

PW-WEB-CHAPLOG-003

PRESENCE WORKS LLC™

Healing Begins with Presence™

Trauma-Responsive Encounters

Chaplain's Log: Law Enforcement Edition

Real and illustrative field encounters exploring how PRESENCE™ and ATTUNE™ guide compassionate, ethical, consent-based care among officers, peer supporters, chaplains, and supervisors.

The Chaplain's Log: Law Enforcement Edition is a collection of field-style teaching encounters some adapted from ministry with first responders, others composite illustrations built in the same spirit written to show what trauma-responsive presence looks like among law enforcement officers, peer supporters, chaplains, and supervisors. Each entry follows a real or realistic moment: an officer who says he's fine after a hard call, a rookie shaken by his first death notification, a supervisor who chooses curiosity over correction. These aren't polished success stories. They're honest snapshots of what it looks like to slow down, notice, and stay present when someone in uniform is hurting.

For our students, the purpose isn't to hand you a script. It's to show PRESENCE™ and ATTUNE™ at work in situations too complicated for a textbook to fully capture where composure and struggle exist side by side, where the badge can make it harder to ask for help, and where the right response is often patience rather than technique. Each case walks through the situation, the challenge, the response, and then breaks down exactly which movements of PRESENCE™ and ATTUNE™ were in play and why they mattered.

Read these not as a set of rules to memorize, but as a way of training your instincts so that when you're the one sitting with an officer in crisis, you already recognize the shape of what presence can offer.

Sometimes the Best Backup Is a Person Who Stays

Officers are trained to answer calls for backup with speed and force. But some of the most important backup an officer will ever receive is quieter a peer who sits down, a supervisor who steps away from the crowd, a chaplain who simply doesn't leave. These encounters remind us that presence is its own kind of cover.

01 The Officer Who Sat Alone in the Parking Lot

THE SITUATION

An officer responded to a fatal crash involving a child. He completed the investigation, notified the family, finished his reports, and returned to service without incident. At the end of shift, a peer noticed him sitting alone in his car in the parking lot long after everyone else had gone home.

THE CHALLENGE

His composure through the call didn't mean the call hadn't affected him. I needed to check on him without treating "I'm fine" as an invitation to push, and without leaving him to sit with it alone simply because he said he was okay.

THE TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE RESPONSE

I sat nearby rather than standing over him or asking direct questions. I told him there was no pressure to talk, I just didn't want him sitting out there by himself. Several minutes passed before he said his daughter was about the same age as the child from the call. That became the beginning of the conversation.

PRESENCE™ in Practice

- **Pause & Prepare:** I resisted the instinct to ask what was wrong and simply sat down first.
- **Regulate Self:** My own steadiness kept the moment from feeling like an interrogation.
- **Engage Humanly:** I treated him as a colleague sitting in a hard moment, not a case to manage.
- **See & Sense Cues:** His isolation after a fatal call involving a child was itself the signal, regardless of what he said.
- **Empower Choice:** I made clear he didn't owe me disclosure to earn my company.
- **Normalize Responses:** I didn't challenge "I'm fine" it can be true and incomplete at the same time.
- **Connect Early:** I mentioned peer support was available whenever he wanted it, without pressing the offer.
- **Encourage Next Steps:** We agreed I'd check in again before he went home.

ATTUNE™ in Practice

- **Attune to State:** His controlled exterior and prolonged isolation didn't match, and that gap mattered more than his words.
- **Track Stress Impact:** A fatal call involving a child close to his daughter's age carried a personal weight the report wouldn't show.
- **Titrate Intensity:** I let him arrive at the connection to his daughter on his own, rather than asking who the crash reminded him of.
- **Understand Meaning:** The resemblance between the victim and his daughter was the real center of what he was carrying.
- **Name Strengths:** He completed every professional obligation of the call before he let himself feel any of it.
- **Equip Next Steps:** He left knowing exactly who to call if the parking lot moment came back on another shift.

