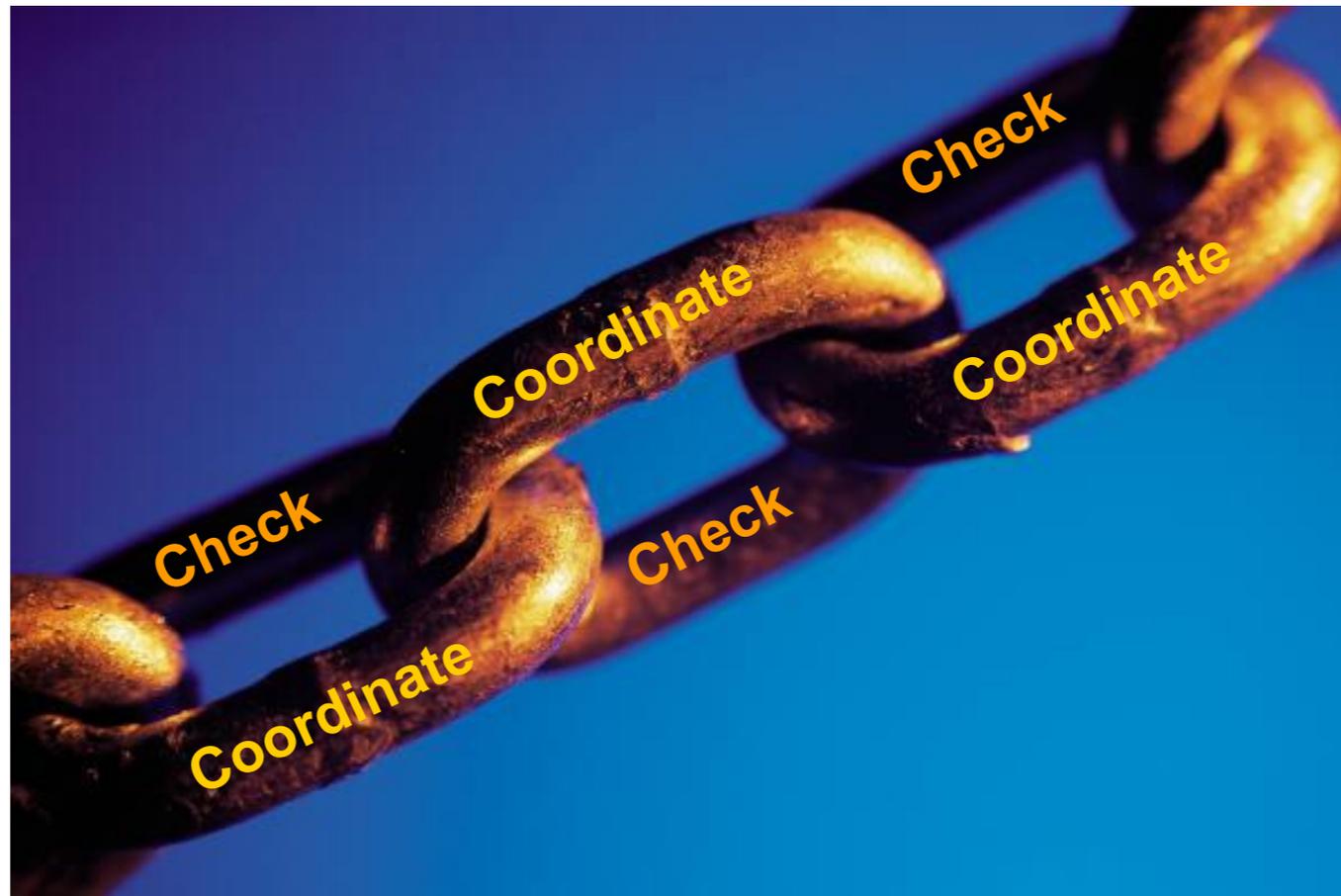


Combat and Operational Stress First Aid (COSFA)

Continuous Aid: Check and Coordinate





Enabling Objectives:



1. Continuous Aid

- Describe why Continuous Aid is the core of COSFA.
- Describe why the Stress Continuum is central to Continuous Aid.

2. Check

- Describe why the Check function is needed by everyone in our care.
- Describe the three steps of the Check cycle: (1) First Check, (2) Second Check, and (3) Collateral information Check.
- List the three forms of Orange Zone indicators that must be considered during every COSFA Check and recheck.

