

BEYOND THE SHIFT

A WORKBOOK FOR POLICE OFFICERS ON AND OFF DUTY

Understand the impact of policing.
Notice what follows you home.
Develop greater choice.



A few things before you begin

SAVE A COPY FIRST

Save the PDF to your device before you begin. On a phone or tablet, download the workbook rather than relying on a temporary browser preview.

TYPE DIRECTLY INTO THE FIELDS

The cream response areas are fillable. Larger fields accept multiple lines of text.

SAVE AS YOU WORK

Use your PDF app's normal Save or Save As function regularly.

YOUR RESPONSES STAY IN YOUR COPY

Nothing is submitted automatically. To share your responses, send or show someone your saved PDF.

PHONE OR TABLET?

For the best experience on mobile, download the workbook and open the saved PDF in Adobe Acrobat Reader. Some mobile browsers and third-party PDF apps may display the workbook correctly but may not support all fillable fields or reliably retain your entries.

Welcome to Beyond the Shift

Police work asks people to adapt. You learn to notice what others miss, make decisions with incomplete information, contain reactions when the situation demands it and remain ready when circumstances can change quickly.

Those adaptations can become genuine strengths. They can also continue operating after the environment has changed. Beyond the Shift is designed to help you notice what the job has taught you to do, what continues to serve you, what may be costing you something, and where you may want greater choice.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION Are the responses that help you at work still helping you when the shift is over?

Sharing this workbook

This workbook is designed to be shared. You are welcome to download, use and distribute the complete, unmodified workbook for personal, educational and professional purposes.

This workbook provides general psychological education and guided reflection. It is not a substitute for individual assessment, diagnosis or treatment. Persistent intrusive memories, nightmares, avoidance, marked hyperarousal, emotional numbing, substantial sleep disturbance, escalating alcohol or substance use, or meaningful changes in day-to-day functioning deserve appropriate professional attention.

Five stages, one progression

UNDERSTAND

Recognise what policing has trained your mind and body to do.

NOTICE

See where operational responses appear beyond the situations that require them.

TAKE STOCK

Consider what the job is giving you and what it may be costing you.

EXPERIMENT

Practise small changes that increase flexibility and recovery.

BUILD YOUR PLAN

Bring what you have learned into a realistic Beyond the Shift blueprint.

THE THESIS

The goal is not to undo the adaptations policing has given you.
It is to develop greater choice about when they are needed.

The Job Changes You

How policing shapes the way you think, respond and relate to the world around you

MODULE 01 / 10



UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

How repeated work becomes automatic

Police work involves repeated learning under conditions where attention, speed and accuracy matter. Each time you scan a scene, notice a change in behaviour, contain an emotional reaction or make a decision with incomplete information, the brain is practising a response. Repetition makes useful responses easier to access. Eventually, some require very little deliberate thought.

This is one reason experienced officers can notice something important before they can fully explain what caught their attention. The mind has become efficient at recognising patterns. That efficiency is an occupational strength: it reduces the amount of conscious effort required to perform familiar tasks.

Learning, however, is not stored in a perfectly sealed 'work' compartment. The brain learns associations between situations and responses. If vigilance, decisiveness or emotional containment are practised often enough, they can become readily available in other environments too. This is called generalisation: learning from one context begins influencing behaviour in another.

Generalisation is not evidence of damage. It is a normal feature of learning. The important question is whether the response remains sensitive to context. A flexible system can increase vigilance when risk rises and reduce it again when risk falls.

KEY IDEA

Adaptation becomes most useful when it remains responsive to context.

UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Adaptation, strength and flexibility

An adaptation can be useful and costly at the same time. Vigilance may help an officer detect danger and also make a quiet restaurant surprisingly effortful. Emotional containment may allow someone to function through a confronting scene and also make emotional reconnection slower afterwards. Decisiveness may be valuable at an incident and feel abrupt in a family discussion.

The distinction that matters is between capacity and automaticity. Capacity means you can use a response when it is useful. Automaticity means the response begins before you have deliberately chosen it. Neither is inherently problematic. Difficulty arises when an automatic response keeps operating despite a change in the environment.

Psychological flexibility is the ability to vary behaviour according to what the current situation requires. It does not mean becoming less vigilant, less decisive or less capable. It means retaining access to those strengths without being restricted to them.

Throughout this workbook, the aim is therefore not to identify 'bad police habits'. It is to understand what the job has trained, notice where those responses appear, and increase choice where a once-useful response has become too automatic.

KEY IDEA

Adaptation becomes most useful when it remains responsive to context.

Policing requires adaptation

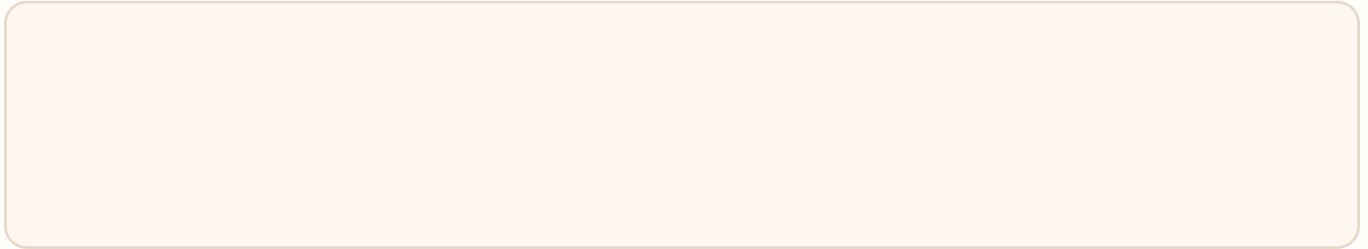
Police officers are trained to notice what other people miss. You learn to watch hands, read behaviour, notice exits and anticipate what might happen next. With experience, many of these responses become automatic. The brain does not have a simple switch labelled work and home. Responses practised repeatedly in one environment can begin appearing in another. None of this automatically means something is wrong. It means you have adapted.

Are the responses that help you at work still helping you when the shift is over?

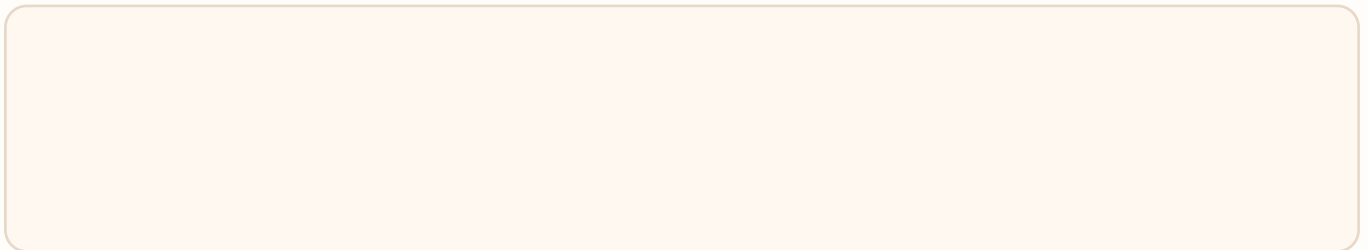
What the job asks of you

Police work places unusual demands on the person doing it. Over time, policing may strengthen your ability to scan, anticipate, control, contain, question, act and endure. These capacities can be enormously useful. The question is whether you still have choice about when you use them.

Which qualities has policing strengthened most in you?



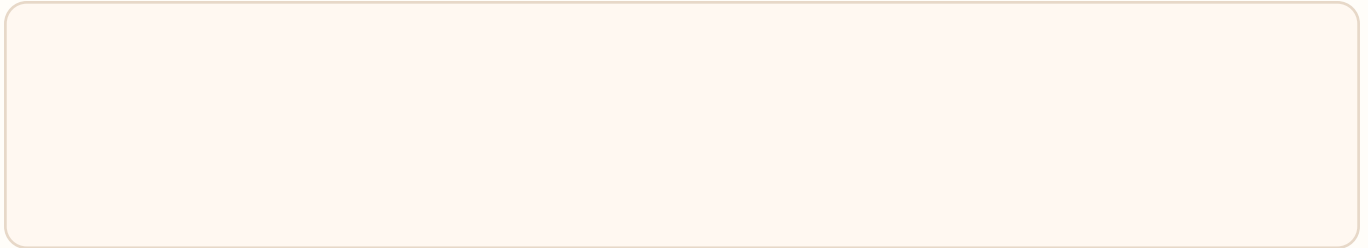
Which of these qualities do you value?



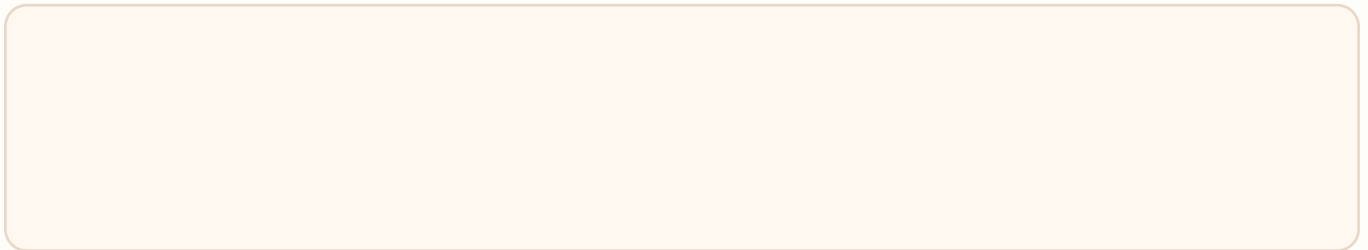
Adaptation is not damage

Conversations about police mental health often begin with what can go wrong. Those things matter, but they are not the only way policing changes people. The job can also develop competence, courage, perspective, loyalty, humour, resilience and an ability to function when circumstances are difficult. This workbook does not begin with the assumption that policing has damaged you.

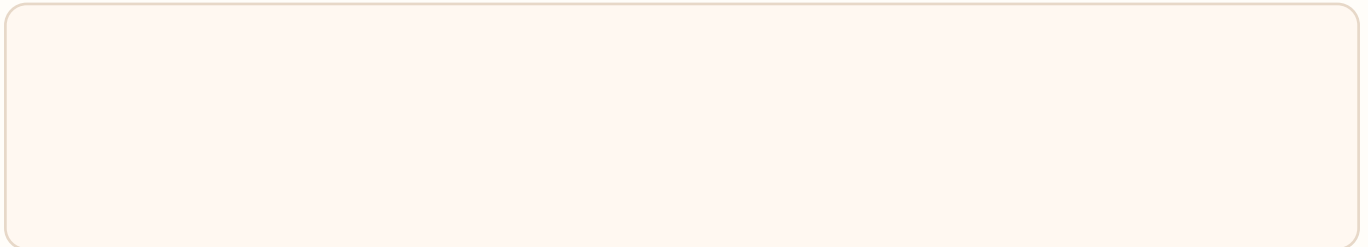
Policing has made me better at...



One quality the job has strengthened that I value is...



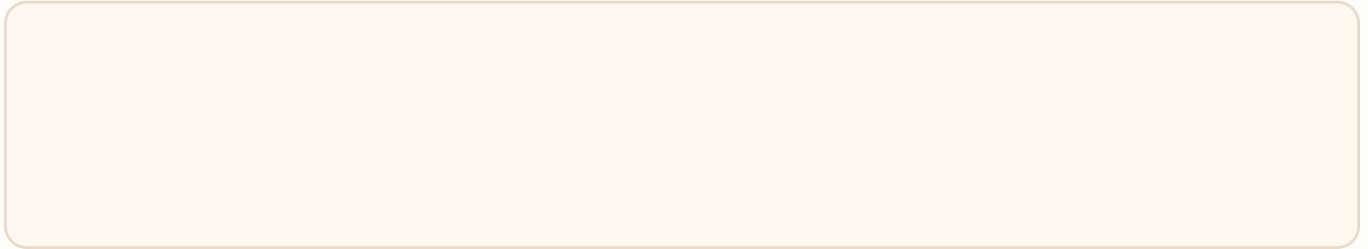
Something I can handle now that I might have struggled with before policing is...



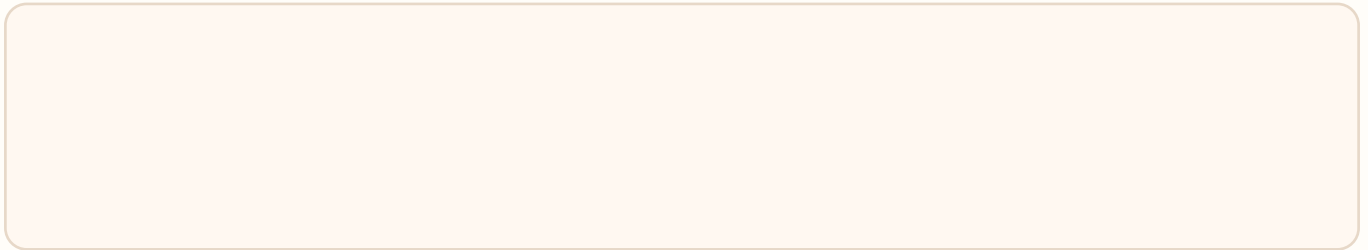
Capacity versus automatic response

There is an important difference between being able to do something and having difficulty not doing it. Being capable of taking control is different from needing to control. Being capable of vigilance is different from being unable to stand down. What matters is flexibility.

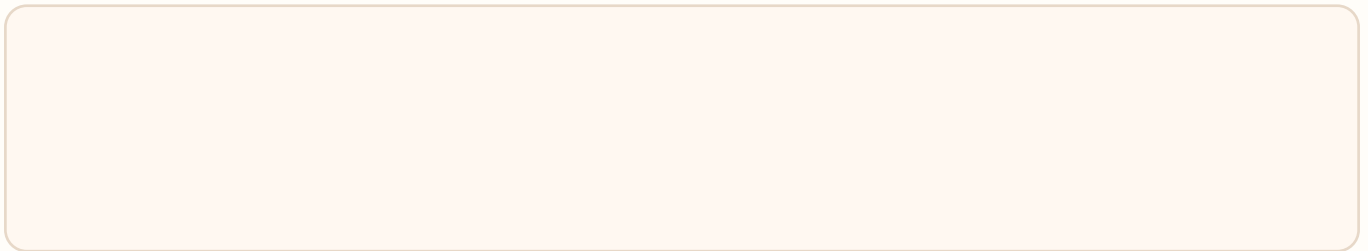
A response I can switch on when I need it is...



A response that sometimes seems to switch on automatically is...



A response I sometimes find difficult to switch off is...



Has the job changed you?

Think back to yourself before policing. Some parts of you may be essentially unchanged. Others may be noticeably different. There is no correct direction in which policing should have changed you. The purpose here is simply to notice.

Before policing, I was more...

Since becoming a police officer, I have become more...

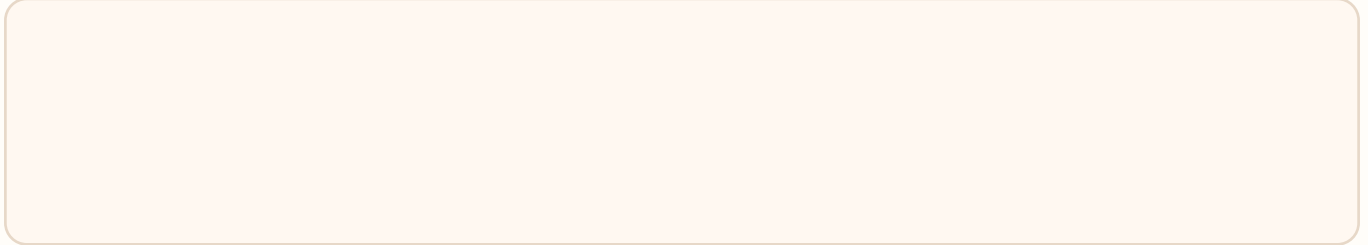
The change I value most is...

The change I am least sure about is...

Your starting point

Before moving further into the workbook, take a snapshot of where you are now. Consider vigilance, emotional containment, comfort taking control, suspicion, detachment and cynicism. This is not a diagnostic test.

If someone who knew me well before policing described how the job has changed me, what do I think they would say?



The Operational Version of You

How your mind moves into operational mode, and why coming out of it can be harder than you realise

MODULE 02 / 10



UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Operational mode is a learned state

Human behaviour is strongly influenced by context. Particular environments, objects, routines and social cues can prepare the brain for a familiar role before anything significant has happened. In policing, uniform, equipment, radio traffic, a police vehicle, the station and familiar colleagues can all become signals that operational demands are approaching.

Through repetition, these cues become associated with a state of readiness. Attention moves outward. Potential problems become more salient. Personal concerns may recede. The threshold for action changes because the consequences of delay can be high.

This is a form of state-dependent learning. The mind does not merely learn individual skills; it learns clusters of responses that tend to occur together in particular contexts. Operational mode may include heightened observation, faster decision-making, emotional containment, responsibility for others and greater readiness to intervene.

Because the transition becomes familiar, officers may stop noticing it. The state feels less like something being activated and more like simply 'being at work'.

