, 1994).

Police officers exhibit a variety of different ways to cope with stress. Included are the use of humor, using multi-data terminals, engaging in increased sexual activity, sports, and exercise. However, the officers do not regard this behavior as stress- relieving. Some law enforcement officers tend to believe that they have no stress; that they are strong and

can handle anything. This is manifested in their personal life as well as professionally (S.A. Brewer, personal communication, September 28, 1994).

Stress and Skills Training

The importance of and need for effective stress management training for law enforcement personnel cannot be overstated. There are many self-help organizations as well as self-help instructional materials to teach ways of dealing with stress. One of the important factors identified in this area is simply that individuals do not take the time to breathe properly. When an individual takes a deep breath, followed by another, then another, her or his self awareness will come into focus more clearly. Teaching individuals how to breathe is one of the major techniques in stress management. A group of police officers and ex-officers decided, based on their own experience with stress, to start a program to help other law enforcement personnel contend with stress and related issues (Creager, 1993). Through these programs, law enforcement officers created a safe haven to discuss and re-discuss their personal issues and work-related issues. One of these issues includes being unwilling to discuss personal information because they have an image to protect; namely, not wanting to be perceived by others as weak.

In other areas, some law enforcement agencies are incorporating behavioral scientists as part of the law enforcement team. These therapists train the officers in stress management skills and are there to help officers cope with everyday stress (Davis, 1995). Some psychologists, like Theodore H. Blau, have volunteered their services to the police

department to help law enforcement officers deal with stress and stressful events (Trotter, 1987). Others are studying stress and its relationship to occupational stress and health (Cahill, Landsbergis, & Schnall, 1995). The question remains, whether or not these researchers are adequately addressing the problem.

Summary

That stress is high among law enforcement personnel is now an accepted fact. Numerous investigators have studied this population to determine the sources of stress in officers, the consequences of this stress and methods used by the officers to adjust. This study examined more closely the nature of that stress, and the types and usefulness of coping responses toward an end of designing more effective training programs.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this quantitative and qualitative study is discussed in its relation to the subjects selected, the procedures used to study this population, the instruments and procedures utilized to measure the variables, and the descriptive and statistical techniques that were used to treat the data.

Population and Sample

The population for this study was sworn law enforcement officers in Florida and in Texas. The sample was comprised of 38 sworn law enforcement personnel. Four of the personnel were deputies with a sheriff's office in Florida and 34 personnel were police officers in Texas. Subjects included both male and females officers representing different ethnic backgrounds, with an age range of 23 to 51 years. The investigator sent a memorandum to each officer in each department inviting participation in the study. All subjects were sworn law enforcement personnel and no one was excluded based on gender, age, or race.

Procedure

The investigator sent a letter to the Chief of Police in a major metropolitan police department in Texas and to the Sheriff of a major sheriff's office in Florida requesting written permission to have their officers participate in this research study. After written

permission was received from the Chief of Police in Texas and a phone call from the Deputy Chief of the sheriff's office in Florida, a memorandum was sent to each officer inviting participation in this study.

Upon receipt of the invitation to participate in the study, officers contacted the investigator either by mail or telephone requesting further information about the study and to volunteer as participants. At that time, confidentiality procedures were described and the participants were informed about the handling of the data and the consent forms. An information packet that included a copy of an introductory letter, a consent to participate form, a demographic data questionnaire, the Recent Life Changes Questionnaire (a revised version of the Social Readjustment Rating Scale), and the Stress Management Checklist was given to each participant. The packet was either mailed or handed out in person to each participant, depending on what the participant requested. Information packets were coded with numbers and were distributed to a total of 65 sworn law enforcement officers. Each participant was asked to read and sign the consent form, complete the Demographic Data Questionnaire, the Recent Life Changes Questionnaire, and the Stress Management Checklist. At that time, also, a request was made for volunteers to participate in the focus groups. Only five officers volunteered to participate in a focus group. Four were from the sheriff's office in Florida and one from the police department in Texas. Due to the difficulty gaining focus group participation in Texas open-ended questions identical to the focus group discussion questions were administered in a written questionnaire to the officers in Texas.

As each participant returned her/his packet, the consent form was immediately separated from the other data. Data and consent forms were kept in a locked safe area.

The response rate for this study was 60%. Of the 65 law enforcement officers that volunteered to participate in this study, 39 officers returned their packets, one did not return his consent form, one threw his first packet away and requested another one, leaving a total of 38 participants.

Instrumentation and Treatment of the Data

Stress Management Checklist

The Stress Management Checklist consists of 27 Likert-type questions and requires approximately 10 minutes to complete (see Appendix H for the Stress Management Checklist). The Stress Management Checklist was developed by IOX Assessment Associates (1988) for a variety of government agencies to assist in the evaluation of programs for teaching stress management skills within individual governmental agencies. This instrument has not been tested for reliability. The checklist reveals the number of times adaptive and maladaptive coping mechanism was used. For adaptive coping mechanisms, scores ranged from 0 to 18 with low scores indicating the group used fewer positive techniques. A high score indicates more adaptive coping techniques being used. Similar scores for maladaptive coping mechanisms were obtained with scores ranging from 0 to 9. A second set of scores indicated the number of adaptive and maladaptive coping mechanisms were rated by the participants as being used often.

The third set of scores indicated the number of both adaptive and maladaptive coping mechanism that were perceived as being effective.

Recent Life Changes Scale

The Recent Life Changes Questionnaire (RLCQ); a physical and psychological symptom checklist was developed by Holmes and Rahe (1967), (see Appendix I for the Recent Life Changes Questionnaire). They noticed that certain life changes produced a predictable level of stress and that responses to stress were very individualized. This scale can help individuals identify their sources of stress, and determine how to deal with that stress in a more effective manner (Rahe, 1990). The total score of the RLCQ is an estimate of stress experienced by the subject and is termed life change units. The range of the life change units can be 0 to 1467 with a lower score indicating less stress (Perkins, 1982). The revised version of the Recent Life Changes Questionnaire (Rahe & Veatch, 1994) has scores ranging from 0 to 3491. Rahe's findings indicated "that a person's Recent Life Changes may well be linked to their life satisfactions, but not to their health habits, social support, or positive responses to stress" (Rahe & Veatch, 1994, p.13). The instrument measures recent life changes (0-6 months), changes over the past year (7-12 months ago), changes over the past year and a half (13-18 months ago), and changes over the past two years (19-24 months ago). Each of these categories constitutes a separate subscale of the instrument. For the purposes of this study the Recent Life Change subscale and the past two years subscale were used.

Focus Group

One focus group of four sworn law enforcement personnel from the sheriff's office in Florida met for two hours at a vocational technical school in Florida. At the beginning of the group meeting, introductions were made and an explanation of the purpose and objectives of the group meeting were given. The ground rules including confidentiality and the focus group procedures were explained. Open-ended questions were asked in the focus group setting to explore the qualitative aspects of particular issues, gather a full range of possible answers to questions, get spontaneous answers, and give participants an opportunity to comment and express themselves freely. The questions were:

1. Describe any training you have had in the past that has helped you deal with stress. Include how it was helpful.

2. Describe any event that has occurred in the last month that you consider stressful. What did you learn from this event?

3. In your experience, do you feel that the police academy provides effective stress management training for job related stress? personal stress? Explain.