WHY THIS APPROACH HELPED

Sometimes the first trauma-responsive intervention is simply making sure someone doesn't have to sit alone. Presence without pressure created enough safety for him to say the one sentence that mattered.

WEBSITE TEACHING POINTS

- "I'm fine" is not permission to walk away it's often a test of whether you'll stay anyway.
- Isolation after a call is itself a cue worth responding to.
- Silence alongside someone can do more than a question.

TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT *Can you remain present when someone isn't ready to talk?*

02 The Weight Behind "I Did What I Had to Do"

THE SITUATION

An officer involved in a shooting had been cleared administratively and legally. Several weeks later, he told a trusted peer that everyone kept telling him he did what he had to do he knew that but he kept seeing the man's face.

THE CHALLENGE

The instinct to reassure him he'd done nothing wrong was strong, but reassurance risked closing a conversation that needed to stay open. I needed to let moral weight and operational necessity coexist without picking one to defend.

THE TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE RESPONSE

I told him I heard him, and that knowing something was necessary doesn't mean he's unaffected by it. He went quiet. I stayed with him rather than filling the silence, and later encouraged him toward ongoing peer support and behavioral health resources.

PRESENCE™ in Practice

- **Pause & Prepare:** I set aside the reassurance I was ready to offer and listened instead.
- **Regulate Self:** I kept my own discomfort with the silence from pushing me to fill it.
- **Engage Humanly:** I responded to what he said, not to the narrative everyone else had already given him.
- **See & Sense Cues:** His repetition of what others were telling him signaled he didn't fully believe it himself.
- **Empower Choice:** I let him decide how far into the memory he wanted to go that day.
- **Normalize Responses:** I named that necessity and impact can be true at the same time.
- **Connect Early:** I mentioned peer support, chaplaincy, and behavioral health as options without insisting on any one.
- **Encourage Next Steps:** We agreed on a specific time to check in again.

ATTUNE™ in Practice

- **Attune to State:** His flat repetition of “I know that” suggested exhaustion with being reassured, not comfort from it.
- **Track Stress Impact:** An administratively cleared shooting can still leave a moral and emotional weight the clearance doesn’t touch.
- **Titrate Intensity:** I didn’t ask him to describe the image he kept seeing I let him name only what he was ready to.
- **Understand Meaning:** “I keep seeing his face” was less about doubt in the decision than about carrying its cost.
- **Name Strengths:** He kept functioning on shift while carrying something most people never have to.
- **Equip Next Steps:** He left with specific resources named, not just an open-ended offer to talk.

WHY THIS APPROACH HELPED

Reassurance can unintentionally shut a conversation down. Presence makes room for complexity operational necessity and lasting impact don’t cancel each other out.

WEBSITE TEACHING POINTS

- “You did nothing wrong” can foreclose a conversation someone still needs to have.
- Necessity and impact are not contradictions.
- Naming specific resources works better than a general offer to talk.

TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT *Are you listening to understand, or listening so you can make the discomfort disappear?*

03 Taking Care of the One Who Handled the Call

THE SITUATION

An officer responded to an emergency involving a fellow officer he knew personally. He performed exactly as trained. Afterward, coworkers praised him for keeping it together while his hands were visibly shaking.

THE CHALLENGE

Competence during the emergency could easily be mistaken for the emergency having no personal cost. I needed to separate the two without turning his composure into a diagnosis or making a scene of checking on him in front of the crowd.

THE TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE RESPONSE

A supervisor quietly told him the call was handled, and now it was time to take care of the person who handled it. They stepped away from the group no immediate debrief, no demand for details. Just water, quiet, and time.

