

“Bulletproof Mind: Resiliency”

Lt. Col. Dave Grossman, world-renowned legend in the military and law enforcement communities, will present the recipe for ensuring that your mind is mentally prepared for your police career and the life after. He will discuss topics on how violence in our society has become prevalent, the responsibility of on- and off-duty cops, preparing for and dealing with the stress of violent encounters, and the role that law enforcement plays in serving as the protectors to those around them.

Today’s police officers face a much different world than the officers of the past. The current riots are the most expensive in history for the insurance industry and they are taking a toll on street officers on a daily basis.

Law enforcement leaders are also facing a nation with many changes occurring. Dallas and Seattle have lost two talented black female police chiefs. If these talented leaders cannot handle the job in the current environment, who can? At the same time, you have Chief James Craig in Detroit serving as a positive example of an effective leader in these hard times. At some point, it may become almost impossible to govern our large cities.

A major factor in our current situation is the media and their portrayal of the American police officer. Many times, police officers are represented as evil. They no longer have TV series that represent officers in a good likeness, like *Dragnet*, *Adam-12*, and *Gunsmoke*. The news media is constantly convicting officers of “murder” before the investigation is complete. The place to try and convict the police is in the courts, not on the news.

We live in a zero-defects environment where police agencies cannot afford to have a single cop caught on camera doing something irresponsible. Like the airlines industry, it is a zero-defect world where there cannot be a single airplane crash.

How does American policing face these challenges? We must not lower our high standards—better to have no cop, than a bad cop. We must learn of the importance of sleep—better to have no cop, than a tired cop. We must train in de-escalation and understand how the parasympathetic and the sympathetic nervous systems influence our behavior. We must learn to calm ourselves using techniques taught in this class.

What about the impact of masks on policing? Masks can create fear and distrust. The anonymity gained from wearing a mask can empower citizens to become violent aggressors. The mask can diminish the humanity of the victim. They make it difficult to read non-verbal signals from individuals.

We must have faith in our nation and our way of life. There have been bad times in the past. No one does this job just for the money. No one lays down their life, just for the money. Our faith can sustain us. It is one of the “pillars of resiliency.” Love can sustain and empower us. Love for our children, our families, our communities and our nation can help sustain us.

The Bible says, *“Greater love has no one than this, that they give their lives for their friends.”* (John 15:13). There are many ways to “give” your life. Sometimes the greatest love is not to *sacrifice* your *life*, but to live a *life of sacrifice*.