3. Coordinate

- Describe the two goals of the Coordinate action.
- Describe the factors to consider when deciding how much to advise commanders about, and whether or when to refer for outside help.

4. Apply Continuous Aid skills to video vignettes.



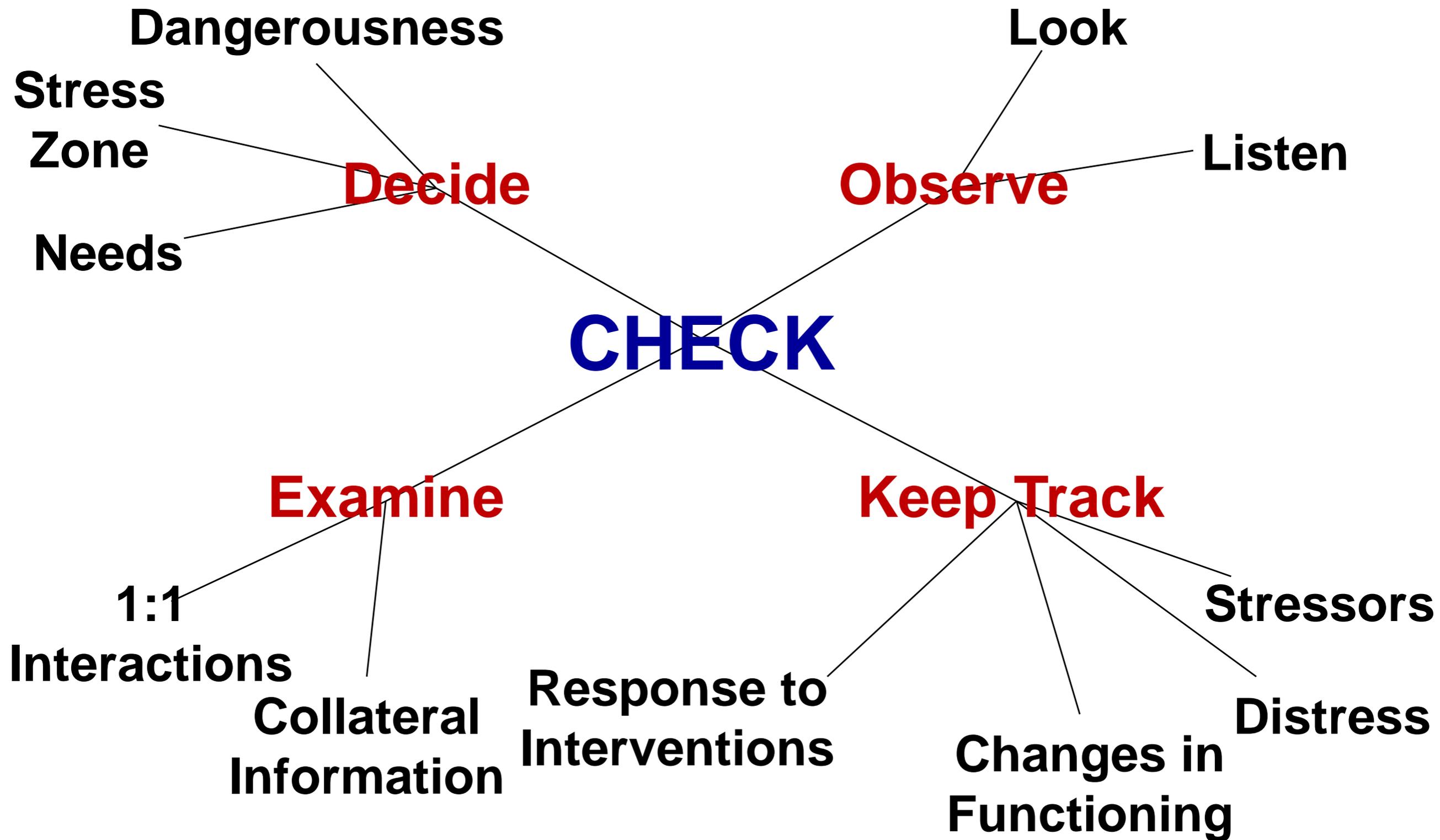
Continuous Aid is Build On Several Basic Assumption:



- Operational stress affects everyone.
- Stress responses and outcomes lie along a spectrum, and are not as simple as “well” or “disordered.”
- Most individuals’ stress states change over time (they have trajectories).
- The Sailors, Marines, and family members we care for live and work in units and other social organizations with great potential for healing and building resilience.