4. What factors from your job contribute to your stress level?

5. How do you deal with your own stress?

6. Describe any significant events, circumstances, or persons in your lifetime that have influenced your ability to deal with stress?

7. Describe any activities that you enjoy engaging in during our off-duty hours.

8. Which of the activities that you engage during your off duty hours do you consider helpful in reducing your stress?

The focus group discussion was audiotaped. The audiotape was transcribed to a computer disk, and the content was analyzed for consistent themes. Responses were coded and tabulated. Common statements were rank ordered by frequency of occurrence. After all data were analyzed, the audiotapes were destroyed.

Demographic Data Questionnaire

The demographic data questionnaire was completed by each law enforcement officer (see Appendix G for the Demographic Data Questionnaire). Because the sworn law enforcement officers that participated in this study were from two different agencies, the demographic data questionnaire was adjusted in question seven in terms of their position with their particular agency. Participants of this study completed the questionnaire, which examined age, number of years in law enforcement, age when law enforcement was chosen, education level, gender, and position in each of their departments. This questionnaire was developed by the investigator to examine these demographic characteristics of this sample.

Data Analysis

Three separate methods were used to analyze the data. First, a descriptive analysis was conducted of the demographic data as well as the categorical data of the scales. Secondly, a correlation analysis was conducted to examine possible relationships among variables. And, thirdly, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to

examine any difference between subgroups of the sample related to stress management skills. Specifically ANOVAs were conducted with stress management skills and stress level as the dependent variables and education level, gender, and position as the independent variables. Finally, due to the small sample size of this study, it was determined that the probability of committing a Type II error was quite high with the expectation of a sample size of 30 to 40 participants, and an alpha level for one tail significant test of .05, the statistical power of this study would be approximately .58. Therefore, in order to increase the power of the study every effort was made to increase the sample size. Despite these efforts the sample remained small. Therefore, it appeared appropriate to increase the alpha level to .10. This would increase the power of the study to approximately .70 and reduce the chances of committing a Type II error to .30. Although, this probability still remains higher than the ideal probability of .20, the change in alpha level substantially reduced the chances of committing a Type II error (Lipsey, 1990).

Summary

The data gathered were used to answer the three research questions to determine if post-academy training was perceived by law enforcement personnel of the sheriff's office in Florida, and the police department in Texas as effective for building stress management skills. All information was kept confidential and a report of the findings was sent to the sheriff's office in Florida and the police department in Texas upon written request.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to assess the attitudes of sworn law enforcement personnel regarding the effectiveness of their post-academy training, with a focus on resulting stress management skills. The research findings of this study are presented in three sections. The first section is the description of the sample and analysis of demographic data. The second section examines correlations of selected variables. The third section presents results of analysis of variance.

Subjects

The sample of this study consists of 38 sworn law enforcement personnel from a sheriff's office in Florida and from a police department in Texas. The demographic characteristics of the group are highlighted in Table 1 and Table 2. The mean age of the respondents was 36.34 years and the range was 23 years to 51 years. Of these participants, 32 (84.2%) were male and 6 (15.8%) were female. In the sample population, the majority of the law enforcement officers were Anglo/White/Caucasian 32 (84.2%) and 6 (15.8%) were from minority groups. In terms of marital status, 13 (34.2%) were married, 12 (31.6%) remarried, 6 (15.8%) were divorced, 2 (5.3%) were separated, and 5 (13.2%) were single.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Gender, Marital Status, Post on the Force and Education (N=38)

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	32	84.2
Female	6	15.8
Marital Status		
Married	13	34.2
Remarried	12	31.6
Divorced	6	15.8
Separated	2	5.3
Single	5	13.2
Race		
Minority Group	6	15.8
Caucasian	32	84.2
Education		
High School Equivalent	4	10.5
Some College	33	86.8
College Graduate	1	2.6
Position On Force		
Uppper Mangement	5	13.2
Lower Management	33	86.8

The rank of the positions of this population within their departments indicated that the majority were 33 (86.8%) officer, deputy, corporal, or detective, and 5 (13.2%) were upper level management sergeant/lieutenant. The amount of education of the participants in this study showed that 4 (10.5%) of the law enforcement officers reported no more than high school or equivalent educational attainment. One (2.6%) person graduated from college and 33 (84.2%) had some college education.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Age, Number of Year on the Force, and the Age Decided to go into Law Enforcement (N=38)

Variable	Mean	SD	Range
Age	36.34	7.07	23.00-51.00
Number of Years on the Force	10.97	6.79	1.00-26.00
Age Decided to go into Law Enforcement	21.79	5.17	9.00-32.00

Correlation Analysis

In this research study two of the primary research questions included the following, (1) what characteristics are positively associated with stress management skills? And, (2) what characteristics are positively associated with high stress among sworn law enforcement personnel? A correlation analysis was used to explore the variables in relation to these research questions. Table 3 shows the correlation analysis.

Table 3

Correlation Analysis of Adaptive and Maladaptive Coping Techniques, Recent Life Change Units, and the Age Decided to go into Law Enforcement (N=38)

VARIABLE	NEG FREQ	NEG OFTN	NEG USE	POS FREQ	POS OFTN	POS USE	TWO YEAR	YEAR DECD
NEGFREQ		.4046***	.4086***					
NEGFTN			.4357**	-.2819*				
NEGUSE				-.5375*		-.547***		
POSFTN				.5953***				
POSUSE		.2828*	-.547***	.9813***	.5751***			
SIXMON	.4022**	.5025***					.6951***	-.3011*
TWOYEAR	.4031**							
YEARDECD		-.4288***						

* p<.10, **p<.05, ***p<.01

The variables used in this correlation included the frequency in the recent past that the participants used positive or negative coping skills to manage stressful experiences (Negfreq/Posfreq). In addition, the participants indicated whether or not they used these coping skills “often” (Negoftn/Posoftn). The participants also indicated whether or not the coping skills were useful in reducing stress (Neguse/Posuse). The other variables that were used in this correlation were the Life Change Units at 6 months and 24 months, and the age the participant decided to go into law enforcement.

The frequency that participants used negative coping skills was significantly correlated with the frequency that the participants indicated they used these skills “often.” The correlation indicated that the greater the number of negative coping skills used by participants, the more often they used these maladaptive behaviors ($r = .4046$, $p = .012$); however, this relationship ($r^2 = .16$) appears to be a fairly weak one (Rubin & Babbie, 1993). Also, when negative frequency was correlated with how the participants perceived the usefulness of the negative behaviors, they indicated that the greater the number of negative behaviors used the higher their perception was of their usefulness. In other words, the more they engaged in the behavior the more they saw it as useful ($r = .4086$, $p = .011$). This relationship ($r^2 = .17$) would also be considered weak (Rubin & Babbie, 1993).

Another significant correlation was found between how often the participants used maladaptive coping techniques, and how the participants perceived usefulness of these techniques ($r = .4357$, $p = .006$). This relationship was found to be weak ($r^2 = .19$). The smaller number of positive behaviors used by participants the more often the participants used negative behaviors ($r = -.2818$, $p = .086$). This correlation, however, was found to be very weak ($r^2 = .08$). Another significant correlation was found between perceived usefulness of negative behavior and the total number of positive behaviors used.

Participants indicated that the more the negative behaviors were perceived as useful, the smaller the number of positive behaviors used ($r = -.5375$, $p = .001$). This correlation appears to be a weak to moderate one ($r^2 = .29$).

