

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

First Responder Interactive Resilience and Mental Strength Training (F.I.R.S.T):
Improving Mental Performance for First Responders

A project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of Master of Science in Kinesiology

By
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Dedication

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Abstract

First Responder Interactive Resilience and Mental Strength Training (F.I.R.S.T): Improving Mental Performance for First Responders

By

Robert Graves

Master of Science in Kinesiology

This project focuses on the creation of the First Responder Interactive Resilience & Mental Strength Training (F.I.R.S.T) program; a mental training program influenced by the U.S Army's Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness (CSF2) and Sapper-Athlete Warrior (SAW) programs (developed to help train soldiers to be more efficient in their personal and professional lives). The focus of F.I.R.S.T is to teach basic and advanced mental skills that will help encourage mental toughness and resiliency, in order to give first responders the proper tools to perform at their peak levels. This paper covers the methodology of the process behind creating the F.I.R.S.T program, and covers research topics revolving around mental toughness, motivation, goal setting, focus, emotions, communication, and resiliency.

Keywords: Mental Training, First Responder, Peak Performance, Sport Psychology, Resilience

Introduction

History & Context

During these times of heightened animosity against our men and women in law enforcement, it is necessary to take a step back in order to assess what we can do to in the performance psychology field to help both the police behind the badge as well as the citizens they serve. Both civilian and police deaths have hit peak levels, leaving approximately 93% of our first responders more concerned about their lives while on duty (cite behind the badge). Officers are even expressing that they are more reluctant to approach suspicious individuals on the street. This overwhelming fear has affected the job performance of the individuals that we as citizens rely on to keep us safe. If the heroes are afraid, who do we call on for protection? This project will focus on the creation of the First Responder Interactive Resilience and Mental Strength Training (F.I.R.S.T); a course developed to give first responders the mental skills and ability to cope with the high stress demands as well as their personal needs, which comes with the badge.

It is no secret that the men and women behind the badge who serve the citizens of the United States have been under a very large spotlight due to the last few years of police brutality and large number of very-public officer related deaths reported on by the media (Hobson, 2016). It seems like America has not had much time to breathe between continuous officer related deaths and social injustices since the murder of Trayvon Martin in 2012 (Botelho, 2012, May 23). Unfortunately, this leads to heightened emotions, which leads to protest and even retaliation against the men and women who have vowed “To Protect and Serve” (CBS, 2016, July 11; Dorobek, 1963). In fact, during the years following Trayvon’s death, many more very public

unarmed deaths have enraged citizens, and has torn America apart as it pertains to choosing sides of law or the land (T. Williams & Wines, 2016).

To give some reference of how dire the situation is in America at the time, this next section revisits a few of the high profile murders within the last few years. Murders like Eric Garner's, who was approached by police and placed in a chokehold for illegally selling cigarettes; while he mouthed "I can't breathe" eleven times before his death (R. Sanchez & Prokupecz, 2014). Michael Brown was shot dead by an officer in Ferguson, Missouri; he was 18-years-old and unarmed (L. Buchanan et al., 2014, November 28). A 17-year-old named Laquan McDonald, was shot 16 times by a single officer (Andone & Almasy, 2017, November 28). Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old playing with a toy gun at a park, was shot to death immediately as officers exited the car (Fortin & Bromwich, 2017, May 30). After being pulled over for a broken brake light, 50-year-old Walter Scott was shot eight times as he ran from the cops on foot (Yan, Shah, & Grinberg, 2017). Then there was Freddie Gray, a 25-year old arrested for having an illegal switchblade; he died a week later after suffering a spinal cord injury he endured while in police custody (BBC, 2016). A woman named Sandra Bland was threatened with a tazer and arrested after being pulled over for failing to use her turn signal to switch lanes; she was found hanging from her jail cell after an alleged suicide (Cevallos, 2015). Selling CDs outside of a liquor store, Alton Sterling was shot while pinned down on the ground by two officers (Balko, 2016, November 28). Finally, there was Philando Castile, who was pulled over for a broken taillight; the aftermath was streamed directly to *Facebook Live* by his girlfriend in the passenger seat—after he was shot to death (Croft, 2017, November 28). These nine murders have added to the growth of the already prevalent racial divide, as well as hatred and fear against the very

individuals who put their lives on the line each day and have to make the decision on whether or not draw their weapons out and pull the trigger.

Colin Kaepernick, the former quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers, began to publically protest police brutality by kneeling on the sideline prior to the beginning of games during the National Anthem (Waldron, 2017). A year following his initial kneel on August 14th, 2016, there were 978* individuals shot and killed by police officers. And although fatal shootings of unarmed individuals have followed a declining trend over the last two years, nationally, police have shot and killed 492* individuals in the first six months of 2017 alone (Sullivan, Thebault, Tate, & Jenkins, 2017).

High profile shootings such as the nine mentioned above have opened the eyes of citizens and has invited a number of researchers to look deeper into the numbers of officer-related deaths. Sites such as *The Guardian*, known for its unbiased journalism, have started to take deeper looks into the numbers of individuals fatally shot by police officers. *The Guardian* has researched every fatal shooting as far back as January 1st, 2015, and has given a face to as many of the 2239* individuals who have died during a police altercation on its online database (Swaine, Laughland, Lartey, & McCarthy, 2017). However, in fairness to our police officers, the 2239* individuals who lost their lives were not all *innocent* unarmed individuals.

Other institutions such as Stanford University, have combined efforts from multiple university programs to create *The Stanford Open Policing Project* (Corbett-Davies et al., 2017), to help the individuals who have the ability to change policy, create possible solutions to improve police relationships with the communities they serve (T. Sanchez, 2017). This Stanford team has examined the data they have collected from over 130 million traffic stops beginning in

*These numbers are based off of the deaths police have reported. Protected by a FBI voluntary program, law enforcement agencies may or may not chose to submit their annual count of "justifiable homicides," defined as "the killing of a felon in the line of duty." (Swaine, Laughland, Lartey & McCarthy, 2017a)

2015, and has shown statistical correlation between traffic stops and racial biases such as higher “stop rates,” and “search rates” against minorities compared to their “white” counterparts.

There is a cultural feeling that the individuals who have had the privilege of not knowing the dark side of the law, are now finally being exposed to their truths (McLaughlin, 2015). The communities that have suffered the most from the skewed police protection feel as if their narrative of generation’s worth of oppression and ill treatment is finally getting the attention that it warrants. However, that same information giving validation to those communities has also created an unjust social blanket against *all* officers who uphold the law; stating that police officers are inhumane, ethnocentric tyrants with guns on their hips—ready to kill anyone who speaks up for their rights (Perrott & Taylor, 1994).

More than ever, an increasing amount of videos of outspoken citizens standing up to police officers are gaining a lot of attention (or “going viral”) on popular streaming social media sites such as YouTube, Facebook, and websites like www.worldstarhiphop.com (YouTube, 2018). The problem with this is, whether or not the social justice warriors in these viral videos are right or wrong in the moments prior to what we as a society see, viewers see the aftermath of an already emotionally heightened situation; which sometimes looks like police brutality. The act of “standing up to the man” creates the space for any other individual that shares the same emotions and attitude of the creators of the viral videos, to *also* stand up for themselves and become disorderly with the police—even if they may be in the wrong (Wolfe, 2015). Although the growing number of videos may very well be a peek into what is happening daily in many communities, the fact is that there are men and women who wake up every morning with the intention to uphold the oath that they have taken, “To Protect and Serve” (Dorobek, 1963).

Answering to the public after four citizens were fatally shot, Tulsa Police Chief Chuck Jordan went on record stating, "...we're a reflection of the society we live in" (Sullivan et al., 2017). Where one may hear that statement and be taken back on how insensitive an individual could be on the deaths of citizens that were supposed be protected and served, the hard truth for police officers is that every street and traffic stop absolutely should be treated as a possible hostile situation, until the very minute the interaction has been complete.

In 2011, 62.9 million Americans (26% of the population) had at least one encounter with a police officer throughout the year (Langton & Durose, 2013, September 24). That breaks down to show that there are approximately 175,000 police-to-civilian encounters daily. As the social uproar of protests and violence against police continues to grow, we have seen increases in assault cases against police officers. 51,548 officers were assaulted by the citizens they vow to protect in 2015 (Groeninger, 2017c). Some of those attacks are deliberate and violent, such as ambush style attacks taking 21 police officer lives over the course of the year—the highest in two decades (Groeninger, 2017a).

At the end of 2016, the 20,789th name of an officer killed in the line of duty, was etched into the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial located in Washington, DC, which honors fallen officers dating back to 1791. In 2016 alone, there were 143 nationwide law enforcement officer fatalities; 61 of those officers were shot and killed (Groeninger, 2017a). The *2017 Mid-Year Law Enforcement Officers Fatalities Report* (2017b) reports that as of June 30th, there have been 65 police officers that have lost their life in the line of duty. 23 of the 65 lost their lives to firearms, which is an increase from the previous two years.

As a society, we quickly learn the names of the citizens who suffer from police brutality, due to the high profile media attention that police brutality receives. However, away from the

spotlight, families of police officers also find themselves mourning and crying out for justice for their fallen heroes. Those like the family of Police Officer Jose Chavez, who lost his life as he was shot during a routine traffic stop in Hatch, New Mexico, by a man wanted for murder in Ohio (Groeninger, 2017a). Memphis, Tennessee PD's Police Officer Verdell Smith's family now mourns a hero, who pushed civilians out of the way of a car that struck him dead—driven by a suspect involved in a triple shooting (Groeninger, 2017a). Another family that mourns the loss of a loved one, is the family of Police Officer Ashley Guindon in Prince William County, VA, who was shot and killed while answering a call to investigate a domestic disturbance on her first day behind the badge (Groeninger, 2017a). These families also understand the pain that is attached to the tear in the fabric of society.

Now, as more of these issues arise in the public eye and violence against police officers increase, the attrition rate of law enforcement officers has taken a hit over the years (Koper, Maguire, Moore, & Huffer, 2001, p. 4). A national survey conducted by the *Pew Research Center* (2017) found that 86% of the police force agrees that the field work is harder today due to what is going on in the county, and 72% of them are now less willing to approach and confront a suspicious looking individual. 56% of the police officers that participated in this survey, say that the work they do has made them more callused. In 2001, research was published exploring the attrition and retention rates of the law enforcement agencies, therefore exploring the benefits of the Community Orientated Policing Services (COPS), which was the federal government's answer to place an additional 100,000 peace officers on the streets (Koper et al., 2001). Also noteworthy, with the “baby-boomers” moving swiftly into retirement, the urgency to get law enforcers on the streets was high-priority. The downside to this is, because of the COPS program allowing for a mass hiring period, the top-tier candidates were recruited immediately—

diluting the quality of the pool of recruits left for other law enforcement agencies to select from. That, combined with the imminent retirement of the baby-boomers, created pressure for some law enforcement agencies to lower their recruitment standards in order to fill positions in their force (Koper et al., 2001, p. 4).

Currently, there are approximately 900,000 sworn law enforcement officers (Groeninger, 2017c) which have sworn to protect and serve approximately 326,350,414 citizens (Census, 2017). These peace officers hold the daily burden to make appropriate judgment calls when faced with potential life or death situations; all while showing compassion and providing aide to those who are in need, even if they may not be the most qualified to do so.

Whether or not a civilian feels that a peace officer is qualified to make life-altering decisions on day one on the police force is not a determinant of whether or not an officer can serve their community. Society must trust that their peace officers are receiving the best quality training possible to do so. Departments like the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) have done their due diligence in training each officer to the same standard as the officers that have graduated from the academy before them. Each trainee goes through a minimum of a 664-hour training regiment, covering 42 basic courses such as *Laws of Arrest, Handling Disputes/Crowd Control, First Aid/CPR, Use of Force*, and other more culturally intertwined courses such as *People with Disabilities*, and *Cultural Diversity/Discrimination* ("Regular Basic Course Training Specifications," 2017). One area lacking in police officer training programs, similar to the LAPD's training program, is one that focuses on teaching and honing mental skills essential for making sound decisions at key moments that compliment the classroom, physical, and field training that the cadets receive.

Purpose of Project

I have a lot of respect for the men and women behind the badge and the responsibilities they hold as it pertains to the stressors of their daily duties, and it is unfortunate that even though the heroes behind the badge are individuals—they all share the same public image. I know that the majority of police officers that find themselves in the situations they do, have to fight against their natural responses that tap immediately into self-preservation mode (Henry, 1993; Henry & Wang, 1998; Iserson et al., 2008) in order to make the choices they do. As a 10-year Marine Corps veteran who has deployed to a combat zone myself, I understand the need of absolute mental clarity and an incredible ability to control one's physical and emotional state during a high intensity or even life-threatening situation. For this reason, after my attendance to the 2017 Association of Applied Sport Psychology conference where I learned that Sport Psychology Consultants (SPCs) have been preparing our troops for deployment to the war overseas by incorporating mental training into Army units, I probed to see if there were similar programs offered to the officers fighting the wars at home.

One primary question should be asked as it pertains to the preparation of training the police force tasked with patrolling the community; Can officers, and other first responders, benefit from a mental skills training program? Although correlating the war overseas with the war at home can turn into a debate even between individuals who have been overseas (Calderone, 2014; Lawrence & Kaste, 2016; Rizer, 2012; Sjursen, 2017)—it is still undeniable that there are similar types of stressors that are experienced by our first responders that patrol our streets, yet there is no formal resilience or mental toughness training for our law enforcement. When officers find themselves in a situation that requires mental clarity, focused attention,

and/or a relaxed demeanor in order to recall the training that they have received via the police academy training, there is room for improvement.

This project will focus on the creation of the *First Responder Interactive Resilience & Mental Strength Training (F.I.R.S.T)* program; a mental training program that not only the police force, but all first responders can incorporate into their organizational training programs in order to teach basic and advanced mental skills that will help responders effectively perform at their physical and mental peaks in stressful and potentially dangerous situations. Developing the F.I.R.S.T will run into a few challenges that should be taken into account as potential roadblocks to teaching a MST course to first responders.

One challenge is developing a program where the students will “buy-in” to the information they will be receiving, trusting that the information received adds value to their personal and professional lives. A second challenge will be “normalizing” mindfulness concepts, and talking about emotions with men and women who are professionals at being stoic. Finally, a different challenge will be figuring out how create a program that continually blends the information learned into new concepts, and drive the students to think about how to add value to their communities using the information learned throughout the course; because often the first responder is the catalyst of great generational change.

Literature Review

The term first responder is a label for any individual who runs toward the danger while others run from it (USFRA, 2018); and the term umbrellas (but is not limited to) professionals such as police, firefighters, military service members, emergency medical technicians (EMTs), doctors, state and county coordinators, park rangers, animal control, and even insurance

investigators. Essentially, any individual who has specialized training to respond first to accidents, natural disasters, and terrorist attacks are considered first responders (USFRA, 2018).

Even though there are a lot of roles that collectively create the category of “first responder,” throughout this project the term first responder will primarily focus on police officers and those who (because of their daily duties) are at high risk to develop mental health disorders such as posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety. Despite both military service members and police officers having been the focus of research on resilience and mental toughness in the past, the military (who is one of the largest employers of SPCs (AASP, 2018)) has created programs to help combat the before (Casey, 2011) and after effects of war (Meredith et al., 2011, p. 121); but there have been few programs implemented outside of research purposes for officers of the law.

In order to create a program focused toward teaching and incorporating the mental skills that help build mental toughness and cultivate resilience, the focus should be on what has been done in the field already as it pertains to the first responders as well as what is currently being employed by the United States Army. Although an individual who is well-versed in the sport and performance psychology field can most likely piece together the tools and techniques that were utilized during the implementations of some of the research, there are gaps of data that leave a lot of room for imagination on certain specifics of program details used in the research. Fortunately, the information that *is* provided throughout the research has been cultivated from a blend of mental training skills that are utilized in the sport and peak performance psychology culture. Combining the lessons learned from my personal military experience along with research covering mental toughness and resilience techniques incorporated into the researched programs, the literature review will cover the most relevant areas of focus that will best

contribute to creating better coping mechanisms for high stress situations as well as over-all well-being for first responders. The review begins with a background of what mental skills training is, and how it is effective to performance outside of sport.

A Background of Mental Skills Training

Mental Skills Training (also known as MST) is the cognitive foundational work that an individual practices, in order to create a mentally strong mind for peak performance (Driskell, Copper, & Moran, 1994); similar to working out in a gym, but specializes in building mental muscle. MST has been adopted and implemented in the athletic world in order to help train individuals to be able to compete at their peak under stressful conditions (Behncke, 2004).

Those who implement MST into their training programs, often correlate their success to being mentally tough (S. J. Bull, Shambrook, James, & Brooks, 2005; Connaughton, Wadey, Hanton, & Jones, 2008; Mostafa, 2015), which is an attribute that is also linked to resilience (Clough, Earle, & Sewell, 2002).

The primary purpose of MST is to minimize performance flaws and enhance a physical execution by learning to control the cognitive and somatic factors (Behncke, 2004) that a person has control over, such as rest and nutrition (Jimenez-Castuera, Cervello-Gimeno, Garcia-Calvo, Santos-Rosa, & Iglesias-Gallego, 2007), self-esteem and emotions (Feddes, Mann, & Doosje, 2015), self-preparation, communication (R. Kelly Crace & Hardy, 1997), body language, self-talk (J. Hardy, Hall, & Hardy, 2005), anxiety control (Khodayari, Saiiari, & Dehghani, 2011; Lanning & Hisanaga, 1983; Mahoney & Meyers, 1989), focus and clarity (Anshel & Wrisberg, 1988), etc. Focusing on learning to control these performance factors has become known as learning to “Control the Controllables” (S. Bull, 2006; Favero, 2013).

MST dates as far back to ancient teachings of meditation and deep focus trainings (Chai, 1991). In fact, mental training through mindful meditation and focused breathing exercises have been an integral and historical component of traditional martial arts practiced by Zen monks and Japanese Samurai (Herrigel, 1971). These past warriors believed that mindfulness is a versatile concept, that when mastered, enabled one to act with non-judgmental, non-reactive observation and description and absolute awareness (Lothes, Hakan, & Kassab, 2013). Embracing the warriors ethos, sport and performance psychology has adopted some of these ancient practices to help facilitate a new training platform for high-performance and elite level teams in order to gain advantage over competitors (Abernethy, 1999). As well as learning from past mindfulness masters, sport and performance psychology has also adopted practices from various psychological frameworks such as positive psychology (M. E. P. Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Singh, 2014), cognitive behavioral therapy (Beck, 1979; Ellis, 1962), growth mindset (Bishop-Kallmeyer & Lewis, 2017; Dweck, 2006; Yukelson & Rose, 2014), and psychology of consciousness (Arico, Fiala, Goldberg, & Nichols, 2011).

Although receiving any type of “mental help,” may have once been looked at as taboo, high profile athletes have started publically shining light on the individuals who work with them to help make them the world’s greatest competitors—their performance psychologist. Four time Olympic medalist Kerri Walsh Jennings, openly credits and tours the country with Dr. Michael Gervais to talk about her experience with mental training (LiveHere, 2012; NBC, 2014). After game 7 in the 2010 NBA finals, Ron Artest (a.k.a Meta World Peace) credits his psychiatrist, Dr. Santhi, admitting, “...She really helped me relax... [And helped to] not [doubt] that 3,” referring to a clutch scoring moment in the Los Angeles Lakers hard win over the long time super-rival Boston Celtics (ApolloFraser, 2010, Feb 23; S. Smith, 2010).

A great example of how incorporating skills revolving around motivation, focus, goals setting, and mental toughness has been incorporated successfully into sport, would be to explore the relationship between Phil Jackson (aka “The Zen Master, one of the National Basketball Association’s most prolific coaches) and a sport psychologist (and meditation coach) named George Mumford (Mumford, 2015). Bringing George Mumford on board to help teach three separate teams the skills to be present in the moment and focus on controlling the controllables, the duo coached eight championship NBA teams (Fernandez, 2016; Mumford, 2018). Mumford states in an interview with Dan Harris from ABC News,

[Mental Training] is not just about being good in sports, this is warrior training. You can’t just be focused in a basketball game; it’s a full-time job. Warriors have known this for a long time. When you go into combat, you cannot be afraid. You have to be able to deal with your emotions and be clear about what you are attempting to do and how you’re going to do it (Harris, 2016).

Mental training practices are extremely universal having have found its place in the training practices of volleyball players (Weigert Coelho et al., 2014), swimmers (Fortes, Lira, Lima, Almeida, & Ferreira, 2016), tennis players (Galloway, 2011), gymnasts (Liggett & Hamada, 1993), cyclers (Lindsay, Maynard, & Thomas, 2005), basketball players (Pates, Cummings, & Maynard, 2002), musicians (Wells, Outhred, Heathers, Quintana, & Kemp, 2012), in the area of improving youth life skills (Orlick & McCaffrey, 1991), and in various areas of the medical field (Cocks, Moulton, Luu, & Cil, 2014; Kabat-Zinn & Gazella, 2005). Google (SIY, 2012), Twitter (Lamb, January 28, 2016), Aetna (Gelles, 2015), General Mills (Behnken, 2014), Zappos CEO Tony Hsieh (Hsieh, 2013), Arianna Huffington (Huffington, 2015, April 1), and Richard Branson (Clarkson, 2015, September 9). Many other leaders and CEO’s have also implemented variations of MST programs for their employees to facilitate strength in their companies by facilitating personal growth without boundaries. However, to compare fighting

crime to fighting the market or a rival opponent would be irresponsible and degrading to the men and women who suit up everyday and put their lives on the line for our safety. Therefore, to maintain relevance to the creation of a program focused on improving first responders' mental performance, it would be of interest to mention that sport and performance psychology has also now been adopted by the US Army (Odierno & McHugh, 2013).

Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness Program (CSF2)

In 2013, the Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness Program (CSF2) was created to facilitate a psychological resource for its soldiers and their families, in order to improve readiness throughout the Army (Army, 2014). Utilizing the baseline of the Penn Resiliency Program and PERMA™ workshops (programs created by the University of Pennsylvania's Positive Psychology Center that revolve around training resiliency through positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishments. According to the Penn Resiliency Program, are the "building blocks of resilience and growth") (Center, 2018), the Army sought out to develop its own program to teach individuals skills to overcome adversity (Casey, 2011). With direction of the Dr. Martin E.P. Seligman, famously known as the "father of Positive Psychology" (M. Seligman, 2011) and the creator of the *theory of well-being* (Martin EP Seligman, 2012), the Army recruited a team of psychologists in various fields to explore current strategies that would best fit into one model; one which would enhance individual and collective resilience within the ranks of soldiers that would deploy to combat (Cornum, Matthews, & Seligman, 2011). Through their individual work, the CSF2 program comes together to train soldiers to develop emotional, social, family, spiritual, and physical skills to cope with the military lifestyle pre- and post-deployment (M. E. P. Seligman, 2011)

The *emotional fitness* model was based off of research and created by two professors of emotions and psychophysiology Dr. Barbara Fredrickson and Sara Algoe (Seligman, 2011). This model focuses on creating more optimism in oneself, through positive self-control and utilizing good character when choosing to act and react (Army, 2014). It also introduces to soldiers how our emotions work for and against us; showing that emotions such as fear are present to warn us of danger, sadness is present because of loss, and anger can build when we feel some sort of trespass on our individual boundaries (Seligman, 2012, p.139). This was important to the Army because emotions are on the forefront of how we approach challenges and solve problems. The challenges we face daily, whether those challenges be personal or professional, affect how we respond to what is immediately in front of us, as well as situations that we anticipate happening later on down the road (Reivich, Seligman, & McBride, 2011). Therefore, Dr. Fredrickson's work, implements tools to pro-actively acknowledge our emotional reactions to situations, in order to make proper judgment calls in any situation.

The *social fitness* model was researched and developed by Dr. John Cacioppo, whose expertise stems in the field of loneliness (Seligman, 2011). The focus of the social model is to teach a level of empathy, emphasizing cultural and racial diversity (Reivich et al., 2011). Additionally, the social fitness model focuses on creating quality relationships and building esprit de corps by focusing on creating a foundation of Social Resilience (Seligman, 2012, p.144), which allows for an individual to recover from trigger stressors and social isolation by cultivating the importance of positive social relationships. Cacioppo stresses that what sets humans apart from any other hive, tribe, or pack species, is our ability to reason, plan and work together—and that our survival absolutely depends on how we are able to collectively bring our strengths to the table to work together in pursuit of shared goals (Seligman, 2012, p.145). This,

in essence, enhances resilience via having the knowledge that a network of support is always available during times of need (Reivich et al., 2011). The social fitness model also focuses on the education and practice of the contagion of emotion, empathy, and altruism.

The *family fitness* model was created by Dr. John and Dr. Julie Gottman, founders of The Gottman Institute (Reivich et al., 2011). The Gottman's work revolves teaching couples and family systems how to manage conflict, build trust, commit to each other, and other various evidence-based foundational techniques that are key to creating love and health in relationships. The Army's interest in this model stems from the concept of the "Army of One;" One team, One fight (Army). Because of the life-or-death nature of being a service member, it was important for the program to instill into soldiers that family is often an individual's primary support system, and a dysfunctional family can distract from a unit's mission at hand (Gottman, Gottman, & Atkins, 2011).

However a second and very important case for creating the family fitness model is to train soldiers to not bring work home (or home to work), as well as help to pinpoint the beliefs that people create that sabotage emotional responses (Gottman et al., 2011). The Gottmans have advised the community that critical incidents such as a heated argument with a spouse, a significant other's threat to leave or divorce, not knowing how to relate to one's child(ren), breaks in trust and betrayal, and many other factors that lead to increased stress and uncontrollable emotional and mental breakdowns, have been a critical factor in suicidal and homicidal ideation during the wars of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF; Afghanistan) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) (Martin EP Seligman, 2012, p. 142). The majority of suicides that happen when an individual is deployed, stems from a failed relationship in the home.

Therefore the family fitness model stresses the creation and maintenance of trust and safety between the soldier as well as both their families at home, and their brothers- and sisters-in-arms(Martin EP Seligman, 2012, p. 143). The model educates the soldiers on the importance of conflict management, acknowledgment and avoidance of conflict escalation, soothing a partner, and many other tools that revolve around acknowledging and controlling cognitive and physiological responses that lead to irrational and destructive behavior.

The family, social, and emotional fitness models are all mandatory workshops that the soldiers must participate in via interactive online models, however there is an optional fourth model that the Army had created to implement into their resiliency training program; the *spiritual fitness* model (Reivich et al., 2011). Created by Dr. Kenneth Pargament, the focus of the spiritual fitness model is to build an individual's "spiritual core," not in terms of religion—but rather in creation of the mindset that one is in service of something larger than themselves (Seligman, 2011). This module largely focuses on two underlying principles; wanting the soldiers to answer to a higher moral order by strengthening ethical and moral values, and finding something to ground themselves to some type of higher spirituality—to help deter from substance abuse, mental illness, as well as improve well-being and personal relationships (Martin EP Seligman, 2012, p. 149). By encouraging individuals to search for purpose in life as well as search for self-knowledge and truth, an individual should be able to tap into the root truth—that they belong and serve something much larger than themselves. Understanding that a person is an integral piece of a larger picture is foundational for building resilience by creating self-awareness and an inner strength strong enough to act ethically in all situations, foster resilience through perseverance, as well as promote *growth* (Bishop-Kallmeyer & Lewis, 2017) in all experiences (Army, 2014).

The Army's CSF2 program takes the implementation of their training one step further by directing their leadership to incorporate these fitness models into the day-to-day training that the soldiers partake in, no matter what job skill the soldiers has (Odierno & McHugh, 2013). For example, an infantry fire team may incorporate MST into a training exercise that replicates a forced entry into a building known to be an insurgent headquarters containing innocent civilians inside. During this exercise, a supervisor might incorporate a heavy focus on emotional fitness, where the team may work on increasing courage through positive self-control and optimism—preparing individuals to move into the mission as one team, with less anxiety and clarity of the goals of what is being asked of them to perform. Whereas, a soldier with the responsibility to manage a unit of 130 soldiers in an administrations building, may incorporate tools from the family fitness and spiritual fitness models primarily that aide in team cohesion and clear communication as well as instilling a sense of purpose of their role in the grander scheme of the Army's focus. This is possible because both leaders intertwining the skills into their day-to-day have both received the same type of extensive resiliency training, even though they incorporate the training differently to be relevant to the soldiers in their specific jobs in order to facilitate readiness (Blank, Sylvia, Garza, & Wade, 2014). This is possible because of the creation of CSF2 Master Resiliency Trainers (Reivich et al., 2011).

The Army figured out that the easiest way to train over 1 million soldiers that were already stationed on bases around the world, was to also develop a “train-the-trainer” course and send out trained soldiers to teach the fundamentals of the CSF2 program. The Master Resiliency Trainer course (MRT), also developed and administered by Dr. Seligman's team, sent thousands of Non-Commissioned Officers to Penn State to learn the backbone of Positive psychology and the in-depth processes of teaching the CSF2 program (Reivich et al., 2011). Focusing heavily on

the knowledge and skills to help build resilience in individuals and groups, this 10-day course, teaches a *positive education teacher training* program that has been modified to adapt to the army's wants and needs (Martin EP Seligman, 2012, p. 165). The specialized course heavily concentrates on the foundations of the resiliency program that Penn State had created, as well as how to incorporate key philosophies utilized in the sport and performance psychology field (Army, 2014).