KEY IDEA

Operational mode is a learned state. Finishing work and leaving that state are not always simultaneous.

UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Why switching off can lag behind finishing work

Going operational is supported by many repeated cues. Coming off duty often has fewer. The roster says the shift is finished, but the nervous system does not read a roster. Attention, physiological activation and unfinished thoughts may continue for some time.

This creates a transition gap: the period between no longer being responsible for police work and genuinely feeling available for ordinary life. The gap varies with the person, the shift, fatigue, what happened and what is waiting at home.

A transition gap is not automatically a problem. After demanding work, some decompression is predictable. The useful question is whether the state gradually changes. Does attention broaden? Does the body settle? Does the officer become more emotionally and socially available?

Recognising operational mode as a state rather than a fixed personality is important. States can be entered, maintained and left. The more clearly you recognise the signs of entering and leaving operational mode, the more opportunity you have to influence the transition.

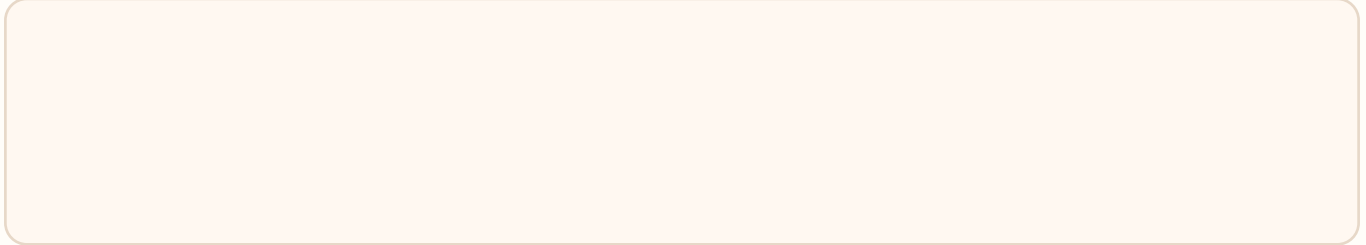
KEY IDEA

Operational mode is a learned state. Finishing work and leaving that state are not always simultaneous.

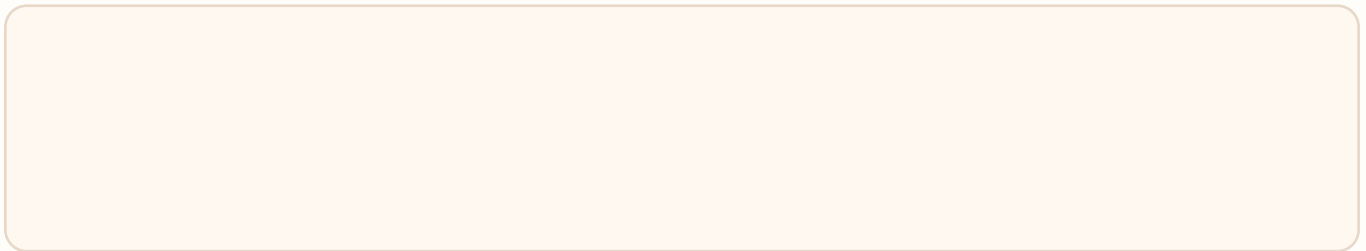
You don't start every shift from zero

Long before anything happens, your mind may already be preparing for work. Getting dressed, equipment, the drive, the station, colleagues, briefing and radio traffic can all become cues that mean: it is time to become operational.

What tells you that you're going into work mode?



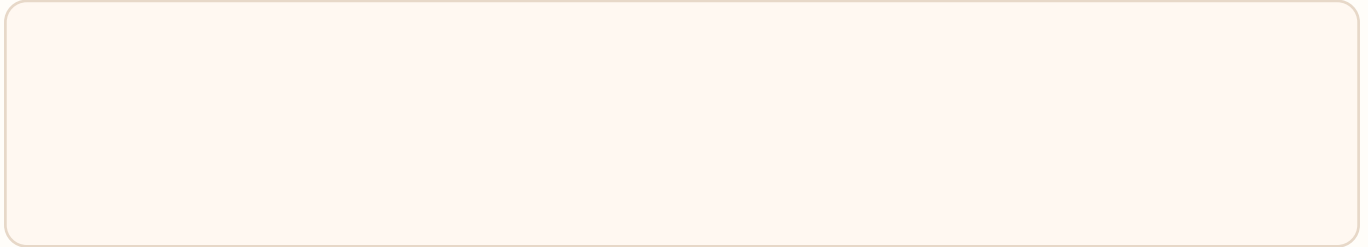
What do you notice changing in yourself?



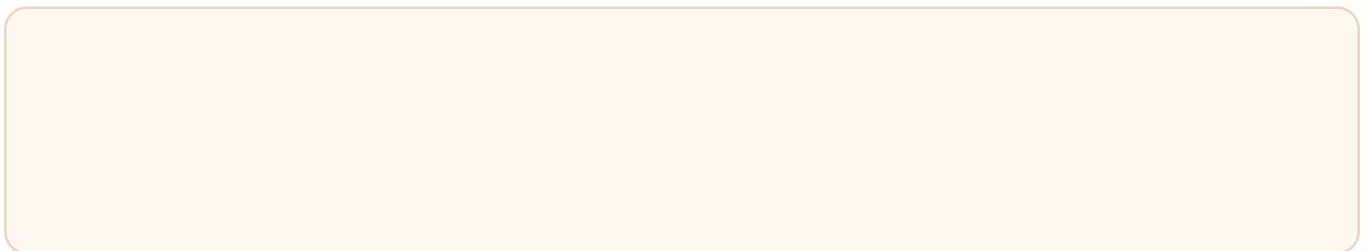
What changes when you become operational?

Operational mode can make you more observant, anticipatory, decisive, emotionally contained, responsible, guarded and action-oriented. With repetition, these can become less like deliberate decisions and more like a familiar state of readiness.

When I become operational, the biggest change in me is...



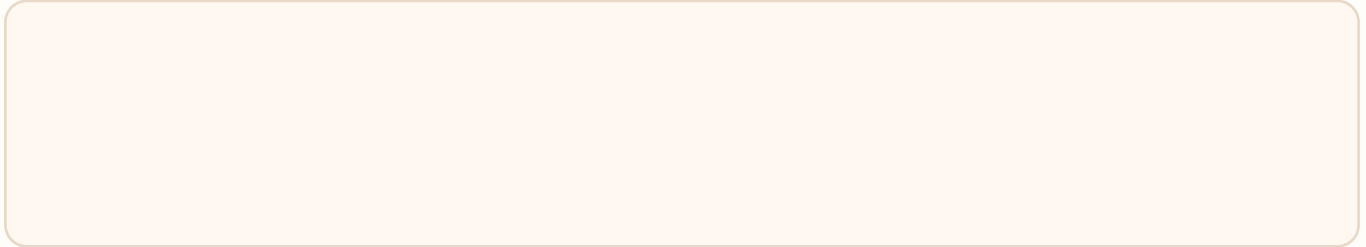
People close to me might notice that I become...



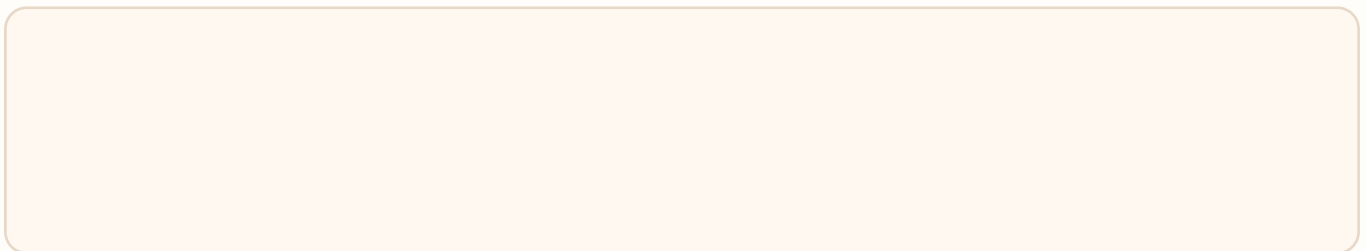
The operational self is still you

Your operational self is not fake and your off-duty self is not necessarily the real you. Different environments call forward different capacities. The skill is developing the ability to shift according to context.

At work: what does this situation require from me?



Outside work: what does this moment require from me?



Going on duty

A typical shift often contains a clear sequence that moves you towards operational readiness. Your brain has had enormous practice learning that uniform, equipment, vehicle, station, colleagues, radio and familiar roads mean: get ready.

The first thing that tells me I'm going into work mode is...

During the journey to work, I tend to...

When I put on my uniform or equipment, I notice...

I know I'm fully in work mode when...

Going off duty

The shift finishes administratively, but has anything told your mind and body that the responsibility has ended? You may have spent years learning how to become operational quickly and far less time deliberately coming out of that state.

The first thing I usually do after finishing a shift is...

On the drive home, my mind is usually...

When I arrive home, my body tends to feel...

I know I've genuinely switched off when...

The transition gap

Coming home and standing down are not necessarily the same event. There may be a period between being fully operational and being genuinely available for ordinary life.

Immediately after work, I usually need...

The things I usually do are...

I tend to feel properly off duty when...

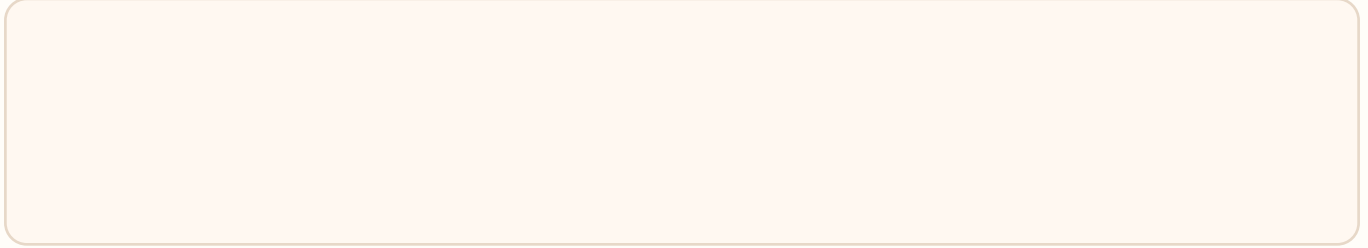
The transition usually takes approximately...

What do people close to me seem to need from me during this same period?

Notice the transition

For now, do not try to build a better stand-down routine. Simply notice when operational mode begins, what remains switched on immediately after work, and when you genuinely feel different.

Over the next few shifts, what do you notice about your transition?



Your Threat System at Work

How repeated exposure to risk can train your mind and body to stay ready

MODULE 03 / 10



UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Threat detection works by prediction

The threat system is designed to act under uncertainty. Waiting for proof of danger can be too slow when the cost of missing a threat is high. Instead, the brain continuously compares incoming information with patterns learned from previous experience and prepares when something resembles a possible threat.

This helps explain why an experienced officer may react to a change in posture, tone, movement or atmosphere before consciously identifying the detail. The system is making a rapid prediction: something may be changing, so preparation is warranted.

Threat detection therefore favours sensitivity over perfect accuracy. A false alarm may cost some temporary activation. A missed genuine threat can cost much more. In environments where danger is possible and sometimes develops quickly, a bias toward preparation can be adaptive.

The body participates in this prediction. Heart rate, breathing, muscle tension and attentional focus can change before conscious reasoning has completed its assessment. These responses mobilise resources for action.

KEY IDEA

A threat system can be highly trained without being injured - but it still needs recovery.

UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Experience changes the threshold for readiness

Repeated exposure teaches the threat system what deserves attention. If aggression, unpredictability, serious injury or sudden escalation occur often enough, the brain learns that apparently ordinary situations can change quickly.

Learning can lower the threshold at which readiness begins. This does not necessarily mean the system is disordered. It may be accurately calibrated to the occupational environment in which it developed.

The complication is generalisation. A system trained in a high-consequence environment can carry its lower threshold into places where the probability and cost of danger are different. Scanning, startle, tension or anticipatory thinking may then occur with little conscious choice.

A useful distinction is between activation and injury. Activation is the system doing its job. Psychological injury becomes a concern when reactions persist, recovery is impaired, symptoms become intrusive or avoidant, or functioning and quality of life are meaningfully affected. A well-trained threat system still requires opportunities to return toward baseline.

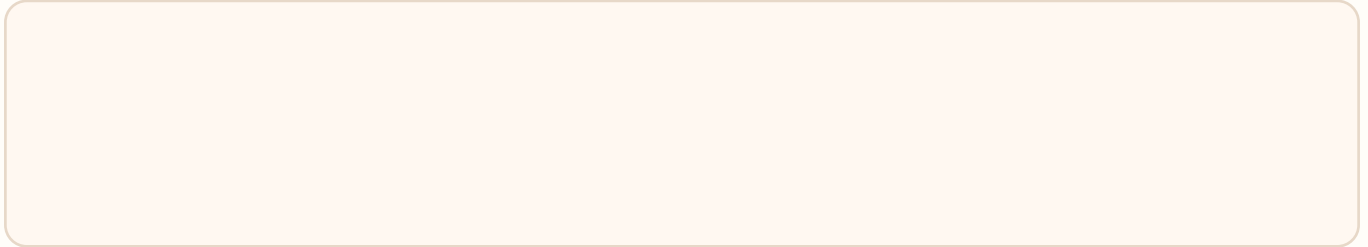
KEY IDEA

A threat system can be highly trained without being injured - but it still needs recovery.

Your brain is designed to keep you alive

Your threat system is older and faster than conscious reasoning. Its job is to detect signs that something might be dangerous and prepare you to respond. Policing gives that system an enormous amount of practice.

What are some things you notice automatically at work that you probably wouldn't have noticed before policing?



Why false alarms make sense

Treating something harmless as potentially dangerous usually has a smaller cost than treating something dangerous as harmless. A threat system therefore tolerates false alarms when the cost of missing genuine danger is high.

What kinds of situations immediately increase your alertness at work?

What subtle behaviours or environmental cues tend to get your attention?

Your body joins the response

Threat detection is not only happening in your thoughts. Heart rate, breathing, muscular tension, visual attention, hearing, pain perception and readiness to move can all change as your system reallocates resources.

When something suddenly feels wrong at work, the first physical change I tend to notice is...

Other changes I recognise in myself are...

After a highly activating incident, I usually notice...

Repetition teaches the system

Repeated exposure teaches your threat system that things can change quickly, small details can matter and being prepared is safer than being surprised. Those lessons may be accurate at work, but learning can generalise.

What has policing taught you about being prepared?

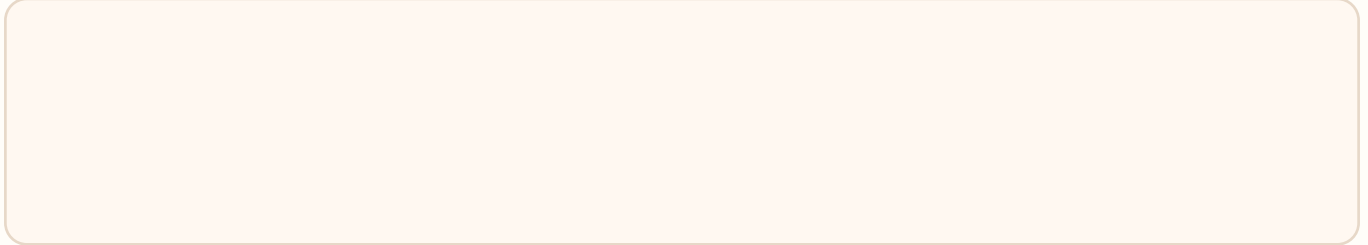
What situations have taught you that things can change quickly?

Are there responses that now happen automatically because of those experiences?

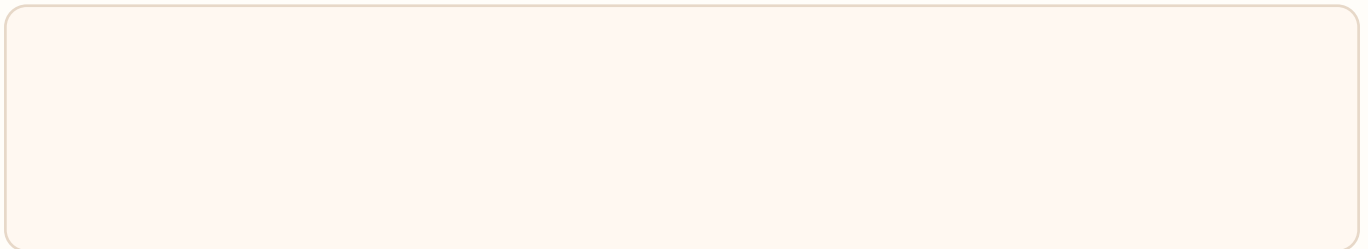
When vigilance becomes the default

Vigilance can be operational, habitual or costly. The important distinction is whether the level of vigilance can change when circumstances change.