Check: Conceptual Map





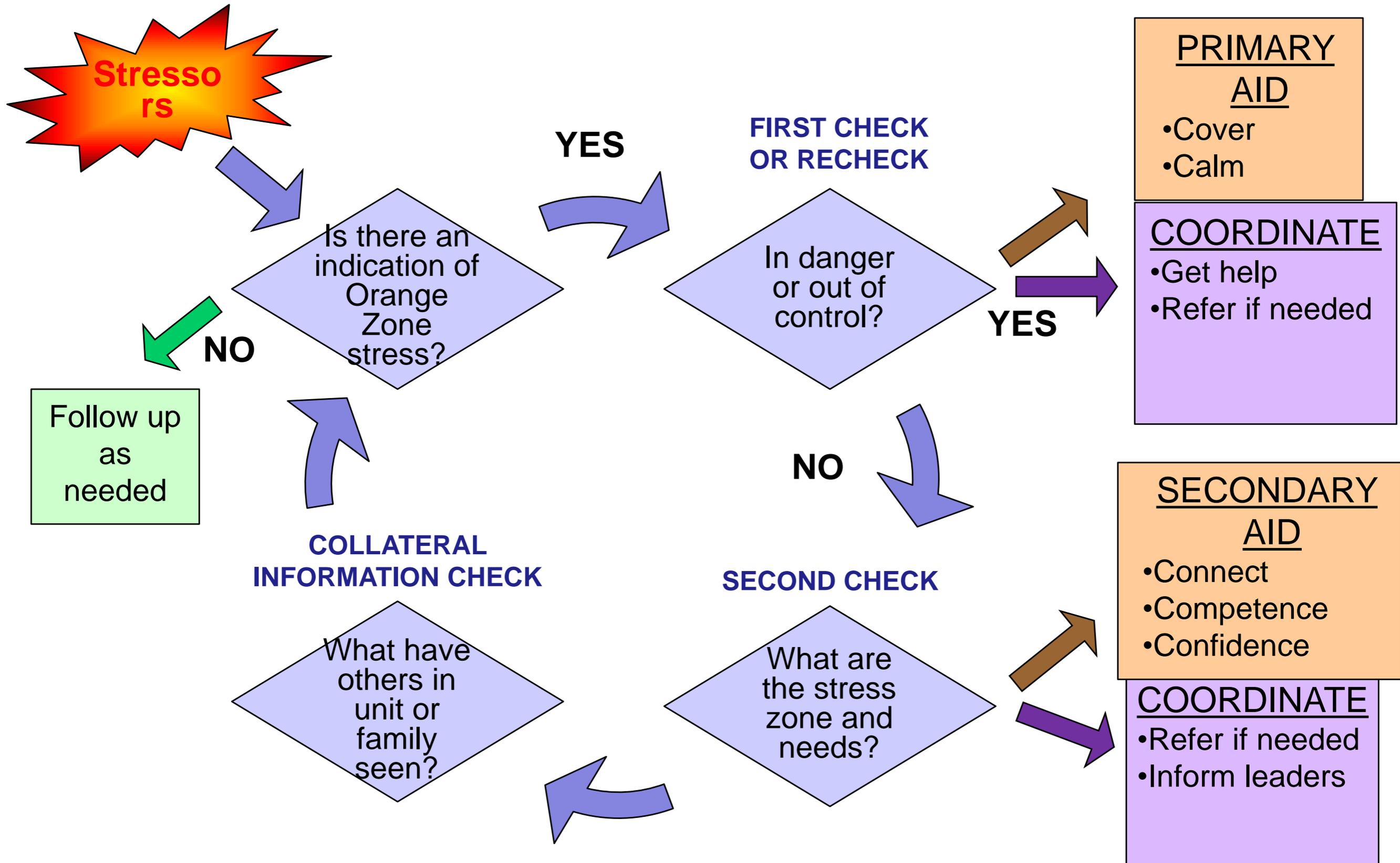
Check: Why Is It Needed?



- Those who are injured by stress may be the last to know it.
- Stigma is an obstacle to asking for help.
- Matching needs to available resources requires careful, ongoing assessment.
- Stress zones and needs change over time.
- Risks from stress injuries may last a long time after the event.