Conversely, significant correlations were also found between positive adaptive coping skills and the frequency and usefulness of those behaviors. The greater number of positive behaviors employed, the more “often” the participants used these behaviors ($r = .5953$, $p = .000$). This relationship appears to be a moderate one ($r^2 = .35$). Negative correlations were found to be significant, however weak, between the usefulness of adaptive coping skills and the frequency and usefulness of negative behaviors. The more “often” the participants perceived positive behaviors as useful, the less “often” they used negative behaviors ($r = -.2829$; $p = .085$; $r^2 = .08$). Negative correlations were also found to be significant between the usefulness of adaptive coping skills and the usefulness of maladaptive coping skills. The more “often” participants perceived positive behaviors as useful, the less often they perceived negative behavior as useful ($r = -.5470$, $p = .000$). This relationship appears to be a weak to moderate association ($r^2 = .30$). Significant positive correlations were found between positive coping skills and frequency and usefulness of those techniques. The greater number of total positive behaviors used the more the participants perceived positive behaviors as useful ($r = .9813$, $p = .000$). This relationship was found to be very strong ($r^2 = .96$). Also the more “often” the participants used the positive behaviors, the more “often” they perceived these behaviors as useful ($r = .5751$; $p = .000$) This relationship appears to be a weak to moderate one ($r^2 = .33$).

The frequency of negative coping skills was significantly correlated to scores on the RLCQ; however, these relationships were found to be fairly weak ones. The greater the number of negative behaviors used the higher the score on the RLCQ after a six months period ($r = .4022$; $p = .012$; $r^2 = .16$). Also, the negative coping skills used more “often”

were significantly correlated to the six months scores on the RLCQ. The more “often” negative behaviors were used by the participants the higher the six month scores on the RLCQ ($r = .5025$; $p = .001$; $r^2 = .25$). Conversely there was no significant correlation between the number of positive behaviors used and the six months scores.

In analyzing the past two year subscale of the RLCQ significant correlations were found between the number of negative coping skills used and the past two years score on the RLCQ. The more negative behaviors were used, the higher the two year score ($r = .4031$; $p = .012$; $r^2 = .16$).

A negative correlation was found between the age of the officer when she/he decided to go into law enforcement and negative coping skills. The younger the officer was when she/he decided to go into law enforcement, the more “often” she/he engaged in negative behaviors ($r = -.4288$, $p = .007$). This relationship was a fairly weak one ($r^2 = .18$). A significant correlation was also found between the age of the participant when she/he decided to go into law enforcement and 6 month RLCU. The younger the person was when she/he decided to go into law enforcement the greater the score on the Life Change Units at six months ($r = -.3011$; $p = .066$; $r^2 = .09$).

Results of Analysis of Variance Procedures

There were no significant differences found in terms of age and years on the force, by position on the force. A significant difference was found on how often negative behaviors were perceived as useful by ethnicity ($F = 9.67$, $d.f. = 1, 36$; $p = .0037$). White officers had a mean score of 1.6, and minority officers had a mean score of 3.17 on the perception of usefulness.

A significant difference was also found on how often positive behaviors were perceived as useful by marital status ($F = 2.82$; $d.f. = 4, 33$; $p = .04$). Married officers had a

mean score of 15.54, remarried officers had a mean score of 16.58, divorced officers had a mean score of 15.5, separated officers had a mean score of 17.5 and single officers had a mean score of 14.8. The greatest difference occurred between those that were separated and those that were single. The officers who were separated had a higher score on perceived positive behaviors as useful than single officers did.

Open-ended Focus Questions

Eight open-ended questions identical to those used in the focus group, were given to 34 participants to complete and return. The other four participants participated in a focus group to address the same questions verbally. First, the participants were asked to “describe any training you have had in the past that has helped you deal with stress. Include how it was helpful.” Of the 38 participants that responded to the question, 22 stated that they had no training to help them deal with stress, another 6 participants chose not to respond to the question. Another 10 participants stated that their training involved therapy and counseling, reading, taking psychology courses, being in the military service, using meditation or breathing techniques, taking stress management classes to deal with stress. Some of the participants stated that they did receive some training while in the academy. The focus group participants responded by stating that two of the four participants had a stress management seminar after they graduated from the academy.

Next, the participants were asked to “describe any event that has occurred in the last month that you considered stressful. What did you learn from this event?” Participants listed events that ranged from problems at work, problems at home, holidays, the birth of a child, health concerns, death of a family member, financial problems, and problems with significant other. The participants stated that what they learned from these events involved that some things are out of their control, that communication skills are important,

that they needed to learn how to relax and take control of themselves, and that they needed to avoid conflict. The focus group responses dealt with health concerns and work issues.

The third question posed was, “in your experience, do you feel that the police academy provides effective stress management training for job related stress? Personal stress? Explain.” There was no training reported by 29 of the participants, while 4 participants responded that they received some training that was mostly related to job-related stress. This training included an article from the police psychologist that was printed in the police officer association monthly magazine. Some participants expressed a perception that there was a resource available to discuss their problems. In the focus group, one participant stated that she/he took a Human Diversity class and the other three participants said the “there was no training in the police academy.” All 38 participants indicated that there was no training for personal stress.

In response to question four, twenty-one participants stated that major contributions to their job-related stress came from management, administration, and the lack of support from those organizational components. While 12 other participants stated that their work was their major area of stress on the job. The areas of work related stress included dealing with gang members, public complaints, and facing the unknown. Lack of breaks and time for lunch, areas in which the participant worked, verbal abuse from the citizens, dealing with co-workers, lack of support from other officers, and fellow officers “stabbing each other in the back” were other areas of job-related stress. The focus group participants talked about beepers and their responsibilities on the job that were the major area of job related stress.

Question five examines how the participants deal with their own stress. Table 4 represents the responses to the written focus questions and the focus group responses. Three participants gave no response to this question.

Table 4

Characteristics Reported From Written Responses and Focus Group Responses (N=38)

Cognitive		Behavioral	
Meditation/Relaxation	3	Walk/PhysicalExercise/Outdoor Sports/Recreation	11
Music	1	Travel	3
Time With Friends	2	Housework	5
Time With Family	4	Workshop	2
Time With Self	6	Movies	2
Remove Self From Problem	2	Eat	1
Reading	2	Golf	1
Pray	1	Old Cars	1
Cry	1	Fishing	1
Internalize Stress	2	Smoke	1
Humor	1	Motorcycling*	1
Read	1	Mow the Lawn	1
Talk to Co-Workers*	1	Boating*	1
		Photography*	2
		Collecting*	1
		Antiquing*	1

* Focus Group Responses

In the two broad categories of cognitive and behavioral stress management techniques, time with self and time with the family were two important methods in dealing with stress. Meditation/relaxation, time with friends, removing self from the problem, and internalizing stress were the other areas mentioned most often by the participants to deal with stress. And other areas included crying, praying, music, humor, reading and spending time with co-workers. Behaviorally, the majority of the participants who engaged in physical outlets for their stress stated that walking, physical exercise, outdoors activities and recreation were beneficial in dealing with stress. Other activities included housework, travel, movies, photography, and working in their workshop. Some participants relieved their stress through food, smoking, old cars, fishing, collecting, antiquing, and other outdoor activities.

