# Suicide Prevention Month highlights navigating stress

**From CFAY FFSC, FAST Office**

Week two of September's National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month highlights the importance of Navigating Stress.

How is life today? Are you inspired, energized, or are you struggling? Day-to-day life can be stressful, but you can be better prepared for the inevitable challenges of military life by learning how to navigate stress. Stress is a normal part of life and we respond to it physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. Stress can help us perform at our best, but too much can hurt us. The Navy wants to safeguard you by helping you to become more resilient by increasing your ability to prepare for, recover from, and adjust to life in the face of stress, adversity, trauma, or tragedy.

To do that, the Navy established the Operational Stress Control (OSC) Program and developed the OSC Stress Continuum Model to help Sailors, commands, and families determine the levels of stress at work and at home. It is an evidence-based model that is consistent with the Navy's culture. The model uses four color-coded stress zones: Green or Ready, Yellow or Reacting, Orange or Injured, and Red or Ill zone. Recognizing what zone you are in is the first step in charting your course – whether it's to keep doing what you've been doing, or finding new things you can do to feel better and back to the "Green zone".

The Green or Ready zone is the Navy's goal for Sailors, commands, and families. Ready Sailors, commands, and families are resilient and able to adapt to life events. They are not stress free but coping well, function effectively, and are physically and emotionally healthy. The Green zone is good stress, which is also known as eustress. Eustress keeps us excited and motivated about the events in our life. It creates the energy we need to handle stressors. Those in the Green zone are encouraged to keep fit, eat right, and relax.

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The Yellow or Reacting zone represents how a person interprets the stressor (their thoughts, emotions, beliefs, and attitudes). However, they are able to recover and build resilience. It is important to note that 100 percent of people faced with a stressful situation will react. Normal responses to stressful situations are common and expected and are still generally in the normal range of dealing with stress. Those in the Yellow zone are encouraged to get adequate sleep and talk to someone you trust. However, if stress reactions are not managed properly, they can easily move into the Orange or Injured zone.

The Orange or Injured zone is negative stress which is also known as distress. Distress is when we have too much stress in our lives; we start to feel "burned out" and we are no longer able to adapt to stressors. Over time, even simple day-to-day tasks and decisions can feel overwhelming and our ability to cope decreases. Unmanaged distress can lead to depression, anxiety, stroke, heart attack, and even suicide. Those in the Orange zone are encouraged to talk to a chaplain, counselor, or medical provider.

The Red or Ill zone indicates potentially serious illness that requires prompt medical evaluation and treatment. Examples include constant and disabling distress, depression and severe anxiety, symptoms worsening, relationships and work suffering, and/or suicidal thoughts or actions. Those in the Red zone are encouraged to seek medical treatment immediately. The goal is to fully reintegrate Sailors back into the command after medical treatment, and ultimately work towards getting back to the Green zone.

Using the Stress Continuum can help you learn more about the signs and symptoms of too much stress, and what you can do to help yourself and others stay healthy. Stress affects us all differently. Wear and tear or illness can creep up on us slowly—we don't feel normal, but don't understand that anything is wrong until it really takes a toll. Take a moment to check-up on yourself, family, or your command. If you can recognize a concern early, there are many resources available to address this distress before it negatively impacts work performance, morale, relationships, and/or health.

Visit www.navynavstress.com and click on "Stress Zones" to find out what zone you're in. (Extracted from navynavstress.com and Navy's Operational Stress Control Program materials.)

For more information, to request suicide prevention trainings for your department or command, or to talk to a counselor, contact Fleet and Family Support Center at 243-7878 or 243-FFSC.

# 7th Fleet Band collaborates with Yokosuka Symphony

**By MCSN Kelby Sanders, C7F Public Affairs**

U.S. 7th Fleet Band and the Yokosuka Symphony Orchestra held their 3rd annual American Sound in Yokosuka Friendship Concert Sept. 9 at the Yokosuka Arts Theatre in Yokosuka.

The orchestra and the band strengthened U.S.-Japanese ties by sharing the stage with one another and playing several American classics.

"This event gives us the opportunity to express our gratitude to the locals for having us here in their homeland, and also strengthens the musical community shared by the two nations," said 7th Fleet Bandmaster, Lt. j.g. Geordie Kelly.

The band ignited the crowd with energetic jazz numbers and showmanship. It was a great opportunity for two cultures to come together.

"Special occasions like this are important because people can see us making beautiful music and art together, and that strengthens the bond between us all, not only those of us within the musical community," said Kelly.

For two countries with cultural differences and language barriers, the ability to play wonderful music with each other presents opportunities for each group of people to better understand the other.

"Music is a universal language," said Kazuyoshi Akiyama, the Laureate Conductor of the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra and guest conductor of the Yokosuka Symphony Orchestra. "It can help people from all around the world communicate heart-to-heart better than any other language can."

Musician 2nd Class Trent Perrin, who plays the clarinet and the saxophone, said he made some new friends and it was a great musical experience.

At several points during the show, the sold out crowd of 1,806 started clapping in unison to the band's rhythm. The concert was concluded with a stirring rendition of Holst's Jupiter, from the Planets and the ever popular The Stars and Stripes Forever.

"All-in-all this is a terrific venue and the musicians involved are outstanding," said Kelly.

**Conductor Kazuyoshi Akiyama conducts the U.S. 7th Fleet Band and the Yokosuka Symphony Orchestra during a friendship concert titled "American Sound in Yokosuka" at the Yokosuka Arts Theatre in Yokosuka, Japan.**
**U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Joshua Karsten**