

Annex A – NATO RESILIENCE TRAINING FOR BASIC TRAINING



NATO RESILIENCE TRAINING FOR BASIC TRAINING

NATO RTG-203



Training Package Objectives

- Provide a realistic understanding of Basic Training stressors and what it means to be resilient
- Identify and practice fundamental skills to strengthen resilience/mental health
- Provide information about other sources of support and how to support others (being a “buddy”)

4



Training Exercise: Introductions

- What do you hope to get or achieve during your military service?
- What strengths or skills do you have that will help you succeed in basic training?

5



Training Exercise Discussion

- Why do you think we asked you about your strengths and skills?

Choose from:

- to waste our time
- to keep us awake
- less work for you if we do the talking
- to help us learn about each other's skills & strengths

Being mentally fit and healthy can help you reach your goals.

6



Module 1 Objectives

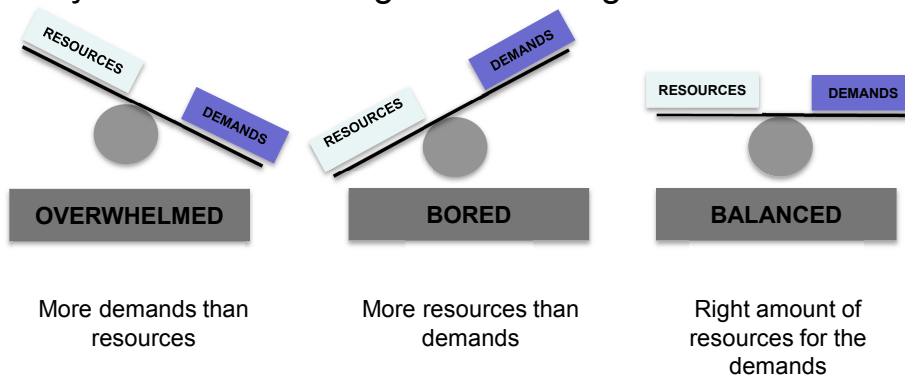
- **Learn what it means to be resilient in Basic Training**
 - Introduction to stress and resilience
 - Discuss realities of Basic Training
 - Introduction to the Mental Health Continuum
 - View a model for understanding how stress affects us

7



Module 1

- What is stress? How does stress affect you and your buddies during basic training?



8



Challenges in Basic Training

- What do you think will be challenging during basic training?
 - Making mistakes
 - Drill Instructor yelling at me
 - Being away from home
 - Not enough sleep
 - Lack of privacy
 - Learning new things/being tested
 - Physical training
 - Others who aren't motivated
 - Being embarrassed

9



The Realities of Basic Training



- You will not get much praise; however...
 - No news is good news
- You will have at least one area of weakness
- You will make mistakes
 - Mistakes will help you learn
- You will be “advised” of your mistakes

10



Basic Training

- *Basic training challenges can affect our mental health (both negatively and positively)*
- Basic Training is hard, yet most recruits complete the training
- Being physically and mentally fit will help you manage the stress and succeed

11



Mental Health & Fitness

- What is mental fitness?
 - How we think, feel and act
 - Determines how we handle stress, relate to others and make choices
- What are mental health problems?
 - Everyone feels worried, anxious, sad or stressed sometimes
 - These feelings become a problem when they do not go away and are severe enough to interfere with daily life.
 - Can make it hard to reach your basic goals: having friends, holding a job, or enjoying your life.