Describe any significant events, circumstances, or persons in your lifetime, that have influenced your ability to deal with stress was focus question six. Of the written responses, eight participants did not answer this question. Only one participant from the focus group chose not to answer this question. The responses are represented in Table 5.

Table 5

Significant Events, Circumstances, Or Persons That Have Influenced Ability To Deal With Stress

Event		Circumstances		Person	
Depression	1	Arrest of a Close Friend	1	Close Relatives/Family	12
Maturity	1	Shooting	2	Co-Workers	2
Reading*	3	Shot on the Job	1	Significant Other	2
Life Experience	1	Death of Spouse	1	Elderly	1
Combat	1	Alcohol*	2	Close Friends	1
Divorce(s)	1	Death of Brother	1	Up Bringing	2
		Job	1	Self	1
				God	1
				Teacher*	1

* Focus Group and Written Response

Events that influenced participant's ability to deal with stress reported by participants included life experiences such as maturity, dealing with depression, military service experiences, divorces, and reading a good book. Circumstances reported to have helped the participants handle stress include being shot on the job or involved in a job-related shooting, death of a family member especially a spouse or sibling, off duty incidents involving alcohol, and good experiences on the job. And people who were reported as beneficial in reducing stress included close relatives and family members such as parent, spouses, and children. Other persons that influenced the participants to deal with stress included significant other, working with children and the elderly, a special teacher, God, themselves, a close friend, and how they were raised.

Question seven, "describe any activities that you enjoy engaging in during off-duty hours" was divided into two activities, passive and physical. Passive activities included activities that represented the category of non-physical activity. Table 6 shows a list of some of these activities.

Table 6

Activities Engaged In During Off-Duty Hours

Activities		Activities	
Passive	Interacting With Others	Physical	Sports*
	Computers		Hobbies**
	Meditation		Sex
	Reading/Writing		Shopping
	Church		Travel
	Watching TV		Yard Work
	Art Work		Construction
	Music		Walking/Exercise
	Animals		Flea Markets
	Time With Family		Time With Family
	Times With Friends		Time With Friends
	Photography		Farming

* Sports “the playing of games or participation in competitive pastimes involving physical exertion and skill, especially those played outdoors” (Cayne, 1987, p. 960).

** Hobbies “a spare time interest or occupation, especially if it is taken up for pleasure” (Cayne, 1987, p. 460).

The participants of this study reported involvement in many activities during their off-duty hours. These activities involved participation in interacting with others, spending time with family and friends, reading a good book, and many others. While some activities involved physical exertion like playing softball, skiing (snow or water), exercising, riding bikes, running, going for walks with friends, going to cemetery, and collecting Barbie dolls.

Question eight addresses the activities that the participants engage in during their off-duty hours that the participants consider helpful in reducing stress. Participants mentioned some of the same activities that were described in question seven and added a few more. These included philosophy and religion, painting, having a great marriage, church, playing in the garage, having quality time for self, good communication skills, sex, playing billiards, coaching, going to the coast or hide-a-way cabin, and watching soap operas. These activities were some of the ways the participants of this study perceived that helped reduce their stress.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to assess the attitudes of sworn law enforcement personnel regarding the effectiveness of their post-academy training, with a focus on resulting stress management skills. Only those subjects identified as sworn law enforcement officers were used in the data analysis.

The data analysis indicated that law enforcement officers utilized both positive and negative coping skills when dealing with stressful experiences. The greater number of negative coping skills that the officers engaged in, the more useful they were perceived to be, therefore, the more “often” the officers used these coping skills. However, the more officers used positive coping skills, the more useful they found these behaviors to be in reducing stress.

In addition, differences were found among participants in terms of ethnicity and marital status. Whereas, the open-ended focus questions indicated that law enforcement officers have not received adequate training in stress management skills for both job related stress and personal stress. And, the officers perceived that the majority of their stress is from management, administration, and the lack of support from those organizational components.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide evidence to suggest that law enforcement personnel experience personal stress unrelated to their jobs and often utilize negative coping mechanisms to ameliorate these experiences. These stressful events coupled with the stressful situations encountered on a daily basis in their jobs may increase the cognitive and behavioral symptoms that are manifested in their lives. These findings contrast with the research concerning work-related stress in law enforcement. The Police Stress Survey (Spielberger, et al., 1981) examined the relationships between occupation stress and job-related attitudes, and Violanti and Aron (1993) investigated sources and types of police stressors, job attitudes, and psychological distress; whereas, Rahe and Veach (1994) support the belief that a person's perception of events and circumstances that take place in their life may have an overall effect on the person's health.

The strongest association was found between the frequency and perceived usefulness of positive behaviors. Therefore, it appears that when positive coping skills were used, officers perceived these behaviors to be more useful than the negative coping behaviors.

Another finding indicated an association between negative coping skills and recent stressful events in the law enforcement officer's life. It appears that with an increase in stressful life events, officers use more negative coping skills. The findings of

this study indicated that the frequency of negative coping behaviors was associated with how often these behaviors were engaged in and the perceived usefulness of these behaviors. This result appears to exemplify a pattern of negative reinforcement. For example, the more negative behaviors that law enforcement officers engage in, the more often she/he engages in these behaviors and the more useful they are perceived to be. This cycle could be self-perpetuating. The more the officers engage in negative behaviors, the more the perceived value of these behaviors increased.

Conversely, the findings also indicated a positive association between the frequency and usefulness of positive coping behaviors. Also, the more often positive behaviors were utilized the less often the officers used negative behaviors. Just as with the negative pattern of behavior, it appears that a positively reinforcing cycle can be established.

While the number of ethnic minority participants was small, a statistical significant difference was found between ethnic groups and the usefulness of negative coping skills. Minority participants perceived negative coping behaviors as more useful than white participants. One reason for this finding may be the differences in environmental stressors experienced by these two groups. Another reason may be differences in cultural upbringing among the different groups. In other words, it may be more socially acceptable to use certain coping behaviors in some minority groups as opposed to others.

Additional findings were in differences between groups in terms of marital status and how often positive coping skills were perceived as useful. The greatest difference occurred between single officers and those officers who were married or had been married at some point in time. Due to having been married these officers may have found healthier outlets for stress than never married officers.

What are some of the characteristics which are positively associated with high stress among law enforcement officers? The qualitative portion of this study offers some insight into this question. From focus group and written data it appears that there are several factors associated with high stress within this population. Some of these factors include taking things out on the public, having an apathetic attitude, feeling that the justice system is dysfunctional, having no self control, and feeling that management and administration are unsupportive.

What are some of the characteristics which are positively associated with stress management skills? From the written data and the focus group law enforcement officers used several adaptive coping skills in stress management. These include meditation, music, talking things over with other people, getting to know oneself, exercise, learning from past experiences, reading, enjoying outdoor activities, getting involved in sports or hobbies, using humor, and spending quality time with family and friends as ways to deal with stress. The officers of this study stated that these skills were helpful in reducing

personal stress. However, the participants did not indicate that these skills were helpful in reducing job-related stress.

