

Abstract

Police officers protect and serve the community at any cost. The cost can include their physical and mental health. This study interviewed seventeen current and former police officers about their memories of the police action shootings in which they were involved and how these memories resonated in their minds. They were asked questions which prompted them to explain how they were affected physically, mentally, and emotionally by the incident. The interviews were transcribed and coded to find similarities and differences between responses. The original coded data was reduced to sixteen themes and were analyzed for the purposes of this study. The findings revealed many commonalities among the officers in terms of the consequences for them as a result of the shooting incidents. These findings can assist police departments in better understanding the emotional, physical, and social aftermath for officers and in creating meaningful and supportive policies and procedures to shepherd officers through these trying times.

Keywords: police-involved shooting, critical incident, police officer, stress

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