The Check Cycle





How to Recognize Who Needs Help: Orange Zone Indicators



- What is an Orange Zone Orange Zone indicator?
 - A reason to suspect that a given individual might possibly be in the Orange Zone and in need of help
- Three forms of Orange Zone indicators:
 - 1. Recent Stressor Events:** recent exposure to a events with high potential to cause trauma, grief, moral injury
 - 2. Distress:** Significant and persistent distress such as unusual fear, anger, anxiety, sadness, guilt, or shame
 - 3. Changes in Functioning:** Significant and persistent changes in physical, mental, social, or spiritual function
- Caregivers can learn of Orange Zone indicators directly from individuals or from other informants.

Discriminating Orange From Yellow: Stressors

Yellow Zone

- Common, experiences
- Can come from any source
- Can be of any intensity
- Can be taken in stride

- Money problems
- Relationship problems
- Health problems
- Lack of sleep
- Conflicts with superiors
- Conflicts with peers
- Legal problems
- Disciplinary problems
- Uncertainties about future
- Missing friends or family
- Loneliness
- Etc.

Stressor Characteristics

Stressor Examples

Orange Zone

- Extraordinary experiences
- Either high-intensity events or a severe long-term accumulation
- Can be overwhelming

- Life threat
 - Nearly being killed
 - Seeing someone else die
 - Aftermath of death
- Loss
 - Death of friend or family member
 - Break-up of marriage
 - Disabling injury
- Inner conflict
 - Failing to save a peer's life
 - Obtaining revenge
 - Having trust in others betrayed
- Wear and Tear
 - Closely repeated deployments
 - Excessive, persistent Yellow stress

Discriminating Yellow From Orange: Subjective Distress

Yellow Zone

- Feels like being under strain but still one's normal self
- Fluctuates during the day
- Gets better with rest, exercise, or recreation
- Can be controlled, set aside

- Worry
- Irritability
- Sad or low mood
- Low morale
- Decreased sense of humor
- Less interest in social activities
- Feeling lonely
- Muscle tension
- Headaches or body aches
- Fatigue

Subjective Distress Characteristics

Subjective Distress Examples

Orange Zone

- Feels uncharacteristic, like not one's normal self
- Fluctuates, but always there
- Can significantly interfere with ability to work, rest, or have fun
- Can't be controlled, set aside

- Uncharacteristic episodes of panic anxiety or rage
- Constant high anxiety or anger
- Severe depressed mood
- Intense guilt or shame
- Inability to enjoy normal activities
- Hopelessness
- Feeling depleted of energy
- No interest in social activities
- Recurrent violent images
- Recurrent intense nightmares or flashbacks
- Suicidal or homicidal ideation

Discriminating Yellow From Orange: Changes in Functioning

Yellow Zone

- Mostly under control
- Seems like usual personality
- Minimal interference with work or social behaviors

- Difficulty focusing attention
- Difficulty recalling information
- Difficulty making decisions
- Trouble getting to sleep
- Weight Loss or gain
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Increased visits to medical
- Decreased quality or quantity of work
- Trouble getting along with others

Changes in Functioning Characteristics

Changes in Functioning Examples

Orange Zone

- Loss of control
- Noticeable change in personality
- Can significantly interfere with work or social behavior

- Body
 - Shaking, when not in danger
 - Changes in speech
 - Loss of control of bladder or bowels
- Mind
 - Losing track of time and place
 - Hearing or seeing things
 - Not making sense
 - Loss of remorse or compassion
- Behavior
 - Pacing, can't sit still
 - Inert, moving very slowly
 - Mute or very little speech
 - Avoiding contact with others



First Check: Safety and Crisis Assessment



- What is First Check?
 - Safety assessment of an individual with Orange Zone indicators
- When does First Check happen?
 - As soon as possible after learning of an Orange Zone indicator
 - May be during direct observation of Orange Zone behaviors
- Goals of First Check:
 - Assess for dangerousness to self or others — need for Cover.
 - Assess for physiological arousal or emotions — need for Calm.
 - Determine whether immediate outside help or referral is indicated.
- How do you perform First Check?
 - Look and listen.
 - Assess ability of the individual to recognize and respond to threats.
 - Assess level of self-control and physical and emotional calmness.
 - If indicated, ask about impulses or thoughts for suicidal or homicide.



