

Behind the Line, Inc.
Heather Brown, PhD
Registered Psychology Associate
Under the Supervision of Dr. Samantha Scott
hbrownbtl@gmail.com
443-614-8682

Our police officers, fire fighters, EMTs, Medics, and Dispatchers face situations daily that can have negative implications on their mind and body. Our bodies are designed to protect us from danger and adapt to survive. For instance, when faced with a critical incident, the body will automatically increase the production of adrenaline, cortisol, and oxytocin. It can take up to 48 hours for our bodies to fully detox from the increase of these hormones. Unfortunately for our first responders, they are unable to have periods of time that allow them to detox from the hormones and instead they continue to build. According to the Mayo Clinic high doses of cortisol becomes dangerous and increases a person's risk for heart disease, weight gain, sleep disorders, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress. We also know that staying at high states of stress decrease a person's cognitive abilities.

Nature has been proven as means to help people heal and relax from stress and trauma. It has been reported by Harvard Medical School that spending a minimum of 20-30 minutes in nature was one of the strongest interventions to lower cortisol levels. Helping our first responders increase access to the State National Parks can increase their ability to heal from the daily stress and traumas. For our first responders' wellness, we can continue to increase their resilience, strengthen their relationships, and increase their work productivity by providing them access to nature within our own State.