



# Evidence Into Action

**Building Occupational Awareness  
Training for First Responders ©**

# Matt Johnston

- RCC #2857
- Acting Officer
- Co-founder of the Fire Fighter Occupational Awareness Training Program©



2015

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2017



# Dr. Duncan Shields

- Registered Psychologist
- Co-founder of the Fire Fighter Resiliency Program

**B**BLUEPRINT







# Social Return on Investment

A quantitative measure of the value of social, environmental, and economic outcomes based on Health-Related Quality of Life (HRQoL), and Quality Adjusted Life Years (QALY).

**448%**

For every \$1 Movember invested in the program, the social return of investment was \$5.48 USD.



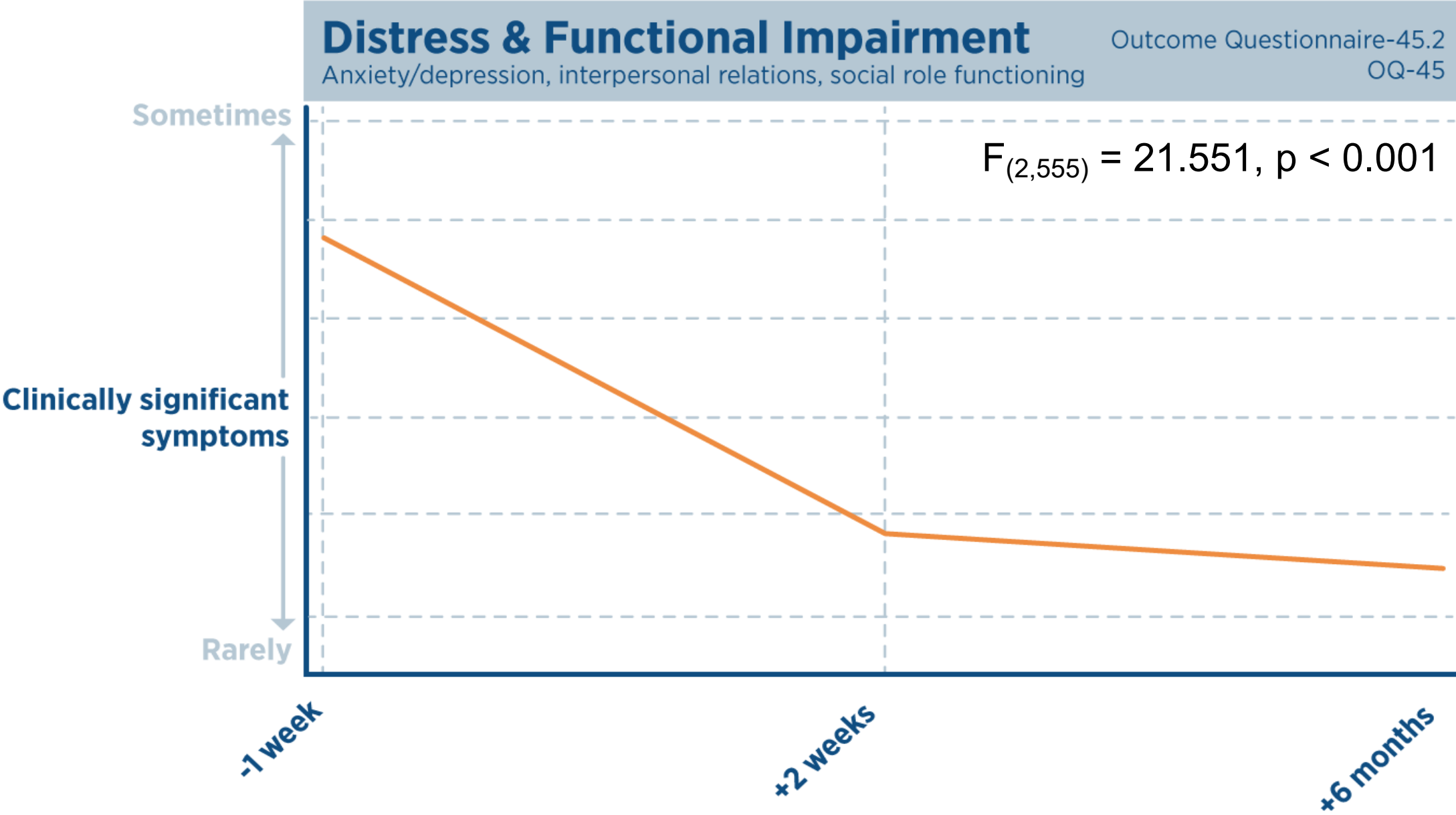
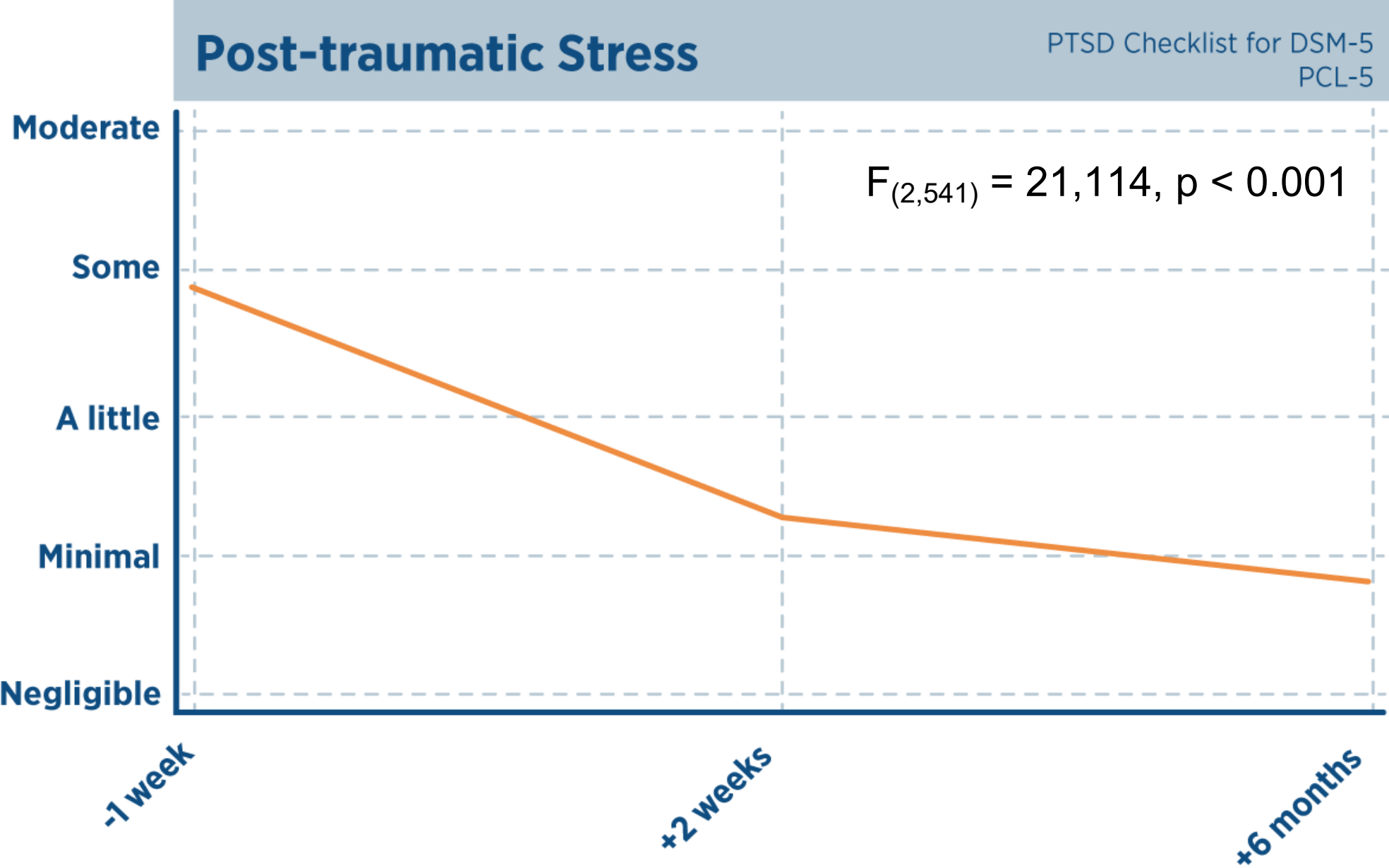
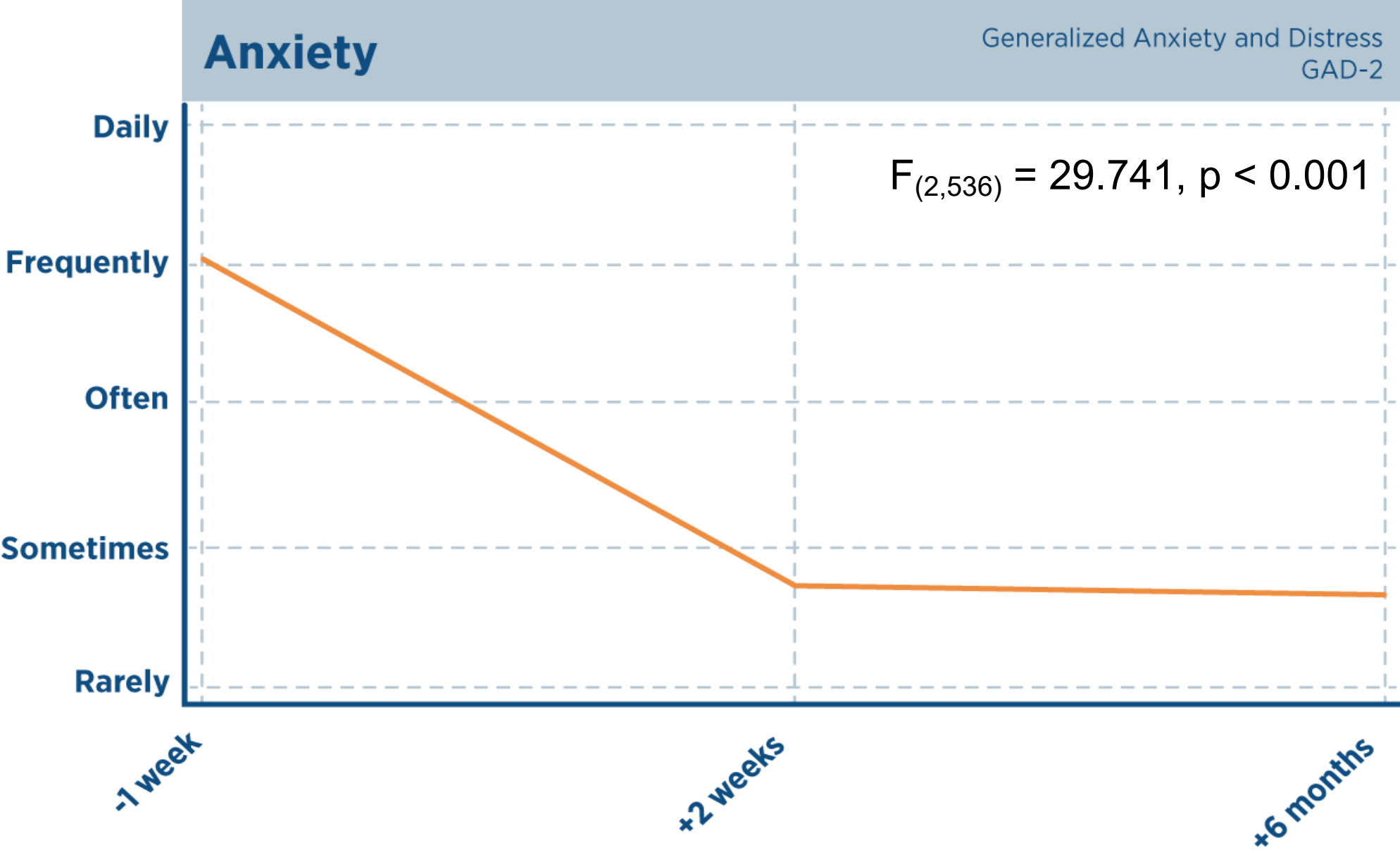
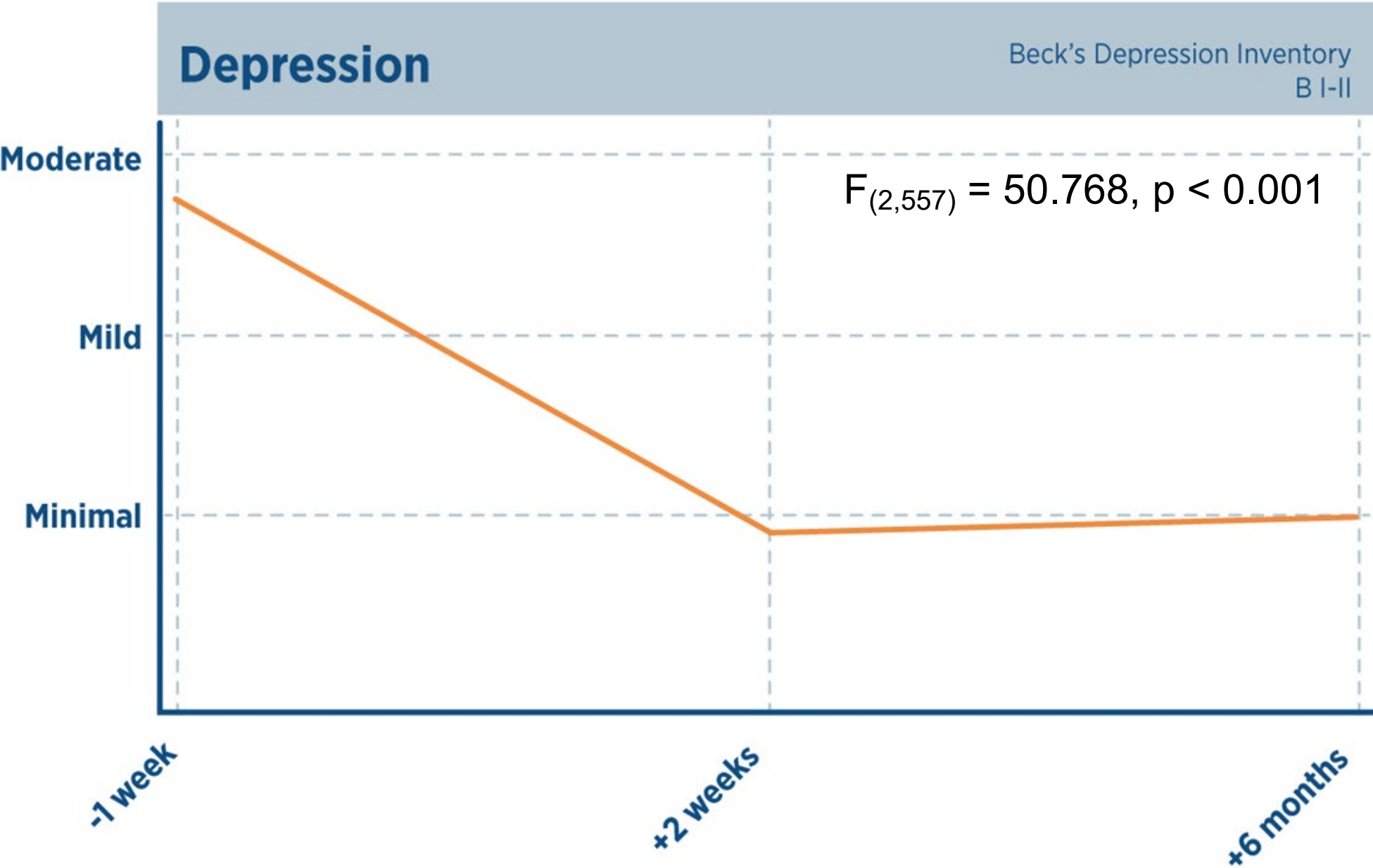
# FIRST RESPONDER RESILIENCY PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT

MOVEMBER AND THE DISTINGUISHED  
GENTLEMAN'S RIDE VETERANS AND FIRST  
RESPONDERS MENTAL HEALTH GRANT  
PROGRAM

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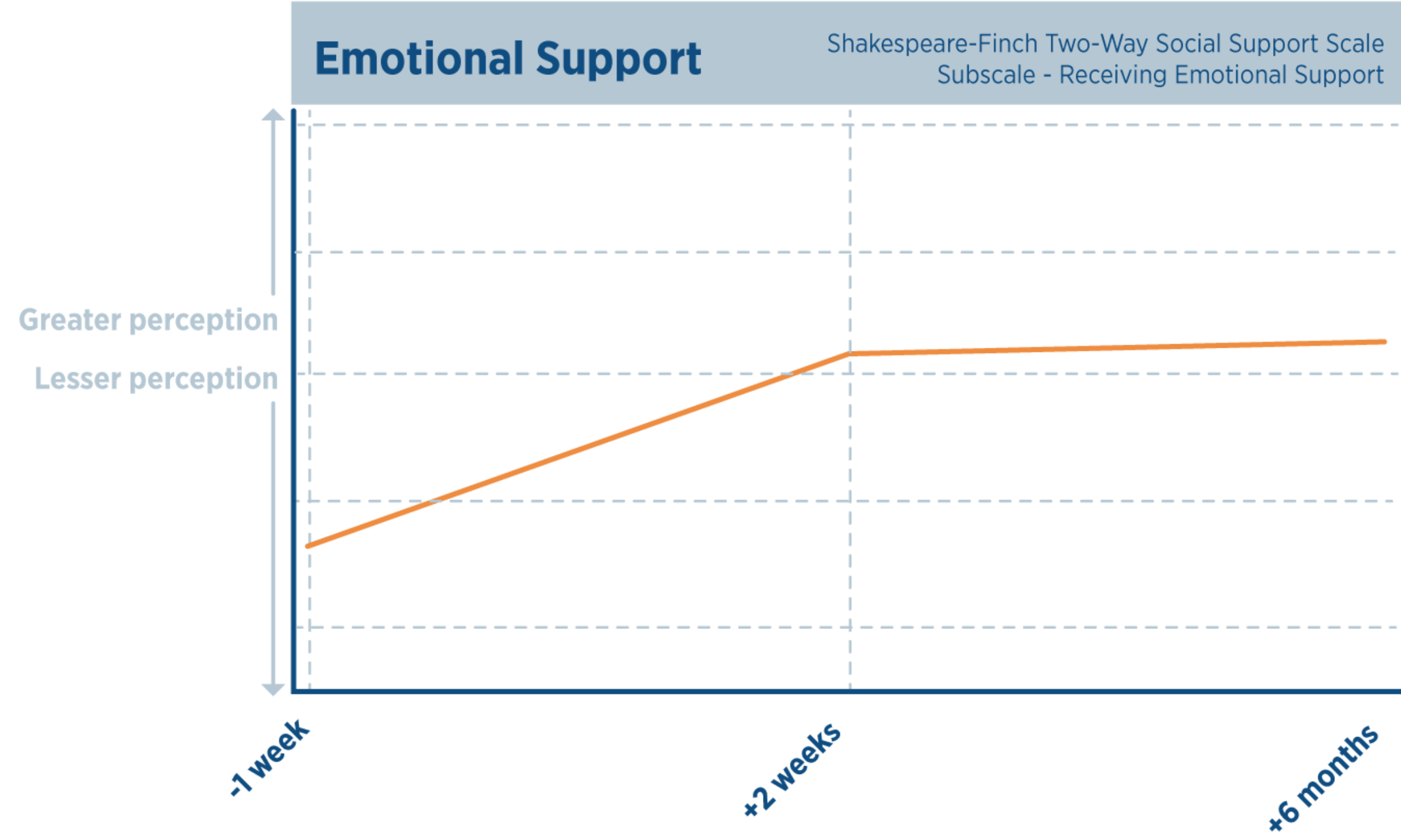
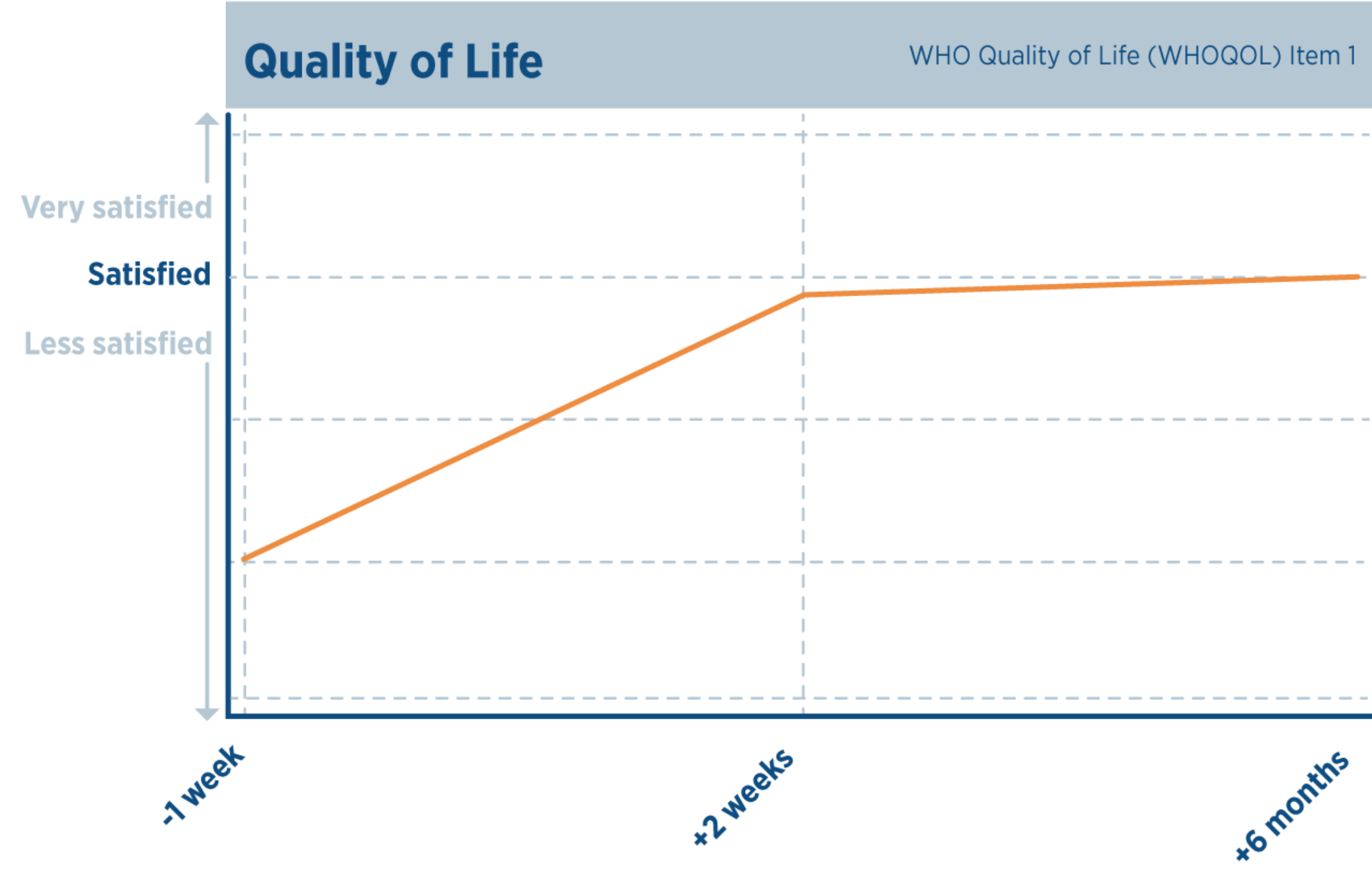
July 2024