Although U.S Army Chief of Staff and initiator of the CSF2 program, General George W. Casey Jr. (Martin EP Seligman, 2012, p. 127), demanded that the MST program be implemented immediately without a pilot study and research findings (largely due to Dr. Seligman's reputation the past achievements) (Martin EP Seligman, 2012, p. 163). As a result a dark cloud lays over the program when it comes to the validity of the research. Drs. Roy D. Eidelson, Marc Pilisuk and Stephen Sulz have led the movement of professionals that have voiced their opinion about the unethical push to have the MRT as well as the CSF2 program implemented into the Army with little-to-no research behind it to back its value (Eidelson, Pilisuk, & Soldz, 2011; SOLDZ, 2012). The primary focus of the arguments lay largely around the unproven claims that the program will help lower the rates of depression, suicide, and PTSD, as well as secondary claims that the CSF2 program wobbles on the ethical boundaries of creating soldiers that will "[make] them more likely to engage in combat... including killing in furtherance of state policy" (Eidelson et al., 2011). Even in an email correspondence that happened between Dr. Richard McNally and myself, after I reached out to him about the Post Traumatic Growth model of the CSF2 program, he voiced that he has publically expressed disappointment that the Army chose to run a proper randomized control trial pilot study prior to

launching the program; along with sending me an article he and Dr. Richard Tedeschi published explaining the reasons behind his disappointment (Tedeschi & McNally, 2011).

However, despite the calls for retraction (Ph.D, 2012), there has been research run to show validity of the CSF2 program as it pertains to growth within the confines of each of the models that CSF2 focus on (Lester, McBride, Bliese, & Adler, 2011). One article in particular discloses the results from an evaluation report monitoring the measurements between eight Army brigades; Four utilizing MRTs to implement resilience training, and four control group brigades that were not (Harms, Herian, Krasikova, Vanhove, & Lester, 2013). The results correlate higher Global Assessment Tool (GAT; a self-report system allowing soldiers to measure their level of psychosocial fitness within the CSF2 pillars) scores with the brigades utilizing MSTs, after a 6-month period, and report positive retention of the resiliency training as far out as 12 months. Another study claims to have validated their research showing a decrease the number of soldiers that struggle from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, as well as those later diagnosed for other substance abuse mental health problems (such as depression, anxiety, or suicidal) (Paul B Lester et al., 2011). A separate ongoing evaluation of the CSF2 program released data in 2013 which displayed continuous diminishing rates of soldiers being diagnosed with substance abuse issues as well as mental health problems (Blakeley & Jansen, 2013); which had cost the government approximately \$4.5 billion dollars to treat between 2007 and 2012.

Other branches of service have implemented similar outcome-based programs to combat mental illnesses, like the Air Forces' *Landing Gear*, and the Marine Corps' *Operational Stress Control and Readiness training (OSCAR)* (Meredith et al., 2011, p. 121), which are both psychologist and social worker based—and are arguably not as aggressive as it pertains to the subject matter delivery. However, no matter the argument about the ethical push of the CSF2

program, it is still understood by the masses—that the primary focus of the program is to increase functional readiness of the Army’s soldiers by preparing them for the seemingly persistent future and aftermath of warfare (M. E. P. Seligman & Fowler, 2011).

Continued Service

Many veterans find themselves transitioning from serving their country, to serving their community by enlisting into local law enforcement. Annually, “the hottest jobs” for veterans are published electronically (Military.com, 2018), in magazines (Jobs, 2017), and even pushed out to the career centers on bases in order to recruit service members directly from active duty into the workforce. Every year, one career that is always on the list is law enforcement (CareerCast, 2013; Quigg, 2011; Staff, 2017; Trade-Schools.net, 2017).

The federal government established the Community Orientated Policing Services (COPS) program in 1994, to place an additional 100,000 peace officers on the streets annually (Koper et al., 2001, p. 4; Services, 2012). In 2012 the COPS Hiring Program (CHP), ruled that if any law enforcement department wanted to apply to the utilize CHP, those agencies “must hire military veterans” (Services, 2012); a veteran being, any honorably discharged individual who has served on active duty for more than 180 consecutive days, as long as some of that time was after September 11th, 2001 (Services, 2012). In 2013, a survey of 22,765 law enforcement officers from 95 agencies published that 20.1% of the personnel had served in the military (Rosenbaum et al., 2016).

There is a reason that law enforcement so heavily recruits military personnel. Research that the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) had initiated, surveyed the law enforcement focus groups across the country in order to get a better understanding of the military

veteran population (Daxe Jr et al., 2009). The most reoccurring reasons explaining why veterans are ideal candidates are: their physical health and conditioning abilities, their weapons training, ability to lead, respect for authority, higher tolerance for stress, experience with diverse cultural groups, and their combat experience. Agency leaders also mentioned that they appreciate and enjoy a veteran's confidence level, and ability to respond to and operate in tactical environments (Daxe Jr et al., 2009).

However, law enforcement leaders have also acknowledged that those veteran officers who put on a badge, may also be an endangerment to themselves, as well as to the community they serve. In 2009, 86% of the veterans currently employed in law enforcement had deployed to OEF/OIF within the last five years (Daxe Jr et al.). And even though the military mandates each branch of service to facilitate a "transition ready" program in order to vet the individuals who are not quite ready to reintegrate, sometimes those suffering from MHDs (especially PTSD) will not develop or show symptoms until 6-12 months after suffering from a traumatic event (Daxe Jr et al., 2009). If a returning service member is diagnosed with a disability, including PTSD, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) (Moore, 2009), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (United, 1996) and section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Wolff, 1978) will provide job protection for the disabled veteran (Labor, 1994).

Whether or not a veteran is suffering from an MHD or not when they return to law enforcement, leaders (as well as the veterans themselves) have pinpointed some areas of concern that are most apparent in a veteran's behavior. One main issue is that a peace officer can often be triggered due to the similarity of the urban environment similarities, compared to veterans of past wars who fought in the deserts of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, as well as those who fought in

the Jungles of Vietnam (Daxe Jr et al., 2009). Crowds create chaos, and chaos creates confusion, which is why military personnel are trained to control the situation; which happens to be a problem for some veterans when returning home to work in law enforcement due to the past ability to engage and detain a possible hostile with no questions asked. Veterans (not specific to veterans in law enforcement) often have developed a lower tolerance for “minor complaints,” have a reduced level of empathy, are impatient with those they seem are not deserving of the responsibilities they hold, and often fight through the blurred lines of the rules that must be followed from what “used” to be—to what currently is (Daxe Jr et al., 2009). Reporting officers have also pinpointed other behavioral issues such as: inappropriate use of force, attendance issues, domestic violence, changes in driving behavior, mood, lack of verbal interactions, disregard for paperwork, and even hesitation when engaging in routine traffic stops (Morin et al., 2017).

The Big Picture

Although it seems as if veterans are having a hard time adapting to the life of a police officer, data shows that they only make up approximately 28% of all police officers (Morin & Mercer, 2017). The Pew Research Center conducted a nationwide survey, with approximately 8000 participants from police stations with over 1000 officers working at that particular station (Morin et al., 2017). From their research, their data painted a much clearer picture on how our law enforcers see themselves in their roles, judge the communities around them, enjoy and approach their line of work, approach racial issues, and how they even feel about firing their weapons. As mentioned earlier, 86% of officers feel that their job is harder today than in the past; primarily due to racial incidents from the past. 93% of officers are more concerned about

their safety; 72% are less willing to stop and question a suspicious individual; 66% have been verbally abused by a community member, and 56% feel more callused because of their work (Morin et al., 2017). When it comes to how others see them, 14% of the police officers say that the public understands the risks they take each day. Determining how to engage a citizen, 56% feel it is more effective to approach in an aggressive way in specific neighborhoods, and 44% believe that a physical approach is the only way to reason with “some people.” 26% say their department rules are too restrictive (Morin et al., 2017).

As it pertains to weapons, the data becomes a little more interesting. The Pew Research Center surveyed another 7,917 officers to gather data on police officers who have fired their weapons while on duty (Morin & Mercer, 2017). The survey reports that 30% of citizens believe that officers typically fire their weapons a few times a year while on duty; while 83% suspect that an officer has fired their weapon at least once. The surveyed data shows that only 27% (of the officers surveyed) have ever fired their weapons while on the clock. When questioned about how much fire-arm training they have had in the last 12 months, 53% reported at least 4 hours of shoot-don’t shoot scenarios (Morin et al., 2017). Officers that have fired their weapons are more likely to favor protecting rights to bare arms (Morin & Mercer, 2017), and even though veterans make up approximately 28% of the police force, 32% veterans have pulled the trigger while on duty; more than any subgroup (Morin & Mercer, 2017).

Moving forward, it seems as if there is plenty of room for improvement in the lives of police officers. These individuals are asked to place themselves in harms way day-in and day-out, and overall—the line of work has taken a toll on the mental health, which has a trickle down affect into other areas of their lives. If first responders would be open to adopting and implementing a mental skills training program, multiple ecosystems within an individual’s

community could benefit from it. The research in the following sections introduces theories and models within the frameworks of mental toughness, motivation, goal setting, focus, and resilience. Collectively these will be the baseline foundational frameworks that when interlaced together, will create the model of the F.I.R.S.T program.

Mental Training Skills

It is evident that first responders today are bogged down by fear, uncertainty, fatigue, and the after effects of their own traumatic events. The pressure gets to the best of them, and if there is no proper way to cope with the stressors of the job, then life-changing mistakes are made on and off duty (Mather, 2017). Mental training (or peak performance training) has been a staple foundation in many successful individuals lives; and teaching first responders more improved ways to cope with stress and trauma requires that first—the frameworks introduced are deconstructed to best understand why they are important to include in to a mental training program for first responders.

Through the combination of the lessons learned from my personal military experience along with the details documented in both the military and global police forces' research, I feel comfortable determining the necessary psychological tools that are needed to continuously work in a dangerous environment. The next sections will generally cover the primary skills, which utilized along with the concepts used from the CSF2 program and Penn State's PERMA™ model, will be significant in the creation of the F.I.R.S.T program. One key- and determining-factor in whether an individual has what it takes to even make a career in a high stakes profession—such as law enforcement—is how mentally tough a person is to push through “the hard stuff.”

Mental toughness. Some first responders professions require their employees to work long days, carry heavy equipment, stay hyper-vigilant, and maintain a level of health that allows them to wake up and continue this cycle daily. No matter what is happening in the life of a first responder, these individuals are required to function at almost superhuman levels to provide service and safety to their communities. The roles these individuals fill are some of the most mentally tough jobs on the planet.

Mental toughness does not have one standing definition, however, some of the qualities of a mentally tough individual are universally agreed upon. Being mentally tough can be considered as a quality of having a psychological edge which enables an individual to cope better in the demands of pressure (Connaughton et al., 2008). Another way to look at being mentally tough is having the ability to cope with stress, pressure, and adversity (Gould, Dieffenbach, & Moffett, 2002), having the ability to rebound or bounce back from failure (Golby & Wood, 2016), or even having “grit” (Angela L Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007).

Mental toughness has also been found to be linked to self-efficacy (how one perceives their ability to succeed at a task (Bandura, 1997)), as well as self-esteem (how one perceives their own worth [(Blaine & Crocker, 1993)]); both linked to optimism (Golby & Wood, 2016). Optimism, which can be a learned trait (M. E. P. Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), has shown that the characteristic is a likely factor in an individuals’ internal drive to cope with trauma and life altering situations, including sickness and terminal illness as is introduced in the research presenting the prolonged mortality rates of individuals when it comes to cancer victims and cardiovascular disease (CVD) (Martin EP Seligman, 2008).

Dr. Seligman’s study of optimism followed men who had previously suffered a heart attack, presents evidence that individuals with high levels of optimism reported 20-25% less

CVD than a control group, and those who reported highly pessimist reported to developed 20-25% more CVD than the same control groups. A more significant finding of a similar study following 96 men who had already suffered heart attacks, supported the hypothetical power of optimism by unveiling scored optimism tests of men as they passed away. Within 8½ years of the initial test 15 of the 16 most pessimistic men died from a second heart attack, where 5 of the 16 most optimistic men suffered the same fate (G. M. Buchanan & Seligman, 1995, pp. 225-232). These studies alone may not express how optimism and mentally tough individuals relate; however, similar studies continue to show that optimism and resiliency are often linked—which will be explored more throughout the creation of the F.I.R.S.T program.

Motivation. One key factor relating to 72% of officers' admitted hesitation to engage suspicious suspects, is a new sense of fear for their lives (Morin et al., 2017). What motivates these individuals to perform the duties required of them today, is different than in the beginning of their careers due to past personal experiences' or experiences of colleagues. Fear has motivated officers to alter their behavior due to their external environment, and this has increased levels of animosity toward civilians; as well as formed callousness within individuals behind the badge (Morin & Mercer, 2017; Morin et al., 2017; Samuels & Martinez, 2014). Admittedly, it is hard to remain mentally tough when the deck is stacked against you. However, in a profession that asks for its employees' ultimate selflessness, dedication, courage, and professionalism at all times, those individuals may have to revisit the values and virtues that innately drive their motivation in order to learn how to access it for optimal performance while on the job.

Motivation—is the underlying reason behind a focused activity that likely explains a person's actions (Maslow, 1943), and a person's motivation can be described in two primary

ways; intrinsically, and extrinsically (E. Deci & R. Ryan, 1985; Deci, Koestner, Ryan, & Eisenberg, 1999). Both types of motivation will help drive an individual toward their goals, yet each have a very different effect on how an individual perceives the reward of the accomplishment (Pang, 2011).

For instance, *intrinsic motivation* is rooted in one's natural born curiosity and pushes an individual to explore their capabilities, work to overcome limitations, and is directly related to mastery (Reiss, 2004). An intrinsically motivated individual experiences more self-efficacy, autonomy, competence (Bortoli, Bertollo, Comani, & Robazza, 2011), self-determination (E. L. Deci & R. M. Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000), self-esteem (Blaine & Crocker, 1993), heightened vitality (Mostert & Kesselring, 2002), as well as well-being (Golby & Wood, 2016; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Martin EP Seligman, 2012). This is likely due to the nature of intrinsic motivation—which is to please oneself.

When an individual is intrinsically motivated, they display a higher level of interest and excitement in the task at hand (Ryan & Deci, 2000), they tend to be more persistent in goal-achievement (Bortoli et al., 2011; Harwood, Cumming, & Hall, 2003), and this in turn facilitates a level of enhanced performance and confidence (Fortes et al., 2016; Kahrović, Radenković, Mavrić, & Murić, 2014). There is an element of internal reward for the person who is motivated intrinsically, and the focus may be pride, completion of a self-set challenge, spite, self-improvement, self-actualization, self-respect, etc.; whereas, extrinsic motivation would be the opposite. *Extrinsically motivated* individuals thrive on external achievements, recognition or praise. Being extrinsically motivated, an individual will behave or perform in a manner that will achieve a pleasure external to the satisfaction of the activity itself (E. Deci & R. Ryan, 1985). There is a third type of motivation worth mentioning but will not be explored, amotivation;

which describes a lack of motivation typically found in individuals who no longer can find excitement in the things they do (Duda & Treasure, 2010).

Motivation is a largely researched topic in many different areas of interest. The need to understand what drives an individual to behave in the manner they do has been linked back to as far as Aristotle (Hudson, 1981). In order to approach the question of what drives an individual to do what they do, we look to models such as Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943), Hull's 16-Primary Principles that drive behavior (Hull, 1943), and even the original groundbreaking work done by B.F Skinner (Skinner, 1938) and Ivan Pavlov (Pavlov, 1927) on operant behavior. However, as it pertains to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, Steven Reiss's Theory of 16 basic desires (Reiss, 2002) attempts to map out the relationship between motive (extrinsic need), the underlying basic human need (desires), and the intrinsic feeling to show that an extrinsic motive can also foster an intrinsic reward—which dilutes the black and white thinking that an individual works solely by either/or.

Motivation can also be determined by how individuals perceive themselves as it pertains to their perceived level of ability in a specific area (Nicholls, Cheung, Lauer, & Patashnick, 1989). An individual who understands that there is room to improve in an area and chooses to put in the work to perform at a high level (given a task) is said to be *task-orientated*. This type of individual is more inclined to take on challenging tasks, usually with an effective strategy in order to succeed (Bortoli et al., 2011). Typically intrinsically motivated individuals are focused on effort and improvement, which is linked to mastery of a task for the sake of meeting or exceeding requirements (Dweck, Goodstein, Glaser, & Takanishi, 1986). An *ego-orientated* individual may tend to feel some processes for performance are useless—therefore unnecessary to focus on (Duda & Treasure, 2010; Dweck et al., 1986; Nicholls et al., 1989). The ego-

orientated individual will tend to focus on establishing superiority and outshine competitors or given assignments, and is more likely extrinsically motivated for reward or praise (Ames & Levin, 1992; Duda & Treasure, 2010; Nicholls et al., 1989). This type of individual may work solely off of their strengths to get through a challenge, and pay little to no attention on building up their weaknesses.

Understanding that motivation drives the initiative behind why individuals behave the way they do, proper motivation is an essential key to achievement in a specific area in one's life; and similarly, improper or a lack of motivation can be detrimental. It is important to understand although there is nothing wrong with being motivated extrinsically, intrinsically, or both, there is research that recognizes that excessive extrinsic rewards have the ability to diminish intrinsic motivation; and that improving intrinsic motivation in an individual can likely help to facilitate self-efficacy, autonomy, and perceived confidence (Arnold, 1976; Fabes, 1987; Rushall, 1992). Fundamentally, if the schema(s) that best motivate an individual can be exposed and exploited, an individual could then boost the likeliness of success in changing a habit or improving a skill by incorporating the action of goals setting.

Goal Setting. First responders often work in a team environment; however, a lot of the team's success relies on factors such as clarity of tasks, physical fitness, individual actions (as a piece of the larger puzzle), but most importantly—the team member's level of preparedness. There is a lot of prep work that goes into a successful societal transaction, and if a first responder is not clear on their outcome of what it is they are engaging, it could create confusion—which can easily turn a routine call into a deadly situation.

One definition of mental toughness focuses on the ability to accomplish one's goals while facing pressure and various stressors (Fitzwater, Arthur, Hardy, & Kavussanu, 2018). A goal is a focal point that provides reference and direction to future actions in order to achieve a desired outcome (Locke & Latham, 2006). Goals drive the motivation to carry out menial task as mundane as driving yourself to work, to larger global tasks like establishing a colony on Mars. However, for the purpose of creating mental toughness and resilience in oneself, goals shall be acknowledged as focused objectives that serve as the foundation of strengthening and growth in an individual's personal and professional lives (Doran, 1981).

Because of the importance and power behind proper goal setting and what an individual can achieve when the act of setting goals is done properly, goals have been studied in many settings; such as every level of the education system (Ames & Levin, 1992), parenting (Preckel, Götz, & Frenzel, 2010), the workplace (Huff, 2014) health and fitness (Johnstone, 2015), and especially in sport (Ames & Levin, 1992; Bortoli et al., 2011; Burton, 1989a). Interestingly enough, in every setting that goal achievement is researched there are a few key pieces of knowledge that are consistent through them all: motivation affects goal outcomes (Gómez-Miñambres, 2012; Nicholls et al., 1989), goals help to foster collective- as well as self-efficacy (Short, Tenute, & Feltz, 2005), goals teach qualities of commitment (Locke & Latham, 2006), and goals are key for mastery (Holgado, Navas, & López-Núñez, 2010).

Initially created to help corporate managers help flourish in their respective areas of business, the "SMART" acronym has become a staple in multiple areas of goal setting research such as health and child development (Ames & Levin, 1992; Zimmerman & et al., 1992). The original acronym (Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Realistic, and Time-Related) describes five criteria for setting a proper goal so that large goals are achievable in small steps (Ryan & Deci,

2000). Over the years individuals have adapted the acronym into a similar usable form that benefits their area of interest; for instance substituting *Significant* or *Sensible* for “S,” *Achievable* or *Action-Oriented* for “A,” *Reviewable*, *Reasonable*, *Result-oriented* or *Relevant* for “R,” and *Tangible*, *Truthful* and a plethora of other *Time*-focused variations (Rubin, 2002). No matter which version of the acronym fits best in an individual’s personal model, the same overall theoretical foundations remain the same. In order to be successful in goal achievement the goal must be created with as much detail as possible so that there is no ambiguity with what wants to be accomplished; and the goal needs to be broken down from a large overwhelming thought into smaller, challenging yet realistic actions, which is possible by detailing the SMART goal process into three separate and more direct categories of goals: outcome, performance, and process goals (Burton, 1989b; Daw & Burton, 1994).

The reasons goals work are because goals provide feedback of progress, and when an individual is able to monitor (or measure) progress, intrinsic motivation is strengthened (Locke & Latham, 2006). Setting up goals in this manner also create a heightened sense of awareness, and establishes a additional controlled environment for mastery to occur, due to ability to limit external factors that do not serve a purpose for improvement (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Most importantly, knowing how to manipulate this process of goal setting, allows individuals to push themselves toward mastery at any rate of growth they are comfortable with.

Focus. A key element to being mentally tough is having the ability to control focus. The ability to maintain focus on the present moment is essential to an individual’s ability to carryout a task. In sport and performance psychology, focus is one of the most essential lessons that athletes receive; learning that focusing on the process of performance rather than the outcome is critical

to the achievement of athletic success (Gould et al., 2002). Learning to “focus on the process” requires an individual to be fully aware of everything happening internally and externally in the present moment (J. M. Williams, Nideffer, Wilson, Sagal, & Peper, 2010) and continuously training the mind to acknowledge and understand each of the variables that make up the conditions of the internal and external factors in the current moment. In the world of a first responder, if you cannot control your focus or your awareness, it could easily mean life *or* death.

In the age of technology, individuals are finding it harder to find deep and intimate focus with their internal and external processing. The access to an unlimited amount of online communication platforms, news and media sites as well as social media, has significantly decreased our cultural social skills as well as fostered an expectation for instant gratification (Willingham, 2010). Individuals are so tapped into the technology that they often develop anxiety from a fear of missing out (FoMO), and are unable to maintain focus on one task without being distracted from what they could be missing at the moment (Alt, 2015). Although technology is not the only factor pulling attention away from individuals and destroying the ability to focus for, it does not help to nurture a healthy ability to concentrate; and a major factor of concentration is that an individual should be able to able to vet out and discard all non-essential environmental stimuli (J. M. Williams et al., 2010). The problem here as it pertains to nourishing mental toughness, is that an untrained mind will often drift to nonessential thoughts during key moments—momentarily destroying an individual’s effectiveness to perform (J. M. Williams et al., 2010).

In order to get a better understanding on what drives a champion, a qualitative study interviewing ten Olympians (who cumulatively earned 32 medals), their coaches, parents, and their significant others, asked each individual what they thought were the ultimate reasons for

Olympic success. The authors reported that the a few of the highest qualities these champions shared with each other were the ability to control and cope with anxiety, increase confidence at will, maintain optimism, and set and achieve goals (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 2002; Gould et al., 2002). The highest scored qualities from the 30 participants were reported as equally important across the board; 73.3% of the participants felt that the success of the Olympians were due to both the ability to remain mentally tough and resilient, as well as the ability to maintain focus and block out distractions (Gould et al., 2002).

A large part of being able to train focus, is to foster *awareness* and *emotional control*. Both are essential for an individual to be able to regain composure of their psychological and physiological behavior when placed in situations that take them out of a homeostatic balance (Blank et al., 2014). Awareness of self, introduces the thought-performance relationship in which an individual is able to acknowledge a change in baseline thoughts, feelings, and emotions, as well as any type of change in one's physiological state (Behncke, 2004). If arousal moves too high or too low from baseline, an individual would begin to work outside of their Individual Zone of Optimal Functioning (IZOF) and soon performance would decrease, which could lead to abnormal decision making process, or missed opportunities (Kamata, Tenenbaum, & Hanin, 2002).

When an individual begins to experience a majority of their performance outside of their optimal functioning areas, the individual may begin to experience a variety of negative impacts. One theory, the catastrophe theory, addresses what would happen if an individual's psychological and physiological arousal levels surpassed their peak performance level (Krane, 1992). Instead of tapering off and gradually getting worse, an individual who experiences this effect would completely shut down and essentially become useless at the task at hand. This can

also be considered, or a result of “choking,” which is the process thought to be initiated by an individual’s negative interpretations of their own anxiety, or when an individual becomes overly focused on the increasing pressure and it is and destroys the ability to focus and perform (Hill, Hanton, Matthews, & Fleming, 2011) In Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, there is a similar process that produces similar results termed catastrophizing (Ong, Zautra, & Reid, 2010).

Catastrophizing describes when an individual waste critical energy focusing on the most negative thoughts, and worst possible outcomes of a particular situation. Placing too much energy into these negative thoughts, or irrational fears, initiates a downward spiral, causing anxiety levels to rise, focus to decrease, performance to decline, and increases the chance of learned helplessness (Maier & Seligman, 1976).

The aforementioned experiences are not rare. They are very likely, and happen often—sometimes unexpectedly. There are not many ways to combat having a break down during performances, however, an individual can train themselves to begin to acknowledge changes to their cognitive and somatic states in order to prevent catastrophizing; by training to improve attentional focus (Nideffer & Sharpe, 1978).

Attention Control Training (ACT) is not a technique, it is a process. Understanding and utilizing the theoretical process introduced by Dr. Nideffer, require an individual to become extremely in tune with internal processing of one’s cognitive and somatic triggers, cues, responses, and then create a response to combat the responses that are not adding value to performance (Nideffer & Sharpe, 1978). Before assessing what an individual must do to become more proficient at focusing, those who are introduced to ACT learn a few key concepts that the training is based off of:

- 1) People are unable to multitask (Nideffer, 1976, 2002; Nideffer & Sharpe, 1978; Willingham, 2010).
- 2) Different situations will invoke different attentional focus schemas. At any point of an individual's focus, they are utilizing one of four categorical focus points; broad to narrow (width; x), external or internal (direction; y) (Nideffer, 1976, 2002; Nideffer & Sharpe, 1978).
- 3) Concentration skills vary from individual to individual.
- 4) Increases in external or internal stimuli (arousal) can create internal noise, which in turn can cloud judgment, alter perception of the present moment, and interfere with the processes that affect the outcome (Nideffer, 1976, 2002; Nideffer & Sharpe, 1978).
- 5) How we engage in specific moments are more trait-like than state-like (N & Hull, 1943); meaning that individuals are more prone to act in their dominant attentional focal schema, which can be predictable—if an individual has acknowledged and made note of their internal and external processing.

Assessing an individual's focus schema to determine their strengths and weaknesses is a key piece of ACT training (Nideffer, 1976, 2002; Nideffer & Sharpe, 1978); and ACT, as well as the Test of Attentional and Interpersonal Style (TAIS; a 144 question self-reported measure to assess attentional and interpersonal characteristics) (Nideffer, 1976), both focus on the acknowledgement and conscious manipulation of how an individual interacts with their environment. If the concepts of ACT are understood at a baseline level, this work plays a large role in creating confidence in one's abilities.

Confidence, or the state of feeling certain within one's environment, with one's ideas or with one's actions, (Kruglanski, 1989; Tormala, Rucker, & Seger, 2008; Wan & Rucker, 2013) has been linked directly to how much information an individual processes before performing a task (Brinol, Petty, Valle, Rucker, & Becerra, 2007; Wan & Rucker, 2013; Weary & Jacobson, 1997). Essentially, if an individual is highly confident in their abilities with the task at hand, less energy is spent on processing the information coming in, and more focus can be placed into more abstract thought—or “big picture” thinking (Wan & Rucker, 2013). The opposite of confidence is doubt. Therefore the inverse actions of a confident person will result with an individual not feeling confident with the current task; and will revert to concrete thinking, focusing on the most basic known cues, spending more time processing information, and increase the likelihood of catastrophizing or choking (Hill et al., 2011; Ong et al., 2010; Wan & Rucker, 2013).

It is imperative that first responders maintain a high level of confidence in their abilities while on the job. This is true for many reasons, but the primary reason is that citizens have confidence that the first responders know how to handle situations that they do not. Citizens expect the paramedics to have a certain level of knowledge and command the environment with their presence; they expect police officers to know what to do when they show up to a crime scene. If the public loses confidence in the first responder's abilities, that first responder has lost credibility, and has lost control of the situation.