PRESENCE™ in Practice

- **Pause & Prepare:** The supervisor waited until the operational demands had fully passed before addressing the personal ones.
- **Regulate Self:** A calm, unhurried tone signaled there was no urgency to perform recovery quickly.
- **Engage Humanly:** Moving him away from the crowd protected his dignity rather than making his reaction public.
- **See & Sense Cues:** The shaking hands, not the composed voice, were treated as the accurate signal.
- **Empower Choice:** No debrief was demanded he set the pace for whatever conversation followed.
- **Normalize Responses:** Praise for “keeping it together” was gently set aside rather than reinforced as the goal.
- **Connect Early:** Simply staying nearby kept the door open without forcing anything through it.
- **Encourage Next Steps:** The two agreed to check in again once he’d had time to settle.

ATTUNE™ in Practice

- **Attune to State:** His body was communicating something his composed voice wasn’t.
- **Track Stress Impact:** Responding to a call involving a known colleague adds a layer competence training doesn’t prepare for.
- **Titrate Intensity:** Water, quiet, and time were the entire intervention nothing more was pushed.
- **Understand Meaning:** The personal relationship to the officer involved was what made this call different from routine calls.
- **Name Strengths:** He performed his duties fully and correctly under real personal strain.
- **Equip Next Steps:** He left knowing someone had noticed and would check again, without having to ask for it.

WHY THIS APPROACH HELPED

Competence during an emergency does not mean the emergency had no impact. Someone has to take care of the officer after everyone else has been taken care of.

WEBSITE TEACHING POINTS

- Watch the body, not just the performance.
- Step away from the crowd before starting any personal conversation.
- “Keeping it together” is not the same as being unaffected.

TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT *Who takes care of the officer after everyone else has been taken care of?*

04 The Cup That Was Already Full

THE SITUATION

A veteran officer began arriving early, staying late, growing irritable, and avoiding coworkers. A partner asked what was going on and got “Nothing.” Days later, over coffee, the partner asked again, more specifically, about the sleep trouble he’d mentioned in passing.

THE CHALLENGE

A single vague “Nothing” could have ended the conversation permanently. I needed to notice a pattern of change rather than a single incident, and find a way back in that didn’t feel like round two of the same question.

THE TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE RESPONSE

The partner didn’t push after the first “Nothing.” A few days later, a specific, low-pressure follow-up opened the door. The officer eventually talked about a disturbing call from months earlier and then several others. It wasn’t one call. It was years of them.

PRESENCE™ in Practice

- **Pause & Prepare:** The partner let the first “Nothing” stand instead of pressing immediately.
- **Regulate Self:** Patience over several days, not urgency in a single conversation, carried this one.
- **Engage Humanly:** Coffee, not a formal check-in, kept the conversation from feeling clinical.
- **See & Sense Cues:** Irritability, early arrivals, and withdrawal were read together as a pattern, not isolated moodiness.
- **Empower Choice:** The second question was specific but still easy to decline.
- **Normalize Responses:** The follow-up focused on sleep, a concrete and non-stigmatizing entry point.
- **Connect Early:** The coffee conversation itself functioned as the connection — no formal referral was forced.
- **Encourage Next Steps:** Once the years of calls surfaced, a plan for ongoing support was built together.

ATTUNE™ in Practice

- **Attune to State:** Behavior change over weeks, not a single bad day, was the real signal.
- **Track Stress Impact:** The most recent call wasn’t the cause it was the one that finally filled an already-full cup.
- **Titrate Intensity:** One specific, low-stakes question sleep opened a door that a broad “What’s going on?” hadn’t.
- **Understand Meaning:** Years of accumulated calls, not one incident, explained the current strain.
- **Name Strengths:** He’d carried the weight of those calls while still showing up and doing the job.
- **Equip Next Steps:** Ongoing conversations, not a single disclosure, became the plan going forward.

WHY THIS APPROACH HELPED

Sometimes the call that appears to cause the reaction is simply the one that filled an already-full cup. Noticing the pattern, not just the incident, made the difference.

WEBSITE TEACHING POINTS

- A single “Nothing” isn’t the end of the conversation it’s often the start.
- Look for patterns of change over weeks, not single moments.
- A specific, low-pressure question opens more doors than a general one.

TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT *What changes might you notice in someone before they ever say, “I need help”?*

05 Letting the Shift End Before the Night Does

THE SITUATION

After a chaotic shift involving a pursuit, a serious crash, and multiple arrests, an officer sat in his patrol vehicle outside the station well after his shift had technically ended. He said he knew it was over but still felt like he was waiting for the next call.

THE CHALLENGE

The shift being over on paper didn’t mean his body had received the message. I needed to help create an actual transition rather than assuming the clock alone would do it.

THE TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE RESPONSE

A peer supporter sat with him and acknowledged that his reaction made sense given the night he’d had. They didn’t try to solve anything right away instead, they gave him a few minutes before he headed home, talking briefly and letting the shift end at its own pace.

PRESENCE™ in Practice

- **Pause & Prepare:** The peer supporter didn’t rush him toward his car or toward home.
- **Regulate Self:** A slower pace in the conversation modeled the deceleration his body needed.
- **Engage Humanly:** Sitting with him, not directing him, kept the moment relational rather than procedural.
- **See & Sense Cues:** His statement about still waiting for the next call was taken literally, not dismissed as an expression.
- **Empower Choice:** He decided how long he needed before driving home.
- **Normalize Responses:** His reaction was named as understandable given the shift, not unusual.
- **Connect Early:** Simply staying present functioned as the support he needed in that moment.
- **Encourage Next Steps:** They talked briefly about what helps him transition on nights like this one, for next time.

ATTUNE™ in Practice

- **Attune to State:** His nervous system was still on alert well after the operational demand had ended.
- **Track Stress Impact:** A pursuit, a serious crash, and multiple arrests in one shift compounds rather than simply adds up.
- **Titrate Intensity:** Nothing was processed in depth that night the goal was just to let the alert state come down.
- **Understand Meaning:** “I still feel like I’m waiting for the next call” described a body still on duty, not a complaint.
- **Name Strengths:** He recognized and named his own state accurately, which isn’t always easy after a night like that.
- **Equip Next Steps:** A brief conversation about transition rituals gave him something to try before his next hard shift.

WHY THIS APPROACH HELPED

The body can remain “on duty” after the radio goes silent. Transition rituals help officers recognize that the emergency has actually ended before they carry it through the front door.

WEBSITE TEACHING POINTS

- The shift ending on the clock doesn’t mean it’s ended in the body.
- A few minutes of unhurried time can matter more than any single conversation.
- Ask what helps someone transition, and build it in before it’s needed.

TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT *What helps you leave the shift at the station instead of carrying the entire shift through your front door?*

Sometimes the Longest Shift Is the One After the Call Ends

The radio goes quiet before the mind does. Some of the most important peer support happens not during the call, but in the minutes after in a parking lot, a patrol car, or a quiet hallway where someone simply stays until the alert wears off.

06 Nobody Asked About Us

THE SITUATION

Following a major critical incident, attention understandably focused on the officers directly involved. Days later, an officer who had worked the perimeter told the chaplain he knew other guys saw worse and he shouldn't even be bothered by this.

THE CHALLENGE

Comparative suffering "others had it worse" often keeps people from naming their own experience at all. I needed to make room for his account without ranking it against anyone else's.

THE TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE RESPONSE

The chaplain told him someone else's experience doesn't make his less real. The officer then described hours spent watching devastated families arrive while unable to tell them what was happening. His burden wasn't what he'd seen. It was what he couldn't do.

PRESENCE™ in Practice

- **Pause & Prepare:** The chaplain didn't move past his opening disclaimer he stayed with it.
- **Regulate Self:** A steady response to "I shouldn't even be bothered" avoided reinforcing his self-minimizing.
- **Engage Humanly:** The conversation treated his role as worth discussing on its own terms, not as a footnote to the main incident.
- **See & Sense Cues:** His need to justify his own reaction before describing it was itself a cue.
- **Empower Choice:** He was allowed to define what had actually been hard for him, rather than being told what should have been hard.
- **Normalize Responses:** "Someone else's experience doesn't make yours less real" directly addressed the comparison trap.
- **Connect Early:** The conversation itself functioned as the recognition that had been missing since the incident.
- **Encourage Next Steps:** Naming his specific burden helplessness, not exposure opened the door to more targeted support.