12

Mental Health Continuum


- By being aware of where you are on the mental health continuum, you can know when to do something to move you towards optimal mental fitness

13

Mental Health Continuum


Optimal Mental Fitness	Healthy and Resilient	Common Stress Reactions	Problematic Stress Reactions (prolonged, pervasive)	Significant Stress Reactions (interferes with functioning)
THOUGHTS				
Realistic optimism Optimal use of mental skills Focused	Positive attitude Good concentration Mentally in control	Poor attitude /Unmotivated Procrastination Forgetful Critical Some intrusive thoughts	Negative attitude Poor concentration/decisions Many intrusive thoughts	Overt negative attitude Insubordination Can't concentrate Disruptive intrusive thoughts
EMOTIONS				
Positive mood Patient Good sense of humour	Normal mood fluctuations Calm & takes things in stride Some humour	Irritable/Impatient Nervous/Worried Sadness/Stressed Withdrawn Inappropriate sarcasm	Anger Anxiety/Fearful Sad/Hopeless	Intense anger / aggression Intense anxiety/panic Depressed/Suicidal thoughts
PHYSICAL REACTIONS/BEHAVIOUR				
Peak performance Engaging in healthy habits Good sleep	Functioning well Avoiding unhealthy habits Few sleep problems	Some problems in work performance Some unhealthy habits Trouble sleeping Nightmares	Poor performance Unhealthy habits Disturbed sleep Recurrent nightmares Obstinate (overtly stubborn/slow behaviour)	Can't perform duties or control behaviour Destructive habits/ risk-taking Sleeping too much or too little Night terrors

14

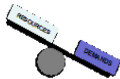


Mental Health Continuum Concepts


Optimal Mental Fitness	Healthy and Resilient	Common Stress Reactions	Problematic Stress Reactions	Significant Stress Reactions
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- People can move across zones and can have reactions in multiple zones at the same time
 - Stress reactions are often temporary
 - Pay attention when stress reactions interfere with functioning
- What typical reaction signals stress?
 - What are **your** indicators that you have more demands than resources, and may have moved into the yellow?
 - What reactions are easy to observe in others?
 - What reactions might be more difficult to observe?




15



Examples of Identifying the Reaction Zone


Optimal Mental Fitness	Healthy and Resilient	Common Stress Reactions	Problematic Stress Reactions	Significant Stress Reactions
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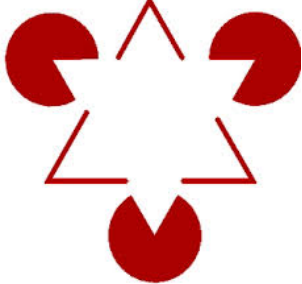
1. “Thinking about home all the time, thinking ‘why am I doing this?’ being unmotivated and being disappointed in myself because of that.”
2. “Talking too much, making jokes in class.”
3. “Physical symptoms such as a stomach ache in anticipation; difficulty sleeping; no performance indications, some difficulty during bad days as no time alone.”
4. “Challenging. Fulfilling when challenges are met.”

Quotes from NATO Basic Training Survey, 2010


16



Mental '*Filters*'