Does post-academy training meet the needs of sworn law enforcement personnel to build and maintain effective stress management skills? The participants of this study reported a minimal amount of training, if any, for handling stress while in the academy or post-academy. The training that was received was not informative or helpful. Most of the participants learned their “coping behaviors” through personal life experiences like a depressive episode, or abuse of alcohol or drugs, and then the tools for dealing with stress were made available, or the participant learn to cope and correct their mistakes. One officer stated that stress is a “symptom” created for people. The majority of the participants stated that they did not receive any stress management training for job-related stress or personal stress. The participants felt that the department was not a place where confidentiality was maintained and that management produced the stress and; therefore, the administration saw no reason to teach the officers how to handle stress. The participants felt that the instructors knew very little about the subject.

Overall the findings of the qualitative and quantitative components of this study appear to only be loosely connected. As self-reported it appears that the coping skills, whether negative or positive, the officers attained prior to entering the academy were essentially the same during and after academy training. Officers who used negative coping behaviors tended to perceive those behaviors as useful and continued using them, whereas,

officers who used positive coping skills continued to pursue those activities and found them beneficial.

On the other hand, the qualitative data suggest that officers used positive coping behaviors in terms of their personal stress. However, these skills did not translate to reduce their work-related stress. Furthermore, the minimal amount of information on stress management provided by the academy or law enforcement agency did not adequately address the multiple stressors, whether personal or job-related, that these officers experienced. The participants reported that stress management training was mentioned in the academy or law enforcement agency; however, the participants were not given instructions on how to use it effectively in their job or personal life. This lack of training may be one reason for the negative coping skills utilized by many of the officers.

Limitations

The lack of representativeness of the sample is a limitation of this study. As is common in studies conducted in the field, the fact that subjects were self-selected restricts the generalizability of the findings. In the present study, the self-selection process yielded a sample that was primarily white, male, and lower-level management personnel.

A lack of ethnic diversity was present in this study even though attempts were made to recruit minority officers. Despite these efforts only six officers were from minority groups. One possible reason for this low minority participation may have been due to minority officers' perception that the department was not interested in addressing

their needs. Furthermore, low participation may have been due to a cultural norm to keep personal issues within the family, a standard for some ethnic groups.

The small number of female subjects also limits the generalizability of this study. Although males have traditionally made up the major proportion of law enforcement officers, female officers may experience different stressors, both personal and job-related, than male officers. The fact that females are entering a male-dominated work environment may place additional stressors on women that their male counterparts do not experience.

Another limitation of the study was the small sample size, which further restricts the generalizability of the results. Attempts were made to recruit officers from other metropolitan areas; however, due to the elections and other administrative issues, agencies were not willing to allow officers to participate in this study.

A primary concern of the officers was the confidentiality of their responses. Therefore, social desirability as a factor could have influenced the participant's responses. Many of the responses were positive in nature. It is possible that participants were providing the investigator with the most socially desirable answer. A scale measuring social desirability such as The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Strahan & Gerbasi, 1972), could be used in future studies to measure this factor.

Limitations regarding the focus group data concern the group size and familiarity of group members with each other. Focus group members may have discussed the study

with each other before all the data could be collected. The small size of the group was not representative of law enforcement officers in the general population.

Implications

The literature reveals that stress has been a part of the lifestyle of humans since pre-historic times (Selye, 1982). However, the literature does not appear to be addressing the personal stress of law enforcement officers and how personal stress may have an affect on job-related stress. A majority of the literature suggests job-related stress as one of the major contributors to law enforcement officer's problems. The findings of this study indicate that personal stress could play an important role in job-related stress.

The RCLQ indicated that persons recent life change may have an affect on their life complacency. Using The Stress and Coping Inventory (SCI), (Rahe & Veach, 1994) in further research studies of law enforcement and stress along with The Police Stress Survey (Spielberger, et al., 1981) could be beneficial in identifying sources of stress in law enforcement and recent life change events.

The development and implementation of an educational program for law enforcement agencies to target both personal and job-related stress with an emphasis on confidentiality could be beneficial. However, law enforcement officers do not trust the administration and fear that anything that is disclosed will have repercussions.

Health educators who work in the area of law enforcement will be challenged with administration and confidentiality barriers that have an effect on their role to educate and

implement changes in the health status of law enforcement officers. The ultimate goal of any health educator is to promote the quality of life.

The need for colleges and universities to offer continuing education courses in the area of stress management, which addresses both personal and job-related stress for law enforcement officers, is needed. It is also important for law enforcement agencies to provide an incentive for these officers to participate in these continuing education programs.

As long as the issue of stress and law enforcement is prevalent, there will continue to be law enforcement officers who will take their frustrations out on their families, the public and fellow officers. If this area is ignored more law enforcement officers will seek maladaptive coping behaviors to reduce their stress. These behaviors may include suicide (Seligmann, et al., 1994), increase sexual behaviors, increase alcohol and drug use, increase family violence, and many other negative behaviors.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

SHERYL ANNE BREWER
P.O. Box 100582
Fort Worth, Texas 76185-0582
817-560-2390

July 5, 1995

Chief

Police Department

Texas

Dear Chief :

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your permission to ride with the Police Department. As a result of this exposure and discussion with my major professor at Texas Woman's University and my need for completing a doctoral study, I would like your permission to conduct research with the Police Department.

This study would assess the attitudes of police officers about post academy training situations, their evaluation of this training in light of their needs as a police officer, and the stress management skills of police officers. I need four groups of eight to ten officers for this study. This will only require one and a half to two hours of participation per group member. Each group of officers will be asked to meet together with me as a focus group in order to discuss their experiences. In addition, each participant will be asked to complete a Consent Form, a Stress Management Checklist, the Holmes-Rahe Social Readjustment Rating Scale, and a Demographic Data Questionnaire.

I am attaching a packet of information that will be given to the participants as they begin this group. Please advise me as to what I need to do to secure your permission to begin this study. Your written permission is required by Texas Woman's University before I can begin this research.

At the completion of this study, a copy of the results will be available at your request.

Thank you for your immediate attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

Sheryl Anne Brewer, MSSW
LMSW-ACSW, LMFT, LCDC, CCDS

SHERYL ANNE BREWER
P.O. Box 690371
Orlando, Florida 32869-0371
407-370-6911

July 5, 1996

Sheriff

Florida

Dear Sheriff :

I am a doctoral student at Texas Woman's University, Denton, Texas. I am currently living in Southwest Orange County. I also have two family members that work for the Sheriff's Office. They are Sergeant Brain Gibson and Deputy First Class Terry Brewer.

I would like your permission to conduct research with the Sheriff's Office. This study would assess the attitudes of deputies about post-academy training situations, their evaluation of this training in light of their needs as deputies, and the stress management skills of deputies. I need four groups of eight to ten deputies to volunteer for this study. I will only require one and a half to two hours of participation per group member. Each group of deputies will be asked to meet with me as a focus group in order to discuss their experiences. In addition, each participant will be asked to complete a Consent Form, a Stress Management Checklist, the Social Readjustment Rating Scale, and a Demographic Data Questionnaire.

I am attaching a packet of information that will be given to the participants as they begin this group. Please advise me as to what I need to do to secure your permission to begin this study. Your written permission is required by Texas Woman's University before I can begin this research.

At the completion of this study, a copy of the results will be available at your request. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, do not hesitate to call me.

