

## From Striving to Thriving: Resilience for the Forensic Scientist

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Although the effects of vicarious and direct trauma have been studied for decades within the criminal justice and law professions, the mental health of forensic scientists has historically been overlooked. Despite rigorous preparation during our education to perform the technical aspects of our careers, there was most likely little to no discussion of how to mentally prepare ourselves for the images and stories we would be exposed to throughout our careers. Due to the lack of awareness surrounding this issue and the potential lack of organizational support, it's no surprise that forensic scientists have experienced burnout in some form. Fortunately, occupational stress and wellness in the forensic science field have gained much interest over the last several years, which has helped pave the way for organizational change and support.

By attending this workshop, we will begin to explore the possible effects on our mental health, discuss wellness practices that can be applied to our daily routines, and learn different forms of self-care that are meaningful to each participant. This workshop will also discuss ways in which the Michigan State Police has supported its employees and welcomes a conversation to share stories from other agencies.

Whether your work is performed solely in the lab or is a combination of the lab and scene response, the goal of this workshop is for all attendees to leave feeling empowered to establish the healthy boundaries needed to give way to a successful and rewarding career.