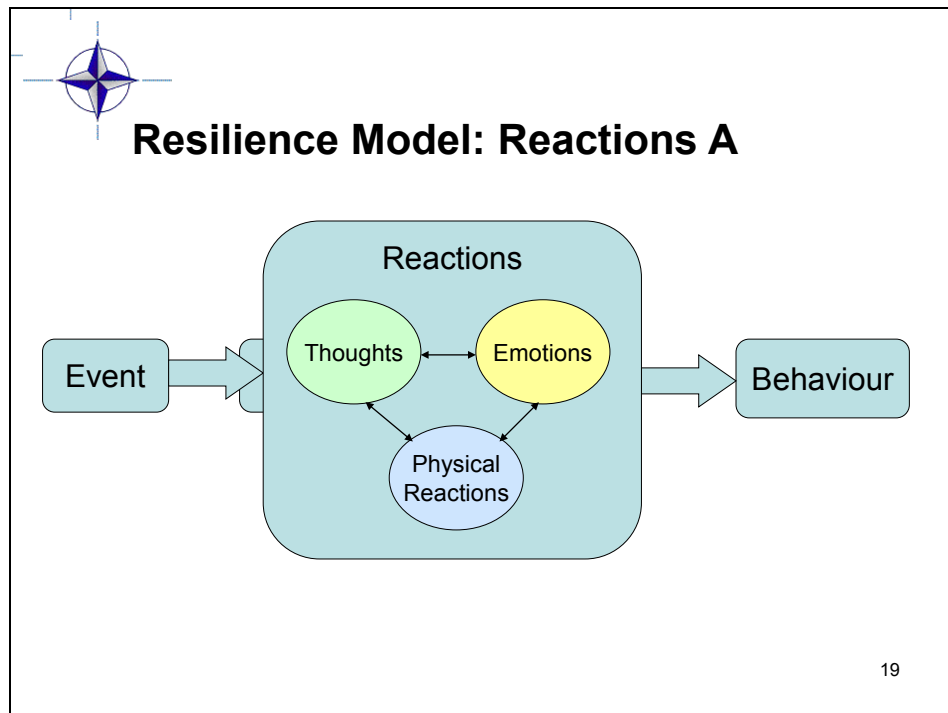
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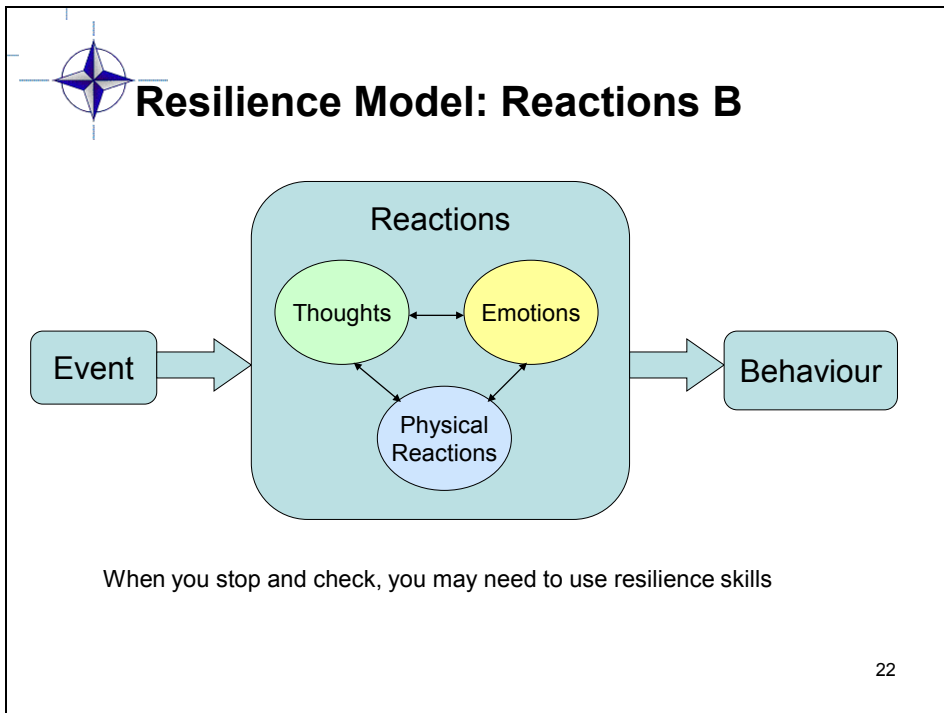
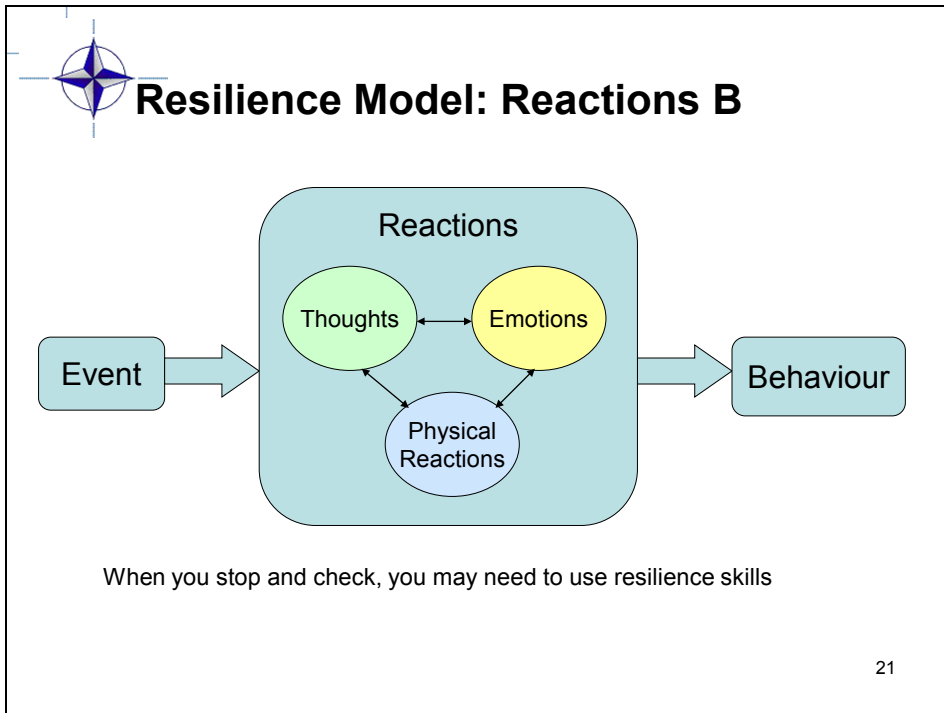
What are Resilience Skills?

