

Armor Up, Armor Down:
The Inner Life of Cops, Firefighters and Medics
 Session II: Working on the Friendship with Yourself

It's the crises of our age, the loss of the interior of our lives. - James Finley



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Our objectives

- Explore the inner life of the first responder
- Focus on living well
- Reframe the role, identity and work as a life path
- Highlight those who thrive and flourish
- Offer practical suggestions for developing lives of satisfaction, fulfillment and meaning.
- *Our work with education, workshops, retreats and connecting*



Our mission is to guide, support and connect first responders on their life journey.

Our vision a community of cops, firefighters and medics who support, guide and mentor each other in living well and leveraging adversity into growth, depth, insight, compassion, and wisdom.

So far

- Much more than a job or career – life long impact
- Current framing by society, psychology, first responders – incomplete
- The actual experience
- What makes us good at the role, challenges the rest of our life
- Those who thrive expect adversity and leverage it into growing up and growing wise

Six areas

1. Armor up and armor down
2. Prioritize equanimity and calm
3. Create a deep friendship with the self
4. Cultivate and tend nutritious relationships
5. Hold, carry and transform heartbreak
6. Claim a personal and collective life narrative

First responders and self care

- Today's reality about self care (interest/struggle)
- Wellbeing paradox

Inner life as friendship with self

- What are we talking about?
- Why we use the word friendship?
- The importance of one's relationship with self and the inner life down through the ages

Why a strong self and inner life matter

- When we there is not a deep knowledge of self and positive regard for one's self, the identity of cop, firefighter or medic becomes who we are. This never satisfies because it is simply a role not a full robust expression of our humanity.
- Knowing yourself, self-esteem, self-regard connected to resilience and to meaning
- What make us good at the role – challenges the rest of life
 - Imagine and prepare for the worst
 - Wall off emotions
 - Sublimate self-protection

What a strong friendship with self looks like

- Enjoying your own companying
- Curiosity to know one's self (many selves)
- Willingness to work on self
- Cultivating a sense of inner goodness
- Humility and laughing at self
- Rejection of the victim, martyr and stoic
- Making the most of what life gives

Doorways in

- Desires, longings, unfulfilled wishes and regrets
- Discomfort with your own company
- Addictions
- Our secrets
- Old wounds
- Shame and guilt
- Failures

Practical suggestions

- Get in the game
- Normalize getting help
- Start small

Questions

- October 22: "Rocking with Adversity"
- October 29: "Rediscovering and Cultivating Calm"

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