# First Responder Resiliency Program Participant Outcomes





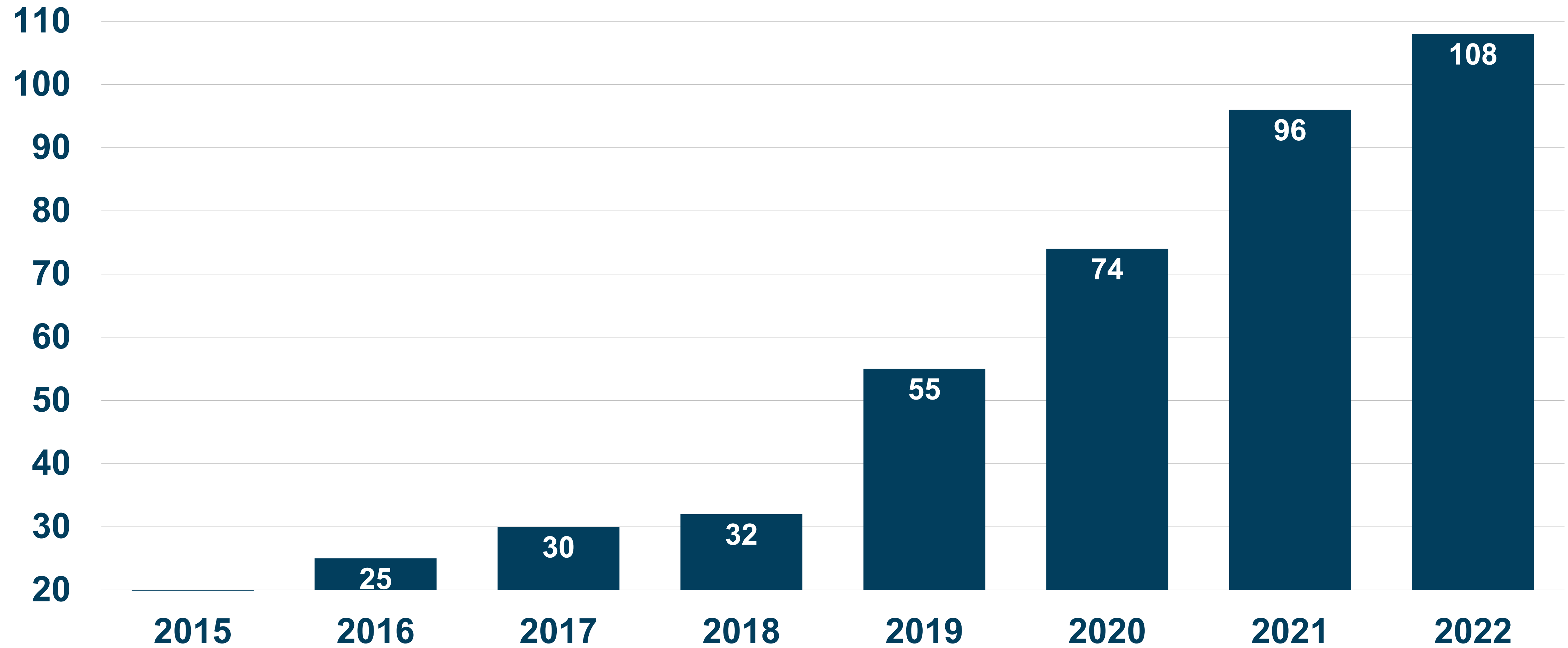
# First Responder Resiliency Program Participant Outcomes



How do you scale a 4-day immersive  
therapeutic group experience?