- Resilience is the ability to grow and thrive in the face of challenges and bounce back from adversity
- You are already resilient and basic training can help you be more resilient
- Resilience skills can be trained and enhanced
- Resilience skills can help you adjust your reactions and move you toward your goals

18



- 
- ### Stop and Check
- Sometimes your behaviour gets you where you want to go & sometimes it doesn't
 - “Stop and check” your reactions by asking:
 - Is the reaction appropriate or helpful?
 - Is it interfering with performance?
 - Is it helping you reach your goal(s)?
 - If you are not sure, ask a buddy
- 20





Module 1 Summary

- Realities of Basic Training
- Mental Health Continuum
- Resilience Skills and the Resilience Model
- The next 2 sessions will focus on building on your resilience skills

23



Module 2 objectives

- **Learn fundamental skills to strengthen mental fitness during Basic Training**
 - Discuss coping skills, and how some previous methods of coping may need to be adapted to basic training environment
 - Learn, strengthen and practice 4 fundamental resilience skills to help manage/overcome Basic Training challenges
 - Acceptance and Control
 - Goal Setting
 - Self-Talk
 - Tactical Breathing

24



Module 2

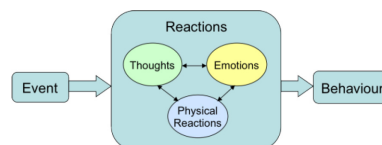
- How did you handle stress before you came to Basic Training?
- Which of these works during basic training?
- Are there new techniques that you are using since you arrived at Basic Training?
- We are going to discuss some specific resilience skills to improve your mental fitness

25



Targeted Resilience Skills

- **Acceptance and Control**
- Goal Setting
- Self-Talk
- Tactical Breathing



26



Acceptance

“Accept the unavoidable hassles [like] discipline, strain, etc. of military training.”

“Not worry about things, going with the flow, and accepting things.”