ATTUNE™ in Practice

- **Attune to State:** His self-minimizing language signaled a need for permission to have a reaction at all.
- **Track Stress Impact:** Helplessness and unanswered families weighed on him differently than direct exposure would have.
- **Titrate Intensity:** He was allowed to explain the specific source of his distress rather than being asked to compare incidents.
- **Understand Meaning:** What he couldn't do for the families mattered more to him than what he had or hadn't witnessed.
- **Name Strengths:** He held a difficult, thankless position for hours without being able to offer the answers people needed.
- **Equip Next Steps:** Being heard without comparison was, in this case, the equipping itself.

WHY THIS APPROACH HELPED

Trauma is not a competition. Naming a burden that isn't about exposure helplessness, uncertainty, unmet responsibility matters just as much as naming one that is.

WEBSITE TEACHING POINTS

- Watch for officers who minimize their own experience by comparing it to others'.
- Roles that look peripheral can carry their own distinct weight.
- Helplessness and unanswered responsibility are real sources of impact.

TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT *Who might be overlooked after a major incident because everyone assumes someone else "had it worse"?*

07 The Sound His Mother Made

THE SITUATION

A young officer made his first death notification, following procedure carefully. Afterward he told his field training officer he wasn't prepared for the sound the mother made.

THE CHALLENGE

The easy response "you'll get used to it" teaches numbness as the goal. I needed to affirm his reaction as human without implying something was wrong with how he'd handled the call.

THE TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE RESPONSE

The senior officer remembered his own first notification and told the rookie some calls stay with you, and he didn't have to become numb to become good at this job. They talked for several minutes before returning to service.

PRESENCE™ in Practice

- **Pause & Prepare:** The senior officer paused to remember his own first notification before responding.
- **Regulate Self:** His own steady tone modeled that the topic could be discussed without alarm.
- **Engage Humanly:** Sharing "I remember mine" put them on equal footing instead of expert and trainee.
- **See & Sense Cues:** The specific detail he fixated on the sound she made was treated as meaningful, not deflected.
- **Empower Choice:** The rookie wasn't required to say more than he'd already offered.
- **Normalize Responses:** "You don't have to become numb to become good at this job" directly named and rejected the wrong lesson.
- **Connect Early:** A brief conversation in the moment kept this from becoming something carried silently.

- **Encourage Next Steps:** They returned to service together, signaling the conversation hadn't ended, just paused.

ATTUNE™ in Practice

- **Attune to State:** A specific sensory detail the sound, not the scene told the FTO exactly what had landed.
- **Track Stress Impact:** First death notifications carry a distinct weight regardless of how well procedure was followed.
- **Titrate Intensity:** A few minutes, not a full debrief, matched what the moment called for.
- **Understand Meaning:** The mother's sound represented the human cost behind a procedure he'd otherwise done correctly.
- **Name Strengths:** He completed a difficult first notification exactly as trained, and named its impact honestly.
- **Equip Next Steps:** He returned to service with a different, healthier definition of what "good at this job" means.

WHY THIS APPROACH HELPED

Experienced officers shape how younger officers learn to understand strength. Naming impact honestly, rather than teaching numbness, protects both performance and humanity.

WEBSITE TEACHING POINTS

- "You'll get used to it" teaches the wrong lesson.
- Share your own first-time reaction it puts people on equal footing.
- Emotional impact and professional competence are not opposites.

TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT *What are we teaching new officers when they show emotion after a difficult call?*

08 What Looked Like an Attitude Problem

THE SITUATION

A previously dependable officer became short-tempered, cynical, and increasingly isolated. Coworkers began describing him as having an attitude problem. One sergeant took a different approach and asked if he wanted to grab coffee, noting he'd seemed to be carrying something.

