CHEMTREC – Resilient Responders Overview

Research shows that responders are dealing with unprecedented levels of stress, pressure, complexity, and uncertainty on the job, and this stress often spills over into their personal lives as well. Their success and safety depend on their ability to stay focused, flexible, energized, and optimistic to support with overcoming challenges that come their way – in a word, to be resilient.

Responders have elevated risks of experiencing mental health disorders. More than 80% of responders report experiencing negative mental health symptoms. Responders prioritize the safety and well-being of others, but it's critical to put the same level of care into their own well-being. Many of the resources available to support our responders wellbeing are reactive in nature, offering support following an event. Commonly, they also fail to acknowledge the impact of the daily stresses and pressures associated with a responder's role, above and beyond that of the acute stress and pressure induced during incidents.

This program aims to support responders to identify their individual personal resilience traits, understand the implications of these traits on their performance, and develop coping strategies to mitigate the impacts of stressful situations and increase their adaptive capacity. The 7 resilience skills that we will teach in this program are effective and evidence based backed by more than 30 years of research.

In advance of each training session, we will invite participants to complete a pre-course survey. This survey will measure baseline resilience levels to give delegates get a clear picture around resilience areas of strength and areas for improvement. Although some group data may be presented, individual responses will be held in strict confidence. Approximately 6 months after the training, a post-course survey will be sent to participants to assess personal resilience growth and development.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES
• To define personal resilience and introduce the 7 resilience skills that will be covered in the program
• To develop an understanding of individual personal resilience levels through a resilience assessment
• To enhance personal resilience by exploring tools and techniques that can be applied
• Rehearse the practical application of tools and techniques through real world scenarios

OUTCOMES
At the end of this program, participants will be able to:
• Understand their current resilience levels
• Use the 7 resilience skills in real time to improve their resilience
• Comprehend the importance of high personal resilience levels in their roles as first responders
• Apply stress management strategies to reduce stress both on the job and in their daily lives
• Diagnose their feelings and take action when needing to reduce large emotional responses

RESILIENCE FACTORS

1. **Emotion Regulation:** Keeping your emotions in check

2. **Impulse Control:** Keeping your behavior in check

3. **Casual Analysis:** Diagnosing and solving problems effectively

4. **Self-Efficacy:** Belief in your ability to handle situations that come your way

5. **Realistic Optimism:** Belief in a bright future within the bounds of your reality

6. **Empathy:** Identifying and understanding what emotions others are feeling

7. **Reaching Out:** Seeking out new opportunities, challenges, and relationships

RESILIENCE SKILLS

There are 7 different evidence-based resilience skills that we teach to enhance personal resilience levels. The definition of each of the resilience skills can be found below:

- **Emotion Radars:** Emotional Radars allow us to practice identifying thoughts and emotions to enhance self-regulation, especially in high stress situations. This skill will focus on identifying and minimizing non-resilient emotions that can affect our decision-making processes. Delegates will have a chance to practice this through their scenarios and receive tailored feedback in our debrief session.

- **Avoiding Thinking Traps:** Sometimes our thoughts can be inaccurate, but we default to thinking a certain way because it is comfortable. Inaccurate thinking can have serious negative ramifications. In this skill, we will work to avoid inaccurate and habitual thought patterns to facilitate better problem solving.

- **Positive Emotion Radars:** This skill is all about reframing cognitions to scan for the positive. There is power in positive thoughts and their associated emotions. Resilience is not only about overcoming the bad, but also reveling in the good. We will leave attendees with homework to focus on this area over time, we recognize that shifting one's mindset to a positive outlook takes time and effort.

- **Flexing Around your Why Styles:** This skill helps to strengthen problem diagnosis and in turn problem solving. Everyone has a default why style, in other words, they have a go to processes to explain why something has occurred, but it is seldom accurate. In high consequence organizations, it is crucial to use sound logic to identify and treat a problem. In this skill, we will practice pivoting to the most resilient why style for optimal performance.

- **Creating Connection:** In any job, we want to find meaning in our work. Sometimes this meaning is clear but there might noise that makes the meaning in the job difficult to focus on. Whether it be employee relations, monotonous tasks, internal politics, etc., there might be something holding us back from connecting our jobs to the greater good. In this skill we will work to identify the noise in our jobs, brainstorm ways to remove or reframe that noise, and pinpoint the significance that our day-to-day tasks have on our communities and beyond.

- **Navigating Negative Icebergs:** A negative iceberg is when someone has an emotional reaction that is disproportionate to the situation that caused it. This often occurs due to beliefs that are formed from a young age in three major categories: achievement, social, and control. This skill focuses on identifying an individual's icebergs and practicing how to navigate around them in the real world when they are experienced.

- **Tapping into Positive Icebergs:** Positive Icebergs are similar to negative icebergs in that they cause strong emotional reactions that are tied to our values, morals, and principals, but with an upside rather than a downside. This skill focuses on tuning into the positive values that we hold and leveraging these strong positive emotional ties to boost resilience and help power through even the most challenging situations.

The resilience skills map across the different resilience factors that delegates are assessed upon. The chart below shows which resilience skills map across which resilience factors:

	Emotion Radars	Thinking Traps	Why Styles	Icebergs	+Emotion Radars	+Icebergs	Connection
Emotion Regulation	✓			✓		✓	
Impulse Control	✓	✓				✓	
Casual Analysis		✓	✓				
Self-Efficacy			✓		✓	✓	✓
Realistic Optimism	✓		✓		✓		✓
Empathy	✓			✓			
Reaching Out				✓	✓	✓	✓