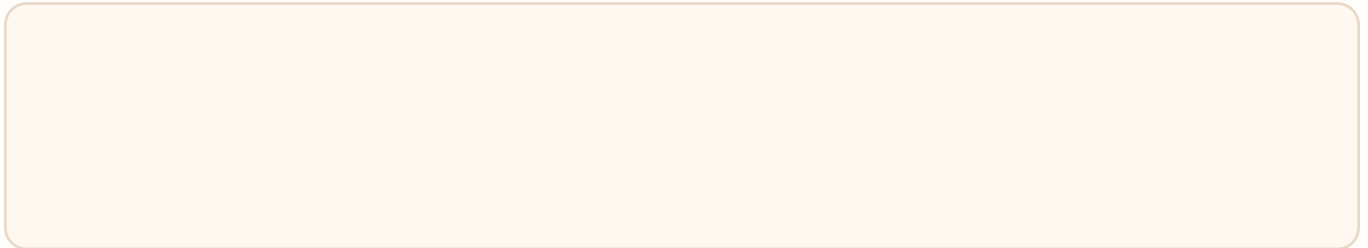
One situation where my vigilance is clearly useful...



One situation where it is probably mostly habit...



One situation where I wonder whether it costs me something...



Repeated activation has a load

Police exposure is not always defined by one catastrophic incident. Repeated activation without sufficient recovery can gradually affect a person's baseline. A smaller event can sometimes land on top of everything that came before it.

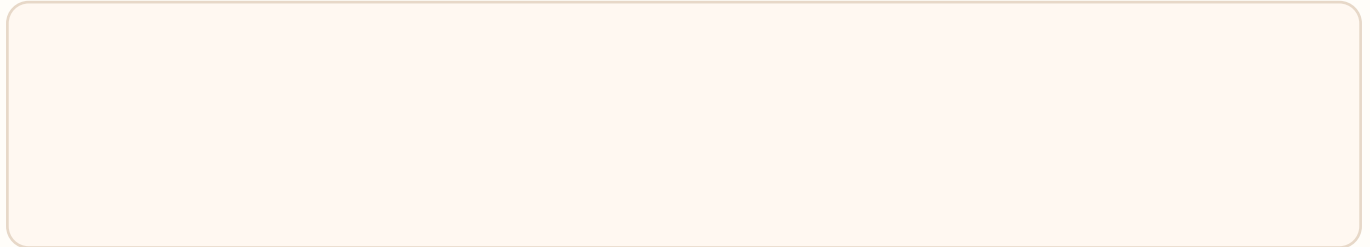
Are there particular types of jobs that have accumulated for you over your career?

Have you noticed any change in how quickly you recover from difficult shifts or incidents?

Activation is not the same as injury

Being alert after a difficult shift, thinking about an incident afterwards or needing time to come down can be understandable. More useful questions are whether the system settles, whether you can return to ordinary life and whether recovery is becoming harder.

Is there anything in your current baseline that deserves more attention?



Your threat-system map

Bring the ideas together using one recent situation in which your threat system became activated.

What happened?

What did you notice?

What did you think might happen?

What happened in your body?

What did you do?

What happened afterwards?

How long before you genuinely felt settled again?

What Follows You Home

When responses that make sense at work begin appearing in situations that ask something different of you

MODULE 04 / 10



UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Context mismatch

A behaviour can be sensible in one environment and unhelpful in another without changing its underlying purpose. This is the idea of context mismatch.

At work, rapid problem-solving may reduce risk. At home, another person may need time to talk. At work, taking control may organise a chaotic scene. At home, the same response may remove another person's sense of agency. At work, scanning may provide useful information. During dinner with family, it may divide attention.

The brain tends to reuse responses that have worked before, particularly when they have been strongly reinforced. Police work repeatedly rewards observation, action, control and resolution. Ordinary life often rewards a wider range of responses: patience, uncertainty, collaboration, listening and allowing events to unfold.

The aim is not to decide that one set of responses is superior. The skill is discrimination: recognising which environment you are actually in and what it requires.

KEY IDEA

The same response can be effective at work and mismatched elsewhere.

UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Why automatic responses persist

Automatic responses persist partly because they often provide an immediate benefit. Taking control reduces uncertainty. Solving a problem creates movement. Scanning provides information. Emotional distance reduces immediate discomfort.

Immediate benefits can reinforce a response even when there is a later interpersonal cost. This is why a pattern can continue despite someone close repeatedly saying that it is frustrating or distancing. The response is doing something useful in the short term.

A practical way to understand crossover is: situation -> automatic response -> immediate benefit -> possible cost. This avoids moralising the behaviour. It asks what function the response serves and whether the same function could sometimes be met differently.

Choice begins in the brief space between noticing the response and acting on it. You do not need to suppress the operational response. You need enough awareness to ask whether it fits this situation.

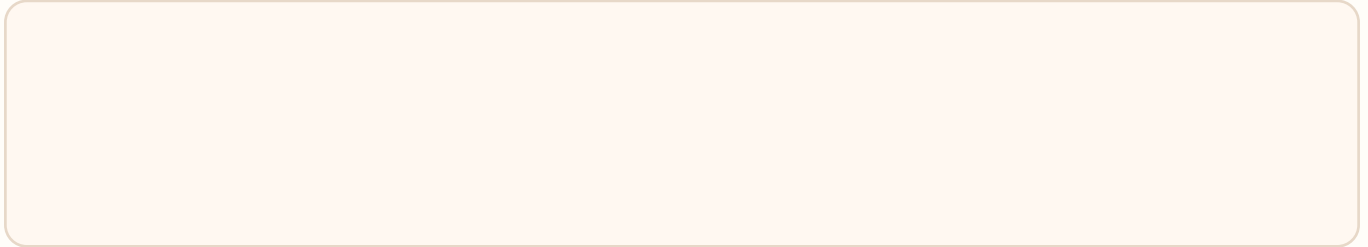
KEY IDEA

The same response can be effective at work and mismatched elsewhere.

Same response, different environment

A response does not suddenly become unreasonable because your shift has finished. Your brain tends to use strategies that have worked before. Difficulty arises when the response remains the same but the environment has changed.

Where do your operational responses appear when you are no longer operating?



When scanning follows you

You may notice exits, choose a seat facing the room, watch hands, register unusual movement or monitor people automatically. The useful question is whether you can stop monitoring when you want to and remain present.

When I enter a public place, I automatically notice...

I prefer to position myself...

If I can't do that, I tend to feel...

When efficiency follows you

Police work can create a strong preference for assessing, deciding, acting and moving on. Ordinary life is remarkably inefficient, and that can become surprisingly irritating.

Outside work, I become most impatient when...

What I usually want the other person to do is...

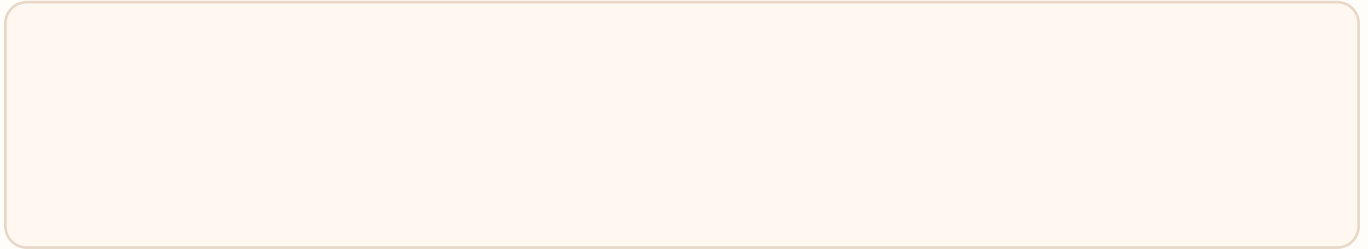
If they don't, I tend to...

What might the situation require other than efficiency?

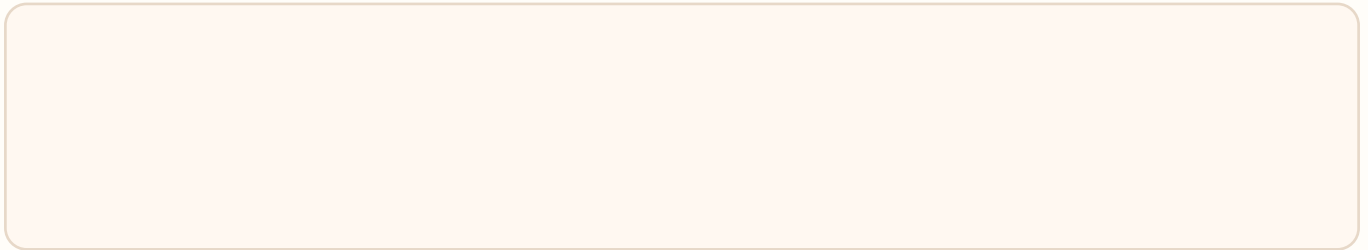
When control follows you

Taking control can be necessary at work. Outside work, many situations do not require somebody to be in command. Ask whether something is unsafe, whether someone is asking you to take charge, or whether you are uncomfortable watching it unfold differently.

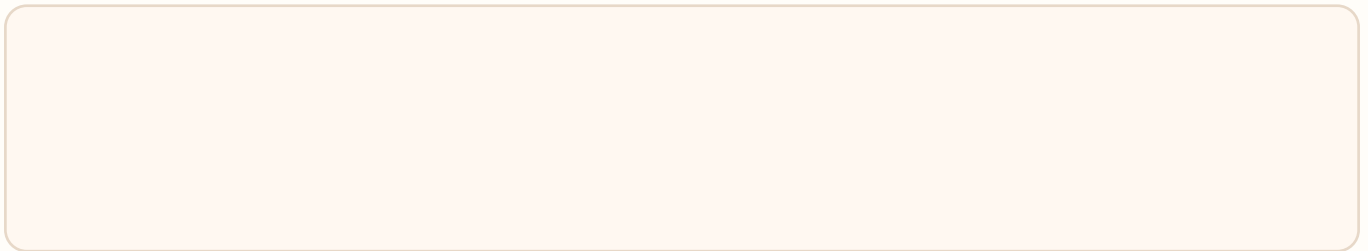
I find it hardest not to take control when...



What I worry might happen if I don't step in is...



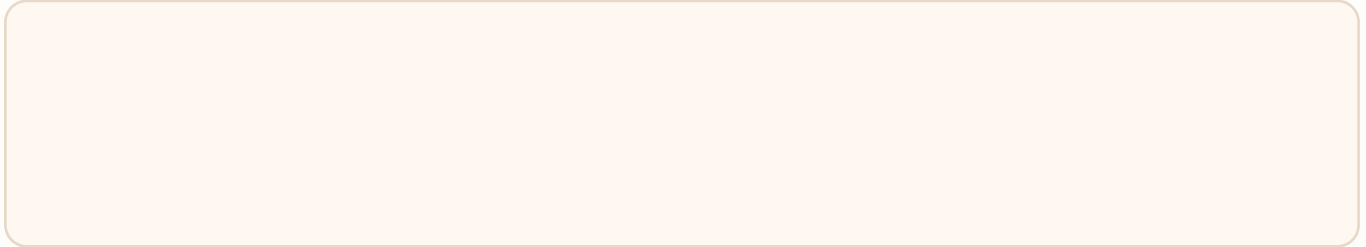
What might happen if I allowed someone else to handle it their way?



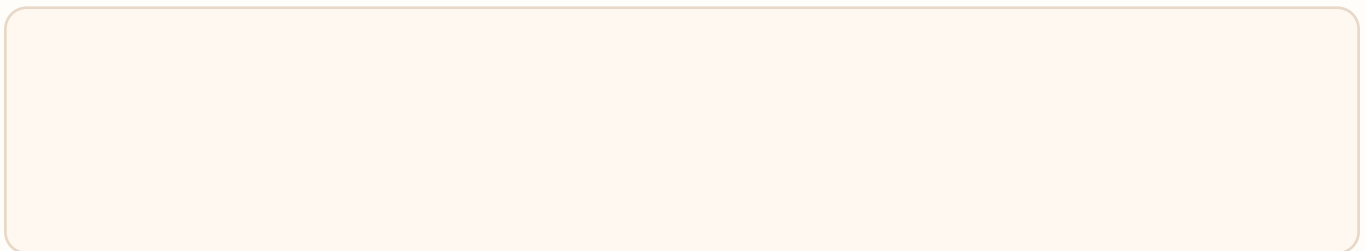
When problem-solving follows you

Someone may tell you they are struggling and your mind begins generating solutions. Sometimes that is exactly what they need. Sometimes they need you to understand what the experience is like for them.

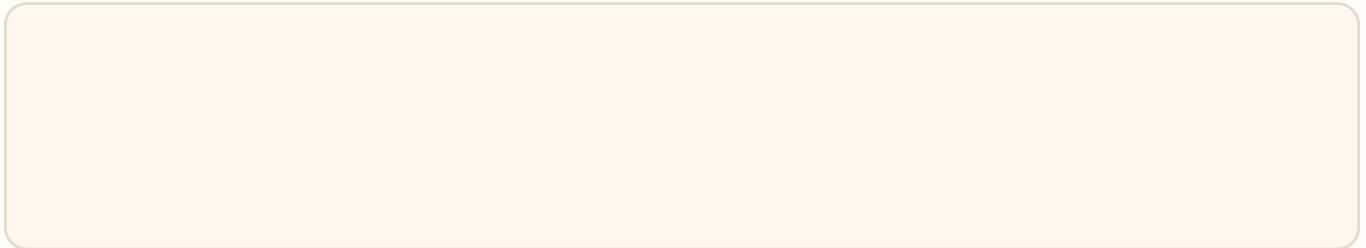
When somebody tells me about a problem, my first instinct is usually to...



I find it difficult to simply listen when...



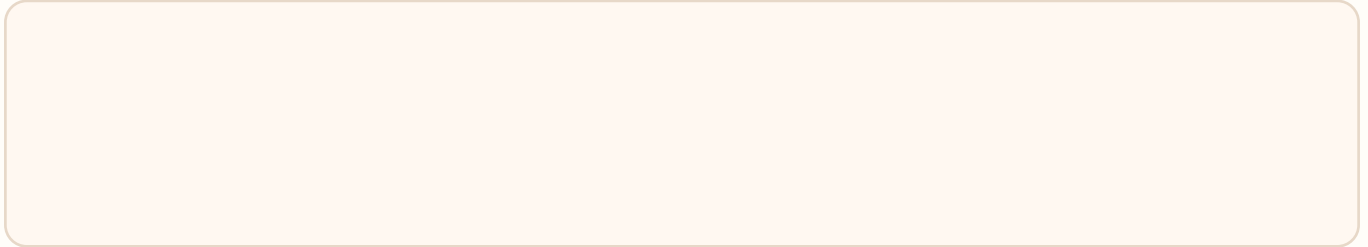
Someone close to me might say that when they're upset I tend to...



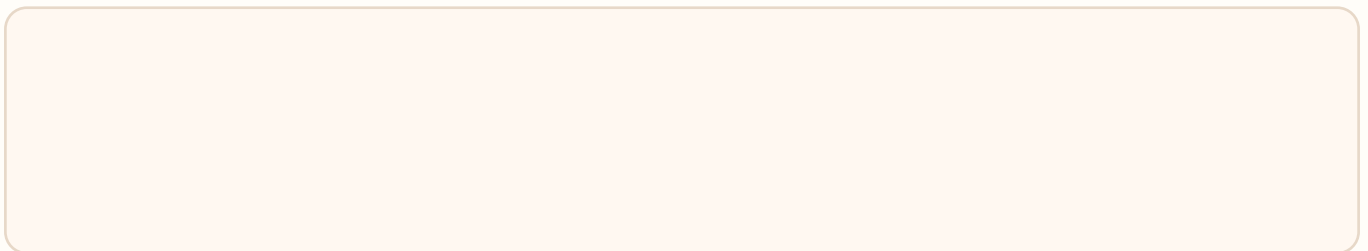
Intent and impact

Intent is what you are trying to do. Impact is what the other person experiences. They are not always the same, and both can be true.

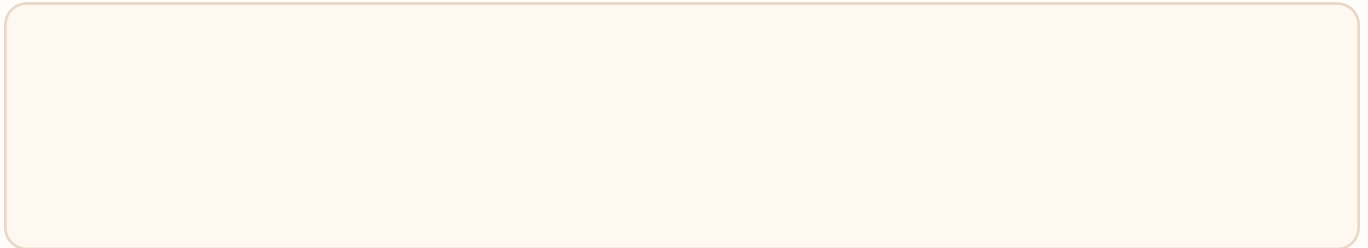
Something I do with a positive intention is...