“Just accept what is happening, thinking about how much you want to be in the army, keeping instructors happy with your performance, talk with buddies”


Quotes from NATO Basic Training Survey, 2010

27



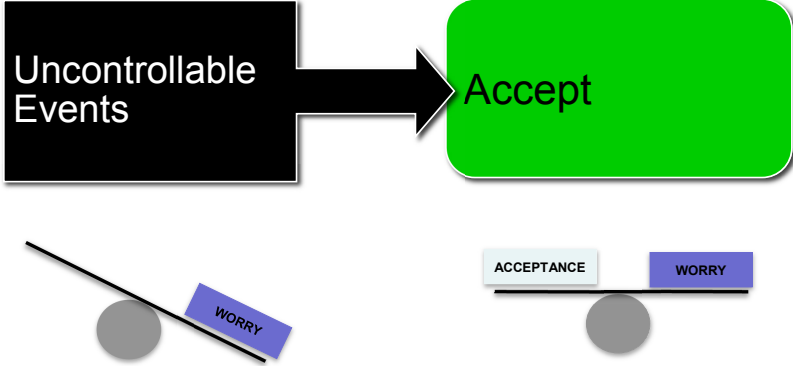
Training Exercise: What are some things you *CAN'T* control during Basic Training?

28




What you cannot Control

- For the events that you can't control, you need to learn to accept them.




29



Acceptance

- Notice your feelings
- Don't push feelings away
- Don't judge them
- Accept them and let them go like a wave



30



Acceptance of Reality



And you thought your job sucked


http://www.militaryphotos.net/forums/showthread.php?4679-****-happens

31



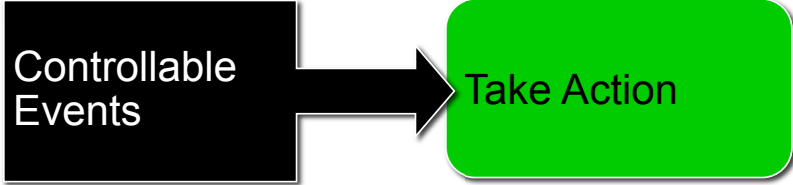
Training Exercise: What are some things you **CAN control during Basic Training?**

32




What You Control

- Identify what parts of the situation or event can be changed then take action to change those parts

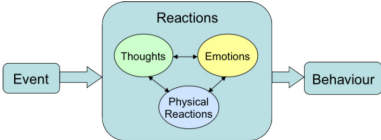


33



Targeted Resilience Skills

- Acceptance and Control
- **Goal Setting**
- Self-Talk
- Tactical Breathing



34



Goal Setting

“When I sign in the army I had my goal: to obtain my beret. During the training, I focused on my goal when it was hard. I accept that all what happened during the training was just a [necessary] way to obtain my beret. The other way to cope was to speak with my classmates. The cohesion was good and it help us.”

Quote from NATO Basic Training Survey, 2010

35



Goal Setting

- Goal setting is an effective resilience skill that has been shown to enhance performance
- How does goal setting work?
 - Goal setting produces motivation
 - Breaking goals into smaller steps:
 - Makes goals attainable and achievable
 - Produces day-to-day focus
 - Pursuing and achieving goals produces confidence

36



Goal Setting

- Two types of goals:
 - Primary or outcome goals (the 'Big goal')
 - Intermediate or process goals
- Goals work best when they are
 - Written down
 - Reviewed daily
 - Posted for others to see or shared with others.



37



SMART Goal Setting



- **S** Specific
- **M** Measurable
- **A** Attainable
- **R** Relevant
- **T** Time-bound

38



Goal Setting Example

- **Primary Goal:** To pass the final Physical Fitness test 8 weeks from now
- **Intermediate (“chunked”) Goal:** I will be able to complete 20 push ups in 6 weeks.
- **Steps:**
 1. I will read the online material that provides the instruction to the proper technique required to do the push ups for the Physical test.
 2. I will make an appointment with a personal fitness trainer at the gym in week two to learn what core and upper body exercises will improve my performance.
 3. I will do 10 push ups each day before I go to sleep for one week.
 4. I will increase the push ups to 15 by week three.
 5. I will increase the push ups to 20 by week five.
- **Is it SMART?**
 - **Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Bound**

39



Training Exercise: Goal Setting



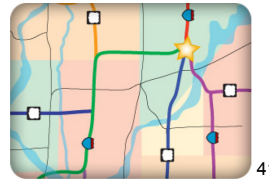
- Make your goal SMART
- Create two SMART intermediate (“chunked”) goals
- For one of the intermediate goals, come up with three steps