Thank you for your immediate attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

Sheryl Anne Brewer
 LMSW-ACSW,LMFT,LCDC,CCDS

APPENDIX B
PERMISSION LETTER
AND
MEMORANDUM



POLICE DEPARTMENT

TEXAS

FAX

CHIEF OF POLICE

September 20, 1995

Sheryl A. Brewer
P. O. Box 100582
Fort Worth, Texas 76185-0582

Dear Ms. Brewer:

I have reconsidered your request to conduct research with the Police Department to complete your doctoral study. I understand this research will not involve officers' on-duty time but is strictly voluntary. You will be permitted to make information about your research study available to officers at our sector buildings by posting this information on bulletin boards at those locations. If you wish to send copies of your information to this office, it will be forwarded to the sector locations.

Also, you may wish to contact the Police Officers Association, Texas -, telephone number, for assistance with your research.

I wish you success in your studies at Texas Woman's University.

Very truly yours,

Chief of Police



Phone

FLORIDA

MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL SWORN LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL

FROM: CHIEF DEPUTY

SUBJECT: LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS RESEARCH

DATE: OCTOBER 11, 1996

=====

Sheryl Anne Brewer of the Texas Women's University, Denton, Texas, is conducting research of law enforcement related stress. Ms. Brewer is requesting thirty (30) deputies fill out a simple questionnaire (front and back of one page) and ten (10) deputies to be interviewed. (Interview takes about two hours.)

Anyone interested in being part of this study, please sign a note and place in a sealed envelope marked "research" on the outside and send to me through office mail by noon, Friday, October 20, 1996.

The sealed envelopes will be given directly to Ms. Brewer and she will contact you. The information you give Ms. Brewer is confidential and you will get the results of her research if interested.

This research is to be done on your own time and is not overtime.

CHIEF DEPUTY

APPENDIX C
REQUESTING VOLUNTEERS
MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL SWORN LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL

FROM: SHERYL ANNE BREWER, MSSW

SUBJECT: LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS RESEARCH

DATE: NOVEMBER 14, 1996

My name is Sheryl Anne Brewer. I am a doctoral student at Texas Woman's University, Denton, Texas. I am conducting research of law enforcement related stress. I need 30 officers to fill out a demographic survey, and two questionnaires and ten (10) officers to be interviewed in a focus group setting. The focus group will take less than two hours.

Anyone interested in being part of this study, please call me or send your name and phone number to me at the following address: 5129 Bryce Ave., Fort Worth, Texas 76107. I will contact you to set up a time to do the research and/or focus group. The information that you give me is confidential and you will get the results of your questionnaires if interested.

If you have any questions regarding this research project, please call me at: 732-3250.

This research is voluntary and to be done on your own time.

Sheryl Anne Brewer, MSSW, LMSW-ACSW, LMFT, LCDC, CCDS

APPENDIX D

PERMISSION TO USE

RECENT LIFE CHANGE QUESTIONNAIRE

SHERYL ANNE BREWER, MSSW
LMSW-ACSW, LMFT, LCDC, CCDS
P.O. Box 100582
Fort Worth, Texas 76185-0582
817-560-2390

June 14, 1995

Richard H. Rahe, M.D.
Professor of Psychiatry
Director, Nevada Stress Center
University of Nevada School of Medicine
Department of Psychiatry
Reno, Nevada 89557

Dear Dr. Rahe:

I am a doctoral student at Texas Woman's University, Denton, Texas. I plan to conduct research to determine 'The Effectiveness of Police Officers' Post-Academy Training In Stress Management Skills'. I would like permission to use the Social Readjustment Rating Scale as part of my dissertation research. I am also requesting a copy of your scale and information on administration and scoring. I would also appreciate any information you can provide on validation and reliability of your scale.

Thank you for your immediate attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

Sheryl Anne Brewer

To Follow -

You may mean the
R-CG (copy
enclosed)

25 Sept 95
Permission
granted.
Rahe, M.D.

SENT BY: NEVADA STRESS CENTER : 10- 1-96 ; 9:27AM ;

7023281778-

8-8172373235; # 1 / 1

TO:

SHERYL ANNE BREWER
PO Box 690371
Orlando, Florida 32869
407-370-6911

FAX:

817-237-3235

September 27, 1996

Richard H. Rahe, M.D.
Director, Nevada Stress Center
VA Medical Center
151 C
1000 Locust Street
Reno, Nevada 89520

Dear Dr. Rahe:

I am a doctoral student at Texas Woman's University, Denton, Texas. I am conducting my research in a few weeks. I need your written permission to use the Recent Life Changes Scale as part of my dissertation and to use copies of the Recent Life Changes Scale instead of the Scantron Form No. 22910-UNR. I am looking at the Effectiveness of Deputy Sheriff's Post-Academy Training In Stress Management Skills. My research is being conducted in the Orlando, Florida area.

Thank you for your immediate attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

Sheryl Anne Brewer

1 Oct '96
you have
my permission
to use copies of
my RLCQ in your
research.
Rahe, M.D.

HAPI

HEALTH ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS, Inc.

 Richard H. Rahe, M.D.,
Chairman of the Board

 Tracy L. Veach, Ed.D.,
President

 638 St. Lawrence Avenue
Reno, NV 89509
(702) 348-8584

Sept. 26, 1995

Dear Ms. Brower,

Enclosed please find the Recent Life Changes Questionnaire (2 sides) and the updated Life Change units. The scoring is done by simply adding up the LCU values for the events which the individual has indicated. For a six month period, we are presently using the interpretations of ranges listed below.

LCU Totals	0 - 125	Low illness risk
	126 - 200	Moderate illness risk
	201 - 300	Elevated illness risk
	301 - 450	High illness risk
	450 +	Very high illness risk.

Dr. Rahe will be sending along more information next week concerning the reliability and validity of the scales. If you have any questions, please call us at 702-328-1440.

Sincerely,
Roblyn Tolles
Research Assoc.

APPENDIX E
INTRODUCTION LETTER

SHERYL ANNE BREWER, MSSW
LMSW-ACSW, LMFT, LCDIC, CCDS
P.O. Box 690371
Orlando, Florida 32869-0371
407-370-6911

My name is Sheryl Anne Brewer; a doctoral student at Texas Woman's University. I am doing a research study on the effectiveness of post academy training of law enforcement officers' in teaching stress management skills. My purpose is to assess your attitudes regarding the effectiveness of training you have received in dealing with stress. You will be asked to complete a consent form, a demographic survey, a Stress Management Checklist, and the Recent Life Changes Scale. All information that is collected is CONFIDENTIAL. Participation in this study is voluntary. After data analysis, your questionnaires will be destroyed.

I would appreciate your not discussing the material with anyone until I have completed collection of all my data. At the completion of this study, a copy of the results will be available at your written request.

I appreciate your taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in my research study.

Sheryl Anne Brewer

APPENDIX F

SUBJECT TO CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH WRITTEN AND AUDIO

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
SUBJECT CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS' POST-ACADEMY
TRAINING IN STRESS
MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Sherry Brewer, Ph.D. Candidate - (407)370-6911
Judy Baker, Ph.D. Advisor - (817)898-2842

This study is part of a dissertation project for above named researcher in connection with Texas Woman's University. The purpose of this study is to assess the attitudes of forty volunteer law enforcement officers regarding the perceptions of effectiveness of their post-academy training, with a focus on resulting stress management skills. Each subject will be required to participate in a one and a half to two hour focus group, which will include completion of a questionnaire, a Stress Management Checklist and the Social Readjustment Rating Scale and group discussion about the effectiveness of their post-academy training with regard to stress management skill-building. Groups will be schedule to accommodate officers' work schedule. The questionnaire consists of demographic information. The Stress Management Checklist consists of twenty-nine, likert-type questions and takes approximately ten minutes to complete. Audio tapes will be made of each focus group session and destroyed after the data has been transcribed and content analyzed. A copy of the study results will be made available to each subject upon written request.