# Psychological Injuries Amongst BC Fire Fighters







# Nothing Built for Us, Without Us



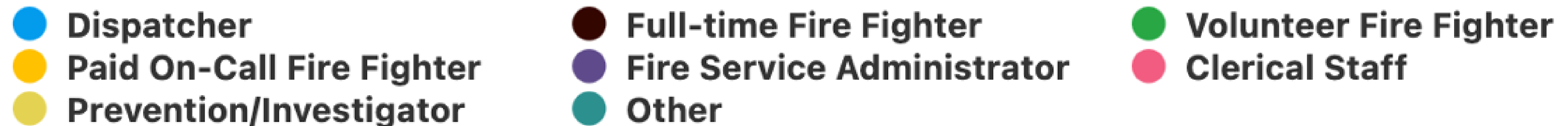
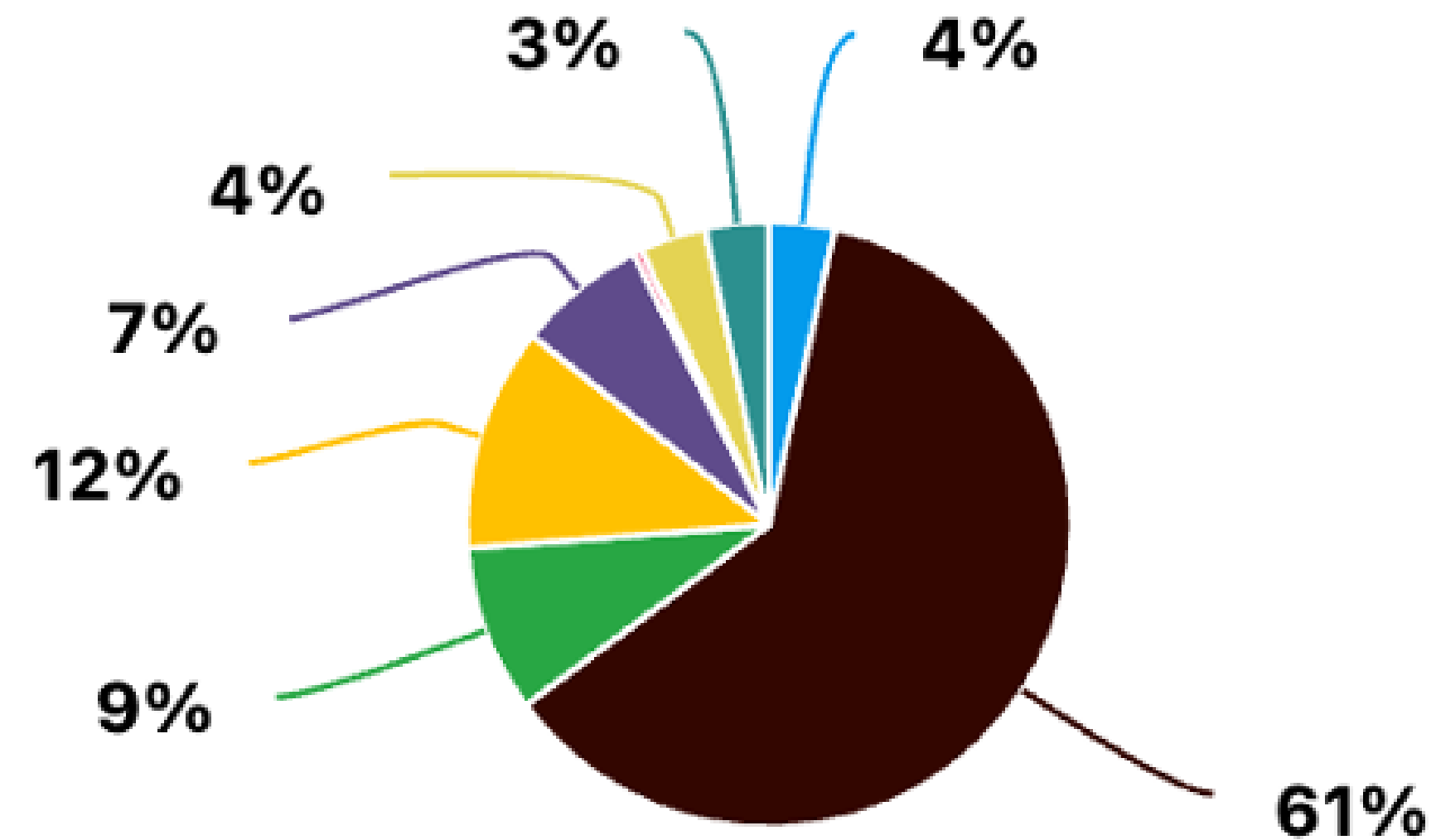
# Establishing the Business Case

