Coping with Protests/Unrest/Anti-Law Enforcement Narrative

·***Restrict*** how much media/social media you watch or read.

·When you have fearful or anxious thoughts: Acknowledge it, tell yourself to STOP and replace those thoughts with something positive.

* Remember that a great majority support their local police. It’s a small subsection of people who find a reason to riot and loot.
* People are allowed to have their opinion. Stop defending yourself, and practice empathy.
* ***Tell yourself you are safe NOW. Focus on the present moment, not the “What ifs.”***

·***Tactical/Combat breathing before, during and after deployment/shift***-your nervous system is flooded with stress hormones. Take a deep breath in through your nose with the count of 4, hold for 4 seconds, and exhale slowly through your mouth for 4 seconds.

·***Talk to someone***-A loved one, friend, family member, peer support, chaplain/clergy or a mental health professional. **DO NOT SUCK IT UP** TRYING TO PROTECT EVERYONE ELSE FROM YOUR CONCERNS. ***This can lead to relationship problems, insomnia, depression and anxiety.***

·**Stay on a schedule** on your days off and as much as you can on days you work.

·***Exercise*** ***and get outdoors***: YouTube has different types of workouts you can do at home and you don’t need equipment. Fresh air and being in nature can also help.

·***Stretch/Yoga***-the mind body connection is powerful. This helps the body and mind decompress and is especially helpful after work to transition and/or before bed.

·***Relaxation meditation***-YouTube and the app store are good resources.

·***Laugh and laugh some more*** (TV shows, videos, movies, books, podcasts, audiobooks)

* **Limit caffeine and alcohol**-remember it’s a depressant that can affect your mood and sleep.
* **Get organized, clean, garden (Take control back)**
* **Read or listen to an audio book, podcast**

Most importantly, please remember that this is TEMPORARY!

You have an opportunity to build community trust through your words and actions. Be the kind of leader and LEO you wish to see.