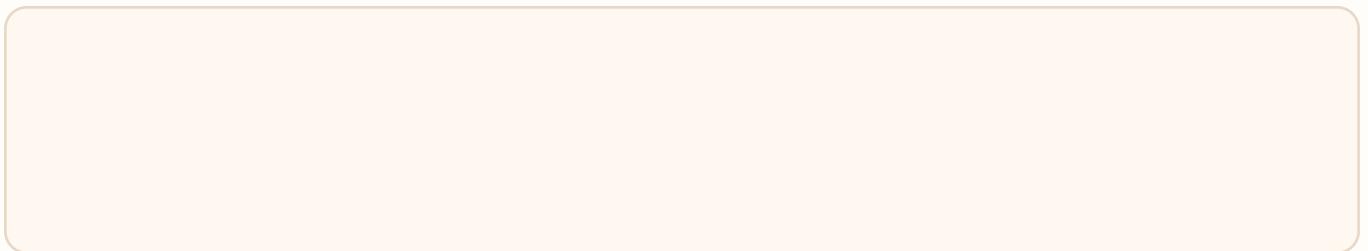
What I am trying to achieve is...



How another person might experience it is...



Have they ever tried to tell me this?



What gets activated outside work?

Operational responses are often more likely when you are tired, in crowds, after a long shift, after confronting jobs, when explanations are vague or when somebody becomes emotional.

Situation...

My automatic response...

What that response does for me immediately...

What it may cost me or someone else...

Your crossover map

Choose up to three operational responses that sometimes follow you beyond work.

Response 1: where it appears, what triggers it, what I am trying to achieve, and its effect...

Response 2: where it appears, what triggers it, what I am trying to achieve, and its effect...

Response 3: where it appears, what triggers it, what I am trying to achieve, and its effect...

The beginning of choice

The aim is not to stop using operational skills. It is to notice when an automatic response appears and create enough space to ask what this situation actually requires.

The response I will watch for is...

I tend to use it when...

When I notice it, what does this situation actually require from me?

The Things You Learn to Put Away

Emotional containment, compartmentalisation and what happens to the things you have to carry

MODULE 05 / 10



UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Containment is a form of emotion regulation

Emotional containment is often essential in police work. A person can be affected by what is happening while temporarily reducing attention to that reaction so the task can be completed. This is a form of emotion regulation, not evidence that the emotion is absent.

Compartmentalisation similarly creates psychological boundaries: this belongs over there; I need to function over here. Used flexibly, both processes protect performance during circumstances in which emotional immersion would interfere with what needs to happen.

The important word is temporary. Suppressing or postponing an emotional response is different from processing it. Processing means that the experience is eventually integrated: the person can recognise what happened, what it meant, what they felt and where it belongs in their broader understanding of themselves and the world.

Processing does not require dramatic disclosure. Sometimes it is quiet recognition. Sometimes it occurs through conversation, reflection, movement, writing or time. The key is that the experience has somewhere to go.

KEY IDEA

Putting emotion aside is not the same process as integrating what happened.

UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Normalisation, habituation and emotional distance

Repeated exposure changes what feels unusual. This is habituation: responses to familiar stimuli often reduce with repetition. In policing, habituation can be protective because it allows officers to function around material that would overwhelm someone encountering it for the first time.

Normalisation can also shift the reference point. Serious injury, death, violence or intense distress can become occupationally familiar. Familiarity, however, is not the same as insignificance. An incident can feel routine and still connect with something personally meaningful.

This is one reason the jobs that stay with people are not always the objectively 'worst' ones. Meaning matters. Identification with a victim, a child's age, helplessness, moral conflict, timing or accumulated load can make a seemingly smaller event land heavily.

Emotional distance becomes worth examining when it spreads beyond the circumstances that require it. Reduced access to sadness, tenderness, enjoyment or connection may indicate that a protective strategy has become less selective. The goal is not to force emotion. It is to retain the ability to reconnect with it.

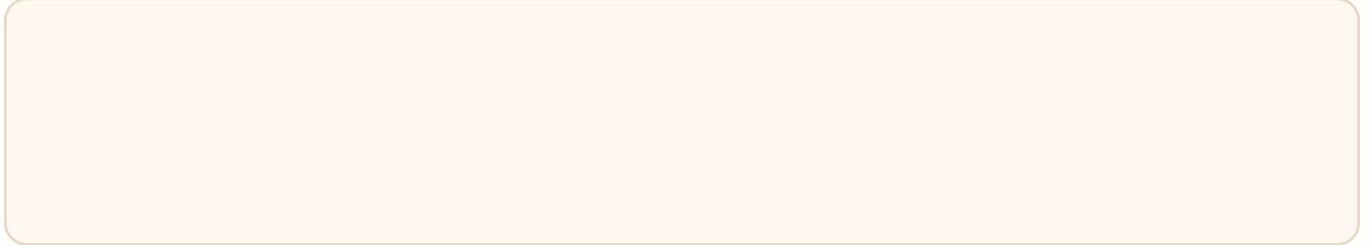
KEY IDEA

Putting emotion aside is not the same process as integrating what happened.

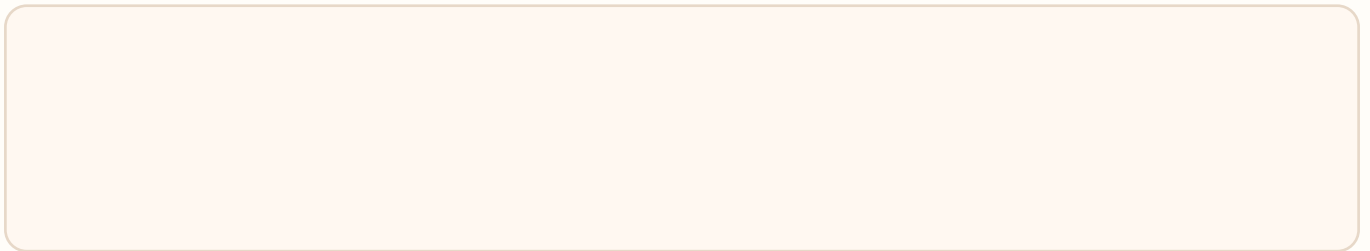
Sometimes you have to put it away

Police work does not always give you the luxury of responding emotionally. Emotional containment can help you function when becoming overwhelmed would make the situation harder. The difficulty is what happens afterwards.

When something affects me at work, I usually...



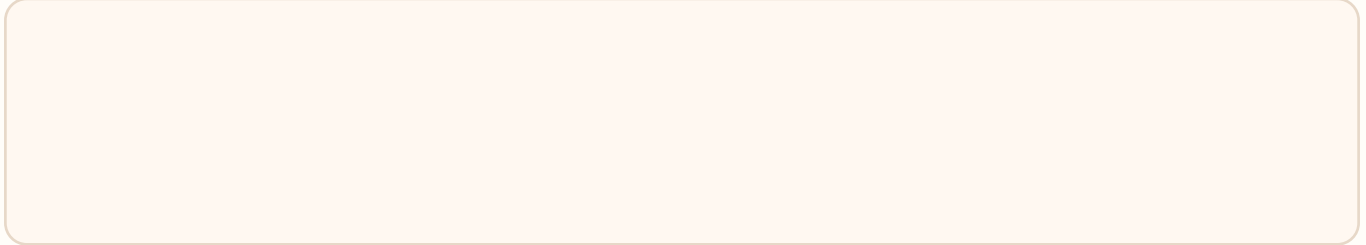
What usually happens to that emotion afterwards?



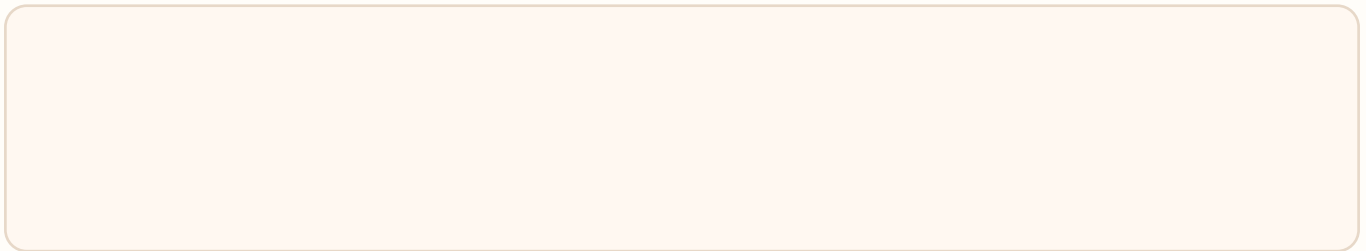
Containment and compartmentalisation

Temporary containment postpones emotion because something else requires attention. Compartmentalisation creates psychological distance. Both can help. The problem arises when later never arrives.

If I don't talk about a job, the main reason is...



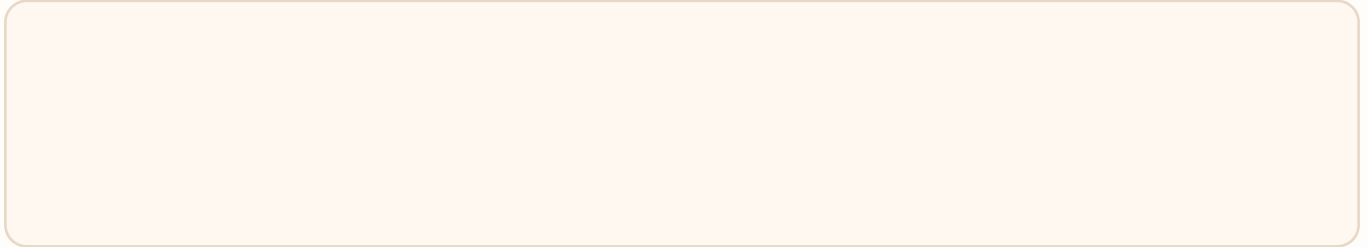
When I tell myself I've moved on from something, how do I know?



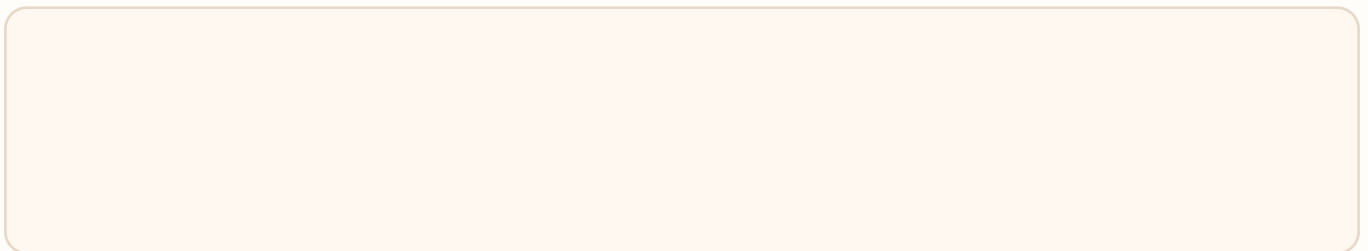
I dealt with it

Operationally completing an incident and processing what it meant to you are not always the same thing. Processing may be as simple as recognising that something was difficult, stayed with you or affected you unexpectedly.

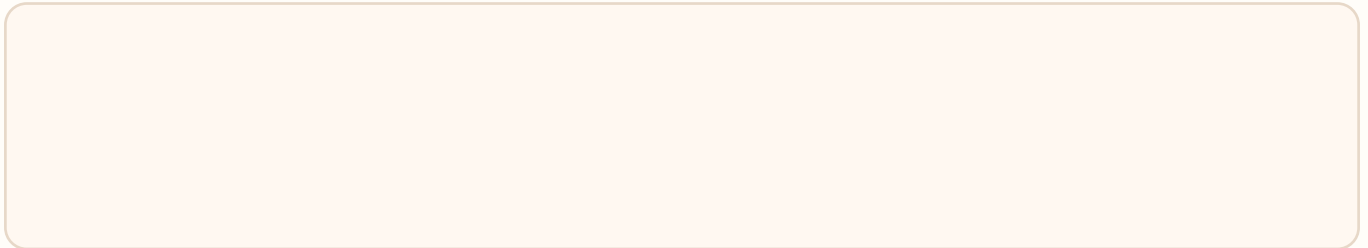
An incident I dealt with operationally...



What I remember feeling personally...



Did I ever really return to that part?



When extraordinary becomes ordinary

Repeated exposure changes your reference point. Normalisation helps officers function, but it can also make it harder to recognise when something has actually affected you.

Something I now consider routine that I would once have found confronting is...

I sometimes forget that people outside policing may find this difficult to hear about...

Has becoming accustomed to difficult material made it harder to recognise your own reaction?

Dark humour

Humour can release tension, create connection and make something unbearable temporarily bearable. It becomes more complicated when it is the only way difficult experiences can be approached.

Humour at work helps me...

There are things I can joke about with police colleagues that I would never joke about elsewhere because...

Have you noticed humour arriving when something felt uncomfortable?

The job that stayed with you

The incidents that remain are not always those that look worst on paper. There does not need to be a logical ranking of which incidents are allowed to affect you.

Is there a particular job that still comes back to you?

What is it about that incident that seems to have stayed?

When does it tend to return?

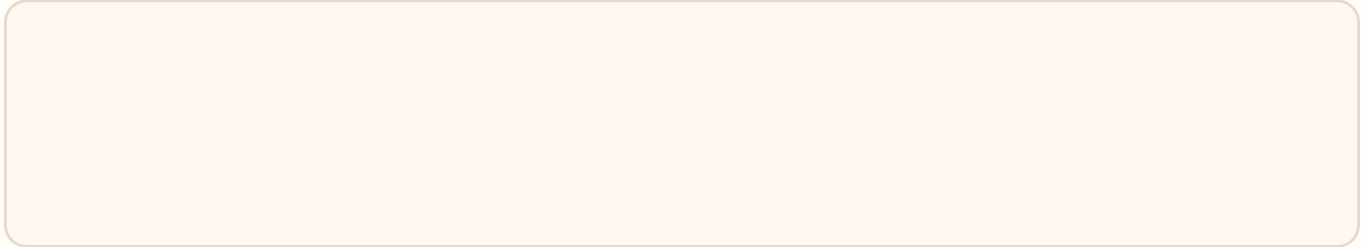
What happens in you when it does?

What do you usually do next?

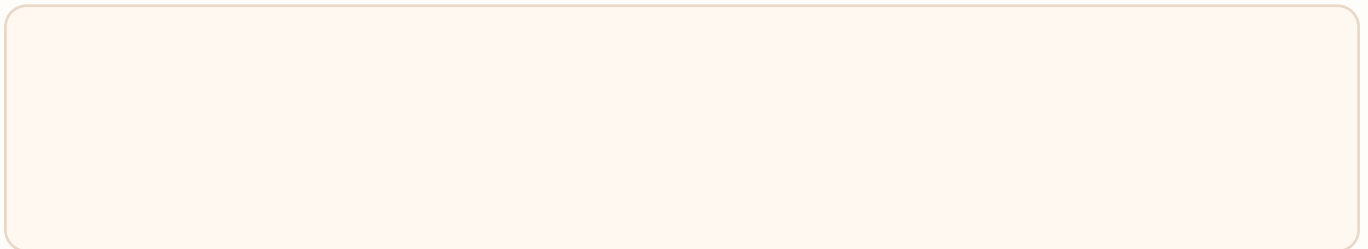
When putting things away becomes distance

Containment can gradually extend beyond the situations that required it. Some people become harder to shock, harder to upset, or harder to reach.

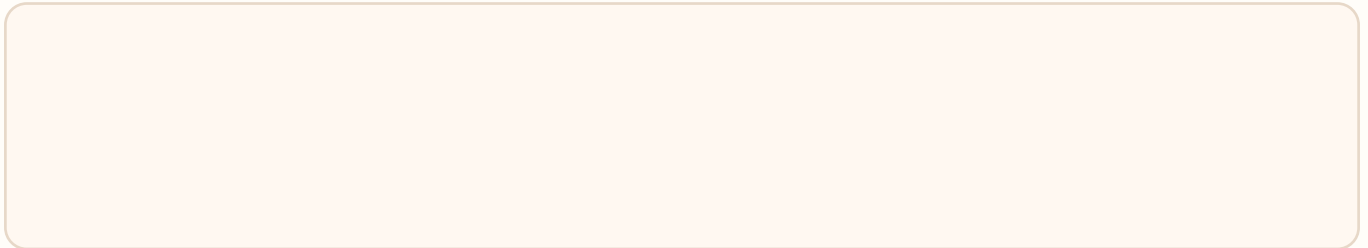
The emotion I find easiest to show is...



The emotion I find hardest to show is...



People close to me would probably describe me as emotionally...



What has somewhere to go?

Not every difficult experience needs a formal conversation. The method matters less than whether difficult experiences have somewhere to go.

The person I can speak most openly with is...

What makes it possible to talk honestly with them?

The things I do that genuinely help me process difficult experiences are...

The things I do that mainly help me avoid thinking or feeling for a while are...

What have you put away?