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## Sample Size = 1099

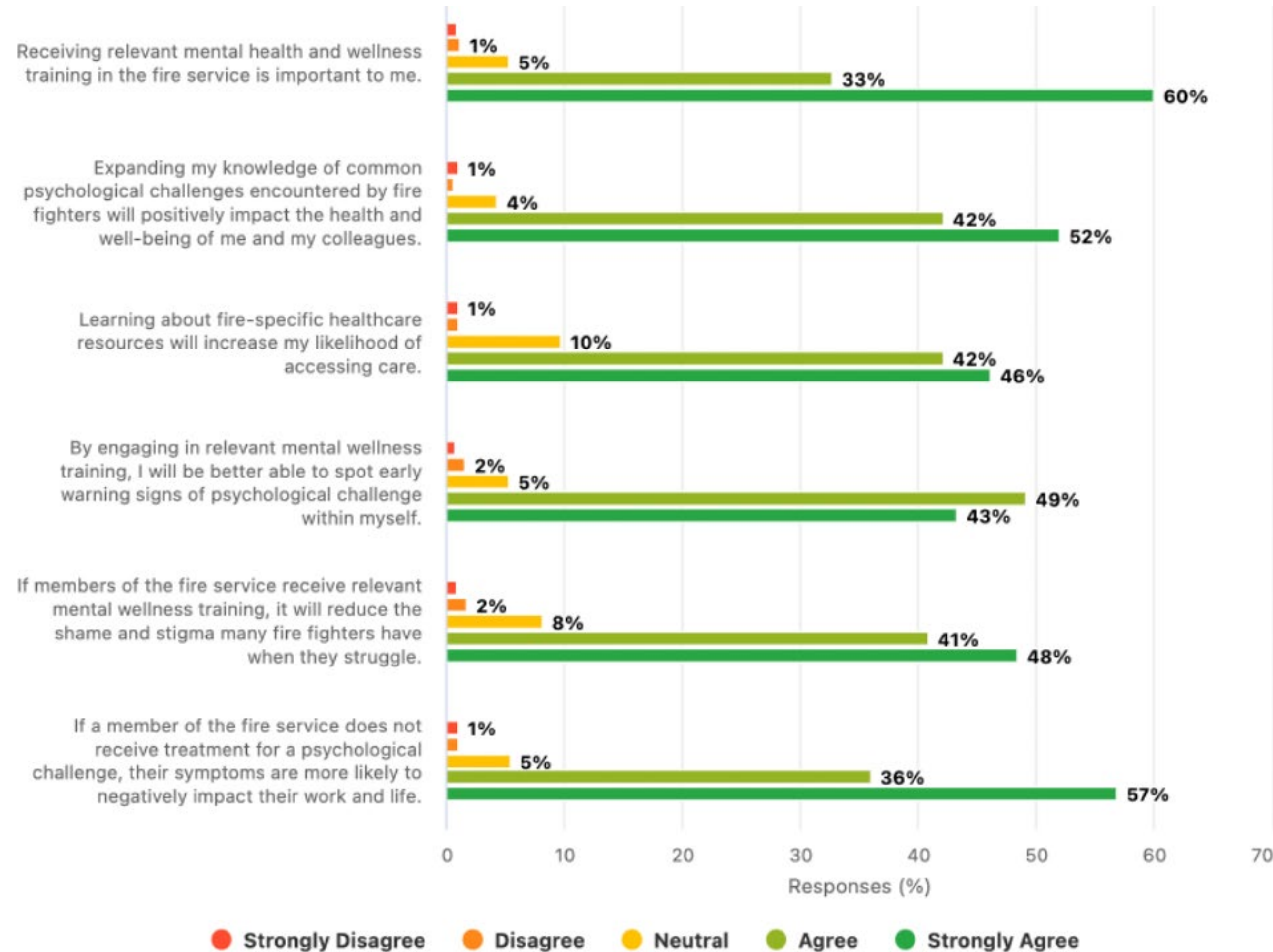


# Demographic Breakdown of the BC Fire Service



# Fire Fighter Mental Wellness Survey

When asked about welcoming mental wellness training in the fire service





# Over 90%

Think operating status quo will  
continue to negatively impact the  
mental health of struggling individuals.

89%

Report familiarity with emerging  
mental health terminology.



59%

Would **consider** accessing mental  
healthcare **after** experiencing a  
significant setback.

43%

Of senior administrators  
would access care in times of need.

## **Key Finding (2023):**

Junior members, peer support and fire administrators are the least likely demographics within the fire service to reach out in times of need.





**Dr. Duncan Shields**

**Co-founder of The  
Fire Fighter  
Resiliency Program©**





# Developing a Scalable Mental Health Program

## Evidence-Informed







# BC Fire Fighter & Wildfire Occupational Awareness Training - Year 2

## Discussion Guide



### Instructions:

The Crew Discussion Guide is designed to assist you and your colleagues in understanding the key concepts covered in each module of the Occupational Awareness Training Program. This guide is intended to stimulate a group discussion and enhance the key learning outcomes of each module.

If you have a Peer Support or CISM Team and there is a team member available, we encourage them to lead the group discussion outlined in the following pages.

### BC Fire Fighter Resources

Below is a list of available resources for BC Fire Fighters. If you require immediate care, call 911.

1. BCPFFA: [www.bcpffa.net/resources-list](http://www.bcpffa.net/resources-list)
2. WorkSafeBC Critical Incident Response: 1-888-922-3700
3. First Responder Health: [www.firstresponderhealth.org](http://www.firstresponderhealth.org)
4. Crisis Intervention & Suicide Prevention Centre of BC: 604-872-3311
5. Fraser Health Crisis Line (open 24 hours): 1-877-829-7444
6. 1-800-SUICIDE: 1-800-784-2433

### BC Wildfire Resources

1. Employee and Family Assistance (Provided through TELUS Health): 1-800-655-5004
2. Critical Incident Stress Management: 1-800-661-2476
3. BCWS Safe Reporting Line: 1-855-500-6609



# Reducing Psychological Injuries

## Program Objectives

- Mobilize skills that encourage symptom detection and early access to care
- Provide consistent messaging and education for all fire service members
- Enhanced support for injured workers who receive relevant education that lessen return to work barriers
- Reduced stigma across organizations by sharing research and practices that normalize psychological injury