40



Training Exercise: Discussion

- How difficult was coming up with intermediate goals? What made it difficult/easy?
 - Recognize steps can also have sub-steps – how specific depends on what works for you
 - You have a history of achieving goals
- When should you use this resilience skill?
- Writing them down
 - Creates a map for achievement
 - Reinforces you with success
 - Keeps you focused



Training Exercise: Goal Setting

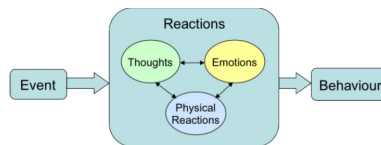
- What is your goal in the military?
Write down your goal

42



Targeted Resilience Skills

- Acceptance and Control
- Goal Setting
- **Self-Talk**
- Tactical Breathing



43



Self-talk

- What we say to ourselves (*self-talk*) can make the difference between success and failure
- Sometimes we tell ourselves that we can't do things – this may stop us from even trying



44



Self-Talk



- Focusing on the task at hand and relying on your training will help you to achieve optimal performance
- Recognize thoughts that interfere with performance (“This is so hard”) and replace them
- Talk yourself through it; for example, you can say to yourself ...
 - ‘Focus’
 - ‘I’m trained to do this’
 - ‘I can do this’
 - ‘Just do it’

45



Self-talk: Discussion

- Do you have to talk out loud for it to work?
- How does positive self-talk differ from negative self-talk? What impact do each of these have on reaching your goals?
- When might you use self-talk?
- How might you end up feeling and acting if you use positive self-talk?

46



Example

- You're late for formation and end up getting your squad in trouble.

- What negative self-talk might you have?
 - *"I'm an idiot, I let my buddies down"*
 - *"I always screw up"*
 - *"They're all going to hate me"*
 - *"I'm not going to graduate"*

- Are those thoughts helpful?

- How might you end up feeling?
- How might this affect your behaviour?

47



Helpful Self-Talk

- What might you say to yourself that would be helpful?
 - *"I'm going to learn from that mistake"*
 - *"One mistake doesn't make me a loser/bad person"*
 - *"I won't do that again; I've learned my lesson"*
 - *"Now other Soldiers might not make that mistake"*
 - *"If that's the worst thing I do, I'm doing pretty well"*
 - *"Everyone messes up; it's not the end of the world; I'll still graduate"*

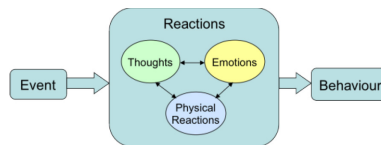
- How might you end up feeling?
- How might this affect your behaviour?

48



Targeted Resilience Skills

- Acceptance and Control
- Goal Setting
- Self-Talk
- **Tactical Breathing**



49



Tactical Breathing



<http://www.combatcamera.forces.gc.ca>

- Delivers oxygen and fuel (glucose) to the brain
- Calms the body and mind
- Reduces anxiety
- Improves performance

50



Tactical Breathing

- What basic training events might cause service members to feel anxious?

51



Tactical Breathing

- Take a normal breath, hold, and count to 5
- Breathe out and as you do focus on the feeling of relaxation
- Breathe in and out slowly through your nose in 10-second cycles
 - “in -2-3-4-5, out -2-3-4-5”
- Repeat until feelings of anxiety are gone

52



Optional Training Exercise: Tactical Breathing

- Take your pulse
- Hyperventilate
- Check your pulse
- Conduct controlled breathing exercise
- Check your pulse



53



Optional Training Exercise: Discussion

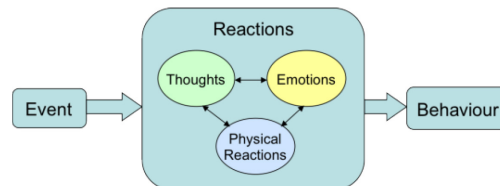
- How many had an increase in pulse?
- How many had a decrease in pulse?
- Was it difficult to use this technique?
- How could you help a buddy with this technique?

