RSA Conference 2020

San Francisco | February 24 – 28 | Moscone Center

SESSION ID: KEY-R09S

Hacking Stress in Cybersecurity Operations

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NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY

SIGNALS INTELLIGENCE Intercept and exploit foreign signals

CYBERSECURITY Prevent and eradicate threats to National Security Systems

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is a physical and emotional reaction to adverse events.

ACUTE Temporary 'fight or flight' responseEPISODIC Repetitive stress with little time to recoverCHRONIC Enduring situations with no sense of control

STRESS & MENTAL HEALTH

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- Physical and mental
- Burnout and turnover
- Depression and anxiety
- Risky behavior
- Substance abuse

RISK FACTORS

- Relationship problems
- Loss/Grief/Bereavement
- Economic struggle
- Prior exposure to suicide and/or violence

- Chronic illness/pain
- Mental health issues
- Past suicide attempts
- History of substance abuse and/or addiction

Source: Center for Disease Control (2016)

LOCUS OF CONTROL

The extent to which a person feels that they have control over the outcome of events in their lives.

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY **OF NEEDS**

Needs

Growth Needs Deficiency

SELF ACTUALIZATION Personal growth and peak experiences

ESTEEM Dignity, freedom, acknowledgement, status



LOVE AND BELONGING Friendship, intimacy, trust, community

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SAFETY Protection, security, health, resources



PHYSIOLOGICAL Food, water, shelter, clothing, warmth



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STRESS & HACKING @ NSA

- Cyber operations are stressful
 - Challenging
 - Tiring
 - Frustrating
- External factors impacting success had the greatest impact on frustration and stress

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HIERARCHY OF HACKER NEEDS

What we need to be happy

What we need to do our jobs

SELF ACTUALIZATION Mission, personal achievement



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ESTEEM Reputation, recognition, respect

> LOVE AND BELONGING Comradery, teamwork, solidarity

> > **SAFETY** Authority, policy, support



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PHYSIOLOGICAL Equipment, tools, access

How do we manage stress?



Three Mindful Breaths



Sensory Centering

Acknowledge **FIVE** Things that you can see



Acknowledge FOUR Things that you can touch



Acknowledge **THREE** Things that you can hear Acknowledge **TWO** Things that you can smell



Acknowledge ONE Thing that you can taste





Mental Health Crisis

Immediately call 911

Need to talk to someone?

- - Call #711 or 1-800-273-TALK



Tweet — @800273TALK

Managing Stress at NSA

- Employee Assistance Services
- Civilian Fitness Program
- Mindfulness Program
- Mentoring Program

What you can do now

Individuals & Teams

- Practice Mindfulness
- Check-in with each other

Organizations

- Empower your workforce
- Value work-life balance

Cybersecurity Community

• Be Kind

Cybersecurity is a **TEAN EFFORT**



nsa.gov/cybersecurity