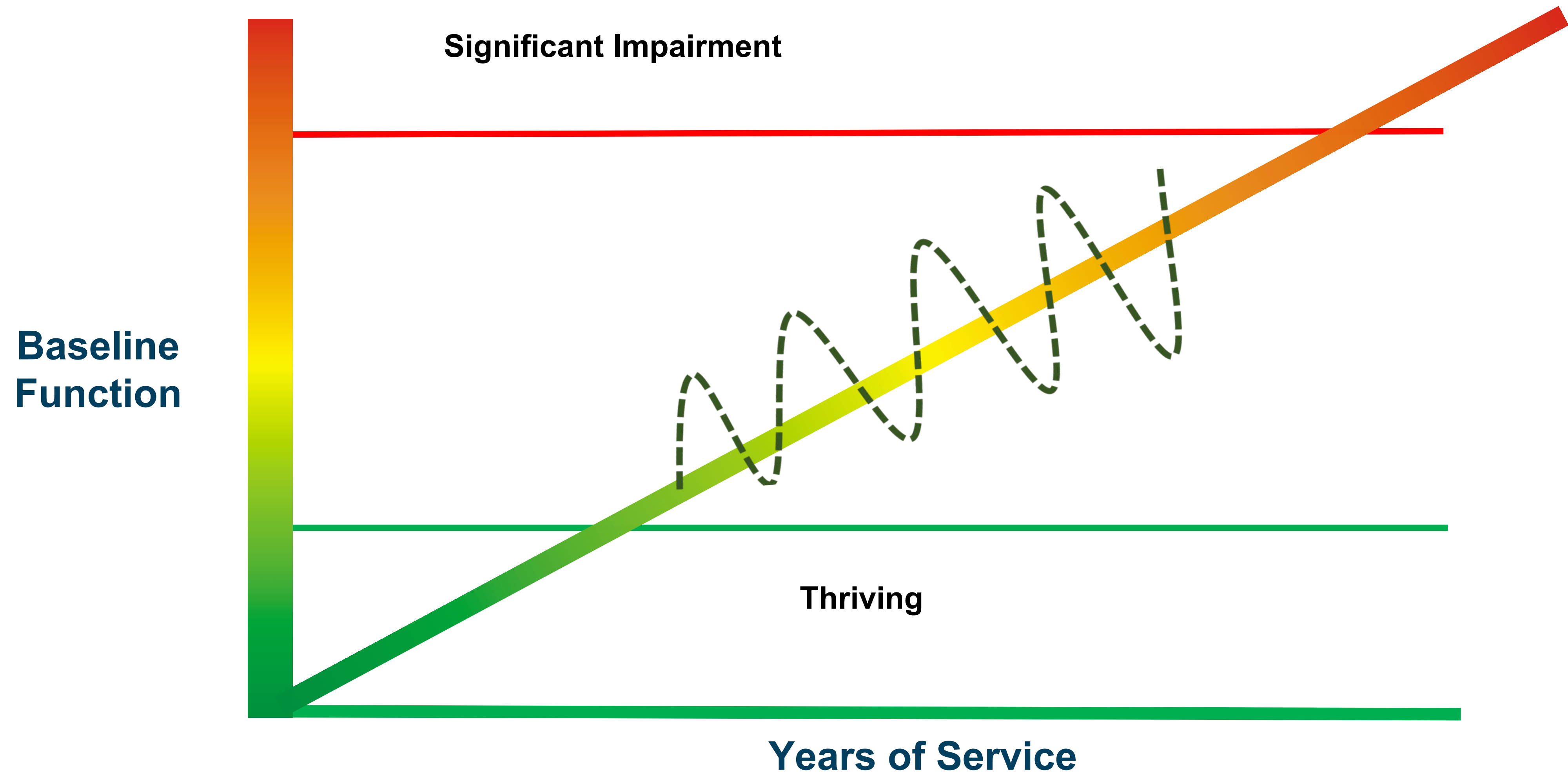
Knowledge Translation

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34.1% of Fire Fighters

# Career Span

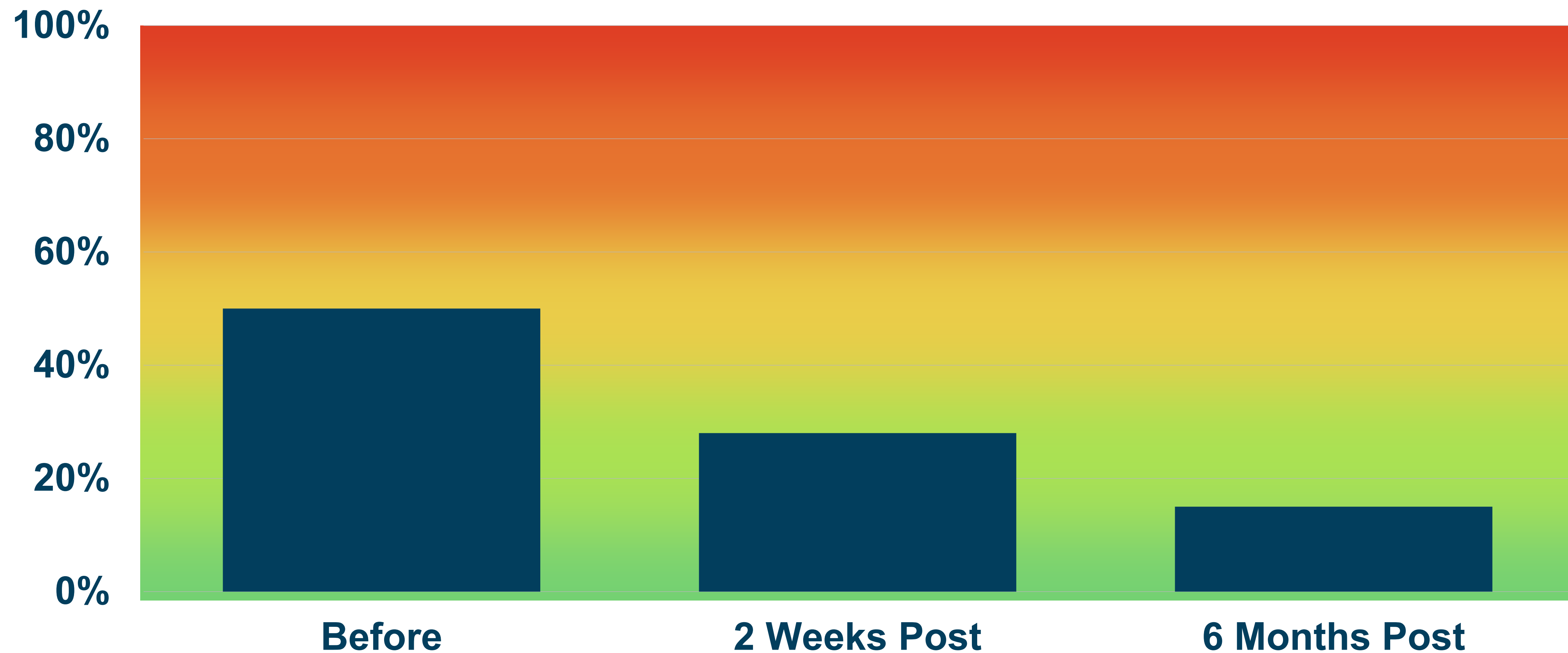
## The Evolution of a Psychological Stress Injury





# Therapy is Effective for Treating Trauma

## Data Summary on BC Fire Fighters (PTSD)



# Beta Test Prior to Launch - Findings

93% of Beta test group reported  
that this program provides fire fighters  
and their crew the knowledge  
and tools to look after themselves  
and each other better.



“Thank you for the opportunity to review this course, it exceeded my expectations and I feel confident it will have a profound impact on the first responder community.”

“This program will save lives.”

“Great video series, it will change lives.”