Lacking confidence in one's own abilities stems from an immeasurable amount of variables, which essentially create more distraction and increased frustration. Those who are not able to cope tend to have negative experiences, and focusing on negative experiences will foster negative expectations; and could possibly develop into self-deprecatory self-focus (Scheier & Carver, 1987). Motivation, high levels of self-efficacy, how diligent an individual has trained to

acknowledge where their focus is, and how an individual manipulates the thoughts that follow tend to predict whether or not an individual is able to cope with their emotions and respond to the feelings of anxiety once the signs present themselves. If these key characteristics are all met, an individual will likely experience enhanced performance (Wan & Rucker, 2013). However, there is one last characteristic that can separate a bench warmer on the practice squad from the captain of the team—and that is resilience.

Resilience. Stories of strong and courageous warriors have been passed on through cultural generations since the story of the beginning of man. The strength and power of the human psyche has been instilled in our warriors through the art of story telling by way of our village elders, prepping young men for battle in hopes that the heroes of the past will influence the heroes of the future. Stories that collectively embrace the premise that if an individual is persistent and resilient enough—one can survive battles that were never in their favor, and return home a hero.

So what is resilience? A research study in 1979 observed 169 businessmen in a stressful environment in order to determine if the ability to deal with stress correlated with producing symptoms of illness (Kobasa, Maddi, & Kahn, 1982). It was determined that those that could endure the stress, experienced symptoms of illness less than those who did not. These individuals were labeled “hardier” than their counterparts. The hardier workers displayed a stronger commitment to themselves, controlled their environments better, valued their worth in their roles more, and believed that outcomes in their lives were because of their own actions (Kobasa et al., 1982). Because of Kobasa’s research, “hardiness” embedded itself as a stable and testable personality characteristic (Kobasa et al., 1982; van Der Meulen, Bosmans, Lens, &

Lahlah, 2017), which involves the ability to predict an individual's courage, adaptability (commitment), and composure to perform optimally when exposed to higher-than-normal stressful situations (challenge) (Sandvik, Hansen, Hystad, Johnsen, & Bartone, 2015). "Hardiness" became a gold standard when studying coping strategies, stress, and transformational leadership (Bartone, 2006), and today it is still high in regard in the conversation of psychological resilience (Maddi, 2007; Maddi, Matthews, Kelly, Villarreal, & White, 2012).

In a study researching how a police officer's hardiness is related to how stressful situations affect decision-making processes, 61 officers completed a hardiness questionnaire and then were monitored during six separate shooting scenarios utilizing a shooting simulator (Barton, Vrij, & Bull, 2004). The study determined that officers with low hardiness scores, made more incorrect decisions, when faced with a threatening situation.

However, hardiness does not define resilience by itself, nor does possessing the quality that embodies the ability to "maintain balance in the presence of significant disturbance," as defined by John Violanti describing resiliency in police officers (2006). Resiliency has been defined as a personality trait; one that intricately weaves in and out of an individual's life experiences, the individual themselves, and the context of the situation (being one of prevention, or treatment) (Meredith et al., 2011). Others have described the struggle of challenge; continuing to exert effort and persist against adversity, sometimes being set back or even failing. This "perseverance and passion for long-term goals," has been coined as "grit" (Angela L Duckworth et al., 2007). Resilience has been described as the ability to "bounce back" from downfalls as well as unfavorable and even traumatic events, such as a death in the family (B. W.

Smith et al., 2008; John M. Violanti, 2006); and it has also been defined as the ability to find a way to grow from the lessons that failure and negative experiences teach us (Dweck, 2006).

The Research and Development organization (RAND) conducted a study for the U.S. military in order to identify the factors that best promotes psychological resilience (Meredith et al., 2011); and after screening a total of 340 documents written on the topic, RAND identified 122 separate definitions of resilience (Meredith et al., 2011, pp. 77-85). What they found was there are three basic models which resilience is taken into account. The *basic* form of resilience labels the trait as a process or an ability that an individual (or a group) can develop over time (Meredith et al., 2011). Resilience also takes form in the *adaptation* model; that would also be described as the ability to “bounce back” to a baseline state after a hardship or traumatic event. The last model defines the *growth* that develops after experiencing a hardship or a traumatic event (Meredith et al., 2011, p. 20). Utilizing the three classifications, RAND decided on a definition of resilience to base the rest of their research on: “the capacity to adapt successfully in the presence of risk and adversity” (Jenson & Fraser, 2006; Meredith et al., 2011, p. 3).

Based off of a study to create and establish a framework for policy to battle collapse in the failing communities for children, youth, and families (Jenson & Fraser, 2006), RAND decided on this definition of resilience to serve as a working definition that they would base the rest of their research on for the U.S Military. Keeping consistency with many of the other working definitions, as well as maintaining enough distinction for how it is used between contexts (use in the education system, family system, military, etc...), one reason behind the decision was that the definition sums up the notion of “capacity” (or competence in one’s ability), and ability to become flexible in the face of hardship or stress (Meredith et al., 2011). Finally, the definition also involves the ability to use positive thinking (Luthar, Cicchetti, &

Becker, 2000) no matter the complexity or labor of the situation at hand. Now that a working definition of resilience has been established, how does the idea of resiliency apply to the improvement of an individual who has taken an oath to serve the citizens of their country?

Those who serve have a greater chance of being exposed to traumatic events over their career, and therefore are more at risk of developing a mental health disorder (MHD) such as posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (John M. Violanti, 2006). A study in Canada looking into the numbers of first responders in their community, found that 44.5% of the surveyed 5,813 individuals show symptoms and early signs of oncoming mental disorders; the general population suffering from MHDs averages 10.1% (Bowie, 2017). A study of police in the Netherlands reports approximately 25% of their police force suffer from a MSD due to the nature of their work (van Der Meulen et al., 2017). In a given year, anywhere from 11-20% of America's OEF/OIF veterans are diagnosed with PTSD alone (Tanielian & Jaycox, 2008); and even more suffer from anxiety, depression, military sexual trauma, and traumatic brain injury. In fact, studies have shown that after traumatic events occur, first responders have had increased encounters with suicide ideation (Bowie, 2017; Davidson, Hughes, Blazer, & George, 1991; Hendin & Haas, 1991; John M Violanti, 2004).

Reasons such as the aforementioned, are some of the reasons that U.S Army Chief of Staff General Casey, reached out to Dr. Seligman to develop a mental resiliency program (Martin EP Seligman, 2012). Psychological resilience is key to keeping those individuals who have to make tough and sound decisions, fit for duty (Meredith et al., 2011; Martin EP Seligman, 2012). However, before a team of individuals can even attempt to create a resiliency program, there needs to be an understanding with how resiliency can be nurtured and groomed. The first step is

to define what will help cultivate resilience; therefore it is important to understand how an individual (or a unit) behaves at its highest functional capacity.

The RAND research created a framework recognizing a few key areas that foster resilience from their screening of the 340 documents covering resilience. What the authors found was that there are intrinsic factors that enhance resilience at an *individual, family*, as well as the *unit* and *community* levels of an individual's environment (Meredith et al., 2011). The belief is that if the factors within each level can be developed and/or strengthened, then an individual is more likely to “adapt successfully in the presence of risk and adversity” (Meredith et al., 2011). The family level framework revolves around the belief that the closest people in an individual's life act as a support system that promote improved communication through closeness and nurturing. The intrinsic factors involved at the *family* level are: Emotional ties, communication, support, closeness, nurturing, and adaptability. (Meredith et al., 2011). The individual level revolves around the belief that self-improvement or self-care is contributory to how an individual is able to manage themselves in a stress environment or situation.

The intrinsic factors that make up the *individual* level are: Positive coping, positive affect, positive thinking, realism, behavioral control, and physical fitness (Meredith et al., 2011). At the unit level, the belief that the more an individual believes that the organization has their best interest in mind as well as how strong the bond the team shares, is instrumental toward how much value they add to the team, and how valuable the team is to them. The intrinsic factors that make up the *unit* level are: Positive command climate, teamwork, cohesion, belongingness, cohesion, connectedness, and collective (Meredith et al., 2011). Finally, the community factor; similar to the unit, however the community factor embodies the mindset that “it takes a village.” The community reaches beyond the environments that an individual has the most interaction

with, and includes the social services, religious institutions, schools, local post office, etc. The intrinsic factors that make up the *community* level are: Belongingness, cohesion, connectedness, and collective efficacy (Meredith et al., 2011).

Working to build up these intrinsic factors is key to creating resilience. The society we live in today is not getting kinder, and we are plagued with constant struggles of hatred, prejudice and war. General Casey stated that American soldiers have been deploying to combat for more than 16 years; stress is inevitable and it will continue to degrade our military's performance as well as ruins their relationships back home with loved ones and peers (Martin EP Seligman, 2012, p. 128). Not dealing with stress or trauma properly will create negative long-term affects as shared by Paramedic Chris Hood on his struggle with mental health after leaving the force:

I dealt with [it] in different ways. I'm on my third marriage. There's a link in there somewhere. If you talked to my ex-wives, I'm pretty sure they would tell you I wasn't the greatest husband, or the greatest person to live with ... In order to cope with the daily duties of the profession—I had to become *cold* (Bowie, 2017).

Cold. In other words, there are first responders on the job *right now*, who have detached themselves from reality in order to continue to perform in the manner they are required to. When an individual cannot properly cope with the stressors, their behavior and actions not only affect the community and family system, but also how they process information and makes important momentary decisions (Meredith et al., 2011); and a poor decision very well may permanently affect an individual's life.

Between sending our troops to extended length deployments and asking our police officers to support the need for increased security due to terrorist attacks, riots and protest, the

operational tempo that we ask our first responders to maintain, is one that is demanding on an individual's overall ecosystem. The coping resources individuals have turned to in the past have historically not benefitted these individuals nor their units, communities, and family systems; which is why since 2006, there has been a focused effort on increasing the attention and stressing the importance of providing more resources, and policy changes revolving around MHDs (Milliken, Auchterlonie, & Hoge, 2007). So it is clear that it is extremely important to strengthen the ability to foster resilience into the lives of first responders; the focus now is how?

A survey taken at West Point military academy asked a graduating class of cadets who had heard of both posttraumatic stress disorder and posttraumatic growth (PTG) (Martin EP Seligman, 2012, p. 157). More than 90% of the cadets mentioned that they had been somewhat knowledgeable of PTSD, however less than 10% of those same cadets had heard of PTG. This commonality creates the issue, that if all an individual is aware of as a coping mechanism is to create a self-fulfilling downward spiral, then how are we to expect individuals to bounce back? Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) is the reframed mindset that traumatic experiences do not have to cause stress or depression in one's life, but instead those same experiences have the ability to enhance personal relationships, enhance spirituality, create a space for personal growth and personal strength, as well as give a new positive appreciation for life (Morrill et al., 2008).

Research focusing on proper intervention, recognizing that experiencing stressful and traumatic situations can elicit growth, has been recently heavily focused upon (Huddleston, Stephens, & Paton, 2007; John M. Violanti, 2006). In 2008, the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI) was created, and produced a way for researchers to gauge five areas of growth that individuals who experience trauma typically report (Taku, Cann, Calhoun, & Tedeschi, 2008). It was found that survivors of trauma reported experiences of renewed appreciation of life, spiritual

change, a chance for new possibilities, improved relationships, and an enhanced personal (internal) strength. Ronnie Janoff-Bulman's research proposed that there are three process that lead to traumatic growth: psychological preparedness, existential reevaluation, and the creation of strength through suffering (Erlbaum, Calhoun, & Tedeschi, 2006). And although her research is primarily focused toward facilitating resiliency in our youth, Dr. Angela Duckworth's research on the "growth mindset," (Dweck, 2006) has gotten researchers to look deeper into ways to promote psychological growth to individuals stuck in the dark side of their experiences, and had been foundational for the PENN resiliency program (Center, 2018); which the Army's CSF2 program is largely based on. Unfortunately PTSD has been prevalent at the forefront of society's mind for so long, that it has become common to immediately attach the disorder to any symptom an individual shows. However, even though there has been a lot of press and research surrounding PTG, it remains to be an underutilized model of promoting improved mental health.

Knowing which tools and strategies to incorporate into a first responder's course is a huge step in the right direction to help aid those serving, by giving them direction and the knowledge to improve their mental toughness and increase resiliency and overall well-being. There are many studies that highlight the benefit of adopting the mental practices that have been introduced in this project, so there is not a question of whether or not mental training would benefit first responders. Instead the question remains how to best incorporate the mental training skills into a program intended to reduce the number of unintended fatal shootings and violence that could be prevented; one that will help boost mental toughness, and foster resiliency and well-being? It was stated earlier that the field of sport psychology has revolutionized the field of competition by incorporating many of the skills and practices shared earlier in the paper, so the

challenge lay in how best to incorporate those same models and skills into the development of the F.I.R.S.T program to revolutionize the field of protecting and serving.

Method

I feel that there is a misconception that teaching a single technique related to MST is supposed to “fix” a problem, when in reality most practitioners in the sport and performance world will agree that mental training is an ongoing process. This is primarily why I felt that the F.I.R.S.T program needed depth. A type of depth that gets the students participating in the training to ask themselves hard questions that they—quite possibly—have never had to answer. My background as a certified hypnotherapist has allowed me to understand the sport and performance and positive psychology cultures in a way, where I consider myself lucky that I am able to be a part of this growing community. The reason I bring this up, is because I came into this area of science with a clear understanding of how beliefs become deeply rooted in our subconscious, and that it takes quality care to help facilitate change in behavior. Simply teaching a skill has limited affect; but personalizing the experience while teaching that same skill to a deeper level of consciousness, helps the participant connect to why MST techniques work.

As mentioned earlier, developing the F.I.R.S.T program would create challenges that would need to be taken into account as potential roadblocks to teaching a MST course to first responders. One challenge was developing a program where the students would “buy-in” to the information they would be receiving, and trust that the information adds value to their lives and professions. A second challenge was how to best incorporate concepts that most individuals in ego- and testosterone-filled workspaces tend to blow off; crime-fighters typically do not want to talk about their emotions. Finally, the last challenge was to figure out how to veer away from

teaching the subject matter linearly, and facilitate a program that was able to teach core concepts up front—then blend those same concepts later in the training for a holistic learning approach. This holistic approach also needed to drive the students to think about how to add value to their communities by incorporating the concepts from the program.

Also, what was this program supposed to look like? Not only aesthetically, but how much information do you pass on to individuals in a program like this? How long should the program be? How involved do you make the class? How do you translate the importance of mental skills to this particular profession; and similar questions that revolve around structure and intent came up as concerns. In order to answer some of these questions I looked at two working models of similar training programs currently being utilized by the United States Army.

In December 2011, the United States Army 307th Engineer Battalion located on Fort Bragg, North Carolina, became the first fully functionally mental training outfit in the military service (Blank et al., 2014). Since then, the Sapper-Athlete-Warrior program (SAW) and CSF2 have expanded to bases nationwide in order to mentally prepare soldiers for 6-12 month deployments to the Middle East. These programs also focused on educating the soldiers returning home with coping strategies that would help them readjust to life outside of deployment. In order to efficiently incorporate these skills into the whole Army organization, these skills are taught to officer cadets from the beginning of their training at the West Point Military Academy's Center for Enhanced Performance. This program allows for long term practice of the skills throughout the course of the cadet's college career—which means greater understanding of the science and technique, as well as greater retention of information prior to them showing up to their first duty stations. Once they have found a home in their new units, the

officers will best know how to teach and incorporate these skills for overall improved performance and well-being.

The SAW program is a 12-month mental skills training program, created to use holistic training to “develop, train, and sustain soldiers’ physical, mental, and emotional readiness for deployment” (Blank et al., 2014). SAW’s training program implements *Six Pillars of Functionality*: mental toughness, functional fitness, self-reliance, resilience, wellness, and recovery. The program was designed to teach and apply mental skills in various settings prior to deployment (classroom, physical training, field exercises, and simulated situational training exercises), in order to automate using the skills in possible real-world scenarios overseas (Blank et al., 2014). SAW is set up as a periodization timeline consisting of five training cycles spread over the year, hitting key training elements milestones throughout the training sessions in order for the soldier to aid the development of *flow state* (Judge, Bell, Bellar, & Wanless, 2010).

As mentioned earlier, the CSF2 program works from five modules that focus on creating effective ways to cope with stressors and trauma, as well as promote well-being or flourishing. The CSF2 program has a less elaborate yet more intellectually and emotionally engaging program, that takes soldiers from their units for 10 days to teach them the Penn State Positive Psychology Center’s PERMA™ model. Although the students in this Master Resiliency Trainer (MRT) course learn the science and teaching strategies behind a blend of positive psychology and sport and performance techniques, they are also experiencing the course how it is meant to be taught—deeply engaging with their inner awareness. Soldiers have left the course able to use the information to immediately improve situations in their lives—which in turn improves their ability to focus while in uniform (Martin EP Seligman, 2012).

Being that non-military first responders may experience similar stresses and trauma at some point in their careers, the F.I.R.S.T program does not need to veer too far off with what is currently working for our nation's war fighters. The benefit of creating a similar structure is:

- 1) The first responders on the civilian side will benefit in their daily jobs and lives from learning new coping skills to incorporate into their professional and personal lives.
- 2) The soldiers that get out of the service will already be familiar with the type of mental training being implemented; therefore allowing them to continue to work further on their mental training process.

The Structure

The structure of the F.I.R.S.T program is similar to the concept of the CSF2 program, in regards to the timeline of the program. The F.I.R.S.T program was developed into a 5-day, 8-hour course (dependent on the class size), covering seven major categories of information. It was important to create a program that absolutely did not feel too existential; meaning, the participants should not feel like the information presented in the course is "spiritual," "hippie," "woo-woo," "sissy," or any other adjective that individuals who are typically closed-minded to concepts of connecting with one's internal processing may express. Speaking from my Marine Corps experience, it is common for individuals in organizations that encourage competition, machismo, or alpha-male mentality, to not be open to expressing deep emotions. A qualitative study looking into why men do not seek (professional medical) help, identified a theme that deals with the nuances of their social roles in their ecosystem (Tudiver & Talbot, 1999). Within the theme of "personal barriers regarding their social roles," men expressed that they did not like to

feel vulnerable, give up control, or disclose anything about their private life—including anything dealing with concerns about their mental state.

For this reason, creating a sense of lightheartedness to the F.I.R.S.T program became a focus. The subject matter needed to focus on the science behind the subject matter, but not too much science where the content would get lost in translation. The course needed to be able to introduce general hypothetical situations that would get students to explore their very personal beliefs and strategies. Humor was also used throughout the workbook, because F.I.R.S.T needed to be a program that was not profoundly monotone in sadness, but instead an honest attempt to attach emotion to learning. When an individual feels emotion during a significant moment, that moment is likely to become a memory that sticks because emotions drives subconscious intense attention, which promotes learning (Sylwester, 1994).

How can you best get individuals to learn subject matter that will possibly someday improve a bad situation? You get them to experience, reflect, share experiences, and teach. A feature that was important to the structure of the F.I.R.S.T program was the creation of personal interaction within the classroom. F.I.R.S.T was created for the students to experience this process with a cohort, where trust would be built over time through its' structured shared experience. Whether or not learning the subject matter together, teaching the subject matter together, or sharing personal experiences with each other facilitates the shared experience, this works because cohorts promote a sense of trust that over time allows individuals to lower their guard for greater personal growth. Cohorts also challenge the group to tap into critical thinking skills that may test an individual's personal psychological blocks (Beachboard, Beachboard, Li, & Adkison, 2011; Imel, 1999; Spaid & Duff, 2009).

A key piece of the program was creating ways to constantly increase awareness. One of the main themes of the F.I.R.S.T program is that awareness and acknowledgement is key to everything that the first responders do. Therefore, it was important to figure out ways to conceptualize that mentality subtly, yet in a very direct manner, while staying true and relevant to the presented material. This was accomplished by creating engaging activities into the program, where students would be required to reflect on current and past experiences, allowing for in-depth self-reflection. Activities were also created to facilitate application of critical thinking skills to newly learned knowledge, utilizing real-world situations. Increasing awareness also meant that an individual would have to take ownership of not only their actions, but also their thoughts. In order to incorporate this into the program, the word “I” was utilized instead of “you” in as many places throughout the workbook, in an attempt to help create a sense of ownership for the work being done.

Finally, a week prior to the course beginning, an email will be sent to the students with instructions for the up coming class (Appendix A). The email instructs the students on what to expect in the class, provides some background knowledge on the reason that F.I.R.S.T was created, and also provides links to the self-reported test that the students would be asked to complete. There are nine self-reported tests that were chosen for this course, to give a snapshot of a particular aspect of the students’ current characteristics or behavior. The intention of the self-reported tests are not to diagnose symptoms, but instead to provide a baseline assessment of where the student is excelling or experiencing struggles in their lives. The tests required to take are as follows:

- 1) *The Life Values Inventory*: a test that gives an extensively detailed snapshot of an individual's most relevant values as it pertains to personal motivation, relationships, self-improvement, stress and resilience. This particular test also compares an individual's self-determined values to the summarized results of the inventory. This is extremely helpful for an individual to reflect on if their actions are in line with their intentions (R Kelly Crace & Brown, 1996).
- 2) *The VIA Survey of Character Strengths*: created by Dr. Martin Seligman and the Positive Psychology Center at University of Pennsylvania, this test focuses on helping an individual become aware of the character traits that if purposefully utilized in daily interactions, will increase chances of positive interactions. Ultimately, if an individual is more aware of how the best interact with their environment, then those strengths can be utilized for an increased chance of success in professional and personal endeavors, as well as possibility to improve health and well-being (Niemiec, 2013).
- 3) *GRIT*: a concept coined by Dr. Angela Duckworth, this test measures the character strength that deals directly with how an individual perseveres (Angela Lee Duckworth & Quinn, 2009).
- 4) *Hardiness*: this test gives a quick reference of an individual's level of how they relate to stress. Similar to grit and coping, this test just gives an additional view to an individual's method to dealing with stressful situations (Wiebe, 1991).
- 5) *COPE*: this test provides similar information as the last two, by providing an additional perspective to an individual's approach to handling stressful situations (Litman, 2006).

- 6) *Social Support*: the social support questionnaire has an individual reflect on interpersonal relationships as it pertains to trust and support; which is a key factor in building resilience (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farley, 1988).
- 7) *The Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist*: The PTSD checklist, although often used in clinical settings, is a questionnaire that asks the participant to reflect on their behavior throughout the last 30 days in order to become aware of symptoms related to PTSD. Although the instructors of F.I.R.S.T cannot diagnose PTSD, they are responsible for providing the information for an individual to seek help (Ventureyra, Yao, Cottraux, Note, & De Mey-Guillard, 2002).
- 8) *Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS)*: HADS is a self-reported questionnaire that helps clinical professionals diagnose depression and/or anxiety. Again, although the instructors of F.I.R.S.T are not to be diagnosing clinical disorders, awareness of symptoms is essentially the first step into seeking help and changing behavior (Zigmond & Snaith, 1983).
- 9) *Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT)*: this last test is a self-reported questionnaire that allows for the participant to answer questions pertaining to their personal alcohol use (J, 2001).

Again, it is not the intention to diagnose the individuals in the class; only to create awareness. F.I.R.S.T was created to improve well-being by providing individuals with the tools and resources that promote resilience, and the techniques taught are meant to provide more efficient ways to cope with the stresses or traumas an individual is experiencing—if any at all. Although students may choose to disclose the information related to their self-reported test, it is never required. The instructor must respect the sensitive nature of the test results, and respect

confidentiality supported by ethical standards and laws put in place by Health Insurance Portability and Accountability (HIPAA) (Prevention, 2003), Association of Applied Sport Psychology (AASP) (Whelan, 2009), and the American Psychological Association (APA) (Association, 2002).

It is not likely that the scores of the self-reported tests will change significantly following the end of the program; however, these self-reported tests are to be taken again 6- and 12-months out (Appendix B; Appendix C), along with a unique survey specifically interested in the quantity and quality of skill use after the completion of the program. The purpose of revisiting these questionnaires is beneficial in the facts that:

- 1) This type of feedback is imperative to helping improve the program.
- 2) It provides brief repetition through awareness of the information provided of the work the students.
- 3) It gives the students a reference point of how much they have improved—if any improvement has been made.
- 4) It allows for the students to reach back out to the instructors for any type of aide regarding their own well-being.

Modules

Once the intention and outline of how the program was to look and be run had been set, the next step was to fill the F.I.R.S.T program workbook with relevant information pertinent to creating mental toughness and resiliency for the first responders. The challenge here was creating a program that flowed in the sense where the next lesson that would be taught was relevant to the last lesson; and will be relevant for the lesson after it, without utilizing a

causational structure. Although challenging, this could be accomplished due to the subtle relationships between how the skills involved with sport and performance psychology, intertwine between multiple theories and frameworks. For instance, learning about how negative thoughts can affect the cognitive-physiological performance loop (Westbrook, Kennerley, & Kirk, 2007) on Day 2 of the class, would have a significant role in the lessons about character strengths (Martin EP Seligman, 2012) on Day 3; just as much as it would learning about growth mindset (Dweck, 2006) on Day 5 of class.

The following sections will introduce each segment that makes up the F.I.R.S.T program workbook. They sections will explain the intention behind the information and activities incorporated into each segment, as well as any special notes or activities that are not in the student workbook—that may be relevant to instruction.

Day 1: Team Building & Intro to F.I.R.S.T. It is worth mentioning that although the workbook is a single document, only the worksheets relevant to the current day of instruction are to be distributed. This decision was made to control any overwhelming feelings created by the amount of information in the workbook, limit students from working ahead, and attempt to limit the possibility of starting the day of instruction with a closed mind due to predisposed beliefs about peculiar or private subject matter. This decision also allowed for an element of surprise of what exactly would be covered in class on the day of distribution, which can keep the learning process entertaining.

The first day of instruction is specific to informing the students about the necessity of fostering good coping methods for stressful situations and traumatic events. Throughout this day, information is presented on the statistical data that has been collected over the course of the

last decade; that pertains to retention in their job space, mental health disorders, job satisfaction, as well as how all of that relates to their personal health and relationships outside of work.

Students go over the program expectations, as well as share their own expectations for what they want to get out of the program. After in-class introductions, the students are also *re-introduced* to themselves. The very first exercise in the workbook requires the students to reflect on the reasons why they chose to become first responders. This key moment will come back up often throughout the course.

A main focus of Day 1 is establishing unit cohesion by creating the type of environment that the class decides to design for their cohort. The workbook introduces specific exercises created to explore each individual's beliefs of what qualities and characteristics make up a good team player, as well as a good team. Utilizing their collective information, the students build "the dream team," by working together to set the foundational standard of what it will take to be a good team player, as well as a good team throughout the course. Similarly, the students share their ideas of anything that could possibly ruin the course (i.e., speaking out of turn, pulling rank, cell phone use, bringing smelly cheese, etc; imaginations are encouraged). From this information the class will have collectively created their own rules and regulations for their particular cohort. This process essentially begins the development of the "team" by showing that this is not an instructor-based course; and encourages engagement through immediate inclusion (C. J. Hardy & Crace, 1997), which plays an integral role by breaking down barriers that can ruin an student's experience during this program.

After the introduction to the F.I.R.S.T program, and the creation of the cohort's classroom environment has been established, the students will begin to reflect on their own personal experiences with how they deal with setbacks and trauma in the workbook. From the

instructors standpoint, it is understood that the students may not want to share their personal experiences, and that should be respected. In the beginning of the program, instructors are to allow plenty of time for silence; people tend to become uncomfortable with silence and speak up, just to not feel uncomfortable any longer. However, it is imperative that the focus of the instructor is to promote as much involvement as possible. That can be accomplished through beginning conversation with probing questions that lead to open ended-questions, utilizing active listening and repeating techniques, empathy over sympathy, and repurposing information received—and turning it into a probing question. An example of that may sound like this:

*“Who has experienced trauma before? *silence* Who has seen something traumatic like a fatal car accident that stuck with you for a little bit after seeing it? *hands should raise* Petterson, can I ask what you experienced during that moment?” “Fear. I felt fragile. That girl was my daughter’s age” “How did that affect your relationship with your daughter/job/yourself? ... Yeah. I’m understanding that you were really affected by that accident. It affected your (feed back their feelings and emotions as closely to their words as possible)... thanks for sharing with the rest of us Petterson! I can actually relate to a lot of that. How about anyone else, has anyone ever experienced fear or felt fragile after experiencing something while on duty?”*

The concept of *flourishing*, also known as the theory of well-being is also to be introduced in the beginning of Day 1 (Martin EP Seligman, 2012). Focusing on improving well-being by improving emotional states, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishments in one’s life, flourishing is one of the key frameworks that will be revisited often throughout the program; typically through the question, “*How can you use [this] to flourish? How can you use [this] to help your community flourish?*” The reasons behind this are twofold:

- 1) To promote critical thinking revolving around how to increase flourishing in their own lives.
- 2) To understand that their personal positive involvement in their communities, is detrimental to its long term welfare.

Day 1 also introduces a few other key concepts that will also be reintegrated throughout our time together in the course. The first is learning how negativity affects the mind and body, as well as working to develop a strong sense of gratitude. There are a few ways that gratefulness is intertwined into the program on throughout this segment. One way being the use of the Losada ratio (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005; Losada & Heaphy, 2004); a technique used to improve relationships by utilizing a 3:1 ratio as it pertains to positive vs. negative expressions. Throughout the creation of this course, this technique has been weaved into classroom activities between students, exercises relating to communication, positive self-talk, and homework (optional) created with the intention on improving relationships with others. This is based off research that found that companies and marriages that “flourished” were more inclined to have more positive interactions, and when a negative event took place it affected the relationship or ecosystem nominally (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005; Losada & Heaphy, 2004).

