



## STUDENT WORKBOOK

### Stress Preparedness and Resilience

#### *Overview:*

The intent of this module is to initiate a discussion on preparing for stress and building resilience.

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#### *Exercise Instructions:*

Watch the video, and then divide into groups of two to five students. Take 15-20 minutes and discuss the questions below in small groups. Share your answers with the whole class when complete.

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Shay is a 26 year old member of a 20 person hand-crew. She has some big responsibilities at home, caring for two parents with chronic and debilitating health conditions.

Shay went through the fire refresher two weeks ago and is excited about starting a fourth fire season. For the first two weeks of the season the crew has been working locally. This has been helpful for Shay because one of her parents has experienced some additional deteriorations in health. The deteriorations have been severe enough that an urgent appointment with the doctor was made and some lab tests were conducted. The results of the test could have significant impact on treatment plans and quality of life. The doctor told Shay the test results will be back in one week.

Two days later her crew gets a (suppression) resource order to a 120 acre fire burning in remote and rugged terrain. The crew expresses enthusiasm about the first fire assignment of the season. She shares in the excitement but can't help becoming concerned that the lab results will be ready before returning from assignment. It's important Shay is there to provide support when the lab results are shared. She keeps the pending results in mind while taking a seat in the back of the crew carrier (buggy).

Driving to the fire, the crew finds the road to be in poor condition. There are rocks everywhere! There's even a few boulders scattered. The soil upslope of the road has experienced significant erosion. The drivers remain vigilant with these hazards by slowing down.



## Wildland Fire Safety Refresher



While slowing down and remaining watchful, a boulder 100 feet above the vehicle becomes dislodged and tumbles down. The driver sees the boulder just before it hits the road and swerves to miss it. While attempting to avoid this hazard, the front right tire slips off the road. The driver has a difficult time controlling the vehicle. The vehicle's momentum continues toward the passenger side. The vehicle tumbles off the road rolling onto the passenger side. The front (right) passenger hits their head on the window and becomes unconscious after the impact.

The vehicle is on its side when it stops moving. It takes a minute or two for the passengers to realize what just happened. After a couple minutes, Shay checks on the crew members in the back of the buggy. Everyone in back seems okay so she checks on the two riding up front. She sees that the front right passenger is unconscious.

In small groups or pairs share your thoughts regarding:

- Ways Shay could manage the sudden (acute) stress of this event
- The different types of reactions that may result from this event in the moment (short-term)
- The different types of reactions that may result from the event in the long-term
- Balancing the long-term response to this event with responsibilities at home
- Resources one could use for support with the stressors at home and work

The Stress Preparedness and Resilience video states, “The ultimate key to preventing or managing cumulative stress lies in seeking balance in our lives.” This balance includes a healthy lifestyle of adequate sleep and breaks from operational challenges, strength of body and mind, through routine exercise and relaxation techniques, and positive relationships and social connectedness, to name a few.

If you were involved in a potentially traumatic event, is your life properly balanced to mentally and physically handle the situation?

Take five to ten minutes and reflect on how well your life is balanced. If time permits, use your mobile device to [search cumulative stress, acute stress or cumulative stress reaction.](#)

Submit feedback for the 2016 Fire Refresher using the QR code below.