You do not need to open every compartment or deliberately expose yourself to traumatic memories. Consider whether some experiences continue to make themselves known despite efforts to leave them behind.

Something I may have put away rather than fully processed is...

I notice it is still around because...

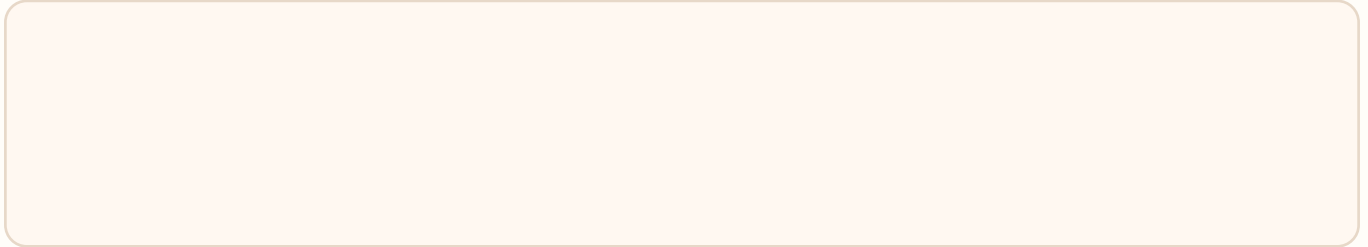
When it comes up, I usually...

What I might need from myself or somebody else is...

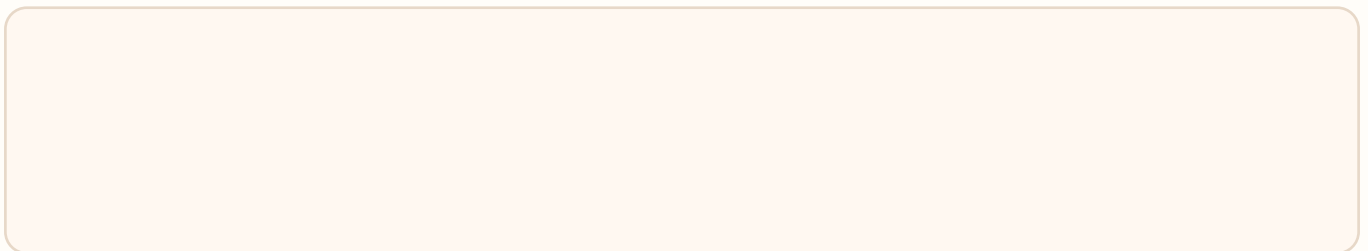
Knowing when something needs attention

Persistent unwanted memories, nightmares, avoidance, irritability, emotional numbness, heightened alertness, sleep disruption or changes in alcohol use can deserve attention. You do not need a diagnosis before taking a change seriously.

One thing from this module I recognised in myself is...



One thing I want to pay more attention to is...



When Your View of People Changes

How repeated exposure to people at their worst can shape trust, suspicion and the way you see the world

MODULE 06 / 10



UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Your occupational sample is not random

Police work provides a genuine but highly selected sample of human behaviour. Officers are disproportionately present when conflict, intoxication, violence, deception, exploitation, crisis or severe distress has already occurred.

The brain naturally builds expectations from repeated experience. If dishonesty is encountered often, scepticism becomes easier. If apparently routine situations sometimes escalate, preparation becomes more likely. These predictions are learned from real evidence.

The statistical problem is sampling. The events that generate police involvement are not a representative cross-section of ordinary human life. Cooperative families, uneventful evenings, honest strangers and conflicts resolved without violence rarely create police jobs.

This does not make negative occupational observations false. It means their frequency within police work cannot automatically be used to estimate their frequency everywhere else.

KEY IDEA

Police experience is real evidence about people, but it is not a random sample of humanity.

UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

From professional scepticism to global belief

Professional scepticism is evidence-sensitive. It asks whether an account is supported, whether information is missing and what alternative explanations fit. Cynicism becomes broader when a conclusion is applied before the individual evidence has been considered.

This distinction matters because beliefs influence attention. If you expect dishonesty, you are more likely to notice information consistent with dishonesty. Contradictory examples can receive less attention because they require no action and carry less emotional weight.

A more precise worldview does not require optimism. It allows occupational knowledge to remain intact while narrowing the claim: some people lie; this person may or may not. Some situations escalate; this one requires assessment. Trust can be built from evidence rather than granted automatically or withheld automatically.

Precision protects the useful part of scepticism without requiring every new person to inherit the history of everyone encountered through the job.

KEY IDEA

Police experience is real evidence about people, but it is not a random sample of humanity.

Your sample of humanity is unusual

Police officers are disproportionately called when something has gone wrong. Repeated exposure to violence, conflict, intoxication, abuse, dishonesty, recklessness, crisis and grief can understandably influence how you think about people.

What has police work taught you about people?

Do you think you trust people more, less or about the same as before policing? Why?

Experience becomes expectation

Predictions built from experience can travel. 'I've dealt with many people who lie' can gradually become 'people lie'. The first describes experience; the second begins to describe the world.

Police work has given me good reason to expect...

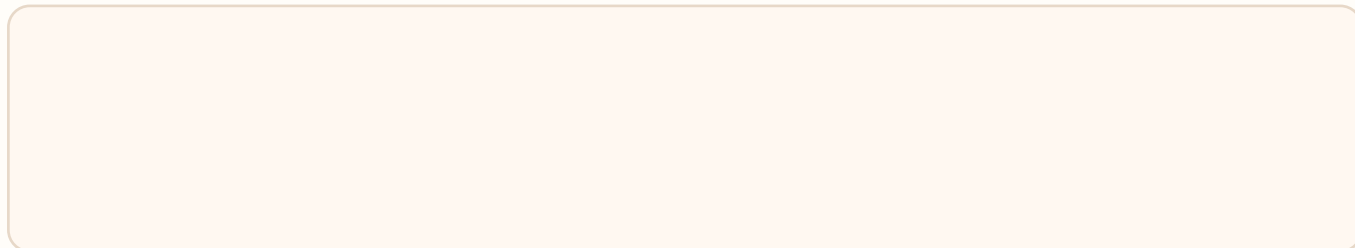
One expectation that has probably become stronger over my career is...

Does that expectation apply equally well outside policing?

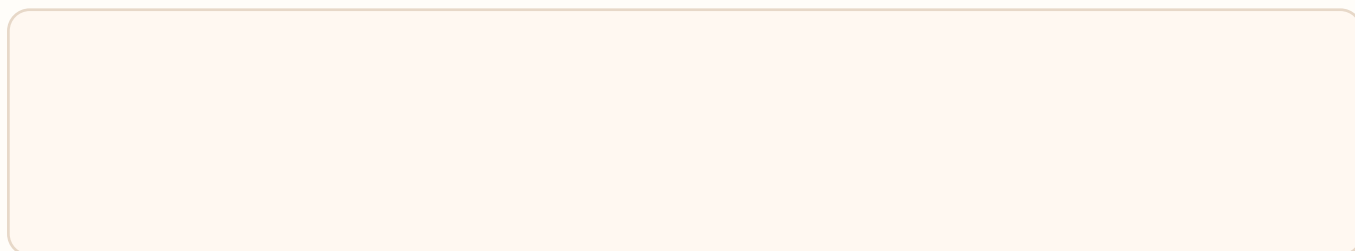
Suspicion can be a professional skill

Professional scepticism evaluates evidence, missing information and inconsistencies. That differs from beginning with the assumption that everyone is lying or has an angle.

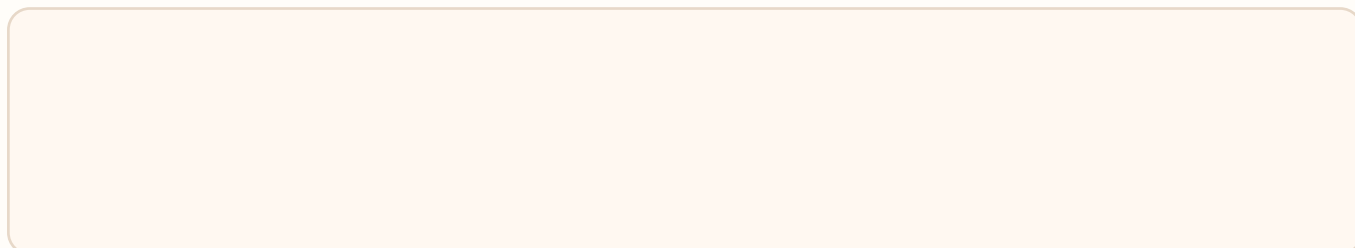
At work, suspicion helps me when...



Outside work, I notice myself becoming suspicious when...



What usually makes me decide somebody is trustworthy?



Finish the sentence

Answer quickly and notice the assumptions underneath your responses.

Most people, if given the opportunity, will...

When somebody I don't know is unusually friendly, I tend to think...

When someone's story doesn't quite make sense, my first thought is...

When someone does something generous, I tend to assume...

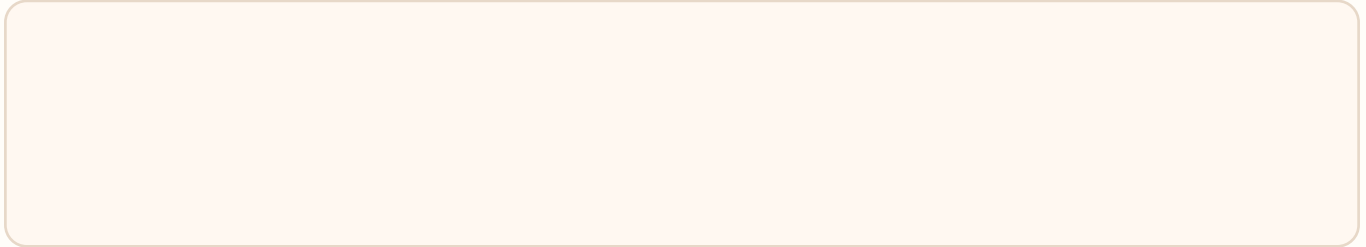
People generally care most about...

If somebody lets me down once, I tend to...

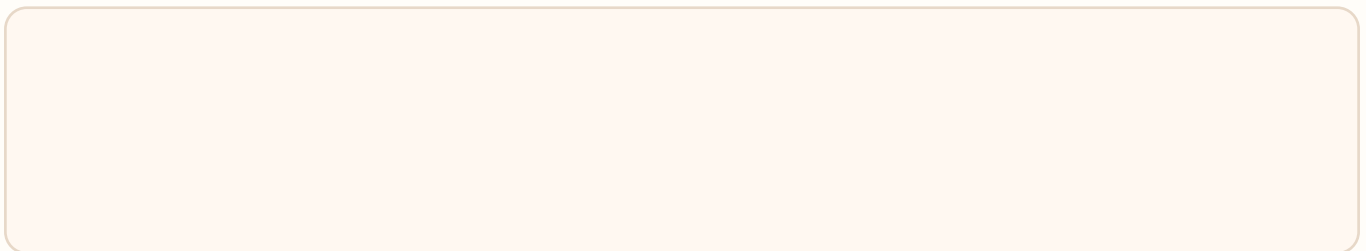
Why the worst examples carry weight

Police repeatedly witness behaviour that is unusual and highly memorable, while enormous amounts of ordinary human behaviour happen without police involvement.

What kinds of human behaviour do you see disproportionately because you're a police officer?



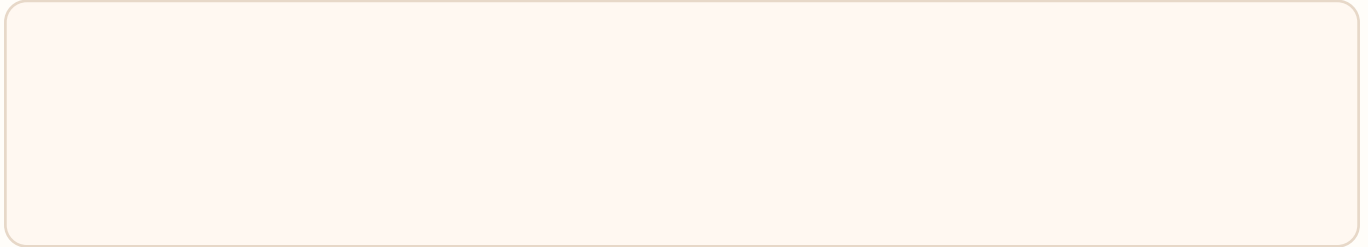
What kinds of ordinary human behaviour does your work give you relatively little opportunity to observe?



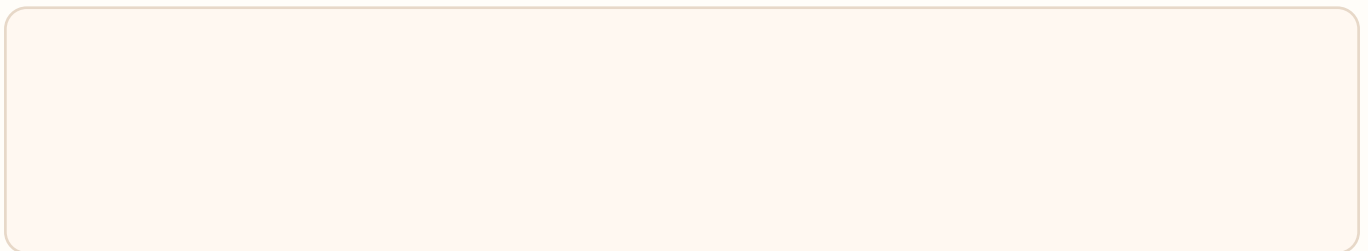
Cynicism can protect you

Expecting less can reduce surprise and make you harder to manipulate. Cynicism may have developed for a reason. Better questions are what it protects you from and what it costs you.

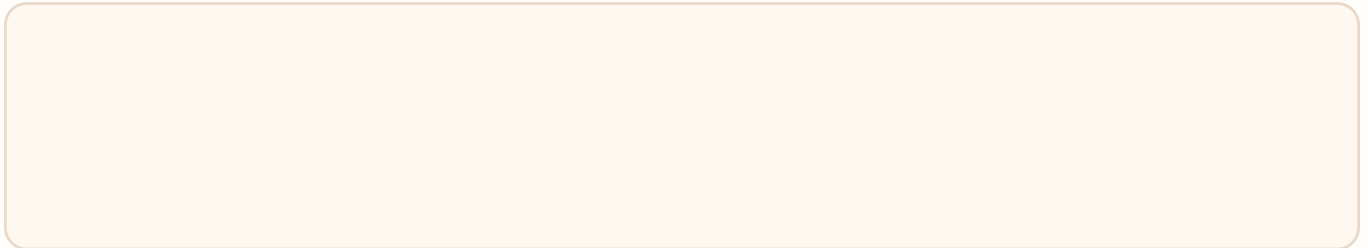
Being cynical helps me...



If I were less guarded about people, I worry that...



The situations in which my scepticism genuinely protects me are...



The cost of expecting the worst

A worldview that protects you from surprise can make generosity harder to receive, trust harder to give and optimism easier to dismiss.

One way scepticism protects me is...

One way it may limit me is...

Something I find harder to believe about people than I once did is...

Has anyone close to you described you as cynical, suspicious, negative or guarded?

Your evidence about people

Choose one broad belief about people that policing may have strengthened and examine the evidence that supports it, the evidence outside work, and the exceptions.

A belief policing has strengthened in me is...

Experiences that support this belief...

Experiences in my personal life that support it...

People or experiences that are exceptions...

My more precise belief...

Scepticism without losing perspective

The alternative to cynicism is not naivete. The goal is precision: assess this person and this situation rather than requiring every new person to carry the weight of everybody you have dealt with before.

An assumption about people I want to become more aware of is...

It is useful when...

It may be less useful when...

What I could look for before applying it is...

When the Job Enters Your Relationships

How operational habits can affect connection with the people closest to you

MODULE 07 / 10



UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Relationships respond to patterns, not intentions alone

Close relationships are systems. One person's behaviour changes the conditions for the other person's next response. After a difficult shift, an officer may withdraw to reduce stimulation. A partner may interpret withdrawal as distance and move closer. The officer then feels crowded and withdraws further. The partner experiences greater rejection and pursues more strongly.

Neither person needs to be malicious for the pattern to become self-reinforcing. Each is responding logically to what the other person just did.

This is why intent and impact both matter. Intent explains the purpose of a behaviour. Impact describes what the behaviour creates in the relationship. A protective intention can have a controlling impact. Calmness can be experienced as emotional distance. Clarifying questions can feel like interrogation.

Acknowledging impact does not require admitting a bad motive. It provides information about the interpersonal system the behaviour is entering.

KEY IDEA

Intent explains what you meant; impact tells you what entered the relationship.

UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Different environments reward different communication

Operational communication often prioritises clarity, speed and compliance. Close relationships frequently require reciprocity, explanation, negotiation and emotional acknowledgement.

Problem-solving shows the same difference. In police work, identifying the problem and moving toward action is often useful. In relationships, a person may already know what to do and instead be seeking recognition of their experience. Advice given too early can accidentally communicate that the emotion is a problem to be removed.