The second is an at home-exercise created by the Penn Positive Psychology team called, “What Went Well?” (Martin EP Seligman, 2012). This exercise requires the students to journal about their day, noting no less than three positive things about that day. Each statement is to be followed up with a statement explaining why that event happened and why it was significant enough to note in their gratitude journal. Each morning of the F.I.R.S.T program, students are encouraged to share something that they journaled. When the human body experiences happiness, (Cox, 2018; Kim & Kyung), the body receives an increase of endorphins (the feel

good hormone) and serotonin (nature's antidepressant). Thinking about a moment of gratitude produces similar, if not the same amounts of endorphins and serotonin as experiencing the moment all over again. Therefore the science behind sharing these moments in class revolves around priming the students to experience this sensation first thing in the morning, as well as the last thing they experience at night; which may help to promote new positive habits that blend into other areas of their lives.

The last few key concepts are simple:

- 1) "Acknowledgment is key"
- 2) "Keep an open mind"
- 3) "Trust the process"
- 4) "Control the Controllables."

These terms have become staple mantras in the sport and performance psychology world, and will be used as an important reminder as it pertains to staying open to the materials being taught throughout the course. More importantly, they are essential foundational reminders for increasing well-being and resiliency that are often repeated throughout the program.

Day 2: Mental Skills Training & Signature Strengths. Day 1 set the foundational work covering *why* the students are learning what they are, but Day 2 sets the foundational work on *what* the students will be learning as it pertains to mental skills. Once again, each module begins with a self-reflection exercise that will be revisited later on in the lesson. Day 2 begins with reflecting on the students' current level of mental toughness, as well as strategies they may have used to overcome a particularly hard moment they have experienced in the past.

Day 1 and Day 2 are extremely important for this particular program, in that the class focuses on normalizing vocabulary we would be using throughout the week. Concepts such as gratitude, flourishing, emotions, mindfulness, and even mental training are automatic turn-offs for individuals in this type of environment, and therefore we normalize these existential ideas, by attaching them to people and companies that they can relate to. Therefore one of the first items on the agenda is to introduce who is utilizing mental training skills in the professional world; and provide examples showing how essential these skills have been toward the success of individuals and companies that the students know and respect.

“Controlling the Controllables,” is a key truth that is introduced on Day 2, as well as the power of internal and external awareness. In the mental skills training module, the students are introduced to the cognitive-physiological performance loop (Adams, 1971; Lane, Wilson, Whyte, & Shave, 2011), which is an adaptation of the Adams closed-loop theory. There are many models of feedback loops varying from dealing with sexual experiences (Palace, 1995), to neurolinguistic programming (Bandler & Grinder, 1975); and is also generally known as a negative feedback loop in most systems or disciplines (Carver & Scheier, 1990). Students will be introduced to and have to work through various scenarios of acknowledging how thoughts, feelings, body functions and performance all intertwine; and how a change in one can have a detrimental impact on the others. This lesson will be essential in order to understand the following lessons throughout the course.

This section briefly touches on gratitude once again, but then moves into introducing the student's to the power of optimism (Scheier & Carver, 1987; Martin EP Seligman, 2006). Stressing the fact that optimism can be a learned trait (M. E. P. Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), it is imperative to educate the students that optimism is a likely factor in an individuals'

will to cope with hardship and trauma. Students will be introduced to research reporting that optimistic patients with cardiovascular disease (CVD) tend to live longer than those who are pessimistic (Martin EP Seligman, 2008). Although the students also work through a few in-class exercises focusing on promoting optimism, as it pertains to their individual work on themselves, optimism will be addressed in depth later in the course.

A large piece of Day 2 is setting the foundational of proper goal setting. Revisiting the literature review surrounding goal setting, one definition of mental toughness defined was the ability of an individual to be able to accomplish their goal(s) in the face of pressure (Fitzwater et al., 2018), which falls in line with the program's desire of building a more resilient individual. Once again, a properly set goal provides a reference point and direction to desired outcomes (Locke & Latham, 2006), therefore it is essential to educate the students that no matter how menial a task, goals are the foundation of growing and becoming stronger both personally and professionally (Doran, 1981). In this portion of the course, the instructor introduces the process of turning the "what I want to achieve," into "how I will achieve it," by introducing the class to the SMART goal process. This process helps place focus on defining the *outcome*, *performance*, and *process* goals that when taken care of at the lowest level, will ultimately lead to the "main" outcome goal (Burton, 1989b; Daw & Burton, 1994).

While creating this module, I felt that it was important to show that many people set goals and fail to achieve them due to multiple reasons. People quit for not seeing results fast enough, people quit for having set too unrealistic goals upfront, and people quit working toward their goals because they were irrelevant to their values or intentions—therefore non-essential to their underlying desires. Therefore I wanted to figure out how best to teach goals to students, and

show that proper goal setting takes planning, time, and commitment. I accomplished this by utilizing the goal setting process taught to the students, and introduced them to juggling.

I used the SMART method myself and created this goal:

I will teach Outcome, Performance (action), and Process goals to individuals that I will instruct (in a class that I will create) by teaching myself how to juggle 3 bags, 5 times within 1 month...and documenting it, so that I can put a video together of my errors and successes...but more importantly—the process of showing THE PROCESS of setting a goal and achieving it, by focusing on the process instead of the outcome.

I documented the process of setting my performance and process goals, practicing the basic movements for at least ten minutes a day, and I dropped the ball—*a lot*. Utilizing this process, I was successful in teaching myself how to juggle within a week; then I modified the goal to see how many times I would be able to successfully juggle at the end of my allotted month. This turned out to be the perfect project to show that every outcome has a process, and achieving goals takes work—and a lot of mistakes.

After having the students go through the process of setting their own goals, they are challenged to show how they can use this information to help their communities flourish. The example given in the workbook revolves around an officer who decides that they want to improve the relationship between the department and the local gang, in the safest way possible. Students then share their community goals, and provide feedback to their classmates. Being that this is not an exercise of right or wrong, the process of sharing with the cohort is designed to spark ideas for other first responders so that they may choose to incorporate something similar in to the communities that they serve.

The topic of goals is concluded by showing that the science behind psychology and goal achievement has moved into the technological world of mobile application (apps) development. Students are shown that apps are being created in order to aide individuals achieve goals such as

becoming more mindful through meditation (Calm, 2012; H. Meditation, 2010), learn yoga (YogaGlo, 2009) and focus on their breathing exercises (Breethe, 2015). Apps have been developed to help train an individual who has never ran a day in their life to run their first 5k (LTD, 2011; Six-to-Start, 2016); there are even apps to help you develop those washboard abs you have been putting off for the past 17 summers (LLP, 2014). This industry is able to continue to expand because of the process of understanding the foundations of the goal achievement theory as well as utilizing the SMART goal format (Chiong & Shuler, 2010; Patrick et al., 2014).

The second part of Day 2 revolves around the students learning about their signature character strengths, and how to incorporate those strengths in their daily tasks. Character strengths are defined as traits or characteristics of your personality that represent your patterns of thought process, your emotional engagement, and your overall engaging behavior (Martin EP Seligman, 2012). Instead of focusing on what you like to do, these traits are theoretically more in line with your personal values of how you would like to be and how you would like world to see you as.

There are six classes of virtues which umbrella twenty-four character strengths (Matthews, Eid, Kelly, Bailey, & Peterson, 2006; Niemiec, 2013; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The six virtues and twenty-four character strengths that make them up are: *Wisdom & Knowledge*: fostered from *curiosity, love of learning, judgment, ingenuity, social intelligence*, as well as *perspective*. *Courage*: cultivated by *valor, perseverance*, as well as *integrity*. *Humanity & Love*: fed from *kindness and loving*. *Justice*: fostered from *citizenship, fairness*, and *leadership*. *Temperance*: which houses *self-control, prudence*, as well as *humility*. *Transcendence*: nurtured from *appreciation of beauty, gratitude, optimism, spirituality, forgiveness, humor*, and *zest*.

The character strength model states that every individual in the world has the same twenty-four strengths; however, every individual also works from a separate set of core strengths. Core strengths are said to be the most prevalent characteristics of how an individual interacts with the world, and ultimately factor into the creation of an individual's personality. For example, an individual who scores high on humor might approach most situations in a humorous way; this includes making jokes during inappropriate times.

As it pertains to helping build mental toughness and resilience, the research behind the character strengths show that engaging any obstacle with your most prevalent character strengths increases well-being, decreases depression, enhances empathy and altruism, as well as improves self-awareness (Niemiec, 2013; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Therefore students learn that engaging their environment from their character strengths can help to promote successful social resilience. Working from one's strengths exposes an individual's authentic self, promotes self-efficacy, as well as increases the likeness of achieving success in goal attainment. It is also noteworthy to mention that if an individual does not believe their strengths line up with their own personal view of themselves, it is possible to work on improving character strengths that fall more in line with how they would like to be viewed by their social networks. This information is presented to the students in order to give the students more insight in how their strengths can be utilized to increase performance in their personal and professional lives. For example, if an individual would like to be viewed as an optimistic person, they must work daily to become more optimistic (Martin EP Seligman, 2012).

Day 3: Emotions. The lessons presented in Day 3 begin to blend instruction together from earlier lessons in the week circling creating awareness, and weaves that information into learning how to acknowledge what triggers their anxiety, as well as how to cue a functional emotional state that will lead to optimal performance. This module begins by learning about the power of anxiety.

Students are asked to list the things in their lives that create anxiety. The students are then introduced to the foundations of state and trait anxiety, and how anxiety can negatively affect the body and mind. Revisiting their lists of what causes anxiety, the students shares their experiences with anxiety; hopefully normalizing some of the anxieties experienced, through shared empathy.

The students then learn that anxiety should not be solely linked to negative ideology, and this is expressed by introducing the Yerkes-Dodson law; also known as the Inverted-U (Krane, 1992; Teigen, 1994). The students participate in a class exercise created to visually show how anxiety affects different people. Men and women are given two separate colors of markers (if there is a decent mix of the two; if not, one color will suffice), and students are asked predetermined questions, and to mark where their anxiety levels fall on a large Inverted-U chart. This activity is intended to show that everyone responds to pressure differently—a very important message to understand in a first responder organization. Seeing the variation of where the students' colleagues lay on the scale compared to each other creates awareness that everyone feels pressure and can become fragile; nobody needs to handle anything alone—because it is likely somebody has gone through [it] before.

Conversation about optimal levels of performance continues with the introduction of the Individual Zones of Optimal Functioning (IZOF) model. Students are able to transfer the

information received from the previous inverted-u exercise and make better sense of why some people feel anxiety in areas they do not, and vice versa. Again, this information is key for the students to establish a heightened level of awareness within their own processing of information, therefore to simplify the process of acknowledging where their levels are, Ken Ravizza's Stop Light Model (Hanson & Ravizza, 1995) is introduced to the class.

The stop light model is a simple concept that can be easily understood; where green means good and red means danger. Explaining it from a scientific lens, an individual should attach the feelings of an optimal performance state to the light's "go" state, or green light. This means that an individual must be aware of what an optimal state feels like somatically, as well as what they experience cognitively when functioning at optimal levels. At any time throughout the day, if there is a negative shift in thoughts, feelings, emotions, or performance outside of what it feels like when working in the green light, an individual is now working in the yellow light. For example, missing breakfast may instantly take an individual from green to yellow, which for this individual means not only is their stomach tight and upset, but focusing on how hungry they are takes away focus from the task at hand, creating a snowball effect of negative responses—resulting in working in the red light, or catastrophizing; which is later introduced throughout the day.

The students are presented with two questions that focus awareness toward what their cognitive and somatic behaviors are like at their best and worst states. These questions require the students recall two very specific events that they can remember vividly, and can detail the emotions, feelings, and self-talk during those moments. The purpose here is to get the students to acknowledge some of their specific processing so that when they feel those processes happening specifically, they can acknowledge immediately and address the issue in order to

change state. For example: “*when I drive on the 405 and someone cuts me off to go just as fast as they were going in the other lane I notice right before I get verbally mad, I grip the steering wheel and can feel my head getting red.*” Although these are very basic moments for two events, this process of reflection teaches the students to really dig deep and not only acknowledge, but become very familiar with these feelings. Becoming more intimate with the process of becoming self-aware, the lesson moves into teaching the students how to acknowledge their personal triggers and cues.

Although triggers and cues are essentially the same thing by definition, for the F.I.R.S.T program specifically, the word “trigger” is intended to acknowledge negative states, and the word “cue” is used to acknowledge positive states. The thought behind this decision was twofold:

- 1) Differentiating between the two allows for less confusion and simple instruction.
- 2) This course was created with the initial intention to reduce unarmed deaths due to police gunfire. Attaching the word “trigger” to the students’ negative state is utilizing a Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) technique called anchoring (Boughattas, Missoum, & Moella, 2017; Hayes, 2006); where a predetermined stimulus response is “triggered” by “firing the anchor.”

Essentially the belief is, by anchoring the word “trigger” to the concept of activating a negative response throughout the lesson related to focusing on functioning at optimum performance levels, touching a trigger mechanism on a weapon may associate the awareness to their actions in that moment (which will be explained more in Day 4’s lesson of focus), allowing for immediate state change.

The period of instruction then moves into five categorical areas of triggers and cues: Time, location, past events, emotions, and other people (Bandler & Grinder, 1975). Examples are given to each category so the students can get a good idea of how each category can be triggered or cued. For example, an individual may get hungry at 10 am every morning; this would be a *time* cue. Every time a person sits on the sweet spot of their couch they fall asleep within minutes—could be a *place* cue, or even an *event* depending on how individuals define that moment for themselves. In order to expand awareness of what they experience while in their performance states, students are to take time to reflect on their own personal triggers and cues through the five scenarios.

The module moves forward with the introduction of secondary gains; or reasons that an individual may continue to behave in a particular manner that is not optimal for their performance. Once again, students are required to reflect if there are emotions or physical states that they find themselves engaging in due to being awarded for an unhealthy behavior. This is introduced as supplemental information and is not a key element in the course, but it does allow for a full range of informative information about why we do the things we do.

Once the students have created a strong base of knowledge behind triggers and cues, they are then introduced to techniques to control anxiety. Because of the importance to be able to build up anxiety when arousal is low as well as reduce it when arousal is high, the techniques introduced in this lesson focus on: breathing, imagery and visualization, self-talk, progressive muscle relaxation, movement meditation such as Tai Chi and yoga, meditation, and *guided* imagery. The reason *imagery* and *guided imagery* are separated, is simply because the students are taught imagery as a tool where they control what is being focused on for a quick ramp up or relaxation technique, and guided imagery is a journey that they are taken on through prerecorded

scripts or a third party such as a facilitator, apps, or YouTube videos (G. Meditation, 2018; H. Meditation, 2010).

The first part of Day 3 focused heavily regulating self-control as it pertains to anxiety, and the second part of the day focuses heavily on cognitive self-control. The students are first introduced to limiting beliefs—or as it is introduced in the workbook, thinking traps and iceberg thinking (Martin EP Seligman, 2012, pp. 167-174). Thinking traps are the irrational thoughts that interfere with effective thought processing. These thoughts tend to revolve around unlikely scenarios created by a fear in order to protect our ego, emotions, or our pride. They negatively affect self-esteem, self-efficacy, confidence, and the ability to focus on the present moment. Thinking traps may be present in statements of doubt such as, *“I’ve been working to cut this weight for the last 2 weeks and nothing works. I’m going to be fat forever,”* or *“they’re all laughing at me. I don’t belong here.”*

If thinking traps are related to fears, *iceberg thinking* would be related to phobias. Iceberg thinking is defined as focusing on the *most* negative events that could happen in an event. These are not thoughts, they are beliefs—and they are so deeply rooted in an individual’s subconscious that there is no amount of reasoning that would change the belief in a moment’s time. Thinking traps are momentary, often experienced in real time due to current events; whereas iceberg thinking has been developed over time, and can potentially affect not only the individual having the thoughts, but the social circle surrounding that individual as well.

An example from the workbook explore the way the students access situations, utilizing open-ended questions such as; *“Deathly afraid of airplanes—although semi-obsessed with researching plane crashes, you’ve been asked to give a speech at your 20 year reunion in the Bahamas. During a violent bout of turbulence, your captain accidentally hits the intercom as he*

says “Uh-oh...” The student is given the opportunity to fill in their stream of thoughts for how they would experience those moments. Although the scenario’s are a bit leading into the worst case scenario, student’s responses will vary; resulting with some being more optimistic than others, and some creating the worst possible scenario imaginable.

Eight types of thinking traps (Jackson & Watkin, 2004):

- 1) Catastrophizing - which is when an individual creates the absolute worst-case scenario that, *could* happen.
- 2) Filtering - when an individual focuses only on negative information, filtering out all of the positive.
- 3) Over-Estimating Danger - expecting the most dangerous thing to happen.
- 4) Labeling - negatively summing up ourselves with a word or a phrase.
- 5) Over-Generalization - over utilizing (and believing) NEVER, or ALWAYS statements.
- 6) Mind Reading - assuming what other people are thinking, typically negative thoughts directed at the mind reader.
- 7) Black & White thinking – thinking in extremes of THIS OR THAT, never in middle ground.
- 8) Fortune Telling – having the obvious ability to predict the future, typically in favor of the worst-case scenario.

Bringing focus back to the negative feedback loops, students are given three steps to work themselves out of the traps. The questions the students are taught to ask themselves in the moments that they experiencing thinking traps and iceberg thinking are:

1) *Where are you getting trapped in your thoughts?*

The students are encouraged to acknowledge the beliefs that have held them back from their goals, and what creates the most anxiety for them.

2) *Why are you getting trapped?*

Understanding that this may not be a 5-minute exercise, the process of tracing back emotions to past experiences that do not hold value to the experiences of today is a valuable tool to learn. Learning how the belief holds value leads into,

3) *How is this belief affecting you?*

The students are taught that if the belief adds no value to their lives, they are able to reprogram their mindsets into new known associations and beliefs that benefit them by using a technique called reframing (Stoeber & Janssen, 2011).

Reframing is introduced to the students through a fun exercise of showing pictures that at first glance is one image, but if you look at it differently you can see another completely separate picture. One famous picture at first glance is the side profile of an old lady's face, but if you redefine the old lady's nose as a left chin on the side of a face, it could also be a portrait of a young girl looking off in the distance. Six similar pictures in the workbook lead the students into the coursework for reframing.

As it pertains to controlling one's performance, reframing is the process of changing an irrational thought as it occurs, and replacing it with a more rational and effective thought. One key misconception that was important to address, was that the reframed thought or belief must *always* be reframed into something positive. This is incorrect. The most important information that should be taken from this lesson is that the reframed statements just need to be *more* positive than the previous belief. The ultimate goal is to change a negative belief system that does not

add value to a situation, by restructuring it to create optimism for future success. For practice, the students are asked to work through an exercise that revisits their *thought traps* in order to work on reframing them, but also focus on creating moments of clarity behind “why” these thoughts come up—if possible. The purpose of doing this in class is for the student to be able to actively work through some of these limiting beliefs while being able consult with instructors or even other students; showing that they can relinquish control that their limiting beliefs hold over them. Finalizing the instructional period of reframing, the students are given the task to explore how they can promote flourishing in their lives, as well as how they can help their communities flourish utilizing reframing techniques.

The last lesson revolving around emotions and cognitive functioning, introduces the students to the topic of appropriate emotions—focusing primarily on the stages of grief (Axelrod, 2006; Barone & Ivy, 2004). A vital point to learn from this lesson is that, a key process of increasing resiliency is having the ability to understand the emotions that you are feeling and not denying them, not making them into something they are not, and allowing them to be present and unjudged. There are no exercises associated with learning about appropriate emotions; however, the students are introduced to the Kübler-Ross *5 Stages of Grief*.

Students should finish this lesson understanding that grief is healthy, and that there are many ways that people grieve. They should also understand that acknowledging the emotions they are experiencing gives them the power to bounce back; it gives them the power of resiliency through learning from pain, and using that for growth. The last key message: grieving is not linear, and there is no timeline on the grieving process.

Day 4: Motivation & Focus. The beginning of Day 4 introduces motivation, and what drives an individual's motivation. Initially the students are asked about the things that motivate them regarding their profession, family, health, and free time. This preps the conversation for the motivation behind the motivation, which leads in to the lessons revolving around intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, as well as how our values drive motivation.

The students should leave this lesson with the understanding that whether the decision is conscious or not, motivation is the driving force behind all actions. This is introduced to the students by first introducing two foundational models that come from separate, yet similar angles. The first model of motivation introduced is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943); which indicates that humans are motivated to reach a point of self-actualization (the fulfillment of an individual's potential). Philosophers will argue that one may never reach the pinnacle of fulfilling one's potential, however Maslow's pyramid is symbolic that we as individuals, are working to establish a strong base built off of the last generations' work. Essentially, if we never hit self-actualization, we are working to create a strong foundation for the generation behind us to have a head-start on their journey to reach theirs.

The second model of motivation is Steven Reiss's 16 Basic Desires (Reiss, 2000, 2002, 2004; Reiss & Havercamp, 1998). Reiss denoted that humans have 16 separate reasons that explain the way we behave. His model maps out the relationship between an individual's basic needs and the feeling that satisfying the desire achieves. For example, the desire to eat (motive; extrinsic motivation) causes an individual to seek out nutrition, which is essential for survival in order to avoid hunger (intrinsic feeling). Other examples from motive to intrinsic feeling are: family \Rightarrow love, independence \Rightarrow freedom, and status \Rightarrow self-Importance.

It is important to note that although these models of motivation are included in the F.I.R.S.T workbook, they are not to be endorsed as the correct nor only models of motivation. However, the motive behind introducing these two specific models to the students is to introduce the idea that motives begin at the most basic needs and wants for survival, and then can be expanded onward from there—*if* an individual feels that the goal is worth achieving. This thought allows for the introduction to task-focused vs. ego-focused motivation; or what drives an individual to complete their goals or satisfy their desires?

An activity earlier in the course had students reflect on how they would prepare for a contest where they could win a car, based solely on their strengths and weaknesses. To express how motivation can change depending on external incentive as well as personal perception of their skill levels, the students were introduced to the scenario again; this time changing factors that change the level of difficulty of the contest. Given various new scenarios, the students reflect on how they would approach the contest once again. The purpose of re-introducing this scenario in this fashion was to display the differences between task-focused motivation (which is typically derived from intrinsic motivation and process focused), and ego-focused motivation (which is typically extrinsic in nature and outcome focused).

The conversation of task- and ego-focused motivation segues into the discussion of motivation because of individual values; a set of guidelines or beliefs of what an individual determines is good and bad that drive behavior. They are the moral compass of action. In this conversation, the students are asked to reflect on the things they value in their personal and professional lives, as well as what they value about their community. They are also asked to revisit their *Life Value Inventory* to compare how their self-reported questionnaire line up with their self-disclosed values named in the exercise. Reflecting on their individual values, the

students are then asked to find a relationship (if any) with their values and their top five character strengths. The purpose of reflecting on the student's values and strengths are to show that motivation can also derive from how an individual chooses to live their life. If an individual values honesty, they will most likely be motivated to be truthful as well as surround themselves around truthful people. If an individual values success, then motivation may be focused on diligent decision-making, organization, time management, nutrition, sleep, etc...

The lesson moves into sharing the story of Sisyphus (Roman & Roman, 2010), who in the afterlife is said to continue to push a boulder up a mountain for all eternity, only because he had been given a sliver of hope that one day the rock he pushes up the hill will release him from the afterworld. Optimistic that he may once again outsmart the gods who punished him with this eternal task in order to walk amongst men once again, Sisyphus continues to push his boulder back to the top of the hill. This story segues into the topic of both learned optimism and learned helplessness (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978; Maier & Seligman, 1976; Martin EP Seligman, 2006; Martin E Seligman & Beagley, 1975).

In order to introduce learned helplessness, an exercise designed to create a sense of learned helplessness is given to the students. This exercise requires that half the class get a sheet of paper with anagrams that are solvable, and half the class get a sheet of paper with only one word that is solvable—which happens to be the last word, and also the hardest to solve. The students are asked to solve the first word and raise their hands when done. The students are asked to solve the second word and raise their hands when done. The students are asked to solve the third word, and so on until the last word. What happens is that the student's with the unsolvable words will look around and see their peers raising their hands, and wonder why they are not able to solve these anagrams. By the last anagram, the students with the unsolvable anagrams have

now psyched themselves out, leading a majority of the students to believe that they will be unable to solve the only solvable anagram on their paper. These students have learned helplessness.

Complimenting the exercise, a story of Dr. Seligman's first and last time doing research on animals is shared with the students introducing the concepts of learned helplessness and learned optimism. The research revolved around implanting tumors with a 50% lethality rate on the sides of rats, splitting them up into three test groups, and then administering one session of 64 mild escapable shocks to two of the 3 test groups. Between the two groups receiving shock, one group was able to turn off the shock with the push of a switch, and for the other group—shock was inescapable (Visintainer & Seligman, 1982, pp. 437-439). 25% of the rats that had been given no option to escape the shocks rejected the tumor (75% lethality rate), where 75% of the rats that had the ability to escape shock rejected the tumor killing 25%. The control group resulted in an approximately 50% survival rate. The author determines that having the perceived ability to being able to control one's own fate may, demonstrate that optimism strengthened the rat's belief that it can control its outcome; or create an instilled belief that pain and suffering is temporary.

This test has been redesigned and duplicated in a number of ways with similar results, therefore this phenomena was labeled as learned helplessness; or deciding that no matter what is done to attempt to control the response of an action, the attempt will be ineffective—therefore the participant learns to become helpless (Abramson et al., 1978; Martin EP Seligman, 2012, pp. 184-189; Trifunović et al., 2015, pp. 187-193). However, there was a second large finding within the data of learned helplessness. During the research of creating escapable and inescapable scenarios, approximately one-third of the inescapable subjects never learned

helplessness (Martin EP Seligman, 2012, p. 188). This finding led to the creation of *learned optimism*: the hypothesis that some people (and rats) simply believed that setbacks in life are temporary and/or changeable. Therefore, it was this optimistic mindset that allowed the subjects to harbor the strength to “bounce back” from a negative situation faster than their counterparts (Abramson et al., 1978). This is the core of what it means to be resilient.

Discussion of this study is meant to facilitate discussion of times the students experienced similar incidents; ones that halted growth, stopped them from pursuing goals, or inhibited their belief in themselves in face of challenges. It is this discussion that allows for a smooth transition into the lesson of growth mindset and posttraumatic growth in Day 5, but to continue this module there is a short refresher revisiting what has been covered in class up to this point. The intention is for the students to be able to recognize that the lessons leading up to this point weave together and are all complimentary of the bigger picture of creating the ability to bounce back and stay mentally strong in tough situations.

This lesson was important to include in to the program because of the way that individuals approach what they believe to be “failure.” Unlike Sisyphus, when times get tough, individuals learn to lose; but instead the focus needs to turn back to learned optimism, which requires individuals to have a level of blind faith that things can and will get better. These frameworks are introduced to the program to refocus the student’s attention on the power of optimism, prior to moving into learning Albert Ellis’s ABC model.

No, the intention is not for the first responders to be able to leave the F.I.R.S.T program and behave as a clinical therapist. The intention is for the first responders to have as many tools and resources as possible, so that they may be able to strengthen their self-awareness to a point where they can immediately acknowledge their thoughts and emotions. First responders often

find themselves in situations that are different and challenging; and often, people do not understand that their reactions are often misdirected—typically due to a misinterpretation of an external event. An example that the students are presented with and are asked to work through is a scenario following: *a couple that had just had their 3rd fight this week, and now the wife is not picking up her phone.* Various beliefs about why she is not picking up the phone are listed, which ultimately leads the husband in the scenario escalating to irrationally thoughts quickly. The students walk through this process step-by-step, in where after acknowledging the irrational behavior, they challenge it and come up with more logical scenarios that are more likely and give the individual back self-control, and the ability to focus on the task at hand clearly.

Students are asked to work through a thought trap that they may be experiencing currently, or have experienced in the past. Students work through the ABC model and then have the opportunity to share with their classmates for more insight on different approaches they may have missed. Once an individual is proficient at acknowledging their internal processing, they will be more effective in refocusing their energy into altering old and ineffective behaviors, into more efficient actions. Therefore it is essential to teach the first responders that the external triggers are not the cause of how an individual reacts (or does not react), but instead their beliefs about the external event are the real driving force behind consequences; adding to the message that optimism is a key factor in determining whether or not an individual is truly resilient, and it is important for the students to take this away from the course.