Second Check: Thorough Assessment



- What is Second Check?
 - Detailed assessment of an individual with Orange Zone indicators
- When does Second Check happen?
 - As soon as possible after crisis has passed (if a crisis existed)
 - May occur after obtaining collateral information from other sources
- Goals of Second Check:
 - Identify current stress zone, especially whether Yellow or Orange.
 - Determine needs for Secondary Aid: Connect, Competence, Confidence.
 - Look for indicators of ability to function in military role.
 - Determine needs for other physical, emotional, social, or spiritual support or care.
 - Determine who else needs to know, and who else can help.



Second Check: Procedure



- Look and listen
- Assess Orange Zone indicators in depth
 1. **Stressors**, current and recent
 - Operational stressors
 - Home-front stressors
 2. **Internal distress**, especially recent increases
 3. **Level of functioning**, especially recent decreases
 - Physical
 - Mental
 - Social
 - Spiritual
- Assess need for Secondary Aid:
 - Level of connectedness and trust in others
 - Level of competence in job, self-regulation, and other roles
 - Level of confidence in self, mission, and values



Second Check Tool: 'OSCAR' Communication



Observe: Actively observe behaviors; look for patterns

State Observations: All attention to the behaviors; just the facts without interpretations or judgments

Clarify Role: State why you are concerned about the behavior. Validates why you are addressing the issue

Ask Why: Seek clarification; try to understand the other person's perception of the behaviors.

Respond: Clarify concern if indicated. Discuss desired behaviors. State options in behavioral terms.



Collateral Information Check: Getting Input From Other Sources



- Sources of collateral information
 - In the unit: leaders, medical department personnel, peers
 - Outside the unit: spouses, parents, friends
- When does Collateral Information Check happen?
 - Before or after each Second Check
- Goals of Collateral Information Check:
 - Gather more information about current or recent stressors, expressions of distress, or changes in functioning.
 - Confirm or refute subjective information obtained from individual.
 - Promote coordination and collaboration.



Coordinate: Conceptual Map





Coordination



- **Goals:**
 1. Inform those who need to know (e.g., commanders)
 2. Obtain other needed sources of help or care
- **Possible reasons to inform commanding officer**
 - Risk to individual or others in unit
 - Benefit from a temporary change in assignment
 - Need for command support for referral and treatment
- **Possible reasons for referral for further evaluation and care**
 - Uncertainty about stress zone, dangerousness, or level of impairment
 - Suspicion that key facts may be missing from the picture
 - Uncertainty about the strength of the working alliance with individual
 - Worsening over time, or failure to improve
 - Need for interventions COSFA caregiver is unable to provide



Combat & Operational Stress First Aid (COSFA)



Seven Cs of Stress First Aid:

- 1. CHECK**
Assess: observe and listen
- 2. COORDINATE**
Get help, refer as needed
- 3. COVER**
Get to safety ASAP
- 4. CALM**
Relax, slow down, refocus
- 5. CONNECT**
Get support from others
- 6. COMPETENCE**
Restore effectiveness
- 7. CONFIDENCE**
Restore self-esteem and hope

Three Levels:

1. Continuous Aid

2. Primary Aid

3. Secondary Aid



Apply Continuous Aid Skills to Video Vignettes:



Stress Awareness:

Some of the video clips that are used to convey combat and operational stress behaviors may contain graphic images or language consistent with human behavior in extreme stress situation.

Fair Use Disclaimer

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- *For training/educational purposes*
- *Is not revenue generating*
- *Is not distributed beyond a classroom setting*



Apply Continuous Aid Skills to Video Vignettes:



Large Group Discussion Questions For Each Video:

1. What are the Orange Zone indicators?
 - a. Stressor type: life threat, loss, inner conflict, or wear-and-tear
 - b. Level of distress
 - c. Impairment in functioning (especially loss of control)
2. Is there evidence of dangerousness to self or others?
3. Who might you coordinate with in this case?
 - a. Chain of command
 - b. Sources of help



Video Vignettes #1:



“Defiance” (*news from home scene, 0:54*)



Video Vignettes #2:



“Saving Private Ryan” (*D-Day beach scene, 1:42*)



Video Vignettes #3:



“All’s Quiet on the Western Front” (*bombardment scene, 1:01*)



Video Vignettes #4:



“Defiance” (*“for my father” scene, 1:36*)



Continuous Aid



Questions or Comments?