Parenting adds another layer. Police exposure provides vivid knowledge of what can happen to children. Vivid, severe outcomes can become cognitively available even when their statistical probability is low. Protection then needs to balance possibility with likelihood and the child's developmental need for autonomy.

The aim is not to become less protective or decisive. It is to widen the range of responses available in relationships.

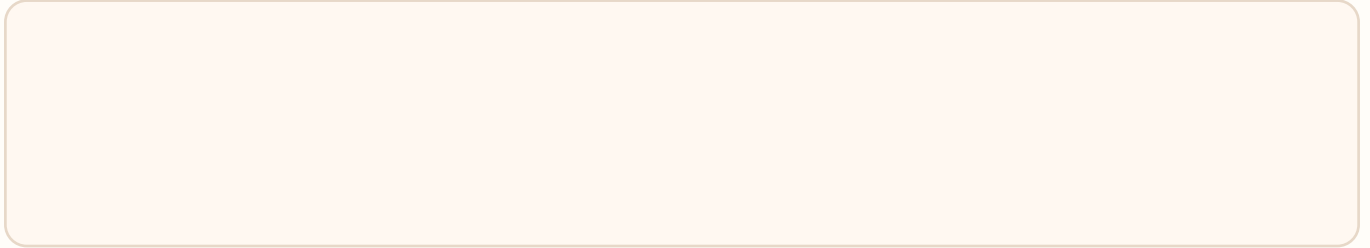
KEY IDEA

Intent explains what you meant; impact tells you what entered the relationship.

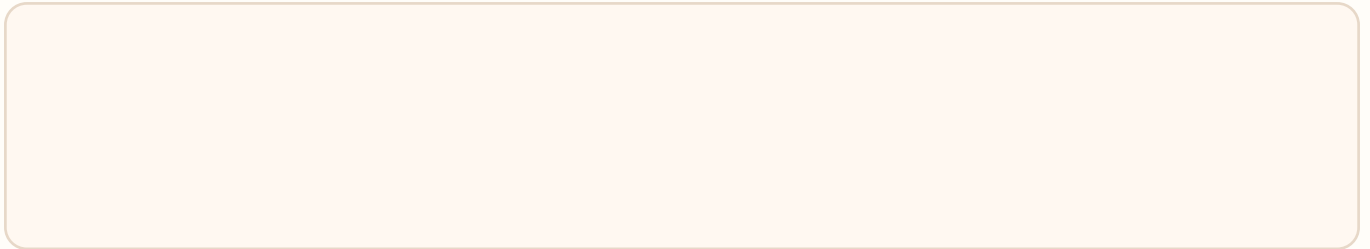
The people closest to you experience the job too

Your family may never attend the incidents you attend, but they can experience the version of you who comes home. They may also experience strengths the job has developed in you.

The qualities policing has strengthened that probably benefit my relationships are...



The parts of policing that people close to me probably experience most are...



Two people can need opposite things

After a difficult shift you may want silence while someone at home wants connection. Neither person is necessarily wrong, but their needs can collide and a pattern can develop.

Immediately after work, I usually want...

The person closest to me usually wants...

When those needs conflict, I tend to...

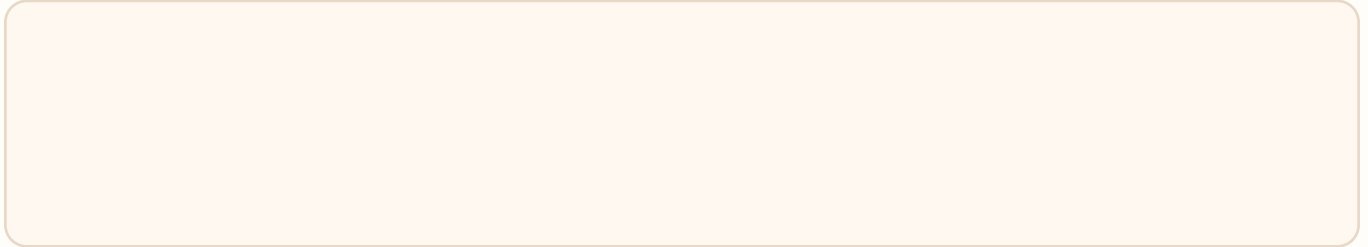
They tend to...

What happens next?

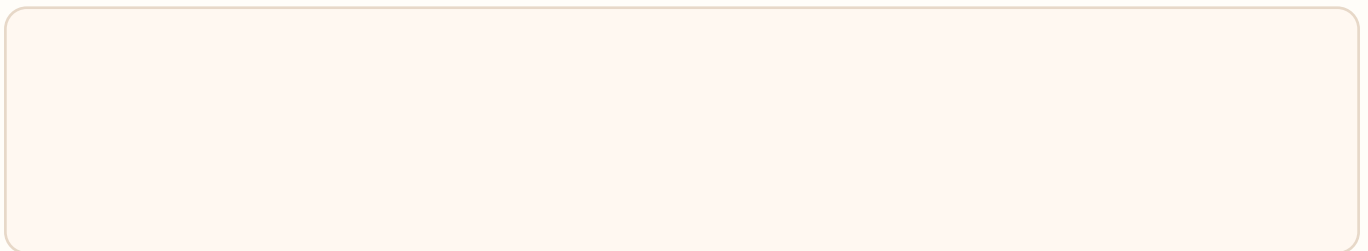
Silence can mean different things

You may be protecting others, tired of talking, constrained by confidentiality or simply needing space. Someone close to you may experience the same silence as distance or exclusion.

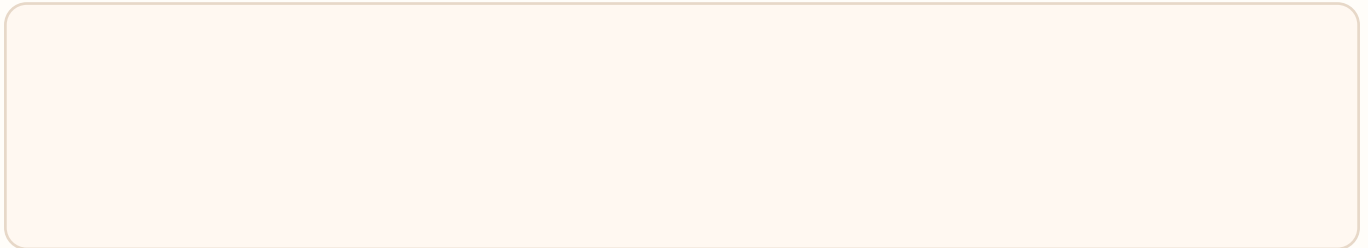
When I don't talk about work, what am I usually trying to achieve?



How might somebody close to me interpret my silence?



What could I communicate without needing to describe the job itself?



Listening without taking command

Relationships sometimes ask for something policing rarely rewards: staying with a problem without immediately fixing it. Asking whether someone wants listening or help removes the guesswork.

When somebody close to me is upset, I tend to...

What do you think the person usually wants from you?

How often do you ask?

Protection and parenting

Police officers can know too much about what can happen. Possibility can begin to outweigh probability, making ordinary childhood risk harder to tolerate.

Because of things I have encountered through policing, I am particularly protective about...

A risk I find harder than other parents seem to tolerate is...

When my child wants greater independence, my mind tends to imagine...

Is my response based mainly on what is likely, what is possible, or both?

When authority comes home

A communication style that works when immediate compliance matters may feel very different around the dinner table. Partners expect an equal voice and children increasingly need explanation and age-appropriate choice.

When I'm tired or stressed, my communication becomes more...

People close to me might describe my tone as...

The situations in which I become most directive at home are...

What I mean versus what they experience

Return to intent and impact. Understanding impact does not require accepting an accusation about motives, and understanding intention does not require the other person to ignore the effect.

What I do...

What I am trying to communicate...

What I imagine they experience...

What they have actually told me they experience...

What I usually do when they tell me this...

The people who get the leftovers

You may give patience, calm, restraint and attention to the job, then come home depleted. The people you care about most may encounter the version of you with the least energy remaining.

At work, I am particularly good at remaining...

At home, when I'm depleted, I become more...

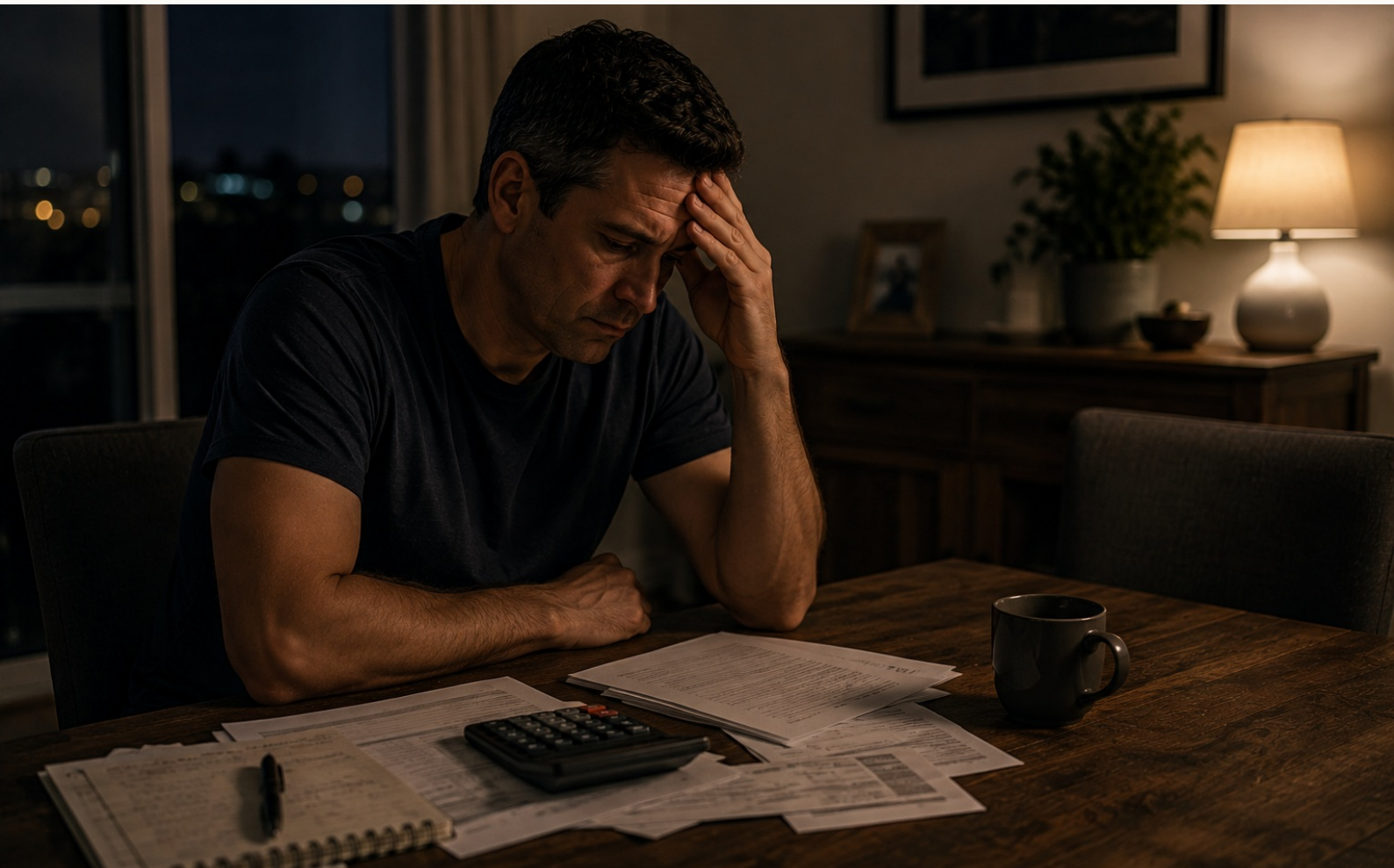
Someone close to me might reasonably wonder why I can do this at work but struggle to do this at home...

What tells me that I have very little left to give?

What Is It Costing You?

Taking stock of the cumulative impact of the job on your wellbeing, relationships and life outside policing

MODULE 08 / 10



UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Cumulative load can be quiet

Occupational cost is not limited to diagnosable disorder. Repeated activation, disrupted sleep, emotional labour, shift work, exposure and responsibility can influence a person's baseline gradually.

Because the change is gradual, it can be difficult to detect from inside it. A person adapts to being more tired, less patient, less interested or slower to recover. The new baseline begins to feel normal.

This is why a stocktake looks across domains rather than asking only whether someone is coping. Sleep, physical health, mood, relationships, alcohol use, social connection, enjoyment and identity can each provide information about cumulative load.

No single change proves that policing caused it. Patterns across time are more informative than isolated symptoms.

KEY IDEA

Being able to keep functioning does not tell you what functioning is costing you.

UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

But I'm still functioning

High functioning can hide substantial cost. An officer may continue attending work, performing well, paying bills, parenting and meeting responsibilities while sleeping poorly, becoming increasingly isolated, relying more heavily on alcohol or enjoying less of life.

Functioning tells you something important about capacity. It does not necessarily tell you what functioning is costing you.

This distinction matters in occupations that value competence and endurance. If the threshold for concern is 'I can no longer do my job', support may be delayed until the load is severe. A more useful threshold is change: what is becoming harder, narrower, more effortful or increasingly dependent on strategies that carry their own cost?

Recognising cost does not mean regretting the career. It allows deliberate protection of the parts of life that matter alongside it.

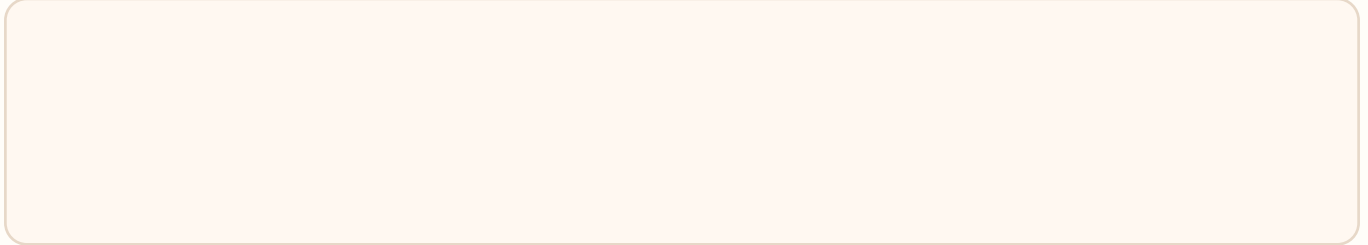
KEY IDEA

Being able to keep functioning does not tell you what functioning is costing you.

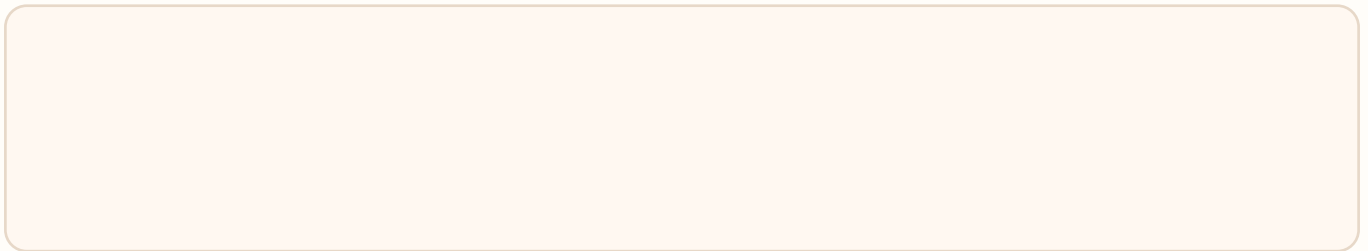
Cost doesn't mean regret

You can value policing and still recognise its costs. You can be good at the job and still be affected by it. This module is a stocktake, not a diagnosis or judgement.

The things policing has given me that I value most are...



The things I suspect it has taken from me are...



Sleep and recovery

Shift work, overtime, court, family responsibilities and physiological activation can all complicate recovery. The question is not simply hours in bed, but the quality of recovery.

The thing that interferes with my sleep most is...

After a difficult shift, my sleep tends to...

When I wake, I usually feel...

How do you switch off?

People naturally look for ways to change their internal state. Some strategies restore, some distract, some numb, and some can do all three depending on how they are used.

The thing I rely on most when I need to switch off is...

If I couldn't use it for a week, I would feel...

Alcohol

The useful question is not only how much you drink. It is the relationship between alcohol and your internal state, and what you increasingly need it to do for you.

I am most likely to drink when...