The last exercise revolving around this lesson, introduces a scenario that may happen to the officers in their respective communities. They are given an activating event of catching a student ditching school for the third time this week, and are asked to work through the ABC model to show the progression of how beliefs can change from illogical to logical. Once this

activity has been completed, the students are asked to sit down with the truant student's family and utilize a combination of the tools that have been learned in class up until this point, to create a plan that will improve this family's situation. Once again, the students will share their created plans with the class—with the intention to promote learning through hearing how other students attempt to resolve the family's issue. This wraps up the first part of Day 4.

The second part of Day 4 revolves around learning how to improve focus. Focus is the concentration for this portion of the class because it is an ideal central point to start to bring the earlier lessons together. It is explained to the students that the work they have done up until this point is extraordinary in the sense that many people never get to learn how to acknowledge their emotions, thoughts, beliefs, or triggers and cues. Many people don't understand they have ultimate control of their behaviors, and the students are praised for all the hard work they have done up until this point. It is important to reiterate the reason for learning this information—and that is to create mental toughness and resiliency through learning better ways to cope.

Students are given an exercise asking them to name all the things that need their attention at any given moment. Once complete, they are asked to break down the strategies they used to recall that information. This is priming the information for a later reference in the chapter, that an individual's thoughts are organized—and often people have strategies connected to the way they learn, process, and recall information.

The students are introduced to seven strategies to improve memory (Bower, 1970; Lachman, Weaver, Bandura, Elliot, & Lewkowicz, 1992; Verhaeghen, Marcoen, & Goossens, 1992). Those strategies are:

- 1) Converting information into a picture
- 2) Assimilating an item to a name

- 3) Using mnemonic devices
- 4) Rhymes
- 5) Attaching a memory to a location
- 6) Attaching a memory to an emotion
- 7) Creating a pattern or categorization.

The students then are given a game where the students stare at a picture for 60 seconds and then are asked to recall as many items as possible.

Students are then taught about being present in the moment, and are given two exercises to acknowledge how often our thoughts veer from where they are meant to be. The students are asked to first, place their phones face down on the desk, and annotate every time they thought about picking up their phone, as well as every time they actually picked it up. The exercise moves into the second part, which requires that the students sit and focus on one thought for 5-10 minutes. During this single point meditation exercise, the students are given the instructions to simply think of the word “relax,” and then once attention starts to be pulled away from the word “relax” just simply pull the focus back to where it needs to be; and reflect on the experience once complete.

Awareness and emotional control are reintroduced, and students are informed on how arousal levels can negatively affect focus. Being able to acknowledge what your body is experiencing as it pertains to present moment arousal levels (utilizing stop light processing, inverted-U, or IZOF), is a key factor in being able to move into the next lesson of Attentional Control training (ACT) (Nideffer & Sharpe, 1978). ACT is presented initially by utilizing a scenario that will be referred back to throughout the steps of teaching this process. The scenario is: *You’ve responded to a home invasion, and the suspect is said to still be on premises and is*

armed. You notice that your fear of dying is kicking into gear big time, and can't stop thinking about your newborn baby at home. This cognitive thought has triggered a somatic response of feeling sick to your stomach, your muscles are tense, and your hands are sweaty.

Prior to moving forward in instruction, the students learn the concept of mental speed (Brand, 1981; Nettelbeck & Rabbitt, 1992; Roberts & Stankov, 1999), which addresses the benefit of having as much information stored in memory to save time on the mental processing of external cues. This is related to the first main element of ACT, which states the people are unable to multitask; and is demonstrated by asking the students to sing the ABC's to the happy birthday song. The students should notice that the task is not as easy as singing the ABC's regularly. This is because although it is a similar task to something they are familiar with (both singing happy birthday and the ABC's), the task was not learned and trained in that precise way; therefore it takes more focus to mentally process how to complete that particular task.

Once that point has been made, the attentional focus schemas are introduced. The students are taught the baseline knowledge of the four focal quadrants in the following manner:

- 1) External-General/Broad (aware): describes an individual's focus schema where they are receiving general external cues and are assessing how to react (Nideffer, 1976); an individual walks into a room and scans it to see how many people are present.
- 2) Internal-General/Broad (strategic): describes an individual's focus schema where they are taking the external cues received from the "aware" state, and comparing that data to previously stored internal data about that particular situation in order to create a strategy and a plan to engage (Nideffer, 1976; J. M. Williams et al., 2010); looking out the window an individual notices big dark clouds are forming in the sky, and the tree branches are swaying abnormally. In the past these external cues have resulted in a cold

rainy day, therefore a decision is made to change out of shorts and a t-shirt, into something more appropriate.

- 3) External-Focused/Narrow (focused): describes an individual's focus schema where they are engaging with an external source (Nideffer, 1976); a batter or golfer keeping their eye on the ball before, during, and after contact.
- 4) Internal-Focused/Narrow (systematic), describes an individual's focus schema where they are checking in on their internal responses prior to, or during a situation (Nideffer, 1976; J. M. Williams et al., 2010); "checking in" for breath control, anxiety, posture, nervous ticks, etc.

Using the new information, the students return to the scenario presented in the introduction to ACT. Two pictures are placed in the aware and focused quadrants, and some characteristics are included in the strategic and systematic quadrants. The students are asked to elaborate on what else could possibly be pieced together from this particular scenario before moving on, breaking down the key elements of the ACT model.

Teaching focus continues through demonstrating that mental speed is also directly linked to confidence. Exhibited through a quick Likert-scale created to make this point, students are asked to rate how confident they are doing small tasks, such as pouring a bowl of cereal on a 1-5 scale (1-very little, 5-a lot). Then they rate how much focus they give to those tasks on the same 1-5 scale. The tasks gradually become more complicated, and the students can visually see that the more complicated a task the more focus is needed to perform those tasks.

More exercises in the workbook are provided in order to train focus through utilizing strategies of memorization and recall, as well as other elements of expanding focus—primarily peripheral vision. A couple of these exercises are available online for the students to practice on

their own when they have free moments; the concentration grid (Stalwart, 2017): a test to train concentration and strategy of how to project your next immediate test. This test requires the individual to simply find all the numbers in order, in a specified amount of time. A second test, the Stroop test (Lab, 2016), is a test to train individuals to focus through distraction. It accomplishes this by providing a list of words *of* colors, written in color—but not necessarily the color displayed. For instance the word “white” could be displayed back to back, although the first white may be in white text, but the second might be in yellow. The test delegates which answer to respond with (the word, or the color of the word), and this is also a timed test.

Finishing up the instructional period of focus, the students are introduced to the process of cueing states. Although this section is introduced as “pre-gaming,” the function of this section is to teach the class how to prime the feelings that lead to optimal performance, maximizing time by reducing mental processes, raise confidence, and control the controllables. Once again, this process requires the students to acknowledge their physical processing as well as the thoughts and emotions behind those processes. However, the difference on this exercise will be that each process written down will be linked to a “cue word” (or thought) that illicit a desired state. The standard behind this work is that if an individual begins any process by controlling how they prepare to move into an event, there is a better chance of continuing to maintain control once engaged in that event, as well as have more functional control over individual actions through.

To begin this exercise, students are asked to write down their typical day as they wake up, and then link any physical, mental, or emotional arousal states that they experience—or would like to experience at those moments (i.e. I eat my breakfast to start my day with energy). Next, the students are asked to attach a verbal or mental cue to that action and desired state; *Eat Breakfast (activity) — To Start My Day With Good Energy (Reason/Thought/State) — “FUEL*

THE BODY” (*Verbal/Mental Cue*). Similar to utilizing the anchoring technique with the word “trigger,” developing cues in this manner utilizing them daily will help illicit the desired state as well as help to create routine; which gives the mind more time to work on mental speed of a separate task.

The students are given time to go through this exercise in detail for four areas: their morning routine, their daily functional checks (operational checks and preventative maintenance) of their gear, making stops on the street, as well as the wind down process for getting off work until bed. Once again, the purpose of educating the first responders on developing cues to be able to anchor themselves in desired states is to leave as little to chance as possible, and to always be at an optimal state of functioning. Techniques like this are very important to practice often because of neuroplasticity (Dayan & Cohen, 2011; Hargreaves, Cain, & Vanderwolf, 1990)—the ability to form new neural connections. Purposefully and faithfully utilizing this technique will etch in new pathways of how an individual wants the brain to feel or behave at specific times; therefore if an individual notices they are not at their optimal desired state, utilizing the cues will fire those synapses reminding the body that it is supposed to behaving in a different manner that it is.

Prior to wrapping up Day4 the students are left with two things. The first: they are reminded that they can *only* control the controllables. External responses are out of anyone’s control; and that is why it is important to be absolutely aware of the cognitive and physiological signals that are being displayed or felt, as well as be as prepared with as much information able to be processed accurately in any moment. The second: the students are asked how many times they wanted to pick up, or actually picked up their phones.

Day 5: Communication & Resilience. Although this may be one of the shorter sections, it is also one of the most important sections. Day 5 starts off with the instructional period of communication. Students are given the fundamentals of how we communicate, why we communicate, and whom we communicate with, beginning with the first main lesson in this module; establishing rapport. Students are introduced to the “first impression” study that found that we make a decision of whether we feel an individual is trustworthy or attractive within 1/10 of a second. Even when the participants were given more time, they made the same correlation of the level of attractiveness or trustworthiness as before, with a higher level of confidence.

Seemingly set up for failure within 0 to 1/10 seconds, the students were introduced to other techniques that would help build rapport (Hayes, 2006). Many of the techniques require an individual to be very present in the moment, which means that utilizing focus techniques are just as important; therefore, the more practice in these areas the less mental processing needed, and the easier it will be to build rapport. The techniques introduced were: maintaining good eye contact, enthusiasm with verbal and non-verbal keys, greetings, learn personal things to mention alter, empathy (not sympathy), finding common ground, and be authentic.

Separating the instructional period into two sections, verbal and non-verbal cues, students first start off learning about their vocal presence and speech patterns. The students are introduced to five qualities of voice that an individual can purposefully control in order to manipulate a conversation; volume, pitch, temp, rhythm, and timbre. For example, an individual can use pitch in three separate ways. If there is inflection at the end of a sentence, the sentence becomes a question. If the sentence was not meant to be a question, then that person has now come off as uncertain. A flat tone or normalcy in the voice denotes a statement, and lowering one’s pitch will make what is said come off as a command.

Similar to how we speak, word choice can disclose a lot of information about an individual. People use all five senses to communicate, however, most people utilize one of the three primary senses in their speech: visual, auditory, or kinesthetic (VAK). Individuals use words that cue in on the modalities they best learn and communicate with, and with enough information and training, students will be able to pick up on hints on how others use VAK to communicate.

For example, asking the question “*Where are you going to be in 5 years*” to each of three, one may receive these responses: From the visual communicator– “I *see* myself starting a food blog and traveling around the world.” From the auditory communicator– “Somewhere in the woods. *Tuning out* from the rest of the world.” From the kinesthetic communicator - “I’m just getting a good *grasp* on my duties. Maybe I’ll *stick it out* here.”

Although it does take some practice and requires a person to really engage in active listening as well as process information without disrupting the conversation with awkwardness, communicating to individuals in their communication language fast-tracks rapport.

Subconsciously the brain attaches itself to familiarity (Calvo-Merino, Grèzes, Glaser, Passingham, & Haggard, 2006), and the more familiar you portray yourself to be, the less of a threat you come off as. Here are two examples of in-rapport and out-of-rapport communication utilizing VAK speech patterns:

In rapport: “I *see* myself starting a food blog and traveling around the world.”

“I bet you will have *bright* future ahead of you if that’s the *rout* you go!”

Out of rapport: “I *see* myself starting a food blog and traveling around the world.”

“That *sounds* fun. Can’t wait to hear all about it.”

Despite the fact that both responses are positive, the future blogger would get more out of the conversation from the individual speaking their language—and may even become more inspired to do so based on this particular conversation.

Utilizing that information segues into building non-verbal rapport. The students learn about the process of mirroring and matching, which is another NLP technique based off the same concept of brain familiarity. Although there is more existential science that surrounds sharing energy, and frequencies (Nagy, 2011), mirroring and matching works because the person using the technique is attempting to break pass mental barriers by becoming visually similar to the individual in front of them. The mirroring technique involves the students to practice replicating facial expressions, posture, breathing rates, movement speed, etc... The concept is to subtly be a mirror in front of the individual, meaning if facing an individual who is sitting with their legs crossed from left-to-right, you sit with your legs crossed from right-to-left. Matching on the other hand, is the same concept, but the actions are replicated—not mirrored. Using the matching technique, if facing an individual who is sitting with their legs crossed from left-to-right, you can cross your ankles.

Communication via VAK has a place in mirroring and matching as well, and this is why it is taught prior to this portion. During both techniques an individual should work to pick up on the communication language, and both techniques require that an individual respond with the proper VAK response. However, the differences between the two techniques are subtle. The mirroring technique, requires the individual trying to get into rapport to use the same words being spoken to get into rapport; “Forrest Gump was a beautiful movie.” “Titanic was also a beautiful movie.” While utilizing the matching technique, the individual only needs to use

similar words to get into rapport; “the Marriott has really soft beds,” “ you know who else has really comfy beds?”

Similar to any technique for anything, anyone is trying to master—these techniques work best blended together. The students are taught that utilizing one technique for practicing purposes is fine, however if a conversation is held and the individual on the other side begins to feel as if they are being mocked or that you are being ungentle, rapport has been broken—and you will have to work to build it back up.

The next lesson in communication is the education of the 4 types of responses (Martin EP Seligman, 2012, pp. 173-174). Typically the way we respond to people sets the tone of how an interaction will run its course. The 4 responses are: Active constructive; Passive constructive; Passive Destructive; and Active Destructive. Active constructive responding is a response that is authentic and enthusiastically supportive. Passive constructive is supportive, yet unenthusiastic. Passive destructive responders respond in a way that completely ignores the individual’s statement or event, and active destructive responders tend to point out the negative aspects of the moment shared. The students go through each one exploring what is prevalent in the moments that they respond each way, as well as how they feel emotionally and physically in those moments. The reason for this is for the student to be able to acknowledge the response they are communicating in real-time, and alter it to be in line with their intended transmitted communication.

The communication module is completed with a few key notes to remember, such as: the importance of taking ownership for what is being communicated by using “I” statements; being clear in communication; and remembering to use the Losada ratio for best chances of fostering successful relationships.

The second half of Day 5 wraps up the program, by introducing resiliency. This section opens up with a scenario that checks in with whether or not the students lean more toward a growth mindset, or a fixed. *It introduces two students that the first responders are responsible for as a mentor, through their departments' mentorship program. As a mentor you receive progress reports from the young cadets' teachers. One student states that they "hardly ever study" received a 91%, and the other cadet who studied hard and was extremely confident going into the test received a 67%. What type of conversation are the mentors having with their cadets?* There is no right answer—per se, however, the purpose of this section is to train the students that there is always room for growth.

Prior to getting into the weeds of resilience, earlier data from the week is revisited, baselining the importance of the topic. The students are reminded of the retention rate, the mental health disorders, and the suicides that relate to first responders. They are reminded that their jobs are not getting easier, and that is reason enough to learn how to better cope with the stress, and learn become a beacon of optimism the best way they can in their communities. The students then explore their own processes of how they bounce back from setbacks.

The exploration requires that they tap into times where they have experienced loss from a job or a team, have experienced loss of a big game or failure, as well as loss of a family member. In each memory, the students are to explore how they were affected as a consequence, how they were affected emotionally, and what it took for them to bounce back to a more positive state. After they take the time to explore their own moments, they are asked a similar second set of questions. Covering the same loss, although exploring the moment as a friend, family member, or an associate of someone processing those emotions, the students are asked how long they let the individual suffering experience their own emotions before they personally lose interest in that

person's grief, as well as the guidance they would give during those moments. After taking that time, the students are asked to reflect on how they experience grief and how they experience other people's grief and annotate any similarities and differences.

Once again, a large portion of this program is becoming aware through acknowledgment. Therefore for this portion of the course, it is absolutely necessary to acknowledge the process of experiencing failure, in order to teach the lesson that there is no failure—only growth. One key piece to my personal philosophy that I want to instill in everything I do is the “it takes a village” mentality. That is why for this portion of the instruction, it is not only important for the students to understand how they experience these moments themselves, but to also become aware of how they *support* those experiencing these moments.

The lesson moves into the four factors that foster resilience (Meredith et al., 2011): the individual factors, the family, the unit factor and the community factors. The importance of these four factors are extremely significant in building resilience in an individual's life. Each can be developed and strengthened, and the lack of one does not necessarily set an individual up for failure, but having the strength of all four exponentially increases resiliency through facilitating a strong sense of support.

The individual factor is not focused on, because it has been focused on throughout the course. While addressing the family factor, students are educated as to why the family is a great support system as it pertains to adding to the support system for building resilience in an individual's life. For those who aren't using their families as support systems, there are some key questions to begin the conversation as to why, and how to possibly bring them in to the life that we, as first responders, keep them from. Questions starting with, “why am I so uncomfortable sharing the thoughts that affect me, and keep me guarded with those in my

family?” Finally, the message that family doesn’t stop at the bloodline is passed on. Those sharing the same uniform know and share similar feelings and emotions and can be turned to for support outside of the unit level.

Which segues into the unit level of support. During the support module the lesson focuses on supporting the mission and supporting the team. The students are taught that if an individual feels that value can be added by improving outdated thinking, then they are encouraged to set the example instead of waiting for it to be set. When working in environments that challenge what you believe in, it is important to work from your “why” as well as from your character strengths. Be authentic always. This material is presented through guided discussion, which leads into an exercise that asks the students to focus on areas they would like to see their units improve. The students are then challenged to brainstorm on ways to start to create change within their organizations beginning with themselves. Finally, the students are presented with the knowledge that there may be push back and asked questions that challenge their willingness to do the work that it would take to create change.

As it pertains to the community factor, the students are challenged to become more involved in their communities by becoming friendlier with the people who are in it. This includes the grocers, the mailmen, the neighbors, and the old couple who walks their dog at the same time every morning. The “it takes a village” should be honed in here. For many people, the communities they are in have been a part of a journey to get where they are today, and nobody would be the wiser—because the art of conversation has died. The students are encouraged to use their communication skill learned in the course to build small pockets of rapport. Feelings connected to one’s community improves how comfortable an individual moves

through their space; it creates confidence through unity, and when experiencing stress or trauma—it helps to see people who genuinely care for your emotional state.

Strengthening, or working to flourish in these areas of family, unit, self, and community add to the students' ability to cope through extremely hard times, which is pivotal for an individual to foster resilience. However sometimes the emotions, feelings, and images that some of us experience are so severe that being personable, and putting effort into any four of these areas is just that—effort. At this point, people who are no where near qualified to say so sometimes start to plant the seed that what we may be experiencing is PTSD; and sometimes when we are looking for an answer—we will attach to that.

Similar to how close to 20% of young children per year are misdiagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)(Ford-Jones, 2015), PTSD has similarly been at the forefront of society's mind for so long that it has become common to immediately attach the disorder to the symptoms an individual shows. Searching for answers, individuals will attach themselves to this label without seeking proper help and are likely to adopt coping mechanisms that can create a self-fulfilling downward spiral. When this happens, how are we to expect individuals to bounce back? This is where we teach how to turn posttraumatic stress, into posttraumatic growth (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2014; Tedeschi & McNally, 2011).

The students are introduced to the concept of taking traumatic experiences and reframing them in order to learn from them and pull from them something positive that adds to personal growth. This growth often develops through enhanced personal or spiritual relationships, because holding the ability to reframe and approach trauma from a growth mindset have the ability to give an individual a new positive appreciation for life.

The students are presented with a posttraumatic growth inventory (PTGI) (Taku et al., 2008), which for classroom purposes is for conversation only; the students have already taken their own personal versions and do not have to share their information publically, yet are still encouraged to speak with the instructors to seek help if needed. The PTGI shows the relationships the questions have with the scoring system, and the scoring system becomes the topic of discussion.

Conversation with the students begin with the five factors that help strengthen PTG; Relating to others, new possibilities, personal strengths, spiritual change, and appreciation of life. Similar to the five factors of flourishing as well as the four factors that foster resilience, the students become aware that these five factors that help strengthen PTG can also be improved through deliberate focus in that area; which segues into the conversation covering growth mindset (Bishop-Kallmeyer & Lewis, 2017).

At this point in the course, the students have already been educated on the main processed for building PTG. The lessons leading up to today all factor in how an individual can awaken their growth mindset. The tools are there, and it forces the individual to tap into their inner child's curiosity. It requires that an individual chooses to become more intrinsically motivated, and it requires that individuals use the tool provided in the F.I.R.S.T program in order to reframe negative situations into opportunities to learn more about themselves; to reframe negative situations to learn more from those events to prepare for a successful second round—if that event were to happen again. It requires taking ownership for the actions of oneself through awareness and deliberate focus what went well, how could one grow to be better next time.

Conversation with the students continues to encourage them to embrace challenge, and view them instead—as opportunities, as well as lose the word “fail” and embrace the word

“learn.” Students are reminded to focus on the process, and that things are not the way we want “yet.” Growth takes time—so trust the process, and focus on controlling the controllables. Students are encouraged to engage their factors of resilience utilizing their character strengths, and authentically working from their virtues and values. Essentially the lesson revolving around PTG ties together the courses work, and wraps up revisiting the scenario given at the beginning of the module.

Reintroducing the two young cadets in the youth mentorship program, the first responders are once again what conversations they are having with both the student who “hardly ever studies” and received a 91%, and the other cadet who studied hard and was extremely confident going into the test received a 67%? The students are asked to approach the scenario utilizing a growth mindset, and the students share their approaches; once again, looking to learn from other’s perspectives and approaches.

The Next Step

The final piece of the F.I.R.S.T program encourages the first responders to utilize the information presented by incorporating it into their lives. Having the ability to bounce back from stress and trauma is a reflection of an individual’s ability to control the controllables, creating more optimism, and developing a growth mindset. Students are introduced to the thought, that it is possible the reason they hold so much weight on themselves during times of *perceived failure*, is because they sometimes hold an image of what success should look like, and often don’t understand the what it takes to get there.

Often we lose sight of the bigger picture, and our points of reference are misconstrued from what our role actually is in the mission. The example given is the unraveling of the

question, “*what is the ultimate goal of a little league coach?*” Is it to create a winning team? Or is it to get the players ready for the next level, while incorporating lessons that help the athletes become better students, members of society, and children in the home? It is here where the students have the time to create a personal mission statement of their own, and given the task to display it in multiple places where they will see it often.

The final challenges given to the students before finishing the program are to: find their support system, challenge themselves to be just a little bit better today than they were yesterday, trust the process, and always think about how to flourish in the moment. The students are finally encouraged to teach what they have learned. *Docendo Discimus*; latin for “by teaching, we learn.” There is no better way to grasp concepts and information that has been taught, than to teach somebody else (Battro, 2010). The students are left with this thought; “*don’t worry if this is too weird to you now, know this—all this information is going to be common knowledge soon. Mental training is on the rise, and it is being incorporated everywhere. Consider yourselves on the leading edge of improving performance, based on the only thing you can rely on...Yourselves! Never forget—Control The Controllables! ... If anything leave here more aware of your processing strategies. The better you can acknowledge what you’re experiencing in real time, the more control you have over your next move.*”

Results & Future Direction

Although F.I.R.S.T stems from wanting to implement a program that helped to reduce officer related deaths, it is unrealistic to track whether or not this program directly affects the number of police related shootings. From a research perspective, there are too many external

factors involved in each individual situation to account for. However, there has been a process established for collecting data on the perceived proficiency of the program.

Beginning with the first cohort, students are asked to take a number of self-assessments and asked to bring in the results on the first day of class. Those results are then stored in an electronic student file, in order to track the progression or digression of the self-assessment of the individual's well-being. At the end of the course the students are asked to also fill out an After Action Report (AAR) (Appendix D) covering the process of how the class is taught, what went well, as well as recommendations for improvement. At the 6- (Appendix B) and 12- month (Appendix C) markers, students are sent a questionnaire to fill out inquiring about the quantity and quality of skill use since the program ended, and they are also asked to retake the self-assessment tests and record the results on a provided document that is sent back to the instructors. That data will ultimately help in creating an efficient program, and will be helpful in determining how best to expand the program.

Conclusion

Throughout the research process for the creation of F.I.R.S.T, one of my main areas of concern was the lack of quality research in the field of first responders. The limited research in the field fell into one of three categories:

- 1) Looking for correlation between observed behavior and self-reported tests.
- 2) Looking for significant results in one cycle of testing, after teaching a single technique to a test group (Page, Asken, Zwemer, & Guido, 2016).

- 3) Trying to solve an unsolvable problem such as eliminating mental health disorders without a continued program in operation (Arble, Lumley, Pole, Blessman, & Arnetz, 2017).

This is why the creation of the F.I.R.S.T program focused on drawing from functional models and tools in the sport and performance and positive psychology worlds, with the intent to create a program that not only provides the foundational knowledge, but also the opportunity to improve mental toughness and foster resiliency in the lives of individuals who hold the professions where stress and trauma are imminent. Although this particular program is not going to be administered for statistical research, the roots underneath the F.I.R.S.T program are backed by significant data, and have established their place in the psychology community—as well as the communities of high stress performers.

Programs like the Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness program (Cornum et al., 2011), which incorporate the Penn Resiliency program's foundational coursework, currently is implemented in the Army teaching soldiers how to be more resilient through increasing flourishing in their lives. The foundation of the Marine Corps' Operational Stress Control And Readiness (OSCAR) program is based off of elements of cognitive behavioral therapy and mindfulness (Nash, 2006). Growth Mindset has been implemented into failing school systems, resulting in diminished suspension and expulsion rates, as well as increased proficiency scores (Claro, Paunesku, & Dweck, 2016; Dweck, 2006). By incorporating mental training skills into their cultures, academies such as West Point (Bartone, Snook, & Tremble Jr, 2002) and IMG (Jain, Mazhar, Uga, Punwani, & Broquet, 2012) have documented continued success in their programs. F.I.R.S.T is blending proven programs used within similar populations, and

introducing them to first responders in order to enhance performance and maintain operational readiness.

Once again, I feel that when it comes to helping individuals create good mental training practices, there is a misconception that teaching these skills are supposed to fix an issue, when the reality is that continuous mental training, is just as important as continuous physical training; it is an ongoing process to become proficient. Therefore I believe that the F.I.R.S.T program should be a necessary fundamental course given to all first responders in order to establish a solid baseline of the skills needed to foster mental toughness and resiliency; however, there also needs to be ancillary implementations to help continue the training throughout the years first responders serve in their job setting—and there is room to do so.

In the Los Angeles Police Department alone, there are a plethora of programs that could implement portions of F.I.R.S.T in order to continue subtly training mental toughness and resiliency skills throughout the year. Specialized courses such as the firearms course, leadership courses, the racial profiling instructor course, teambuilding, etc... In fact, LAPD officers are required by state law to attend 24 hours of specialized training annually, and skills that are perishable (“use it—or lose it” skills; i.e. CPR) can be taken as a refresher course. Therefore F.I.R.S.T can also evolve into a shorter annual program that:

- 1) Helps the officers stay on top of the skill set
- 2) Allow the ability to track the effectiveness of the program.

The F.I.R.S.T program could also be incorporated into the youth mentorship program, in order to teach young men and women skills that would help them in school and in their lives starting at an early age.

This also creates the opportunity for F.I.R.S.T to evolve into a program that blends into the working culture. We can refer back to programs such as the Army's Sapper-Athlete Warrior as well as their Cognitive Enhancement and Performance programs, and see that incorporating the same mental skills integrated into F.I.R.S.T into real world training programs help to improve focus, regulate anxiety, and improve levels of self-efficacy in a controlled environment. The more that mental training is incorporated into the culture, the more effective the program.

There is a key limitation in having the ability to train large organizations like the LAPD, LA Fire Department, or the paramedics; and that limitation is the quantity of quality facilitators. This actually creates the opportunity for this program to be expanded into a more in-depth body of work that builds up from F.I.R.S.T, by establishing a train-the-trainer course. This would allow F.I.R.S.T to develop a personalized program that can become self-sufficient within the communities, and help to establish the foundation for F.I.R.S.T to last well into the next generation of first responders because it would then be provided by their own leadership.

In conclusion, as it pertains to justifying the continuation of this program once it has been implemented; that decision absolutely depends on the of the adopting organization's discretion based on what type of results they are looking for. One organization may look to lower the rate of mental health disorder diagnosis, and one organization's general desire may be to increase general well-being for their responders. It is ultimately hard for me to say that the F.I.R.S.T program should be justified by presenting enhanced levels of "x," or lowered levels of "y"; there are already data points from research that can be presented showing that implementing a mental training program are likely to improve coping with stress and trauma. It is my opinion that the focus should be to help first responders become more clear on their intended actions not only while in uniform, but in their personal lives.

There is an unspoken truth in the world of individuals who work in the field of behavior modification; Clients can instantly change their habits in front of your eyes with the skills that you have taught them, and then look you in your face and tell you they don't think it was due to the work you did together. And to us on the other side of the coin—that is perfectly fine because our job is to provide opportunity for growth and improvement; not take credit for someone else's success. My intention is for F.I.R.S.T to be utilized to teach the skills where “x” displays the increase in the people who make it home safe tonight; and looking back historically knowing how the impact of one person, can impact the many—there is no researched value that can quantify the butterfly effect of a second chance at life.