THE CHALLENGE

Behavior that looks like a performance or attitude issue can be the visible edge of something else entirely. I needed to lead with curiosity instead of accusation, without letting go of eventual accountability.

THE TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE RESPONSE

Instead of “What is wrong with you lately?” the sergeant asked what was going on and offered coffee. The officer eventually revealed significant problems at home combined with several difficult calls. The behavior had become visible before the burden did.

PRESENCE™ in Practice

- **Pause & Prepare:** The sergeant set aside the “attitude problem” framing before starting the conversation.
- **Regulate Self:** A calm, low-key invitation coffee rather than a formal sit-down lowered the stakes.
- **Engage Humanly:** “I’ve noticed you’ve been carrying something” spoke to the person, not the performance issue.
- **See & Sense Cues:** Short temper, cynicism, and isolation were read together as signs of strain, not defiance.
- **Empower Choice:** The invitation left room for him to decline or to open up at his own pace.
- **Normalize Responses:** The approach assumed a reason existed, rather than assuming a character flaw.
- **Connect Early:** The coffee conversation itself became the connection point.
- **Encourage Next Steps:** Once the full picture came out, a plan addressing both the home strain and the calls could be built.

ATTUNE™ in Practice

- **Attune to State:** Cynicism and short temper were treated as downstream signals, not the actual problem.
- **Track Stress Impact:** Difficult calls compounded with strain at home were affecting the same person in overlapping ways.
- **Titrate Intensity:** The invitation stayed low-pressure coffee, not a formal meeting until he chose to say more.
- **Understand Meaning:** The behavior was communicating something the officer hadn’t yet found words for.
- **Name Strengths:** He’d been dependable for years before this shift, which the sergeant remembered and named.
- **Equip Next Steps:** Naming both stressors together allowed for a more complete plan than addressing the behavior alone would have.

WHY THIS APPROACH HELPED

Accountability remains important, but accountability and compassion don’t have to be enemies. Curiosity before accusation revealed the actual story.

WEBSITE TEACHING POINTS

- “What happened?” opens more doors than “What’s wrong with you?”
- Behavior changes are often downstream of something else entirely.
- Compassion doesn’t replace accountability it makes it more accurate.

TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT *How might your response change if you asked, “What happened?” or “What’s going on?” before assuming, “What’s wrong with you?”*

09 “Don’t Preach at Me”

THE SITUATION

Following the death of a fellow officer, an angry officer approached the chaplain and told him not to say everything happens for a reason, and not to preach.

THE CHALLENGE

Grief and anger at faith itself can make people wary of anyone representing it. I needed to offer relationship without defending God, explaining tragedy, or rushing him toward resolution.

THE TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE RESPONSE

The chaplain simply said he wouldn’t preach, and sat with him. Eventually the officer said he didn’t understand how God could let this happen. The chaplain didn’t defend God or offer an explanation — he said he could hear how much it hurt. Much later, the officer asked him to pray for the family, and he did.

PRESENCE™ in Practice

- **Pause & Prepare:** The chaplain let go of any theological response he might have prepared.
- **Regulate Self:** A steady, non-defensive tone kept the officer’s anger from needing to escalate to be heard.
- **Engage Humanly:** “I won’t” was a direct, honest answer to a direct challenge, not a deflection.
- **See & Sense Cues:** The demand not to preach signaled a need for relationship first, explanation never.
- **Empower Choice:** The chaplain followed the officer’s spiritual questions rather than introducing his own.
- **Normalize Responses:** Anger directed at God, in this context, was met without correction or defense.
- **Connect Early:** Simply staying seated together was the connection, long before any request for prayer.
- **Encourage Next Steps:** When the officer eventually asked for prayer, the chaplain was ready without having pushed for that moment.