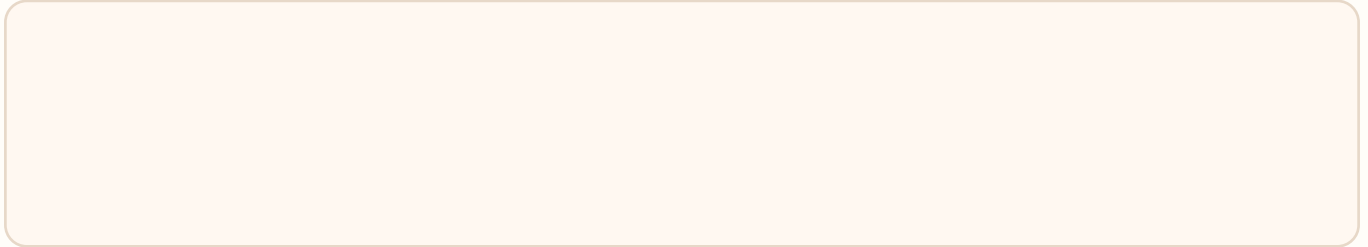
What I want alcohol to change is...

Have you ever wondered whether your drinking is doing more psychological work for you than you would like?

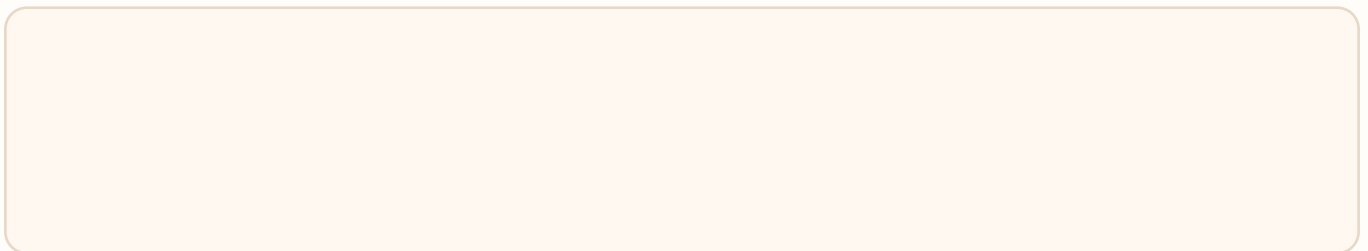
Your body keeps a record too

Shift work, disrupted sleep, prolonged sitting, activation, irregular meals and fatigue can influence physical wellbeing. Persistent or concerning symptoms deserve appropriate medical assessment.

Something my body may be telling me at the moment is...



Something about my physical health that I have been putting off addressing is...



What happened to enjoyment?

One quieter sign of cumulative load can be a shrinking life: less interest, less curiosity, more effort, and days off increasingly spent recovering rather than living.

Before policing, or earlier in my career, I used to enjoy...

I still regularly make time for...

Something I used to do that has gradually disappeared is...

When I have a completely free day, I usually...

Is my life outside policing becoming larger, staying roughly the same, or becoming smaller?

Who is still in your world?

Police culture can create powerful bonds. It is still worth noticing whether policing has narrowed the range of people and environments in your life.

The people I spend most of my time with are...

The people I can be most myself around are...

Someone outside policing I feel genuinely connected to is...

A relationship that has become more distant during my career is...

What contributed to that distance?

When the uniform becomes the identity

Policing can provide identity, belonging, competence, purpose and status. It is worth knowing that there is more to you than the role.

Being a police officer gives me a sense of...

Outside policing, I am also...

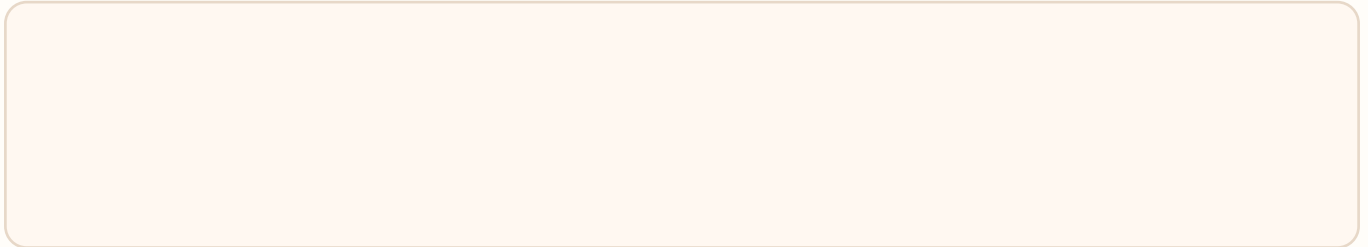
People who know me personally value me because...

If I could no longer work as a police officer tomorrow, the part of my identity I would struggle most to lose is...

But I'm still functioning

Being able to keep functioning tells you something about your capacity. It does not necessarily tell you what functioning is costing you. Someone can remain highly competent while sleeping poorly, becoming isolated, drinking more, enjoying less and taking longer to recover.

Where might I be functioning well while still paying a cost?



What has changed?

Compare yourself now with earlier in your career. Look for patterns in irritability, guardedness, tiredness, cynicism, emotional distance, reliance on ways of switching off, connection, enjoyment, relaxation and hope.

The change that stands out most is...

I think this change happened because...

When did I first notice it?

Has anyone else noticed it?

Your cost map

Rate the areas of sleep, physical health, mood, relaxation, relationships, friendships, enjoyment, switching off and identity according to how much policing currently costs you.

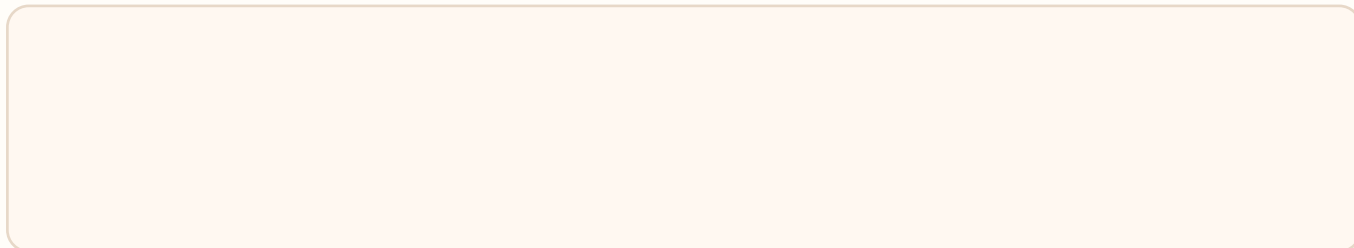
The area costing me most right now is...

If nothing changed for the next five years, I would be most concerned about...

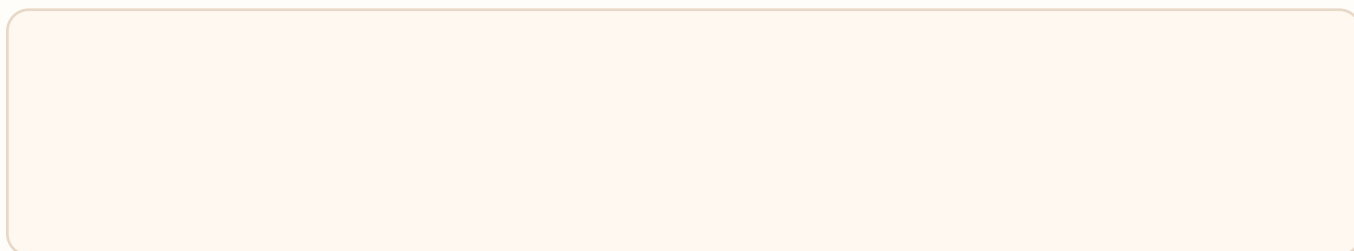
Is the price still acceptable?

There is no occupation without cost. The aim is not to convince you the price is too high, but to help you see it clearly enough to decide what you want to do about it.

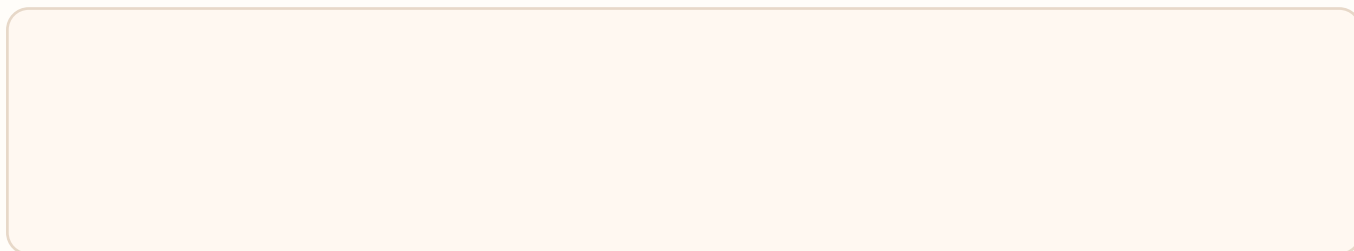
Something I want to keep exactly as it is...



Something I don't want the job to take any more of...



Something I am ready to do differently...



Learning to Stand Down

Practising the transition from operational readiness back into ordinary life

MODULE 09 / 10



UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

New learning requires practice

Insight is useful, but automatic responses change mainly through new experience. The brain needs repeated evidence that a different response can be used safely and effectively in a different context.

This is why standing down is better understood as a skill than an instruction. A repeated end-of-shift sequence can become a new contextual cue. Over time, changing clothes, movement, showering, music, quiet or another consistent routine can acquire meaning: operational responsibility has ended.

The same principle applies to vigilance and control. Deliberately reducing vigilance in a low-risk setting provides evidence that attention can broaden without catastrophe. Allowing someone else to manage a low-stakes situation provides evidence that discomfort can be tolerated without taking over.

The goal is not to prove that the world is safe. It is to improve discrimination between situations that require operational readiness and situations that do not.

KEY IDEA

Automatic responses change through repeated new experience, not insight alone.

UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Recovery changes what happens next

Recovery is not simply the absence of work. It is a process in which activation reduces and resources become available again.

A useful distinction is between recovery and escape. Escape changes experience temporarily. Recovery leaves the person with greater capacity afterwards. The same activity can do either depending on dose, timing and function.

This is why the effect after an activity matters. Alcohol, scrolling, gaming, exercise, solitude and television can all provide immediate relief. The relevant question is what they leave behind several hours later and the next day.

Standing down also has an interpersonal component. Briefly communicating 'I'm okay, I need twenty minutes to come down' gives others context. Returning after that period turns space into a transition rather than indefinite withdrawal. Repeated practice teaches both the officer and the people around them what the transition means.

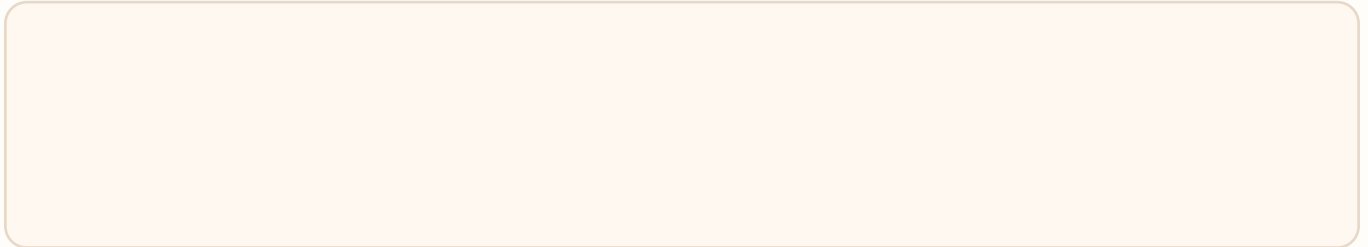
KEY IDEA

Automatic responses change through repeated new experience, not insight alone.

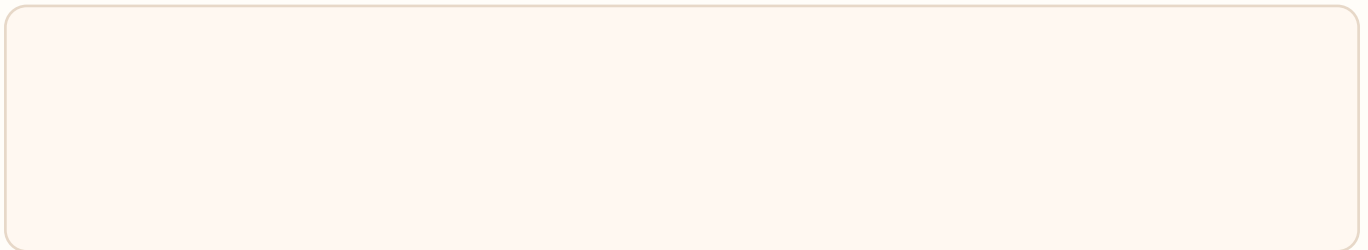
Standing down is a skill

Finishing your shift removes operational responsibility, but it does not necessarily produce an immediate change in your nervous system, attention or behaviour. Standing down is a transition your system may have had much less practice performing.

How long does it usually take before I genuinely feel off duty?



What tends to remain switched on longest?



Don't aim for relaxed

After activation, telling yourself to simply relax can be unrealistic. Aim for transition: reducing activation, broadening attention and reconnecting with ordinary life.

I know I am no longer operational when...

In my body, standing down feels like...

In my mind, it feels like...

Around other people, I become more...

Give the shift an ending

A shift has a clear beginning. It can help to give it a psychological ending as well. The activity matters less than what repetition comes to represent: I am no longer responsible for managing what happens next.

Something I could do consistently at the end of a shift is...

I could do it when or where...

I want this to become a signal that...

Help the body get the message

Operational readiness is physical as well as psychological. Movement, reduced stimulation, food, showering, quiet or slower breathing may help. The task is to discover what reliably changes your state.

When I am physically activated after work, I currently...

Something I could experiment with instead or in addition is...

What did I notice?

Recovery or escape?

Recovery leaves you more available for life afterwards. Escape temporarily reduces contact with what is happening internally. The same behaviour can function differently on different days.

Something I regularly use to switch off is...

Immediately afterwards, I feel...

Several hours later, I feel...

The following day, I feel...

Does this mostly restore me, help me escape temporarily, or both?

Practising less vigilance

Experiment with deliberately reducing attention to surroundings in reasonably safe situations. The aim is not to prove nothing bad can happen, but to discover whether vigilance is something you use or something you must obey.

A situation where I automatically become more vigilant is...

A small reduction in vigilance I could safely experiment with is...

What I predict will happen is...

What actually happened?

Did discomfort change if I stayed with it?

Practising not taking control

Choose low-stakes situations and deliberately allow somebody else to lead or allow a minor inefficiency to remain. Notice what happens inside you.

A low-stakes situation where I could deliberately not take control is...

What I predict will bother me is...

What I will try to do instead is...

What happened?

What did I learn about my need to step in?

From solving to being with

Pause before solving a loved one's problem. Ask whether they want help working it out or simply want you to listen. You are choosing a response that fits a different environment.

The person I could practise this with is...

What usually makes me want to solve their problem is...

What changed when I asked what they needed from me?

What was difficult about simply listening?

Make the transition visible

A small amount of communication can prevent the people around you having to guess what state you are in. If you ask for space, it also helps to return.

When I need space after work, I could say...

A reasonable amount of transition time for me is usually...

How could I signal that I'm ready to reconnect afterwards?

Protect recovery before you need it

Recovery works better when it is not reserved for exhaustion. Even with roster and family constraints, some parts of recovery can be protected deliberately.

Something that reliably restores me is...

I currently do it approximately...

Something work regularly pushes out of my life is...

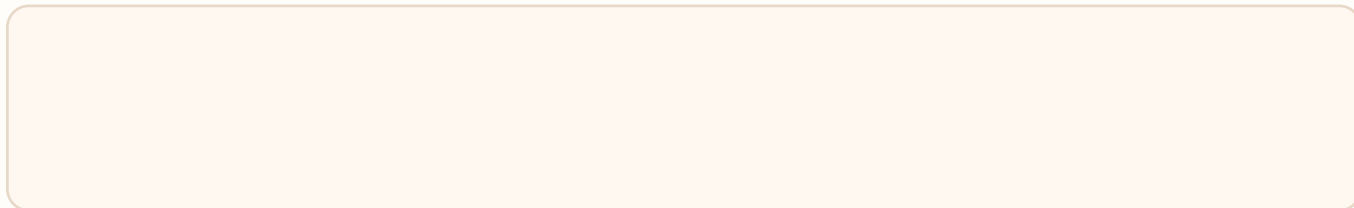
One part of my recovery I could protect more deliberately is...

What would protecting it actually require?

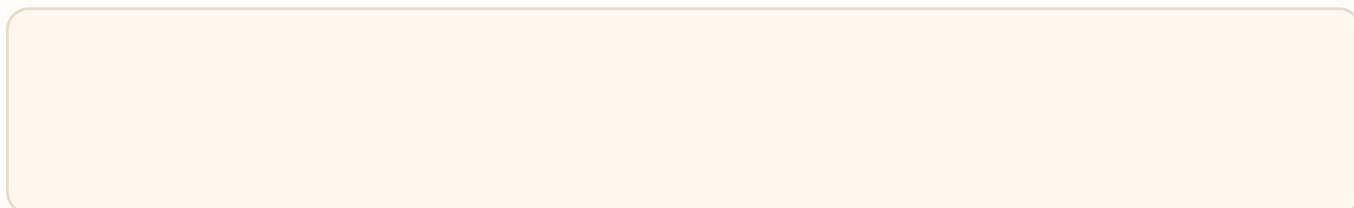
Your stand-down sequence

Build a realistic, repeatable sequence: mark the end of the shift, help your body transition, notice what remains switched on, allow transition time, communicate what you need, reconnect, and respond if something from the shift is still with you.