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F.I.R.S.T

FIRST RESPONDER INTERACTIVE RESILIENCE & MENTAL STRENGTH TRAINING

Appendix A: *Welcome Email*

Dear (Student),

Welcome to the F.I.R.S.T program! My name is Robert Graves and I am a 10-year Marine Corps Veteran, earned my BS Psychology, MS Sport Psychology (soon), Certified Hypnotherapy, and Veteran Advocate. I'm also a father, a husband, and the creator of the First Responder Interactive Resilience & Mental Strength Training.

I can't express in words how excited I am to be able to offer this program to the heroes behind the badge like yourself; because like many of my brothers and sisters in-arms, many of the first responders are out here serving the public unthanked, and unserved as it pertains to taking care of *your* best interest. You are the individuals who live in stress and trauma, and many of you were not prepared to deal with some of the stressors you have experienced.

First Responders, especially police officers, have been in the media's limelight for mostly negative issues, and 14% of individuals that you serve say they understand the risk you take. I understand 100%.

With the stress of the job, with the added stress of what the media is bringing to your jobs, how are you supposed to be able to sift through the mental stressors in able to focus on how to be fully engaged in getting everyone home safely tonight?

72% of officers admit they are less willing to confront suspicious individuals. 86% of officers agree that field work is harder today. 93% of officers have admitted they are more concerned with their safety. 56% of you say you are more callused today because of what you do.

243 first responders took their lives in 2017, which is 67% more lives than those who lost their lives in the line of duty.

F.I.R.S.T has been created to teach Sport & Performance mental training skills and Coping strategies to first responders to develop more resilient minds for high-stressed situations. These skills have been adopted by the US Army in order to train soldiers to become operationally ready for combat, and having the tools to come home and deal with the stressors that come along with the job.

These skills are being delivered to you.

F.I.R.S.T is a 5 day course that you have been selected to participate in. It will absolutely require that you come comfortable, because you will become quite uncomfortable with some of the work that we will be moving into. You can expect:

- To feel uncomfortable at times
- At least 4-6 hours a day of interactive course work
- To feel very uncomfortable sometimes
- The instructors to call on you even if your hand is not up
- The instructors to trust that you are doing the homework asked of you
- Confidentiality
- For the instructors to make themselves available for personal assistance after hours
- ... to feel really uncomfortable... until you finally give in to the process.

Not to give too much of the class away in an email, I'll wrap it up by letting you know once again, how excited I am for you to join this next class, and I'm looking forward to working together!

Respectfully,
Robert Graves
LIVE@CoachGraves.com
(310) 756-5986

Lastly: These test will be covered in class. Please prepare yourself for class by taking these test. Some test take longer than others, so give yourself up to 15-30 minutes of time to sit through each.

Please print off and bring in, or take a screenshot and email your results to the instructor prior to or on the first day of class.

Self-Reported Test

[The Life Values Inventory](#)

[Hospital Anxiety and Depression \(HADS\)](#)

[The VIA Survey of Character Strengths](#)

[GRIT](#)

[The Hardiness Test](#)

[COPE](#)

[The Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist](#)

[Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test \(AUDIT\)](#)

[Social Support Questionnaire](#)

Appendix B:
The F.I.R.S.T Program Workbook

F . I . R . S . T

FIRST RESPONDER INTERACTIVE RESILIENCE & MENTAL STRENGTH TRAINING

IN THE BEGINNING...

- Step 1) Record your Self-Reported questionnaire dates in their respective location
- Step 2) Show up to class with an open mind, ready to rock n' roll
- Step 3) Revisit these scores later on and judge yourself
- Step 4) Smile, laugh, chuckle, or throw something... in a fit of joy

SELF- REPORTED TESTS

Life Values Inventory

Initial: _____ 6 mo: _____ 12: _____

VIA Survey of Character Strengths

Initial: _____ 6 mo: _____ 12: _____

GRIT

Initial: _____ 6 mo: _____ 12: _____

Hardiness

Initial: _____ 6 mo: _____ 12: _____

Coping

Initial: _____ 6 mo: _____ 12: _____

Social Support

Initial: _____ 6 mo: _____ 12: _____

PTSD

Initial: _____ 6 mo: _____ 12: _____

HADS

Initial: _____ 6 mo: _____ 12: _____

WELCOME TO F.I.R.S.T

MISSION:

To provide first responders with the knowledge and tools that help increase mental toughness and resilience; so that they may maintain operational readiness with the knowledge of self-regulation, personal values, and individual character strengths.

WHO ARE WE?



ROBERT GRAVES, BS, C.HT

WHO AM I:

I am a 10-year Marine Corps veteran, author of "How to Grow a Beard: A Military Transition Guide back into Civilian Life," host of the #YearOfTheVet podcast, and California Disabled American Veterans 2017 Outstanding Veteran of the Year

MY VALUES:

I stay true to the Marine Corps values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment.

MY WHY:

Resilience and determination are the foundations of who I am today. I believe that the greatest lessons learned are after a set back, and that there is a direct connection with the belief in oneself and the ability to succeed, even though no outcome is guaranteed. To me the thrill is in the fight—and the fight is in the mind.

**BS PSYCHOLOGY | CERTIFIED HYPNOTHERAPIST
(FUTURE) MS SPORT PSYCHOLOGY | AASP CANDIDATE**

YOUR CLASS

[Insert Class Roster]

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THIS COURSE:

- To explore and define your individual strengths and weaknesses
- To explore and define the values that drive your actions
- To explore and define your motivations
- To explore and recognize the triggers that drive your emotional responses
- To learn to create focused and clear goals that work
- To learn your focus schema, and how to focus on what is important when needed
- To understand your levels of arousal and how to control your anxiety in key moments
- To learn to become instantly confident
- To learn communication techniques that increase rapport
- To learn how to improve relationships with your co-worker, your family, your community, and yourself.
- To learn healthy and effective strategies to bounce back from adversity and trauma
- To reintroduce yourself to yourself.

YOU CAN ***ALSO*** EXPECT:

- To feel uncomfortable at times
- At least 4 hours a day of interactive course work
- To feel very uncomfortable sometimes
- The instructors to call on you even if your hand is not up
- A little bit of jogging/ Brisk walking
- The instructors to trust that you are doing the homework asked of you
- Confidentiality. Your tests will not be disclosed to anyone*
- For the instructors to make themselves available for personal assistance after hours
- ... to feel really uncomfortable... until you finally give in to the process.

*Unless you plan to hurt yourself or others

Let's Start Our Mental Workout

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SECTION 1: TEAM BUILDING

SECTION 2: INTRODUCTION TO FIRST

5 W's : Who, What, Where, When, Why
Becoming Operationally Ready
Flourishing
“My Why”
Losada Ratio
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Overview
The Power of Acknowledgement
The Performance Loop
Added Value
Optimism
Habits
TRUST THE PROCESS – The Science of Goal Setting
Apps

SECTION 4: SIGNATURE STRENGTHS

How Do You Prepare
Defining Strengths
Determining Signature Strengths
WORKING FROM Your Strengths
LEADING FROM Your Strengths

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Anxiety
Inverted-U
IZOF
Red Light, Green Light
Triggers & Cues
Catastrophizing
Controlling Anxiety
Breathing
Imagery & Visualization
Positive Self-Talk
Winding Down

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT...)

SECTION 6: EMOTIONS... AGAIN

- Thinking Traps
- Iceberg/ Catastrophic Thinking
- Reframing
- Appropriate Emotions

SECTION 7: MOTIVATION

- Foundations of Motivation
- Needs & Desires
- Values vs. Virtue
- The Story of Sisyphus
- Learned Helplessness
- Learned Optimism / Ikigai
- ABC's

SECTION 8: FOCUS

- Recall
- Improving Memory
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- 4-Zones of Focus
- Confidence
- The Intelligence of Speed
- The Virtue of Slowness
- Pregaming - Controlling the Controllables

SECTION 9: COMMUNICATION

- Foundations of Communication
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- Listening
- Mirroring & Matching
- 4 Styles of Response
- Building Trust Through Self-Disclosure

SECTION 10: RESILIENCE

- Foundations of Resilience
- Bounce Back
- It Takes a Village
- Posttraumatic Growth

SECTION 11: THE NEXT STEP

SECTION 12: RESOURCES

FINAL TEAM THOUGHTS

Some other Rules of Engagement

“I” NOT P-U

Stick with “I” Statements.

Your opinions of how you think others are thinking, belongs in the toilet.



DIRTY LAUNDRY

Everyone in here will share something extremely personal to them. Some people may even share emotional moments that have affected them. Even if you think what has been shared is no big deal... refer to above for where you can place your opinions.

YOU CAN'T TURN THE LIGHT ON WITHOUT ENERGY

Do yourself the favor of participating and full engaging as much as possible. Your engagement might be the “A-Ha” moment for someone else. That means Ask questions if you have them, when you have them!

I'm not here to fix your problems. I'm here to teach you how to fix your own problems.

We're here to work on giving you the tools that will keep you safe on the streets, as well as increase well-being in your personal lives. All I ask is you keep an open mind, stay honest, and...

INSTRUCTOR'S ROLE?

TRUST THE PROCESS

INTRO TO F.I.R.S.T

FACT:

Between January 1st, 2015 and December 31st, 2016—there have been approximately 2239 officer related deaths of civilians, nationally

In the first 6-months of 2017 alone, there were approximately 492 civilians who were shot and killed from an officer's weapon.

The officers that they willing to and confront a looking individual

72%

percentage of that admit are less approach suspicious

The percentage of officers that agree that field work is harder today due to what is going on around the country

86%

Fact:

Approximately 51,548 officers were assaulted by the citizens they vowed to protect in 2015.

Police Officers are not held in the light they once were.

There were 143 officer fatalities in 2016 alone; 61 of those officers were shot and killed.

As of June 30th, 2017—65 police officers have lost their lives while on duty; 23 of those were to firearms.

FACT:

There are approximately 175,000 police-to-civilian encounters daily.

Percentage of officers, that reported they are more concerned about their safety

93%

56%

The percentage of officers that say they are more callused today, because of the work they do.

INTRO TO F.I.R.S.T

WHAT IS F.I.R.S.T?

First Responder Interactive Resilience & Mental Strength Training has been developed to connect with those who put themselves in harms way, and add to your toolboxes, the resources and mental training tools that reinforce the physical training and field work you've already experienced.

We do this by introducing coping mechanisms you may not already be using to acknowledge and control emotions, anxiety, unwanted reactions, biases, and even challenge depression or unwanted habits that take away from your ability to be present and focused in every scenario you find yourself in; in-and-out of uniform.

YOU ARE HEROES. EVERYDAY. AND YOU DESERVE TO FEEL LIKE ONE.

Therefore F.I.R.S.T has been created to take you out of your everyday element, to give yourself the time to train your mental toughness and care for your mental well-being. We will accomplish this by educating you on topics such as attentional focus, arousal, and catastrophic thinking; and how each results in a *physical* response. The knowledge to recognize the triggers and cues that take you out of your peak performance level, can be the ultimate determinate if everyone gets home to their family tonight.

BRINGING THE WARRIOR BACK FROM THE GRAVE

If you've been in the business long enough, you've experienced your fair share of trauma. You've seen nice officers take a beating. You may have taken a beating. You deal with individuals daily; sometimes the same ones that just can't get out of their own way. You've responded to fatal car accidents, domestic violence calls, or any other call that may have hit close to home. You've had to make hard decisions that may split up families, and you've also experienced other's decisions that have made good officers leave behind families forever. And how does one cope with this daily burden of always choosing to protect and serve?

*YOU MUST REMEMBER TO PROTECT AND SERVE YOURSELF,
BEFORE YOU CAN PROTECT AND SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY!*

The second approach of F.I.R.S.T, is to teach you—the battle tested, tools and strategies to be able to cultivate resilience in your lives. Not being able to cope with trauma can lead to depression, substance abuse, extreme anxiety, and other mental health disorders such as PTSD. We find the strength together, through frameworks like Posttraumatic Growth, and Positive Psychology tools backed by over a decade of research.

INTRO TO F.I.R.S.T

THE HISTORY BEHIND F.I.R.S.T

- ❑ Mindfulness training dates back to Ancient Greece, where philosophers like Plato pondered how to transcend their thoughts to become closer to the Gods of Olympus.
- ❑ “Resilio,” or “resilire” (Resilience) dates back to Roman politician Marcus Tullius Cicero circa 65 BC
- ❑ Buddha’s First Noble Truth is: *Life is Suffering*. Zen Monks passed on the knowledge of mindfulness and resilience through the teachings of Taoism and Buddhism.
- ❑ 1898, Norman Triplett publishes the first known study of the psychology of sport, otherwise known as peak performance.
- ❑ Dr. Coleman Griffith becomes America’s 1st Sport Psychologist in 1925, and led the Chicago Cubs a successful year in 1935
- ❑ Norman Garmezy studies “The Stress and Competence in Children: A Building Block for Developmental Psychology” in 1969
- ❑ In 1998 Dr. Martin Seligman becomes the “bad boy” of the American Psychology Association and changes the way psychology is studied, by making applied psychology a new way to research *why people do what they do*, by introducing Positive Psychology.
- ❑ Dr. Carol Dweck unleashes the power of resilience to the public with the release of “Growth Mindset” in 2007
- ❑ U.S. Chief of Staff, General George W. Casey Jr. recruits Dr. Seligman in 2008, to create a resiliency program for the United States Army in order to prepare soldiers for deployment—and help them cope once they return.
- ❑ Dr. Angela Duckworth publishes “Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance” in 2016
- ❑ Sport Psychology takes over the 2016 Summer Olympics, and Extreme Sport, such as Red Bull’s Luke Aikins’ Parachute-less jump from 25,000 ft.

SO THE TAKE AWAY HERE IS THAT...

INTRO TO F.I.R.S.T



**...EVERYTHING PRESENTED IN THIS COURSE
IS BACKED BY SCIENCE!**

SO JUST OPEN UP AND...

TRUST THE PROCESS

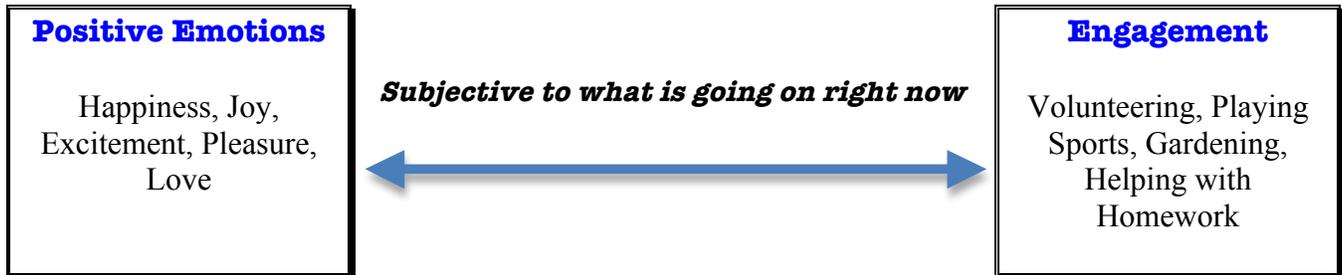
INTRO TO F.I.R.S.T

WORKING TO MAINTAIN OPERATIONAL READINESS

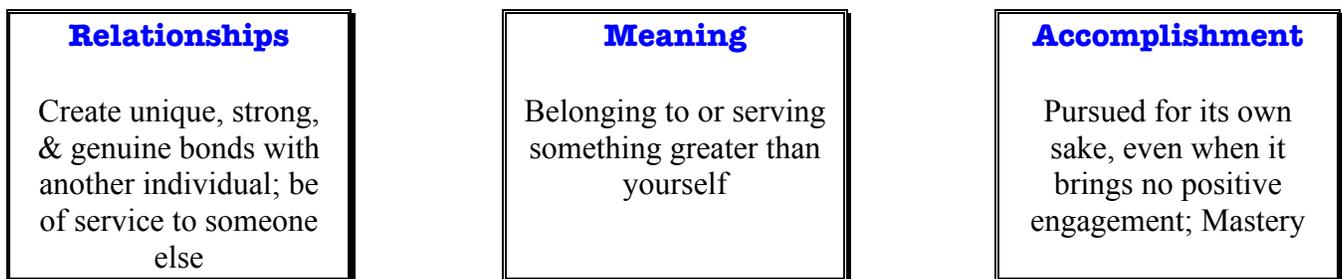
- ❑ Between sending our troops to extended length deployments and asking our police officers to support the need for increased security due to terrorist attacks, riots, and protest, the operational tempo that we ask our military members and first responders to maintain is one that is demanding on an individual's overall ecosystem
- ❑ Those who serve have a greater chance of being exposed to traumatic events over their career, and therefore are more at risk of developing a Mental Health Disorder (MHD) such as posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- ❑ A study in Canada, looking into the numbers of first responders in their community, found that 44.5% of the surveyed 5,813 first responders show symptoms and early signs of oncoming mental disorders; the general population suffering from MHDs averages 10.1%
- ❑ A study of police in the Netherlands reports approximately 25% of their police force suffer from a MSD due to the nature of their work
- ❑ Between 2007 and 2012 it has cost Americans ~\$4.5 billion dollars to treat service members suffering from MHDs.
- ❑ The Comprehensive Soldier Family Fitness Program (CSF2) was created to facilitate a psychological resource for its soldiers and families, in order to improve readiness throughout the Army.
- ❑ Based off of Penn's Resiliency Program, PERMA™ workshops (which stem from Dr. Seligman's *Well-Being* theory) aim to increase flourishing by improving **P**ersonal Relationships, **E**ngagement, **R**elationships, **M**eaning, and **A**ccomplishment, training soldiers to develop emotional, social, family, spiritual, and physical skills to cope with the military lifestyle pre- and post-deployment.
- ❑ An ongoing evaluation of the CSF2 program released data in 2013, displays a continuous lowered rate of diagnosis for substance abuse issues as well as mental health problems
- ❑ West Point Military Academy teaches a form of mental training and resiliency in their Center for Enhanced Performance (CEP)
- ❑ Penn's Resiliency training has been implemented into combat training via the Sapper-Athlete-Warrior program (SAW), integrating mental training skills to tactical foundations.

FLOURISHING

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO FLOURISH? PERMA



POSITIVE EMOTIONS AND ENGAGEMENT ARE PURSUED
SIMPLY FOR THE SAKE OF PLEASING ONE'S OWN DESIRE



**THE CORE FEATURES THAT MUST BE HAD IN AN
INDIVIDUALS' LIFE IN ORDER TO FLOURISH ARE:**

POSITIVE EMOTION - POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT - MEANING

AN INDIVIDUAL MUST ALSO STRENGTHEN 3 OF THESE QUALITIES:

SELF-ESTEEM

OPTIMISM

RESILIENCE

SELF-DETERMINATION

VITALITY

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Flourishing is more than being "Happy."
Flourishing is adding value.

FLOURISHING

TASK: WHAT ARE 3 ACTIONS THAT I CAN INCORPORATE *TODAY*—THAT WOULD IMPROVE EACH ELEMENT?

How Can I Flourish In My Life?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Positive Engagement

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Positive Relationships

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Positive Meaning

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Positive Accomplishment

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Positive Emotion How Can I Flourish In My Life?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Positive Engagement

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Positive Relationships

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Positive Meaning

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Positive Accomplishment

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

WATERING THE SEED

TRUST THE PROCESS

THE STRONGER THE CONNECTION AS TO WHY YOU CHOSE TO SERVE, THE MORE EMPOWERED YOU WILL BECOME DEALING WITH THE FRUSTRATIONS OF THE JOB.

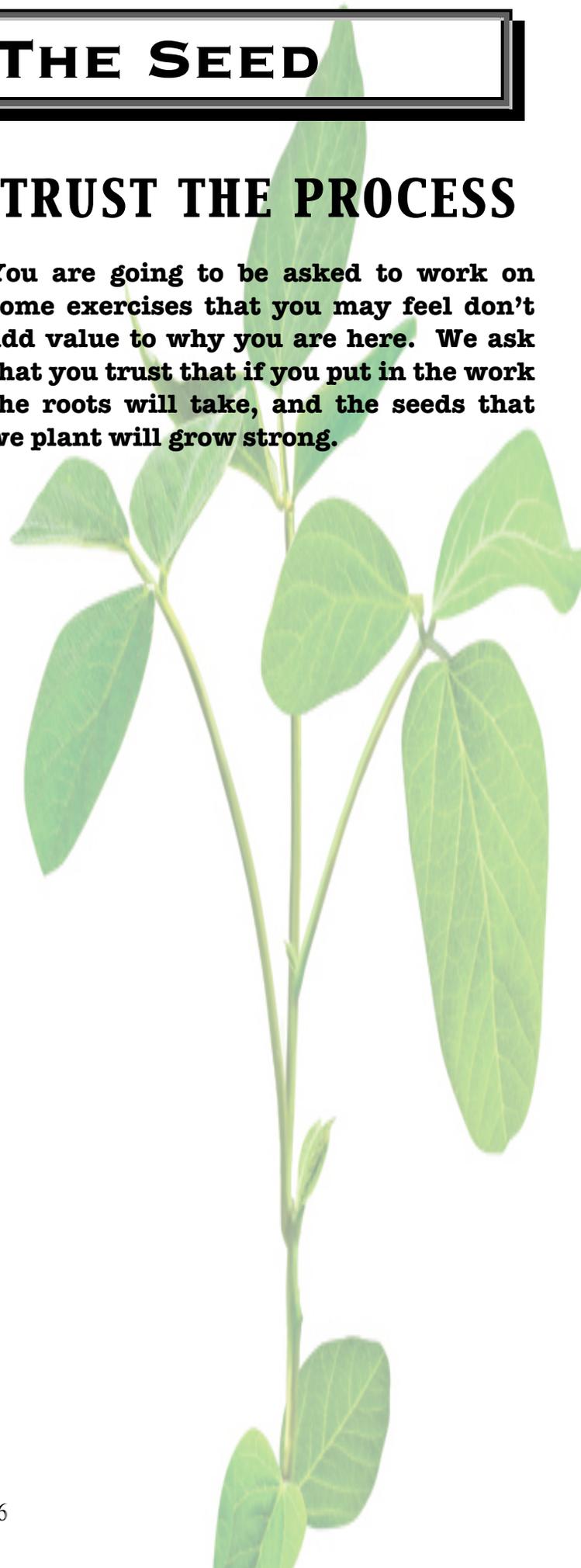
You are going to be asked to work on some exercises that you may feel don't add value to why you are here. We ask that you trust that if you put in the work the roots will take, and the seeds that we plant will grow strong.

TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS BELOW.

1. Why do I choose to serve?

2. What do I enjoy most about my job?

3. So far, what moment(s) have given me the greatest satisfaction while serving? What makes them so satisfying?

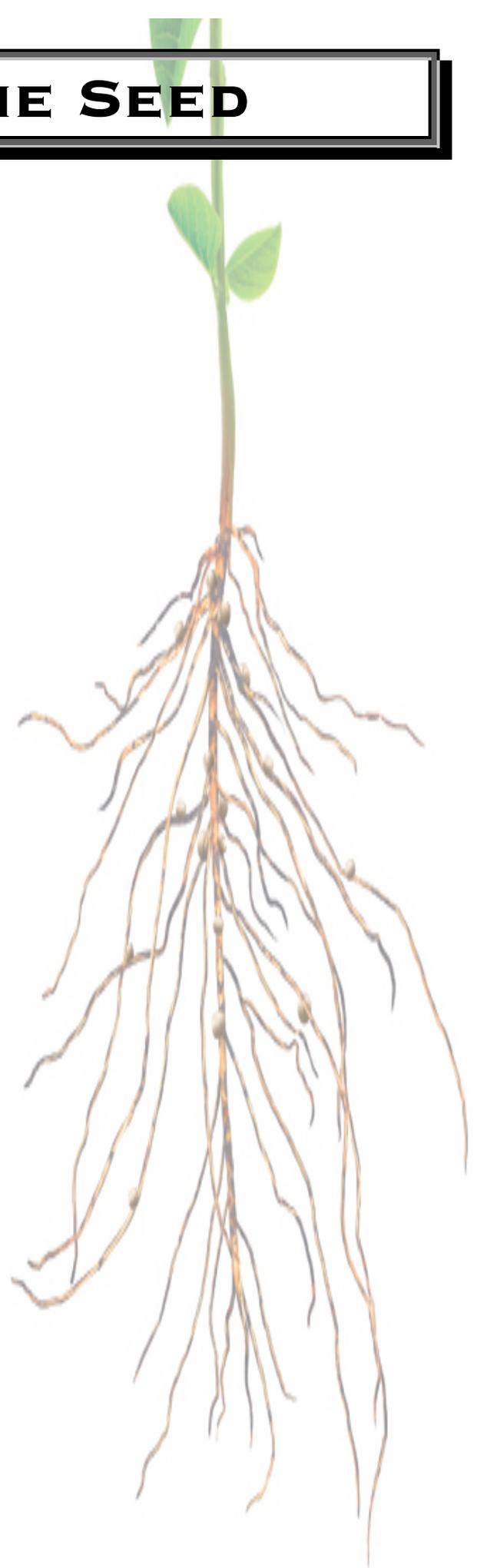


WATERING THE SEED

4. If I were told that this was the last month I was going to be able to wear the badge, what attitude would I *choose* to take each day?

5. What would I miss most about not being able to serve?

6. Complete this sentence several times:
"I don't want to have any regrets about my career. When I retire, I'd like to be able to look back on my career and say..."



IT STARTS TODAY

I PROMISE THAT THIS IS THE LAST TIME THIS WILL BE MENTIONED:

YOU WILL GET OUT OF THIS
WHAT YOU PUT IN TO THIS!

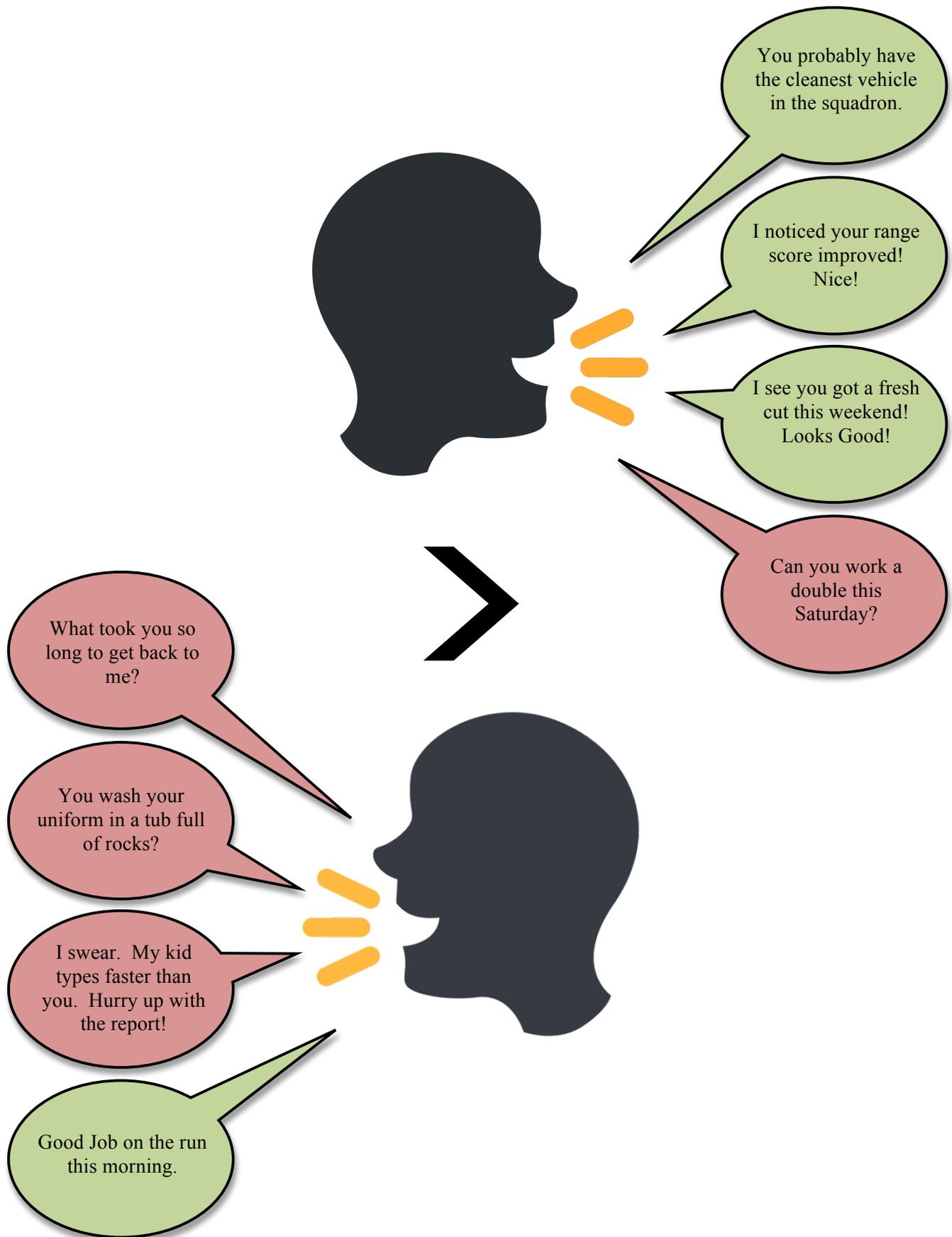
WHAT YOU PUT IN TO THIS!
YOU WILL GET OUT OF THIS

WORKING TO BUILD MENTAL TOUGHNESS AND RESILIENCE REQUIRES SOME WORK THAT FORCES US OUTSIDE OUR COMFORT ZONES, AND ASKS THAT WE ENGAGE WITH TASKS THAT AT FIRST—A ROOM FULL OF ALPHAS WILL SCOFF AT AND APPROACH WITH EGO OVER HUMILITY.

