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*From the desk of*

# GREG YOUNG

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Hi Everyone,

I hope all of you are staying well. All of you are in my thoughts and prayers, and being here at home, grounded temporarily from offering trainings and presentations I want to do what I can to support all of you in the incredible and meaningful work you do. What you do has purpose and saves lives.

Here are some thoughts for those of you waging the current pandemic on the front lines as first responders. First and foremost, thank you and God Bless each and all of you. The reason why I love working with officers from all over, is because I am inspired by the incredible sacrifices each of you makes even before the onset of the current pandemic. I am proud of all of you and honored to serve you in my capacity.

As most of you know, until the pandemic hit us, I traveled extensively here in the U.S. and also abroad offering trainings in resilience, post-traumatic growth as well as on topics of overcoming cumulative stress and moral injury. After this pandemic without a doubt, all of us will have learned lessons that will strengthen us for whatever confronts us in the future.

I have a few thoughts which I think are important for you to consider and hopefully will be of some help to you as you serve your communities with honor and valor.

I don't have to tell you that the general public is more stressed than usual. Some are afraid and acting out their fears. Others are angry and defiant and noncompliant. And others are sick and may need you to administer CPR, with you not knowing the cause of their situation. You are lightning rods for the stress the public feels, and unfortunately those looking for someone to blame, blame you as officers. On top of all of this you wonder if you will contract the virus and bring it home to your families. Some of you, when testing positive, are further isolated, and may become ill or even worse...

Because the stress is really amping up, now is a very good time to fully engage your peer support team to listen. And equally important, I urge those of you who are waging this battle head on to talk about it. Stress affects us physically, cognitively, emotionally, behaviorally, and spiritually. Be self-aware. Employ all the healthy habits that you can to balance the stress scale. Don't practice habits that compromise your immune system. Exercise, find ways to play and let it out. Don't make any very important life decisions while burdened with a great deal of stress. If you are a person of faith, practice your faith...pray, meditate, and practice deep slow breathing. Get outside and walk. If you like to fish, go fishing. If you like to hunt, while in season, go hunting. If you enjoy music play your music. If you enjoy woodworking or other hobbies which help you unplug and balance the scale now is the time to do them. Please talk it out, and if you are a peer support person or chaplain, listen. And simply be present. The gift of a caring presence is perhaps the most important thing we

can do for each other. We will get through this eventually, but for now, stay buckled up and strapped in. May God Bless each of you for who you are and all that you do.

I have written and posted a number of more personal journal entries to bring encouragement where I can as well as some other suggestions as we do what we can to serve our communities. I have posted my journal entry as an attachment for those interested.

If any of you want to correspond or talk to me, I am available. My contact information can be found in my signature line.

Please take care of yourselves, stay safe and stay well! God Bless!

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