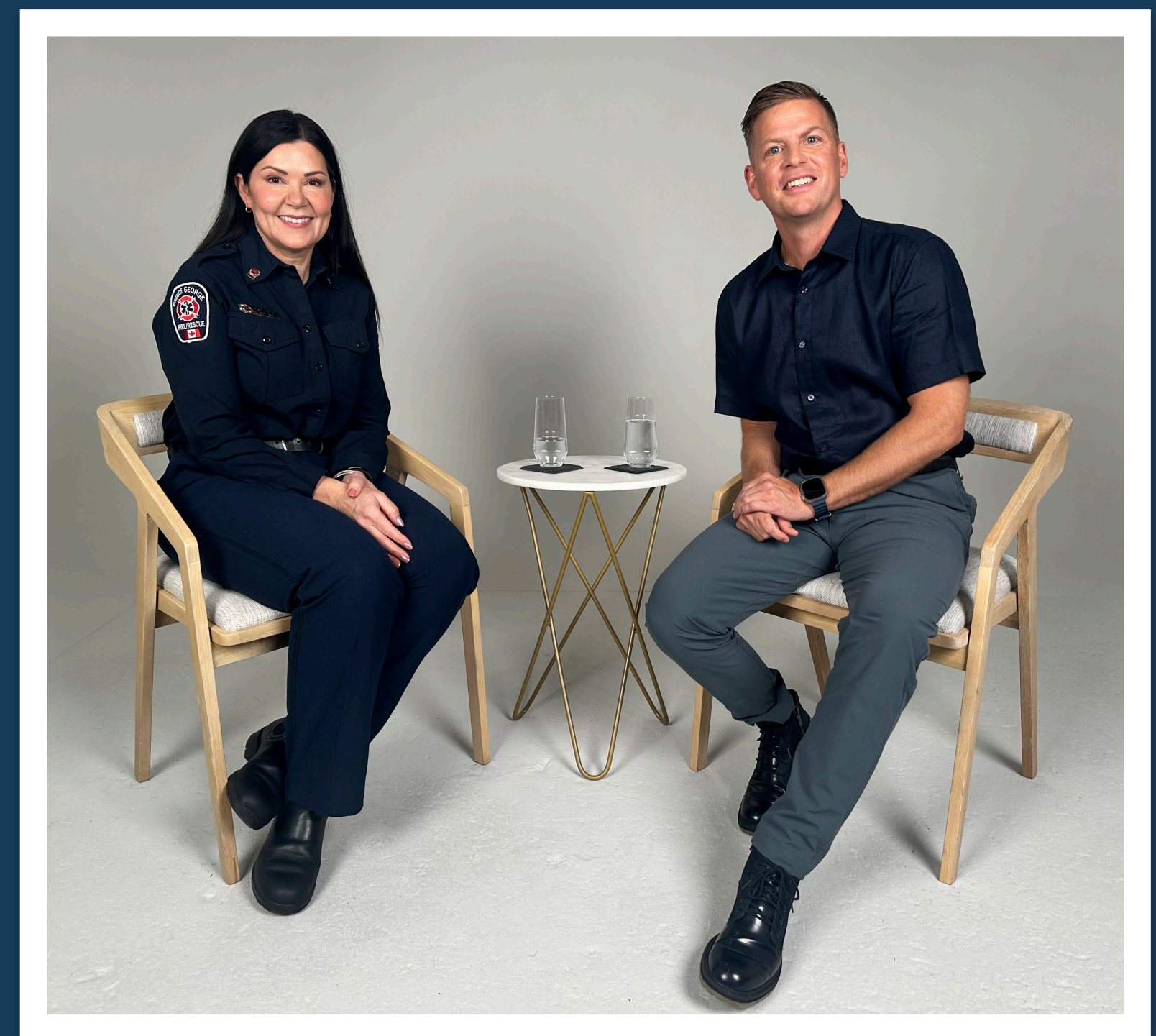
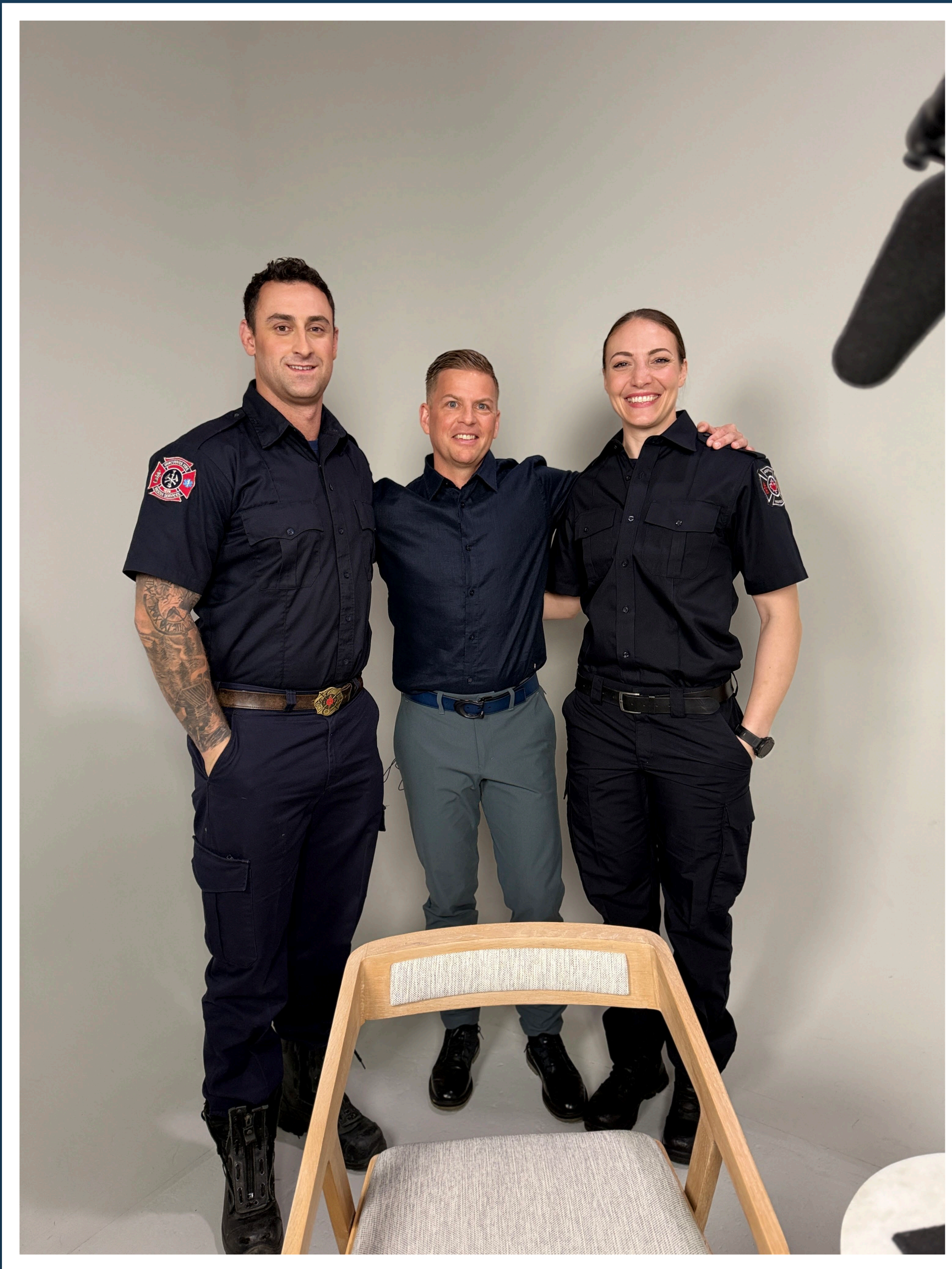
“The entire program was excellent. Every module was relevant and the videos really hit home. I can't wait for the rest of the members to receive this valuable training. Thank you.”

# Occupational Awareness Training

## Program Highlights

- 3 year program, progressive modules
- Over 10,000 enrolments in BC
- 24 modules (Additional 8 in post-production)
- 1 module/month, viewed as a company/crew
- Several guided breathing exercises and various self-regulation tools







# Closing Comments