HUMBLE THYSELF...

... and start with these two exercises tonight.

THE LOSADA RATIO



WHAT WENT WELL

WHAT TAKES UP MORE OF MY TIME IN A CONVERSATION?

WHAT WAS WRONG ABOUT THE DAY?



OR WHAT WENT RIGHT?



↑ Endorphins
Nature's Participation Award

↑ Serotonin
Nature's Antidepressant

Focusing on negative events brings with it anxiety and depression. We can combat that by practicing gratitude.

For the next week, anywhere between 10-30 minutes before you lay day to go to sleep. Write down 3 things that went well today, also *why* they went well.

IT'S BEST TO KEEP A SMALL JOURNAL NEXT TO YOUR SIDE OF THE BED, BUT YOU CAN ALSO USE THE NOTE APP ON YOUR PHONE.

You don't need to search for the most jaw-dropping events from the day if nothing comes to mind. You can acknowledge the moment "Steve held the door open for me which was wicked awesome because I had my hands full of the clothes the baby just threw up on." Or maybe, "I found a \$10 bill in a coat I haven't worn in a year."

Follow up each event with a statement of *WHY* that event even happened at all; Steve may have held the door "because Steve is a great neighbor," or "I wore that coat because I decided to take a day off from work to take my son to the movies, and it was snowing outside."

UP FOR A CHALLENGE?

IS THERE SOMEONE THAT I WISH THAT I COULD'VE THANKED, BUT NEVER GOTTEN AROUND TO? A MENTOR, A TEACHER, SOMEONE THAT PASSED ON SOME KNOWLEDGE THAT HELPED ME GET THROUGH A TOUGH TIME?

Think of a person, that is currently alive, that has positively affected your life. Take a moment to write them a letter, letting them know exactly what it is they did for you, specifying how they affected your life. Include in it what it is that you're doing currently in your life, and make sure to mention that you often think about the impact their actions have had on your life.

NO NEED TO WRITE A NOVEL. YOU CAN KEEP IT SIMPLE

Once you've written your letter, reach out to this individual and set up a visit keeping the letter a surprise. Once you've met up, appreciate the full process of reading the letter... being consciously aware of the reactions and emotions from both of you.

DON'T LET THEM INTERRUPT YOU, AND TALK ABOUT IT IN FULLY AFTER YOU'RE DONE.



MENTAL SKILLS TRAINING

IS THERE A TIME THAT I HAD TO USE WILL POWER, OR MENTAL TOUGHNESS TO PUSH THROUGH A SITUATION?

What was that situation?

Why was it hard for you at that time?

Can you think of the strategies you used to get yourself through that moment?

MENTAL SKILLS TRAINING

"You ain't never got two things that go together!
Cereal, no milk. Kool-Aid, no sugar.
Ham, no burger... DAMN!"
-Smokey



MENTAL SKILLS TRAINING INVOLVES TRAINING THE MIND AS WELL AS THE BODY.

WE TRAIN THE BRAIN, BECAUSE THE BRAIN CONTROLS THE BODY.

WE DO THIS TO MINIMIZE PERFORMANCE FLAWS WHEN IT COMES TO THE EXECUTION OF A TASK.

WHO'S USING MENTAL TRAINING? OH, NOBODY REALLY... JUST:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Google | <input type="checkbox"/> Richard Branson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter | <input type="checkbox"/> Phil Jackson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kobe Bryant | <input type="checkbox"/> The US Olympic Team |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arnold Schwarzenegger | <input type="checkbox"/> Pete Carroll |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Jim Carey |

THE UNITED STATES ARMY



CAN TRAIN MENTALLY:

- How we emotionally react to an external event
- How we respond to unsettling situations
- How we view and respond to failure
- Our thought patterns connected to belief systems that don't benefit our wanted outcome
- Self-esteem
- How we communicate
- How we deal with anxiety
- Focus

...THE "CONTROLLABLES"

MENTAL SKILLS TRAINING

To be the
best, you
have to train
like the best



WHAT MAKES "THE BEST," THE BEST?
LIST SOME QUALITIES OF WHAT MAKES SOMEONE THE BEST AT WHAT THEY DO:

Check out this video on MLB's Evan Longoria
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIx2nhsO5iU>

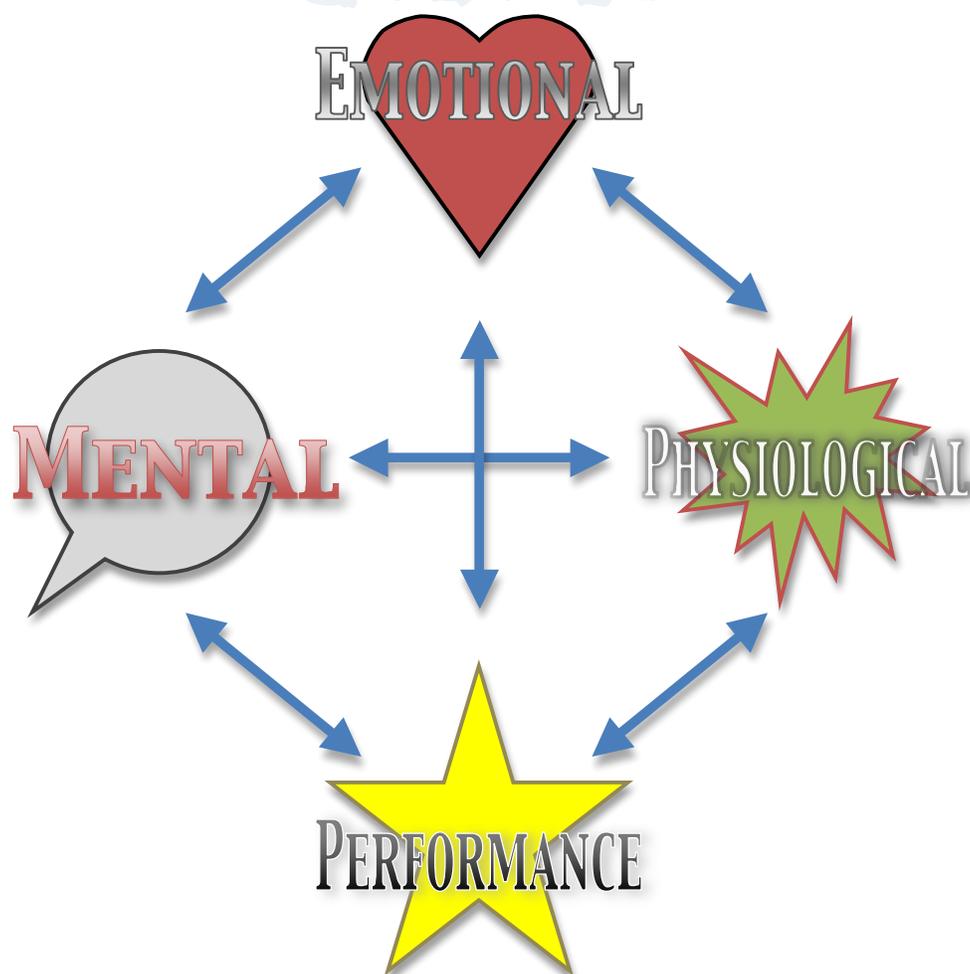


MENTAL SKILLS TRAINING

THERE ARE MANY NAMES FOR THIS PARTICULAR MODEL,
AS WELL AS MANY VARIATIONS. BUT LET'S JUST CALL IT:

The PERFORMANCE Loop

THE PERFORMANCE LOOP



THE PERFORMANCE LOOP REPRESENTS THE WAY THAT WE INTERACT WITH OURSELVES,
AND IT IS REALLY SIMPLE TO UNDERSTAND...

Keep as many of these positive as possible.

THE END

POSITIVE EDUCATION

Time to



...on Positivity

LET'S START OFF WITH...

WHAT WENT WELL

Write down something you experienced that worked out in the end. It can be something you journaled, or something completely different that came to mind later.

A SHORT STORY

There was once a traveler who was walking from a village in the mountains, to a village in the valley. As he walked along, he saw a monk working in a field. So he stopped and said to the monk, "I'm on my way to the village in the valley, can you tell me what it's like?"

The monk looked up from his labor and asked the man where he had come from.

The man responded, "I have come from the village in the mountains."

"What was that like?" asked the monk.

"Terrible!" the man exclaimed, "no-one spoke my language, I had to sleep on a dirt floor in one of their houses, they fed me some sort of stew that had yak or dog or both in it and the weather was atrocious."

"Then I think that you will find that the village in the valley is much the same," the monk noted. A few hours later another traveler passed by and he said to the monk, "I am on my way to the village in the valley, can you tell what it's like?"

"Where have you come from?" Inquired the monk.

"I have come from the village in the mountains."

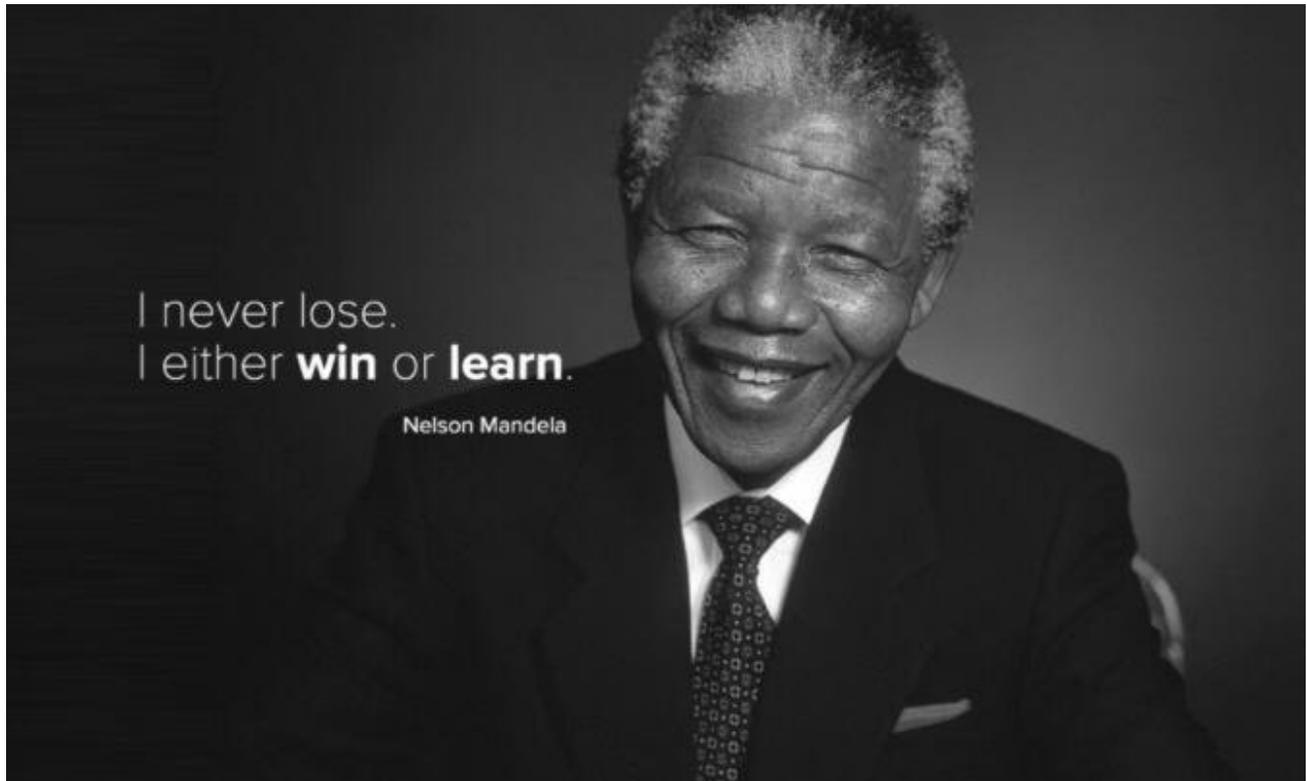
"And what was that like?"

"It was awesome!" the man replied! "No-one spoke my language so we had to communicate using our hands and facial expressions. I had to sleep on the dirt floor, which was really cool, as I've never done that before. They fed me some sort of weird stew and I have no idea what was in it but just to experience how the locals lived was great and the weather was freezing cold, which meant that I really got a taste of the local conditions. It was one of the best experiences of my life."

"Then I think that you'll find that the village in the valley is much the same," responded the monk.

LIFE IS 10% WHAT HAPPENS TO US AND 90% HOW WE RESPOND. DON'T ALLOW THE CHALLENGES OF LIFE TO TAKE AWAY YOUR JOY.

OPTIMISM



THE POWER OF OPTIMISM

Optimism can open doors.

Optimism is key to bouncing back from a setback.

Optimism promotes positive relationships.

Optimism allows for forgiveness.

Optimism reduces stress and decreases depression.

Optimism promotes effective problem solving.

Optimism can be contagious.

Optimism is linked to improved health.

- ❑ Studies show that men who had more optimistic lifestyles compared to those who didn't, 25% less diagnosis of cardiovascular disease than a control group. Where the least optimistic individuals resulted in 25% higher chance of being diagnosed.
- ❑ A similar study following 120 individuals, who'd already suffered heart attacks, focused that within 8 ½ years half of *those* men died from a second heart attack. Not opening the scored optimism test until after the deaths of the individuals, they found that 15 of the 16 most pessimistic men died from a second heart attack, where only 5 of the 16 most optimistic men died from a second heart attack.

OPTIMISM

TASK: LOOK FOR THE SILVER LINING

Each of the scenarios will present an obvious negative scenario. Look for the silver lining in the stories, or come up with an optimistic outcome for each of the stories.

SCENARIO 1:

You were supposed to go to the Beyoncé concert with your daughter, but instead she invites her best friend. Your feelings are hurt.

SCENARIO 2:

After a LONG last year, you finally got your tax return back. You've been looking forward to it so that you could take a much-needed vacation. The vacation isn't planned yet, but this money will delegate where the travel designation is to! As you go to the bank to deposit the check, your transmission goes out...

SCENARIO 3:

You knew you should've given more focus to studying for this midterm, but you decided to hang out with your friend you hadn't seen in a few months due to your schedules.

SCENARIO 4:

You bought lunch from the local deli, and ended up picking up a lotto scratcher. The lady ringing you up threw the scratcher in the brown bag with your sandwich, and you open your bag of chips as you walk out the door and crunch down on a cool ranch Doritos. A weathered man catches your eye, and you decide you aren't as hungry as he is, and you hand him your brown bag. You hear on the news later, that a homeless man just hit the lotto.

SCENARIO 5:

You respond to a call to a home that you frequently visit because of neighbor's complaints about excessive screaming and the sound of broken glass. This time you see that the 5-year-old son's face is cut up and bruised. You have to call the social worker to come pick up the child.

BREAKING BAD HABITS



1) Identify the habit you want to change.



2) Observe how the old habit affects you.



3. Shift your focus.



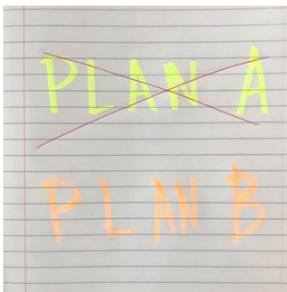
4. Use your imagination



5. Interrupt your faulty patterns when they arise.



6. Use aversion therapy.



7. Create a specific plan of what to do instead.



8. Transform the obstacles.



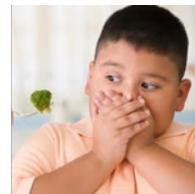
9. Connect to something for inspiration and



10. Transform and make the shift.

BREAKING BAD HABITS

TASK:
CHOOSE A HABIT YOU'D LIKE TO CHANGE, AND WORK THROUGH HOW IT MIGHT LOOK TO CHANGE THAT HABIT

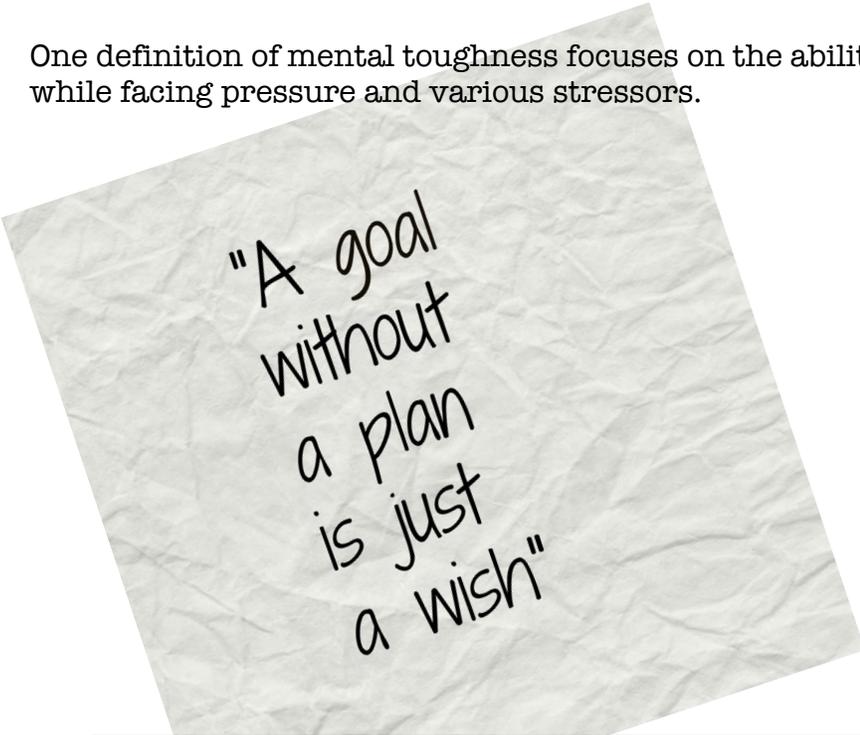


CREATING GOOD HABITS

One definition of mental toughness focuses on the ability to accomplish your goals while facing pressure and various stressors.

A GOAL...

- IS A FOCAL POINT THAT PROVIDES REFERENCE AND DIRECTION TO FUTURE ACTIONS IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE A DESIRED OUTCOME
- DRIVES THE MOTIVATION TO CARRY OUT MENIAL TASK AS MUNDANE
- IS KEY FOR MASTERY



"A goal without a plan is just a wish"

Goals are the **KEY** to strengthening mental toughness

SETTING YOURSELF UP FOR FAILURE:

Generally, we often set goals improperly by setting a goal outside of what we are able to control, and often with no focus on how to achieve the goal!

MY GOAL IS TO WIN THIS RACE

... but the competitor next to me fell into my knee

MY GOAL IS TO KEEP THIS NEW CAR, SCRATCH FREE

... but nobody in LA knows how to park properly.

MY GOAL IS TO JUST MAKE IT THROUGH THIS TRAINING

... but now I have to come back because I didn't study for the test.

REMEMBER! YOU HAVE NO CONTROL OVER THE EXTERNAL FACTORS.

Goals that are created to focus on an external event can instantly set you up for failure. They can be catalyst for stress and anxiety due to the your inability to control the external environment.

GOALS ONLY HAVE TWO RULES. THEY MUST BE:
SPECIFIC & CONTROLABLE

S.M.A.R.T.

Do you know how to juggle?

I Do!

What Does S.M.A.R.T Stand For?

The Characteristics of “S” Are:

The Characteristics of “M” Are:

The Characteristics of “A” Are:

The Characteristics of “R” Are:

The Characteristics of “T” Are:

SOME KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM SMART GOALS

- Goals must be created with as much detail as possible so that there is no ambiguity with what wants to be accomplished
- Goals needs to be broken down from a large overwhelming thought into smaller, challenging yet realistic actions

S.M.A.R.T.

Do you know how to juggle?

I Will!

What is something that I want that I have not yet checked off of my bucket list yet?

“S” – Elaborate on the above goal. Can I inject any adjectives that make the goal more detailed than it is? (Add any details that utilize the 5 senses if you can).

“M” – Can I measure the progress? How will I know when I've achieved my goal?

“A” – Is it possible for me to achieve this? Am I physically, emotionally, mentally, or financially capable to achieve this particular goal, in the measured amount in the time I'll set for myself... or do I need to start with a smaller goal to get back to this point?

“R” – Is this goal relevant to what I want to achieve? Is it in line with my values, ethics, and beliefs?

“T” – Is the time limit that I've set to achieve this goal too much time that it doesn't challenge me, or is too little that I have already set myself up to not achieve?

GOOOOOALS

OTHER TYPES OF GOALS

SHORT TERM GOALS:

A desired outcome you want achieve within the next year.

LONG TERM GOALS:

A desired outcome that requires significantly more time and planning.

OUTCOME GOALS:

An **Outcome Goal** is the outcome... of the goal! Typically it can be the SMART goal in its entirety.

“I will score a perfect physical fitness score by December 1st.”

PERFORMANCE GOALS:

The **Performance Goal** defines what the end of a performance will look or feel like when you are on track of your goal

“I will achieve 20 dead-hang pull-ups, 100-crunches within a 2-minute time limit, and run the 3-mile course in <18 minutes.”

PROCESS GOALS:

The **Process Goal** defines the actions that will help you achieve your **Performance Goal**.

“I will wear a 25lbs weighted vest, and do a max set up pull-ups every other hour of the work day; I will focus on breathing in, during the down motion of the crunch and releasing the air while engaging the core on the way up; I will focus on longer strides while maintaining a strong posture during my training runs.”

WHY GOALS WORK:

Goals provide immediate feedback of how much progress has been made toward your desired outcomes.

Goals build intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation builds Resilience.

Goals increase internal- and external-awareness.

Goals allow for progress to occur with as little external interference as possible

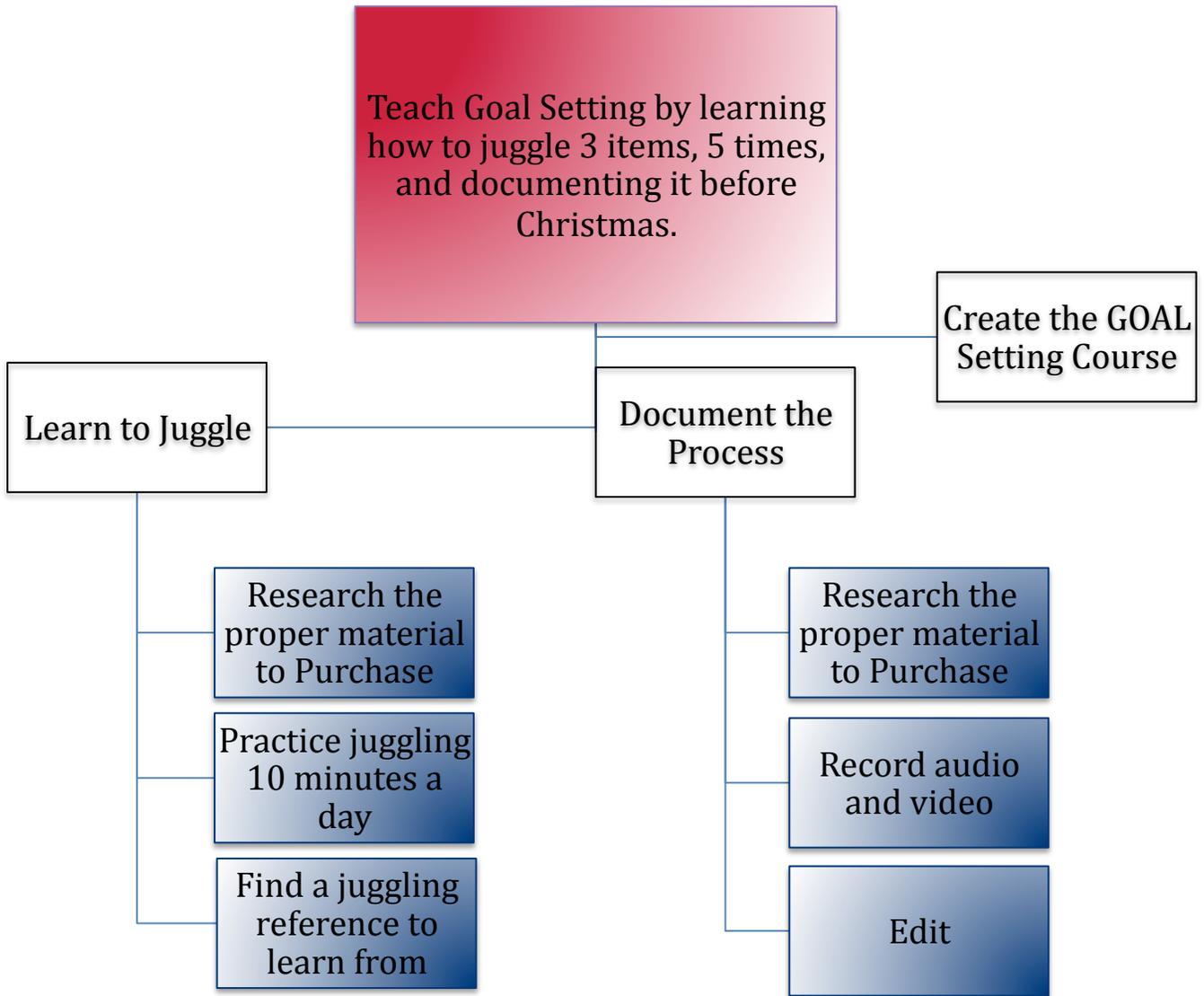
MOST IMPORTANTLY

Knowing how to manipulate this process of goal setting, allows you to push yourself toward mastery at any rate of growth you are comfortable with.

GOOOOOALS

A Goal Flow...

...chart... might look a little like this:



COMMUNITY GOALS

SO LET'S START TO TIE SOME OF THIS STUFF IN TO EACH OTHER.

HOW CAN A FIRST RESPONDER UTILIZE THESE TOOLS SO FAR?

Let's say Sergeant DuMore decides that she want to help her community flourish and do so by improving the relationship between the department and the local gang—in the safest way possible.

That in itself is now the **Outcome Goal**.

Now how can that goal be broken down into three (or more) smaller, yet more manageable goals? Sergeant DuMore may decide to host a precinct BBQ once a month, create a mentorship program, and host a Cop Clean up day, where other community officers come out to clean the streets up and let the neighborhood kids sit in the front seat of the car.

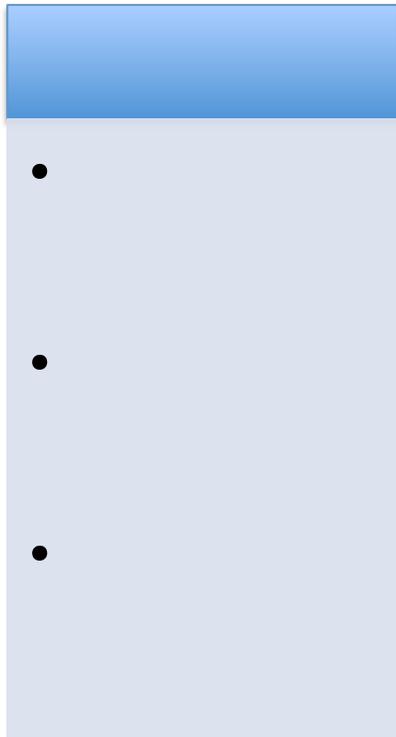
Now even though those goals seem more obtainable, and in the right direction of the **Outcome Goal**, those goals can be broken down even further into three (or more) goals under the Performance (or Action) Goals. Breaking down the goals into smaller goals that are achievable daily—sets the individual up for success, and if the process is worked on daily, the outcome will happen.

HOW CAN YOU USE THIS INFORMATION TO HELP YOUR COMMUNITY FLOURISH?