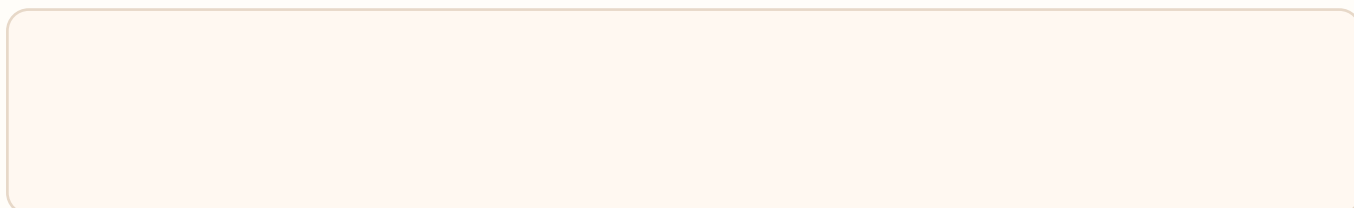
1. Mark the end of the shift...



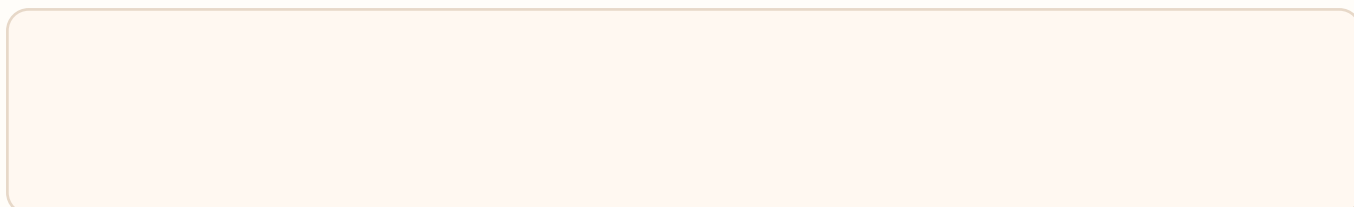
2. Help my body transition...



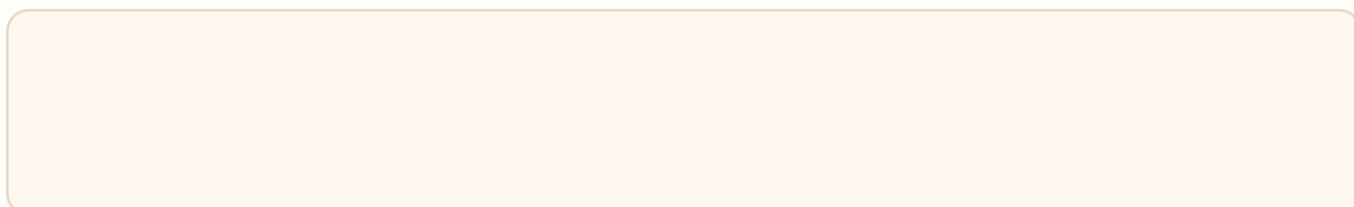
3. Notice what is still switched on...



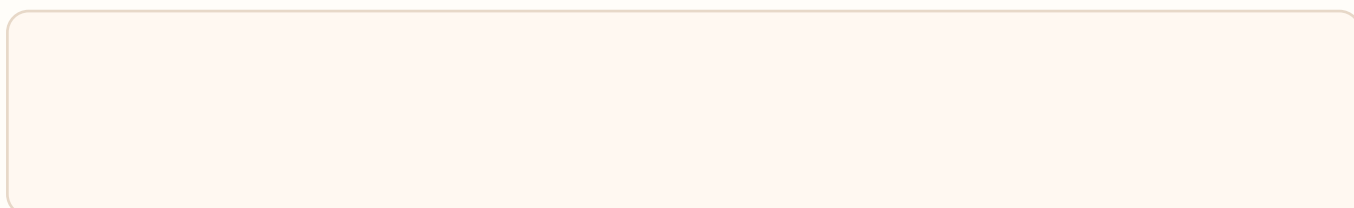
4. Give myself appropriate transition time...



5. Communicate what I need...



6. Re-enter ordinary life...



7. If something from the shift is still with me...

Practise flexibility, not perfection

The goal is not perfect self-regulation. It is increasing the number of moments in which you recognise 'I'm still operating' and have some choice about what happens next.

The stand-down practice I am most likely to actually use is...

The operational response I most want greater choice over is...

If I became better at standing down, the part of my life most likely to benefit would be...

My Beyond the Shift Blueprint

Bringing together what you have learned about the job, yourself and the life you want to protect

MODULE 10 / 10



UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Integration turns insight into a personal model

A useful blueprint is not a list of ideal behaviours. It is a working model of how your own system operates.

It brings together triggers for operational mode, changes in attention and body state, crossover patterns, early warning signs, genuine sources of recovery and the people or supports available when load increases.

The value of a personal model is prediction. If you know that poor sleep plus several difficult shifts makes irritability and withdrawal more likely, you can recognise the pattern earlier. If you know that a particular type of job tends to stay with you, you can respond before the experience has to become severe enough to force attention.

This is self-monitoring rather than self-surveillance. The aim is not constant analysis. It is familiarity with your own patterns.

KEY IDEA

The aim is a life in which policing remains important without becoming the only available mode.

UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM

Protecting a life that includes policing

Policing can become an important source of identity, purpose, competence and belonging. The aim is not to weaken that identity. It is to make sure the role sits within a life rather than gradually becoming the whole structure around which life is organised.

A sustainable blueprint therefore includes what you want to preserve: relationships, health, interests, values, places, roles and parts of yourself that do not depend on being operationally useful.

It also includes escalation points. Persistent intrusive memories, nightmares, avoidance, marked hyperarousal, emotional numbing, significant sleep disruption, escalating alcohol or substance use, or meaningful changes in functioning deserve appropriate professional assessment rather than being treated only as a decompression problem.

The final measure of flexibility is not whether operational responses disappear. It is whether you can recognise what the present situation requires and access a response that fits. You already know how to switch on. The blueprint is about protecting your capacity to stand down as well.

KEY IDEA

The aim is a life in which policing remains important without becoming the only available mode.

What policing has strengthened in me

This final module is not a list of everything you need to fix. Decide what you want to keep, what you want greater choice over and what you want to protect from the demands of the job.

Three qualities policing has strengthened in me...

The quality I value most is...

Outside policing, this quality helps me...

My operational profile

Return to your operational self. The better you recognise it, the earlier you can notice when it is appearing somewhere you do not need it.

What switches me on?

What happens to my attention?

What happens in my body?

What happens to my behaviour?

What happens emotionally?

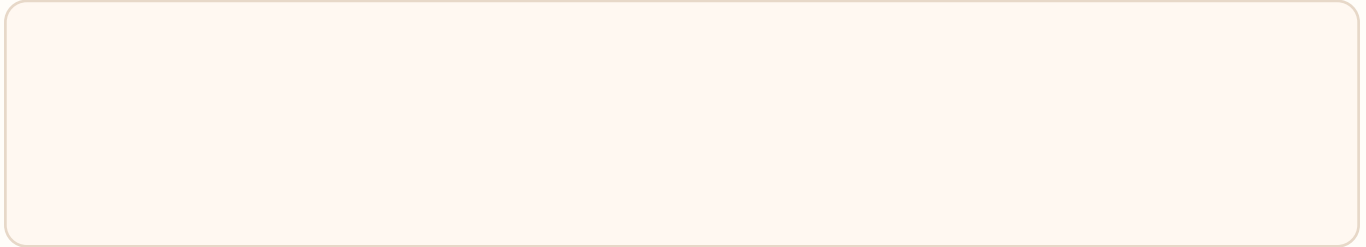
How do I know I'm still operational after the situation has ended?

How do I know I've genuinely stood down?

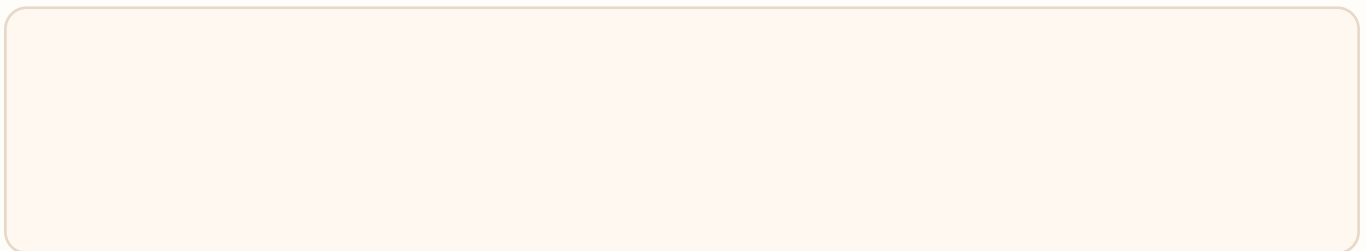
What follows me home

Choose the crossover responses that matter most and identify where they appear, what triggers them, what they are trying to do and what greater flexibility could look like.

Crossover 1: response, context, trigger, purpose, cost and flexibility...



Crossover 2: response, context, cost and flexibility...



My early warning signs

You do not need to wait until things become unmanageable. The most useful warning signs are your warning signs.

When I'm doing reasonably well, I tend to...

When the load is beginning to build, I notice...

Other people may notice...

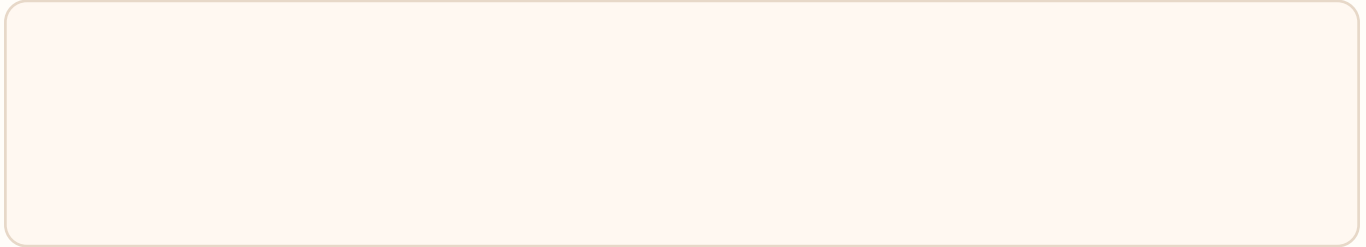
If things continue getting worse, I tend to...

The sign I should take most seriously is...

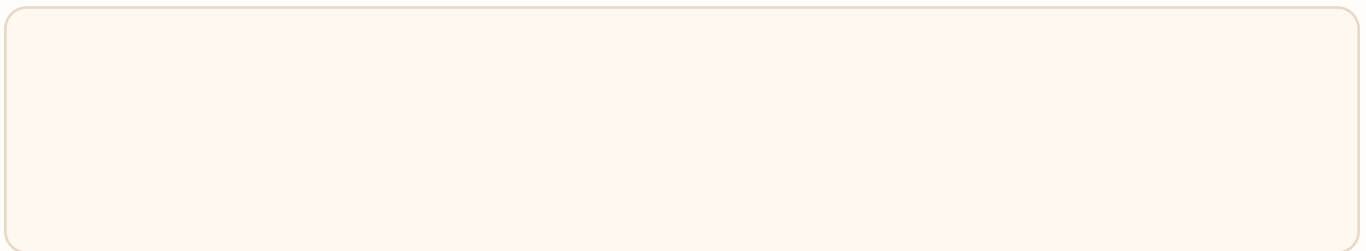
What genuinely restores me

Genuine recovery leaves something behind: more energy, connection, better sleep, a clearer mind or greater capacity for ordinary life.

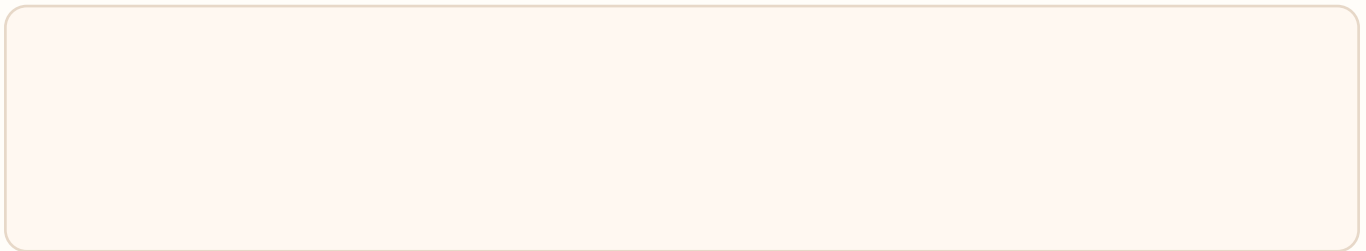
Things that genuinely restore me...



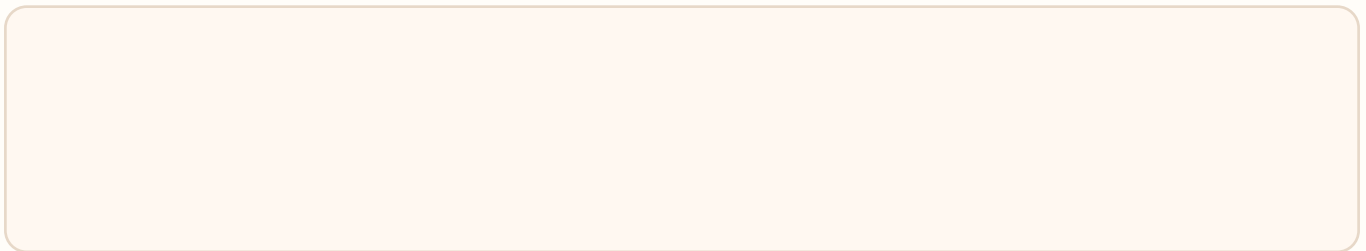
People I usually feel better after spending time with...



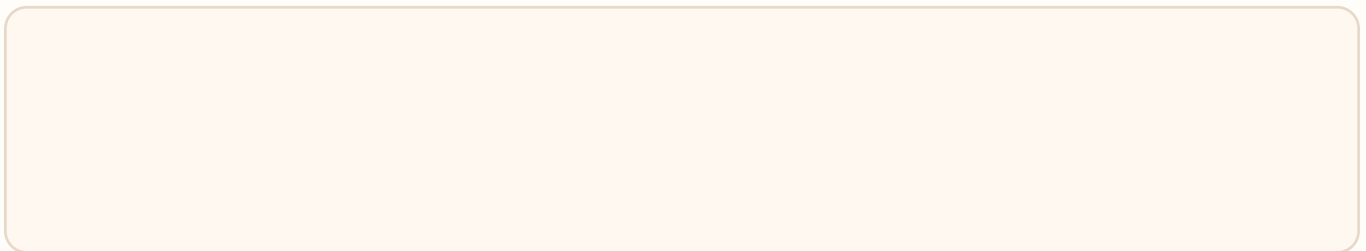
Places where I tend to feel less operational...



Activities that give me relief but don't necessarily restore me...



Something restorative that disappears when work becomes demanding...



One thing I want to protect more deliberately...

My stand-down plan

Refine your stand-down sequence into something you could realistically use after an ordinary shift.

My signal that work has ended will be...

Before I re-enter ordinary life, I will...

If I'm still highly activated, what helps my body come down is...

If I need space, I will communicate it by saying...

I will aim to reconnect after approximately...

If a particular job is still with me, I can...

If my usual strategy isn't working, my next step will be...

My people

Your support network does not need to be large. It needs to contain people with whom you can be sufficiently real.

Someone who usually knows when I'm not myself...

Someone I can speak honestly with about work...

Someone outside policing who helps keep me connected to ordinary life...

If I were genuinely struggling, the person I would contact first is...

What makes it difficult for me to reach out?

What would I want that person to know?

Professional support I could access...

What I want to protect

Look beyond policing to the life the job is supposed to sit within: the people, places, relationships and parts of yourself you want to preserve.

The people I most want to remain connected to are...

Outside policing, I want my life to contain more...

Something I do not want the job to take from me is...

An operational quality I want to keep is...

An operational response I want greater choice over is...

One change I am willing to make now is...

When the job is over, I want to remember that...

Beyond the Shift

Policing may always be part of who you are. The aim of this workbook was never to ask you to leave that part of yourself at work. It was to help you understand what repeated exposure, responsibility and operational readiness may have taught your mind and body to do. Some of those adaptations are strengths. Some may carry a cost. Some are both. The task is not to eliminate them. It is to develop enough awareness and flexibility to recognise which response the situation in front of you actually requires. Keep the vigilance when vigilance is needed. Keep the ability to take control when somebody needs to take control. Keep the composure that allows you to function when circumstances are difficult. But remember that life outside policing can ask something different of you: presence, patience, trust, connection and rest. You already know how to go operational. The work now is remembering that you are allowed to stand down.

You are allowed to stand down.