All information obtained during this study will be kept confidential. Names of participants will be destroyed after subject numbers have been assigned. The results will be reported by group number and subject number, with no identifying information given. The actual demographic questionnaire and Stress Management Checklist completed by each subject will be shredded within one month after completion of the focus group.

The benefits of this study will be that each participant will receive information about their stress level and stress management skills from their scores on the Stress Management Checklist and the Social Readjustment Rating Scale. They will also be given an opportunity to discuss experiences in their post-academy training in a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere and participate in devising better post-academy training for the Sheriff's Office. During the discussion, participants may learn new stress management techniques. In addition, the results of this study will be made available to each participant upon written request.

The potential risks to the subject involved in this research include: (a) improper release of data, (b) boredom, (c) loss of time, (d) fear of eventual repercussions. The data will not be knowingly released to anyone. Efforts will be made to minimize these risks and to prevent any complications that could result from this research. Medical services and compensation for injuries incurred as a result of your participation in the research are not available. The investigator is prepared to advise you in case of adverse effects, which you should report to her promptly. A phone number where the investigator may be reached is listed in the heading of this form.

If you have any questions about the research or about your rights as a subject, we want you to ask us. If you have questions later, or if you wish to report a research-related complication (in addition to notifying the investigator), you may call the Office of Research and Grants Administration during office hours at 817-898-3375,

Participation in this study is voluntary. Any subject may withdraw from this study at any time. The refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. Participation or lack of participation in this study does not impact your position with the law enforcement agency with which you are employed. Complete confidentiality will be maintained. Specific information about your results will not be given to anyone, including anyone associated with the law enforcement agency with which you are employed.

Any and all questions and concerns of the subjects will be answered. If at any time during the study more questions arise, they will be answered expediently. All subjects will be given a copy of their signed *Subject Consent To Participate* form to keep for their records.

I do hereby consent to the recording of my voice by Sherry Brewer, acting on this date under the authority of the Texas Woman's University. I understand that the material recorded today may be made available for the purpose of providing data for statistical analysis for the dissertation identified in the above heading. These tapes will only be heard by Sherry Brewer and the transcriptionist who has been trained in confidentiality and signed an agreement to keep all information heard from these tapes confidential. In addition, all copies of the transcribed tapes will be released to Sherry Brewer by the transcriptionist. The tapes will be erased after the completion of the transcription, not to be any longer than two months after the ending of the last focus group. I do hereby consent to such use.

I hereby release the Texas Woman's University and the undersigned party acting under the authority of Texas Woman's University from any and all claims arising out of such taking, recording and reproducing, publishing, transmitting, or exhibiting as is authorized by the Texas Woman's University.

Signature of Participant

Date

The above consent form was read, discussed, and signed in my presence. In my opinion, the persons signing said consent form did so freely and with full knowledge and understanding of its contents.

Sherry Brewer, MSSW, LMSW-ACSW, LMFT, LCDC, CCDS
Researcher

Date

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
SUBJECT CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS' POST-ACADEMY
TRAINING IN STRESS
MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Sherry Brewer, Ph.D. Candidate - (407)370-6911
Judy Baker, Ph.D. Advisor - (817)898-2842

This study is part of a dissertation project for above named researcher in connection with Texas Woman's University. The purpose of this study is to assess the attitudes of forty volunteer law enforcement officers regarding the perceptions of effectiveness of their post-academy training, with a focus on resulting stress management skills. Each subject will be asked to complete a demographic data questionnaire, a Stress Management Checklist, the Recent Life Changes Scale, and a focus questionnaire. These questionnaires will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. A copy of the study results will be made available to each subject upon written request.

All information obtained during this study will be kept confidential. Names of participants will be destroyed after subject numbers have been assigned. The results will be reported by group number and subject number, with no identifying information given. All questionnaires completed by each subject will be shredded within one month after completion of the study.

The benefits of this study will be that each participant will receive information about their stress level and stress management skills from their scores on the Stress Management Checklist and the Recent Life Changes Scale. The results of this study will be made available to each participant upon written request.

The potential risks to the subject involved in this research include: (a) improper release of data, (b) boredom, (c) loss of time, (d) fear of eventual repercussions. The data will not be knowingly released to anyone. Efforts will be made to minimize these risks and to prevent any complications that could result from this research. Medical services and compensation for injuries incurred as a result of your participation in the research are not available. The investigator is prepared to advise you in case of adverse effects, which you should report to her promptly. A phone number where the investigator may be reached is listed in the heading of this form.

If you have any questions about the research or about your rights as a subject, we want you to ask us. If you have questions later, or if you wish to report a research-related complication (in addition to notifying the investigator), you may call the Office of Research and Grants Administration during office hours at 817-898-3375,

Participation in this study is voluntary. Any subject may withdraw from this study at any time. The refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. Participation or lack of participation in this study does not impact your position with the law enforcement agency with which you are employed. Complete confidentiality will be

maintained. Specific information about your results will not be given to anyone, including anyone associated with the agency with which you are employed.

Any and all questions and concerns of the subjects will be answered. If at any time during the study more questions arise, they will be answered expediently. All subjects will be given a copy of their signed *Subject Consent To Participate* form to keep for their records.

I hereby release the Texas Woman's University and the undersigned party acting under the authority of Texas Woman's University from any and all claims arising out of such taking, recording and reproducing, publishing, transmitting, or exhibiting as is authorized by the Texas Woman's University.

Signature of Participant

Date

The above consent form was read, discussed, and signed in my presence. In my opinion, the persons signing said consent form did so freely and with full knowledge and understanding of its contents.

Sherry Brewer, MSSW, LMSW-ACSW, LMFT, LCDC, CCDS
Researcher

Date

APPENDIX G

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

POST-ACADEMY TRAINING STUDY

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete the following information about yourself. Answer all questions. All information will be kept confidential and will be utilized for statistical analysis only.

1. AGE: _____ (years)
2. RACE: ☐ African American ☐ Hispanic ☐ Anglo/White/Caucasian
☐ Native American ☐ Asian ☐ Other: _____ (Specify)
3. Number of years as a Commissioned Officer _____
4. Schooling Completed (check one)
☐ 12th grade or GED ☐ High School

Years of College:
☐ 1 - 30 credits ☐ 31 - 60 credits ☐ 61 - 90 credits ☐ 91 - 120 credits
☐ _____ (fill in the blank)
☐ Bachelors Degree (BS) ☐ Masters Degree (MS) ☐ Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
Describe your level of education: _____

5. MARITAL STATUS (check one)
☐ Married ☐ Remarried ☐ Divorced ☐ Separated ☐ Single
☐ Other (please specify) _____
6. GENDER: M F
7. Your Rank with the Sheriffs Office:
☐ Deputy ☐ Detective ☐ Sergeant ☐ Lieutenant
☐ Captain ☐ Major of Corrections ☐ Chief Deputy
☐ Sheriff ☐ Other (please specify) _____
8. At what age did you decide to be in law enforcement? _____

POST-ACADEMY TRAINING STUDY

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete the following information about yourself. Answer all questions. All information will be kept confidential and will be utilized for statistical analysis only.