ATTUNE™ in Practice

- **Attune to State:** The initial anger and the later grief were treated as part of the same process, not separate problems.
- **Track Stress Impact:** The loss of a fellow officer had disrupted his sense of faith along with everything else.
- **Titrate Intensity:** The chaplain didn’t move toward theology until the officer brought it up himself.
- **Understand Meaning:** “I don’t understand how God could let this happen” was the real question underneath the initial anger.
- **Name Strengths:** His willingness to bring the hard question to the chaplain, even angrily, showed he hadn’t given up on the relationship.
- **Equip Next Steps:** Prayer, offered only when requested, became a next step the officer had chosen rather than one imposed on him.

WHY THIS APPROACH HELPED

Sometimes spiritual care means having enough faith to sit beside someone's questions without trying to answer all of them. Relationship came before religious explanation.

WEBSITE TEACHING POINTS

- "I won't" can be the most trust-building answer available.
- Follow the person's spiritual timetable, not your own.
- Prayer offered only when requested carries more weight than prayer offered first.

TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT *Can you remain spiritually present when someone is angry with God?*

10 "You Came Back"

THE SITUATION

After a disturbing child-abuse investigation, an officer talked briefly with a peer supporter a ten-minute conversation before the peer said he'd check on him tomorrow. He did. Three days later, another text. A week later, lunch.

THE CHALLENGE

A single conversation, however good, often isn't enough on its own. I needed to treat follow-up as part of the intervention, not an optional afterthought.

THE TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE RESPONSE

Consistent, low-key check-ins a text, then lunch built trust over time. Eventually the officer said what mattered most wasn't the first conversation. It was that the peer supporter had actually come back.

PRESENCE™ in Practice

- **Pause & Prepare:** The peer supporter planned the follow-up before the first conversation had even ended.
- **Regulate Self:** Each check-in stayed brief and low-pressure, without turning into a repeated debrief.
- **Engage Humanly:** A simple text "Thinking about you. How are you doing?" kept the tone personal, not procedural.
- **See & Sense Cues:** The brevity of the first conversation was read as an opening, not a conclusion.
- **Empower Choice:** Each contact left room for the officer to say little or a lot, on his own terms.
- **Normalize Responses:** The follow-up assumed a ten-minute conversation about a disturbing case wouldn't be the whole story, without pressuring him to prove it.
- **Connect Early:** The first check-in came the very next day, while the door was still open.
- **Encourage Next Steps:** Each contact built naturally toward the next, ending in an in-person lunch.

ATTUNE™ in Practice

- **Attune to State:** A short initial conversation didn't necessarily mean a small impact.
- **Track Stress Impact:** A child-abuse investigation carries weight that often surfaces after the immediate moment has passed.
- **Titrate Intensity:** Contact escalated gradually text, then text, then lunch rather than demanding depth immediately.
- **Understand Meaning:** What mattered to the officer wasn't the content of any single conversation, but the fact of being remembered.
- **Name Strengths:** He was willing to engage, even briefly, at each point of contact.
- **Equip Next Steps:** Consistency itself became the intervention, not a single well-timed conversation.

WHY THIS APPROACH HELPED

People experiencing difficult moments may not have the energy, words, or willingness to initiate help themselves. Coming back, without being asked, communicated more than any single conversation could.

WEBSITE TEACHING POINTS

- Follow-up is not optional it's often the actual intervention.
- "Call me if you need anything" places the burden back on the person in distress.
- Consistency, more than any single conversation, builds trust.

TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT *Instead of saying, "Call me if you need me," what would happen if we simply came back?*

A NOTE ON THESE STORIES

These stories are fictional and composite illustrations built to teach trauma-responsive principles for a law-enforcement context. They do not provide medical, psychological, or legal advice. Supportive practices should be used with informed consent, within the practitioner's training and scope, and alongside appropriate emergency, medical, behavioral health, supervisory, or spiritual-care resources when indicated.

HEALING BEGINS WITH PRESENCE™