54



Module 2 Summary

- What were the 4 skills we just learned?
- When would you use them?



55



Module 3 objectives

- **Apply skills to strengthen mental fitness and stay mentally healthy during Basic Training**
 - Learn other methods of coping, such as teamwork and buddy support
 - Identify reactions along Mental Health continuum in self and others
 - Identify other resources and sources of support
 - Apply what you have learned to some vignettes/scenarios

56



Module 3

- What else can you do to help yourself and your buddies succeed in basic training?
- Teamwork
- How to help a buddy
- Identifying reactions
- Resources



57



Teamwork

“My ability to work in a team improved, and I learned that it's possible to achieve everything in a team.”

NATO Basic Training Survey



58



Why is Teamwork Important?

- Service members working together can achieve more than service members working individually
- When service members work in teams, they can apply their different strengths to achieve the mission



59



Applications of Teamwork

- Physical tasks – helping each other complete training events like the confidence course
- Mental tasks – helping each other adjust to the military environment; maintaining control over stress and achieving optimal performance

60



Discussion: Being a Buddy

- What does it mean to be a buddy?

- How do you show you are a buddy...
 - When things are going well?
 - When your buddy is stressed?

“I used the battle buddy system, received a lot of advice, shared common difficulties, and talked to others.”

Quote from NATO Basic Training Survey, 2010

61



Active Encouragement

- When something good happens to your buddy, how do you respond?
- Example:
 - A buddy in your unit has been struggling on PT but did well on his physical fitness test
- What are things a buddy could say?
 - Show interest and ask questions about the experience, leaving the person feeling understood and appreciated

62



Training Exercise: Active Encouragement

- Example: Pick a positive event and as a buddy/team, practice active encouragement


63



When your buddy is stressed

- What would you do if a buddy tells you they are stressed?
- Don't judge, don't give advice unless asked, don't have to have solutions, and don't make it about yourself
 - Avoid "you should" statements
 - Listen attentively
 - Acknowledge feelings
 - Ask questions
 - Be genuine (real)


64



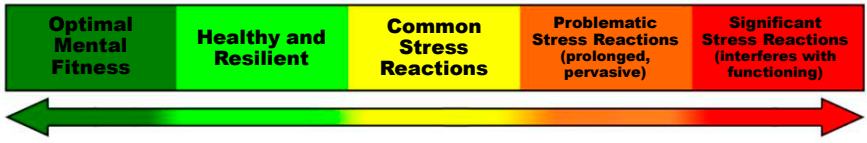
How do I look after my buddies who may be struggling?

- In order to be able to look after your buddies, you need to know what to look out for

65



Identifying Reactions



Optimal Mental Fitness	Healthy and Resilient	Common Stress Reactions	Problematic Stress Reactions (prolonged, pervasive)	Significant Stress Reactions (interferes with functioning)
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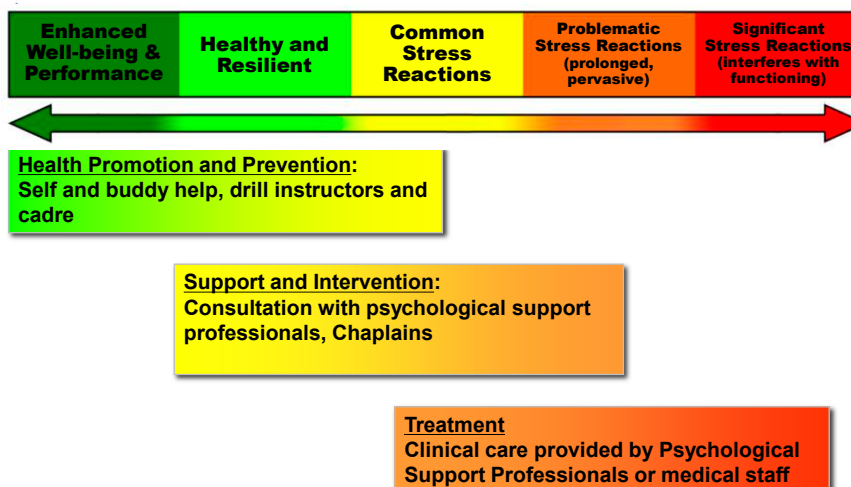
When Your Buddy Needs More Help Than You Can Give Him/Her