1. AGE: _____ (years)
2. RACE: ☐ African American ☐ Hispanic ☐ Anglo/White/Caucasian
☐ Native American ☐ Asian ☐ Other: _____ (Specify)
3. Number of years as a Commissioned Officer _____
4. Schooling Completed (check one)
 - ☐ 12th grade or GED ☐ High School
 - Years of College:
 - ☐ 1 - 30 credits ☐ 31 - 60 credits ☐ 61 - 90 credits ☐ 91 - 120 credits
 - ☐ _____ (fill in the blank)
 - ☐ Bachelors Degree (BS) ☐ Masters Degree (MS) ☐ Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
 - Describe you level of education: _____
5. MARITAL STATUS (check one)
 - ☐ Married ☐ Remarried ☐ Divorced ☐ Separated ☐ Single
 - ☐ Other (please specify) _____
6. GENDER: M F
7. Your Rank with the Police Department:
 - ☐ Probation Officer ☐ Officer ☐ Corporal/Detective ☐ Sergeant
 - ☐ Lieutenant ☐ Captain ☐ Deputy Chief ☐ Chief of Police
8. At what age did you decide to be in law enforcement? _____

APPENDIX H
STRESS MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

STRESS MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

Listed below are things people may do when they experience stress. Think back over the recent past. Think about how you coped with any problems or stressful situations that you faced in the recent past. Put a check in Column 1 to show how often you did each thing when you experienced stress. Put a check in Column 2 to show whether or not the action helped to reduce your stress. If you checked NEVER in Column 1, you do not need to answer Column 2 for that item.

	Column 1			Column 2		
	In the recent past, when you experienced stress, how frequently did you			Did it help to reduce your stress?		
	Often	Sometimes	Never	A Lot	A Little	No
1. tell yourself positive things?	()	()	()	()	()	()
2. drink more coffee?	()	()	()	()	()	()
3. try to figure out what upset you about the problem?	()	()	()	()	()	()
4. eat more?	()	()	()	()	()	()
5. find humor in the situation	()	()	()	()	()	()
6. use relaxation techniques?	()	()	()	()	()	()
7. exercise more?	()	()	()	()	()	()
8. talk about the situation with the people who were involved?	()	()	()	()	()	()
9. smoke more?	()	()	()	()	()	()
10. think about the positive side of the situation?	()	()	()	()	()	()
11. think through how you would handle the situation?	()	()	()	()	()	()

	Column 1			Column 2		
	In the <i>recent past</i> , when you experienced stress, how frequently did you			Did it help to <i>reduce your stress</i> ?		
	Often	Sometimes	Never	A Lot	A Little	Never
12. try to get more information about the situation?	()	()	()	()	()	()
13. make a plan of action and follow it?	()	()	()	()	()	()
14. drink more alcohol?	()	()	()	()	()	()
15. accept the situation if nothing could be done to change it?	()	()	()	()	()	()
16. take drugs or non-prescription medications?	()	()	()	()	()	()
17. take things one step at a time?	()	()	()	()	()	()
18. talk about your feelings with your family or friends?	()	()	()	()	()	()
19. take your frustration out on other people?	()	()	()	()	()	()
20. learn new skills to help you deal with the situation?	()	()	()	()	()	()
21. get advice from someone who could help you?	()	()	()	()	()	()
22. take the blame for a problem that wasn't your fault?	()	()	()	()	()	()
23. do other things for awhile to give your mind a rest from the situation?	()	()	()	()	()	()
24. keep your feelings to yourself?	()	()	()	()	()	()
25. consider several alternatives for handling the situation?	()	()	()	()	()	()

	Column 1			Column 2		
	In the <i>recent past</i> , when you experienced stress, how frequently did you			Did it help to <i>reduce your stress</i> ?		
	Often	Sometimes	Never	A Lot	A Little	Never
26. sleep more?	()	()	()	()	()	()
27. use humor in difficult situations?	()	()	()	()	()	()

APPENDIX I

RECENT LIFE CHANGES QUESTIONNAIRE

RECENT LIFE CHANGES

Richard H. Rahe, M.D.
Nevada Stress Center
University of Nevada
School of Medicine

Name: _____

Today's Date: _____

To answer the questions below, mark in one or more of the ovals to the right of each question. If the event in question happened to you within the past two years, indicate when it occurred by marking in the appropriate column: 0-6 months ago, 7-12 months ago, etc. If you experienced an event more than once over the past two years, mark all appropriate ovals. If the event did not occur over the last two years (or never occurred), leave all ovals empty.

Within the time periods listed, have you experienced:

	19-24 mo. ago	13-18 mo. ago	7-12 mo. ago	0-6 mo. ago
Health				
an illness or injury which:				
kept you in bed a week or more, or sent you to the hospital?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
was less serious than above?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
major dental work?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a major change in eating habits?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a major change in sleeping habits?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a major change in your usual type and/or amount of recreation?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work				
a change to a new type of work?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a change in your work hours or conditions?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a change in your responsibilities at work:				
more responsibilities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
less responsibilities?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
promotion?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
demotion?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
transfer?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
troubles at work:				
with your boss?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
with co-workers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
with persons under your supervision?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
other work troubles?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a major business readjustment?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a retirement?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a loss of job:				
laid off work?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
fired from work?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a correspondence course to help you in your work?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Home and Family				
a major change in your living conditions (home improvements or a decline in your home or neighborhood)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a change in residence:				
move within the same town or city?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
move to a different town, city, or state?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a change in family "get togethers"?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
a major change in the health or behavior of a family member (illness, accidents, drug or disciplinary problems, etc.)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PLEASE COMPLETE REVERSE SIDE

	19-24 mo. ago	13-18 mo. ago	7-12 mo. ago	0-6 mo. ago	
marriage?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a pregnancy?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a miscarriage or an abortion?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a gain of a new family member:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
birth of a child?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
adoption of a child?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a relative moving in with you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a spouse beginning or ending work outside the home?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a child leaving home:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
to attend college?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
due to marriage?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
for other reasons?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a change in arguments with your spouse?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
in-law problems?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a change in the marital status of your parents:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
divorce?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
remarriage?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a separation from your spouse:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
due to work?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
marital problems?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a divorce?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
the birth of a grandchild?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
the death of a spouse?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
the death of another family member:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
child?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
brother or sister?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
parent?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal and Social					
a change in personal habits (your dress, friends, life-style, etc.)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
beginning or ending school or college?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a change of school or college?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a change in political beliefs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a change in religious beliefs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a change in social activities (clubs, movies, visiting, etc.)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a vacation?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a new, close, personal relationship?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
an engagement to marry?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
girlfriend or boyfriend problems?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
sexual difficulties?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a "falling out" of a close personal relationship?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
an accident?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a minor violation of the law (traffic ticket, etc.)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
being held in jail (DUI, felony, etc.)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
the death of a close friend?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a major decision regarding your immediate future?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a major personal achievement?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial					
a major change in finances:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
increased income?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
decreased income?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
investment and/or credit difficulties?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a loss or damage of personal property?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a moderate purchase (such as an automobile)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a major purchase (such as a home)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a foreclosure of a mortgage or loan?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

← THIS DIRECTION →