- What happens if your Buddy needs more help that you can give?
 - Suggest other sources of support as appropriate

67



Resources



68



Common Mental Health Care Questions

- Do I have to go?
- Will it impact my career?
- Who will know what I say?
- How long will it take?
- Will I have to take medication?
- Can I still deploy?
- Is it normal to have mental health concerns?
- What will they do to me?

69



Treatment

- What do Mental Health Providers Do?

Snapshots at jasonlove.com



<http://sg33.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/00455-daily-cartoons-psychology-screw.gif>

"But how does it feel to misunderstand how you might think about not knowing what to believe?"

70



What Mental Health Care Provides

- Education
- Skill building
- Goal setting
- Visualization
- Challenging Thoughts (self talk)
- Anxiety management (breathing)
- In-depth strategies tailored to solving the specific problem a service member may be experiencing



71



Training Exercise: Putting It All Together

- The following scenarios are real-world examples from Service Members going through Basic Training
- Read the scenario and identify:
 - Where is the Service Member on the continuum?
 - Is their behaviour helping them achieve their goals?
 - What are the things that they can't control in the scenarios and what things can they control?
 - What kinds of resilience skills are they using?
 - How you would support them as a buddy?

72



Scenario: Heated Argument

Last night there was a heated argument before the CO inspection this morning and wasted valuable time for us to prepare for the inspection. One of the guys blames the entire team - spent time spinning about it. Eventually one guy took the other guy away and ended it. Lasted a few hours. It is typical to get into heated fights from time to time. I felt angry - yelled a bit - put energy into getting ready and eventually cracked jokes with the guys. I was disappointed with myself for getting so mad - blame it on lack of sleep - I wish I didn't get so mad. Next time use humour.

73

Quote from NATO Basic Training Survey, 2010



Scenario: Phone Call

On Sunday of week 2, I was about to get on the phone for a half hour. I had to leave the line several times for uniform issues. When I finally made it through the line, there was only 8 mins left. I was frustrated, I cried the entire call and was not able to speak to my fiancé. The Drill Sergeant said he would wait for me to quit. This was the worst day of Basic Training. I was stressed for a couple days afterwards. I talked with my battle buddy and cried to help get me through it.

74

Quotes from NATO Basic Training Survey, 2010



Scenario: PT Problems

Taking the PT Test, I was not used to endurance running versus sprints for basketball. Stress began three or four days before the PT Test and lasted until the PT Test was over. To cope, I looked at what I was eating, worked out, was thinking I would pass, and used self talk. I passed on the third attempt.

Quotes from NATO Basic Training Survey, 2010

75



Scenario: Field Exercise

During a three-day tactical field exercise without showers, sleep, or eating well. Drill Sergeant is yelling and expecting the best performance from everyone. Going through these tough times gave me a sense of accomplishment the next day. During the last two days it was tough but positive thoughts got me through.

Quotes from NATO Basic Training Survey, 2010

76



Scenario: Road March

16K road march, I was pretty beat up at midnight second break, my feet were hurting, the demands of being out all week, night infiltration, left me worn out and stressed. The stress picked up 10 min into the march. I thought about my parents and it would be over in a week and finished strong

Quotes from NATO Basic Training Survey, 2010

77



Discussion of Scenarios

78



Take-Away

- Name one take-away point from this training

79



Thank You and Good Luck



80