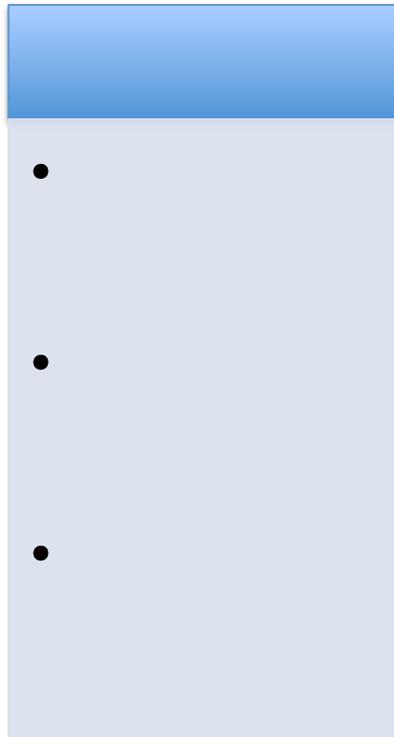
COMMUNITY GOALS

**How Can We Help Our Community Flourish?
(Revisit P.E.R.M.A)**

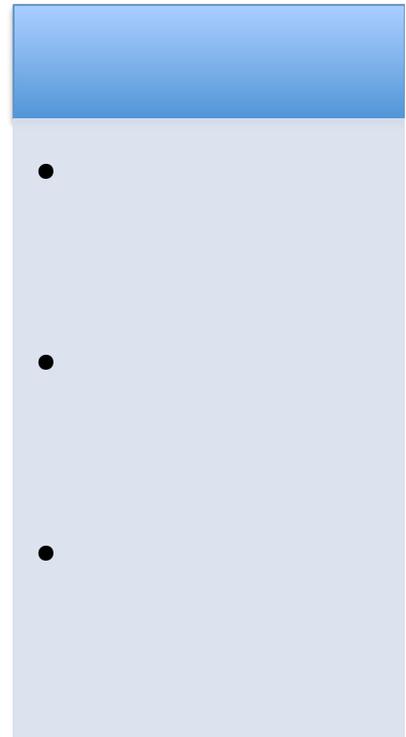
What is the problem we are looking to solve?



-
-
-



-
-
-



-
-
-

5 STEPS TO SUCCESS

REMEMBER THIS PROCESS LOOP?

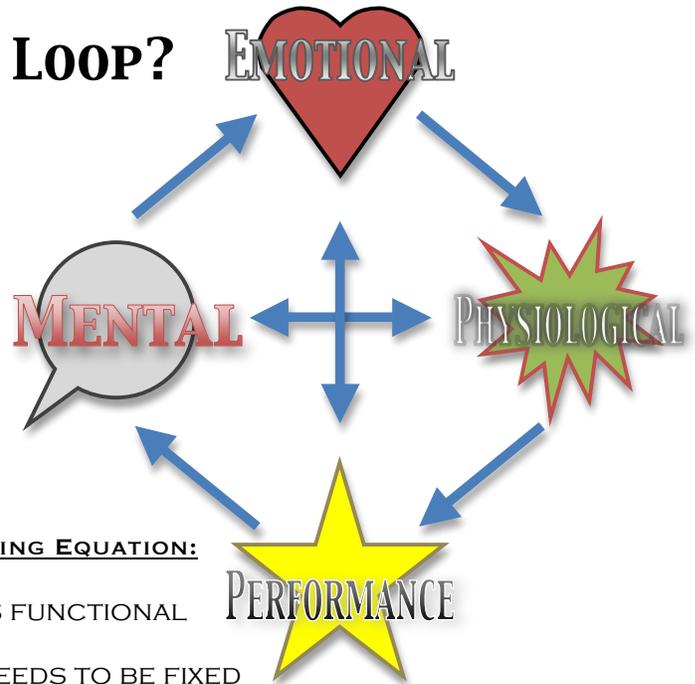
If you ever leave this pretty awesome job, here's the secret to landing a 6-figure job!



BE REALLY GOOD AT THIS BASIC TROUBLESHOOTING EQUATION:

GOOD INPUT/GOOD OUTPUT = EVERYTHING IS FUNCTIONAL

GOOD INPUT/BAD OUTPUT = SOMETHING NEEDS TO BE FIXED



REMEMBER:

1) Identify the Problem

WHAT IS NOT WORKING?

2) Commit

ACKNOWLEDGING THE ISSUE AND CREATING A PLAN OF ACTION TO...

3) ...Execute

PUT THE SYSTEM TO WORK. SET UP AN ACHIEVABLE GOAL PLAN THAT WILL CHALLENGE YOU TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL IN A TIMELY MANNER.

4) Environmental Management

CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES! LIMIT ANY EXTERNAL INTERFERENCE TO YOUR SUCCESS!

5) Generalization

UNDERSTAND THIS... YOU CAN UTILIZE THESE TOOLS IN ALL AREAS OF LIFE, TO IMPROVE HEALTH, EDUCATION, RELATIONSHIPS, ETC.

ADDICTED TO YOUR PHONE?

There's An App For That

The reason that there is a heavy focus on the study of goal achievement is because humans as a species maintain an innate will to succeed. Using proper goal setting techniques will help create a more focused plan toward an individual's end objective.

As we move forward into the course, we will start to explore mindfulness practices such as various breathing practices, positive self-talk, imagery and visualization, and improving our focus.

The Good News Is:

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT TILL THOSE CLASSES TO START!

Figuring out the science behind psychology and goal achievement has moved into the technological world of mobile application (app) development. Apps have been created to aid people in becoming more mindful through meditation, to learn yoga, and focus on their breathing exercises. Apps have been developed to help train an individual who has never ran a day in their life, to run their first 5k. There are even apps to help you develop those washboard abs you have been putting off for the past 17 summers; and this industry is able to continue to expand because of the process of understanding the foundations of incorporating SMART goals into their apps.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE MOST POPULAR MINDFULNESS APPS* ON THE MARKET CURRENTLY.

MINDFULNESS:

- Calm
- Soothe
- Headspace
- Lucid
- Breathe (not a typo)
- Brainwave Studios
- Relax Melodies
- Mindfulness Daily
- Simple Habit
- Aura
- 10% Happier

HEALTH/GOALS ACHIEVEMENT:

- Mindfulness
- YogaGlo
- Lose It!
- MyFitnessPal
- 5K Runner: Couch Potato to 5K
- Zombies, Run! 5k Training
- Ab Workout X
- SuperBetter

IMPROVING ORGANIZATION:

- Productive - Habit Tracker
- Habit-Bull
- Flora
- Mindly
- Todist
- Day One Journal

*Not all apps are free, so I recommend downloading a few of the free versions to try them before purchasing!

SHOW ME YOUR STRENGTH!

I MADE A SECOND PAGE FOR YOU GUYS WHO REALLY THINK HIGHLY OF YOURSELVES!



SHOW ME YOUR STRENGTH!

NOW TAKE A MOMENT TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION.

Would your friends and family agree?

How About...

Your Boss?

Your Partner?

Significant Other

Kids (if any...)

WHO WOULD NOT AGREE?

Why Not?

HOW DO YOU PREPARE?

SCENARIO

You never ever... EVER do this, but while at the mall shopping the Black Friday door busters, you see your dream car sitting there on display with a big white raffle box in front of it that screams, "If you put your info in here, you might as well change your phone number!" However, against your best judgment, you think to yourself "If you don't play, you'll never win," and you find yourself looking for a tiny yellow pencil so that this company can call you to pick your car up.

AND THEY DO.

Long after you've forgotten about dropping your information in that big white box, you get a call from an unknown number. Hesitant to speak with yet another solicitor, but waiting for a call from your mechanic, you pick up the phone and realize it's not George on the other line. Before you can even say you're not interested, this person says, "you remember that raffle you entered around Thanksgiving?" ... *Yeah go ahead...* "Well you can come pick up your car... a week from today at Staples Center. The caveat, you will have to win it during a half time shoot out."

THE RULES: YOU MUST SCORE 30 CONSECUTIVE POINTS IN 3 MINUTES. YOU CAN SHOOT FROM THE FREE-THROW LINE, WHICH IS 1 POINT; OR THE 3-POINT LINE, WHICH COUNTS FOR 3 POINTS. ALL POINTS HAVE TO BE CONSECUTIVE, OR THE SCORE RESETS.

YOU LOVE BASKETBALL! SO THIS SOUNDS LIKE FUN,

AND YOU ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE.

Debating your game plan, you know that your free-throw game is stronger than your perimeter shooting. But the most you've ever made at once is 16 buckets. You also think of this one pick-up game you played with Bruce and Stanley where you scored 8 in a row from DOWNTOWN... but you were seriously on fire that day, and have *never* experienced that type of flow since...



YOU'VE GOT A WEEK TO PREPARE. WHAT DO YOU DO?

HOW DO I PREPARE?

Did you choose to practice on your strength, or your weakness? _____

Why did you choose to work on this over the other?

What factors of the competition would have to change in order for you to have used the other strategy?

Take a moment to reflect on how you prepare for real life scenarios that you find yourself in (prepping for a test, public speaking, shooting range, approaching a vehicle during a routine traffic stop, parenting...): Do you approach these scenarios utilizing your strengths all the time? Or do you work on strengthening your weaknesses. (Don't cheat yourself on this question. Be honest).

Are you typically satisfied with your results? Does this approach work for you in your life?

STRENGTHS VS. WEAKNESSES

TIME TO ACKNOWLEDGE SOME STUFF...

WHAT ARE YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES?

On the next few pages, take some time to reflect on these areas in your life. Write down areas (skills, emotions, characteristics, values, etc...) where you are strong as well as weak. Explain how you know you are strong or weak in these areas.

IF THEY DON'T PERTAIN TO YOU YET (SUCH AS FAMILY LIFE), ACKNOWLEDGE IF THE ABSENCE OF IT MAKES YOU STRONGER OR WEAKER, AND EXPLAIN WHY.

Take some ownership in your actions by including “I” in your explanations. (i.e., “My son and I have a strong bond because *I* am honest and open with him”; I have been passed over for promotion for the second time because *I* have not improved on my performance goals from my last two evaluations). Leave out any words leading to placing ownership on someone else, or any statement that are ambiguous such as “I believe” or “I think ”...

Lastly, if a statement that someone else has made towards you comes to mind and you don't believe it to be true, write it down as if you own it—but put a star before and after it so your ego knows it's a lie as you write it down (i.e., **“I am not a good driver”**; **“I am not a good listener”**). Do NOT write, “My wife says I am not a good driver”... that's what the star is for!

STRENGTHS VS. WEAKNESSES

Are You Flourishing?

Revisit your statements on the previous pages, and tally up strengths and weaknesses.
Record Your Findings Below.

Strengths

Weaknesses

WORK LIFE

Health & Fitness

Family

External Relationships

RELATIONSHIP WITH MYSELF

Spirituality

STRENGTHS VS. WEAKNESSES

Real Quick...More Acknowledging

WHEN I ADDRESSED MY STRENGTHS, WHAT TYPE OF EMOTIONS AND FEELINGS CAME UP? (REMEMBER TO USE "I" STATEMENTS)

WHEN I ADDRESSED MY WEAKNESSES, WHAT TYPE OF EMOTIONS AND FEELINGS CAME UP?

ARE MY LOSADA RATIOS CONGRUENT WITH HOW I VIEW MYSELF AS A WHOLE? _____

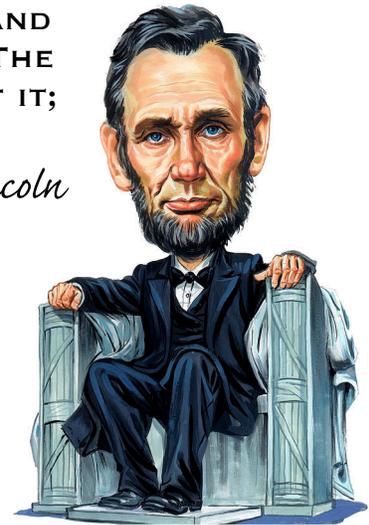
THE POWER BEHIND STRENGTH

TO THE INDIVIDUAL

- Every individual has a core set of strengths
- Working from our strengths promotes self-efficacy
- Working from our strengths increases the chance of successful goal attainment
- Increases well-being
- Decreases depression
- Working from your strengths enhances empathy and altruism.
- Purposefully engaging with your strengths improve self-awareness
- Strengthens resilience

“CHARACTER IS LIKE A TREE, AND REPUTATION LIKE A SHADOW. THE SHADOW IS WHAT WE THINK OF IT; THE TREE IS THE REAL THING.

-Abraham Lincoln



OUR BRAINS ARE WIRED TO HOLD ON TO THE NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES WE ENCOUNTER. THIS IS FOR SURVIVAL PURPOSES. THEREFORE, UNDERSTANDING WHAT CHARACTERISTICS BRING OUT THE MOST EFFECTIVE VERSION OF YOURSELF WILL HELP YOU OVERCOME RESISTANCE TO CHALLENGING YOURSELF TO GROW IN AREAS YOU ONCE HELD BACK FROM GROWING IN.

IN SOCIAL STANDARDS

- Character traits are universal; Humans globally share the same 24 character strengths
- Engaging the world through your strengths exposes your authentic-self, and remember—you can catch more flies with honey...
- Gives you an upper hand on building social resilience, and provides an individual the tools to recover from trigger stressors and social isolation
- Working from our strengths increases successful social engagement

What sets humans apart from any other hive, tribe, or pack species, is our ability to reason, plan and work together. Our survival *absolutely* depends on how we are able to collectively bring our strengths to the table to work together in pursuit of shared goals.

So what are your Strengths?

LOOKING FOR STRENGTH

This next section introduces the questions that will help you determine your character strengths. The questions are based off of a 5-answer scale ranging from “Very Much Like Me”, to “Very Much Unlike Me.” Each section has two questions in it, so add the value of the two questions, and that is your score for that particular section. Once you are done, write down the values in their labeled boxes, and these represent your character strengths.

WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE

1) *CURIOSITY & INTEREST IN THE WORLD*

a) The statement “I am always curious about the world” is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) “I’m easily bored” is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **CURIOSITY** Score _____

2) *LOVE OF LEARNING*

a) The statement “I am thrilled when I learn something new” is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) “I never go out of my way to visit museums” is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **LOVE OF LEARNING** Score _____

LOOKING FOR STRENGTH

3) JUDGMENT - CRITICAL THINKING - OPEN-MINDEDNESS

a) The statement "When the topic calls for it, I can be a highly rational thinker" is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) "I tend to make snap judgments" is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **JUDGMENT** Score _____

4) CREATIVITY – INGENUITY – ORIGINALITY

a) The statement "I am thrilled when I learn something new" is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) "I never go out of my way to visit museums" is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **INGENUITY** Score _____

5) SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

a) "No matter what the social situation, I am able to fit in" is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) "I am not very good at sensing what other people are feeling" is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE** Score _____

LOOKING FOR STRENGTH

6) PERSPECTIVE WISDOM

a) "I am always able to look at things and see the big picture" is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) "Others rarely come to me for advice" is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **PERSPECTIVE** Score _____

COURAGE

7) BRAVERY & VALOR

a) "I have taken frequent stands in the face of strong opposition" is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) "Pain and disappointment often gets the better of me" is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **VALOR** Score _____

8) INDUSTRY - DILIGENCE - PERSEVERANCE

a) "I always finish what I start" is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) "I get side tracked when I work" is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **PERSEVERANCE** Score _____

LOOKING FOR STRENGTH

9) HONESTY – AUTHENTICITY – INTEGRITY

a) “I always keep my promises” is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) “My friends never tell me I’m down to Earth” is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **INTEGRITY** Score _____

HUMANITY & LOVE

10) KINDNESS & GENEROSITY

a) “I have voluntarily helped a neighbor in the last month” is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) “I’m rarely as excited about the good fortune of others as I am about my own” is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **KINDNESS** Score _____

11) CAPACITY TO LOVE & BE LOVED

a) “There are people in my life who care as much as about my feelings and well-being as they do about their own” is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) “I have trouble accepting love from others” is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **LOVING** Score _____

LOOKING FOR STRENGTH

JUSTICE

12) CITIZENSHIP – TEAMWORK - LOYALTY

a) “I work at my best when I am a part of a group” is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) “I’m rarely as excited about the good fortune of others as I am about my own” is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **CITIZENSHIP** Score _____

13) FAIRNESS & EQUITY

a) “I treat all people equally, regardless of who they might be” is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) “If I do not like someone, it is difficult for me to treat them fairly” is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **FAIRNESS** Score _____

14) LEADERSHIP

a) “I can always get people to do things together without nagging them” is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) “I am not very good at planning group activities” is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **LEADERSHIP** Score _____

LOOKING FOR STRENGTH

TEMPERANCE

15) SELF-CONTROL & SELF-REGULATION

a) "I control my emotions" is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) "I can rarely stay on a diet" is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total ***SELF-CONTROL*** Score _____

16) CAUTION - PRUDENCE - DISCRETION

a) "I avoid activities that are physically dangerous" is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) "I sometimes make poor choices in friendships and relationships" is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total ***PRUDENCE*** Score _____

17) HUMILITY & MODESTY

a) "I change the subject when people pay me compliments" is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) "I often brag about my accomplishments" is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total ***HUMILITY*** Score _____

LOOKING FOR STRENGTH

TRANSCENDENCE

18) APPRECIATION OF BEAUTY & EXCELLENCE

a) "In the last month, I have been thrilled by excellence in music, art, drama, film, sport, science, or mathematics" is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) "I have not created anything of beauty in the last year" is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **APPRECIATION OF BEAUTY** Score _____

19) GRATITUDE

a) "I always say thank you, even for little things" is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) "I rarely stop and count my blessings" is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **GRATITUDE** Score _____

20) HOPE – OPTIMISM – FUTURE-MINDEDNESS

a) "I always look at the bright side" is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) "I rarely have a well-thought-out plan for what I want to do" is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **OPTIMISM** Score _____

LOOKING FOR STRENGTH

21) SPIRITUALITY – SENSE OF PURPOSE – FAITH

a) “My life has strong purpose” is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) “I don’t have a calling in life” is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **SPIRITUALITY** Score _____

22) FORGIVENESS & MERCY

a) “I always let bygones be bygones” is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) “I always try to get even” is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **FORGIVENESS** Score _____

23) HUMOR & PLAYFULNESS

a) “I always mix work and play as much as possible” is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) “I rarely say funny things” is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **HUMOR** Score _____

LOOKING FOR STRENGTH

24) ZEST – PASSION – ENTHUSIASM

a) “I throw myself into everything I do” is

Very Much Like Me – 5 Like Me – 4 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 2 Very Much Unlike Me – 1

b) “I mope a lot” is

Very Much Like Me – 1 Like Me – 2 Neutral – 3 Unlike Me – 4 Very Much Unlike Me – 5

Total **ZEST** Score _____

THAT CONCLUDES THE ABRIDGED VERSION OF THE CHARACTER SKILLS TEST

At this point, make sure that you’ve added up all the scores correctly and record your scores on the next page
(*Hint* every second question is reversed scored from the first)

IF YOU HAVEN’T TAKEN THE TEST ONLINE YET, VISIT:

<https://www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu>

- 1) Go to Questionnaires
- 2) Select VIA Survey of Character Strengths

You will have to register, but this is so you can have access to your scores, as well as take other tests. The University of Pennsylvania Positive Psychology center uses the data for research, so no need to be scared of telemarketers... unless you’re waiting to win a dream car.

LOOKING FOR STRENGTH

CHARACTER STRENGTHS RESULTS

Below you will see all 24 Character Strengths. After you record your scores your scores should represent your strengths in the order that you normally approach your daily life. Take note of the top and bottom 5; these are essentially your Strongest and Weakest Characteristics, and are the ones that you lead with, and the bottom are what represent you the least.

WISDOM & KNOWLEDGE

- 1) CURIOSITY _____
- 2) LOVE OF LEARNING _____
- 3) JUDGMENT _____
- 4) INGENUITY _____
- 5) SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE _____
- 6) PERSPECTIVE _____

COURAGE

- 7) VALOR _____
- 8) PERSEVERANCE _____
- 9) INTEGRITY _____

HUMANITY & LOVE

- 10) KINDNESS _____
- 11) LOVING _____

JUSTICE

- 12) CITIZENSHIP _____
- 13) FAIRNESS _____
- 14) LEADERSHIP _____

TEMPERANCE

- 15) SELF-CONTROL _____
- 16) PRUDENCE _____
- 17) HUMILITY _____

TRANSCENDENCE

- 18) APPRECIATION OF BEAUTY _____
- 19) GRATITUDE _____
- 20) OPTIMISM _____
- 21) SPIRITUALITY _____
- 22) FORGIVENESS _____
- 23) HUMOR _____
- 24) ZEST _____

BUT WHAT'S IT ALL MEAN?

HERE YOU CAN FIND THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHARACTERISTICS! FIND YOUR TOP AND BOTTOM 5 AND SEE HOW THEY RELATE TO YOU.

(WANT TO KNOW A SECRET? THESE ARE ALL MY CHARACTERISTICS IN ORDER FROM STRONGEST TO WEAKEST)

Curiosity And Interest In The World -

You are curious about everything. You are always asking questions, and you find all subjects and topics fascinating. You like exploration and discovery.

Capacity To Love And Be Loved -

You value close relations with others, in particular those in which sharing and caring are reciprocated. The people to whom you feel most close are the same people who feel most close to you.

Spirituality, Sense Of Purpose, And Faith -

You have strong and coherent beliefs about the higher purpose and meaning of the universe. You know where you fit in the larger scheme. Your beliefs shape your actions and are a source of comfort to you.

Perspective Wisdom -

Although you may not think of yourself as wise, your friends hold this view of you. They value your perspective on matters and turn to you for advice. You have a way of looking at the world that makes sense to others and to yourself.

Kindness And Generosity -

You are kind and generous to others, and you are never too busy to do a favor. You enjoy doing good deeds for others, even if you do not know them well.

Humor And Playfulness -

You like to laugh and tease. Bringing smiles to other people is important to you. You try to see the light side of all situations.

Forgiveness And Mercy -

You forgive those who have done you wrong. You always give people a second chance. Your guiding principle is mercy and not revenge.

Hope, Optimism, And Future-Mindedness -

You expect the best in the future, and you work to achieve it. You believe that the future is something that you can control.

BUT WHAT'S IT ALL MEAN

Social Intelligence -

You are aware of the motives and feelings of other people. You know what to do to fit in to different social situations, and you know what to do to put others at ease.

Leadership -

You excel at the tasks of leadership: encouraging a group to get things done and preserving harmony within the group by making everyone feel included. You do a good job organizing activities and seeing that they happen.

Fairness, Equity, And Justice -

Treating all people fairly is one of your abiding principles. You do not let your personal feelings bias your decisions about other people. You give everyone a chance.

Citizenship, Teamwork, And Loyalty -

You excel as a member of a group. You are a loyal and dedicated teammate, you always do your share, and you work hard for the success of your group.

Gratitude -

You are aware of the good things that happen to you, and you never take them for granted. Your friends and family members know that you are a grateful person because you always take the time to express your thanks.

Bravery And Valor -

You are a courageous person who does not shrink from threat, challenge, difficulty, or pain. You speak up for what is right even if there is opposition. You act on your convictions.

Judgment, Critical Thinking, And Open-Mindedness -

Thinking things through and examining them from all sides are important aspects of who you are. You do not jump to conclusions, and you rely only on solid evidence to make your decisions. You are able to change your mind.

Creativity, Ingenuity, And Originality -

Thinking of new ways to do things is a crucial part of who you are. You are never content with doing something the conventional way if a better way is possible.

BUT WHAT'S IT ALL MEAN

Honesty, Authenticity, And Genuineness -

You are an honest person, not only by speaking the truth but by living your life in a genuine and authentic way. You are down to earth and without pretense; you are a "real" person.

Modesty And Humility -

You do not seek the spotlight, preferring to let your accomplishments speak for themselves. You do not regard yourself as special, and others recognize and value your modesty.

Industry, Diligence, And Perseverance -

You work hard to finish what you start. No matter the project, you "get it out the door" in timely fashion. You do not get distracted when you work, and you take satisfaction in completing tasks.

Zest, Enthusiasm, And Energy -

Regardless of what you do, you approach it with excitement and energy. You never do anything halfway or halfheartedly. For you, life is an adventure.

Love Of Learning -

You love learning new things, whether in a class or on your own. You have always loved school, reading, and museums-anywhere and everywhere there is an opportunity to learn.

Appreciation Of Beauty And Excellence -

You notice and appreciate beauty, excellence, and/or skilled performance in all domains of life, from nature to art to mathematics to science to everyday experience.

Caution, Prudence, And Discretion -

You are a careful person, and your choices are consistently prudent ones. You do not say or do things that you might later regret.

Self-Control And Self-Regulation -

You self-consciously regulate what you feel and what you do. You are a disciplined person. You are in control of your appetites and your emotions, not vice versa.

REFLECTION

OK. SO LET'S JUMP INTO OUR TIME MACHINES REAL QUICK, AND REVISIT WHAT YOU STATED WHAT YOUR STRENGTHS WERE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE DAY.

- Do your top 5 character strengths line up with the character traits you mentioned earlier?
- When you answered the question, "Who would not agree, and why not," which characteristics most correlate with your answer?
- Revisit your answers about your strengths and weaknesses in the different areas of your life. Do you see a difference of how you approach individual aspects of your life? Or do you approach all things the same?
- In the areas you feel like you most flourish, are you utilizing any of your top 5 characteristics?
- In the areas you feel are the most weak, which of your top 5 strengths are you using? Are you using any?
- When you decided on how you would win your dream car, did you go into it with your strengths, or your weaknesses?

If you chose to go with your strengths in that scenario... why wouldn't you chose to go with your strengths in every scenario?



GET MENTALLY BUFF

NOW THAT YOU KNOW YOUR PERSONAL SUPER POWERS, WHAT SHOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT THEM?

- Consciously utilizing your strengths to solve problems or engage with people has been shown to increase happiness, levels of endorphins, and serotonin—which if you need a reminder...



Endorphins

Nature's Participation Award



Serotonin

Nature's Antidepressant

- Now that you know the traits that can drive you toward your success, in order to reinforce them—practice using them consciously in new way; and be conscious of the feedback you receive from the action.
- To get an idea of new ways to challenge and nurture your character strengths, check out *340 Ways to Use Character Strengths**
- Test how each strength affects the same type of situation, so that you can create awareness and enhanced insight on how to manipulate situations in your favor.
- Know that there are some signature strengths that may not fit every occasion.
- You can absolutely over use your strengths. Imagine if you used humor for every single occasion.

NOW THAT YOU KNOW THE CHARACTERISTICS THAT YOU PRIMARILY WORK FROM, MORE REFLECTION MUST HAPPEN TO SEE IF YOUR CHARACTERISTICS ARE IN LINE WITH YOUR VALUES.

*http://www.actionforhappiness.org/media/52486/340_ways_to_use_character_strengths.pdf

WORKING ON GAINS

SCENARIO 1:

You had a hard day at work, and you're tired. Phil, your neighbor that been constantly bugging you about your friends parking in his space, is coming out in one of his moods. If you engage in the same ol' song and dance, you know that it's going to ruin the rest of your night, and all you want to do is sit in your sweet spot and turn your brain off. You see this as a perfect opportunity to test one of your new skills out.

SCENARIO 2:

Your CO is on your case again for not filling out your trip tickets, but you know you have been, and your partner can vouch. He doesn't like being corrected, but you know that it's operator error on his part.

SCENARIO 3:

You're at another HOA meeting that you don't want to be at, because every time there's a committee that needs to be formed, they turn to you. This time they want to address a neighborhood watch committee, and guess who they look to. You've got too much going on to even think about taking on another project, and you don't want to say *yes just* because you're law enforcement... you didn't even feel this is a legit concern in this particular area.

SCENARIO 4:

Stephen, who's brother has been in and out of jail, is a good kid primarily—but you notice that every time his brother is about to get back out of jail, Steve starts to take on the persona of his brother, and finds himself getting into trouble. You feel that even though he puts on a front, he really holds on to what you have to say. Today he was arrested with his friends during a joy ride, and you decide to test out a separate approach.

ANXIETY

ANXIETY



Seeing it.



Hearing it.



Saying it Out Loud.

DID ANY OF THOSE AFFECT YOU?

THE WORD ITSELF IS A TRIGGER THAT CREATES A SNOWBALL EFFECT OF PERFORMANCE FAILURE.

WHAT CREATES ANXIETY FOR YOU?

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
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ANXIETY

TWO TYPES OF ANXIETY:

State – Situational

State anxieties are normally temporary in nature and are created because of the nature of the situation or environment at the moment.

- A THUNDER STORM
- A SCARY MOVIE
- A CAR ACCIDENT
- DOGS
- FLYING ON A PLANE
- MEETING HIS PARENTS
- A SUSPECT REACHING FOR THEIR WALLET
- A LOUD UNEXPECTED BANG
- ANSWERING A CALL IN A NOTORIOUSLY VIOLENT AREA

Trait – A Characteristic of an Individual

Trait anxieties are normally more permanent in an individual's character. It is a part of who they are. Worry-Warts of a particular situation that may or may not be justified.

- YOUR BABY GIRL GOING TO COLLEGE... SHE'S CURRENTLY 6.
 - FEARS AND PHOBIAS
 - DEATH/DYING
 - DOGS
 - A MOTHER'S EXCESSIVE FEAR YOU'RE NOT TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF PROPERLY
 - THE SOUND OF QUIET
 - BEING SHOT ON THE JOB
 - YOUR BABY GETTING MARRIED... SHE'S STILL CURRENTLY 6.
-

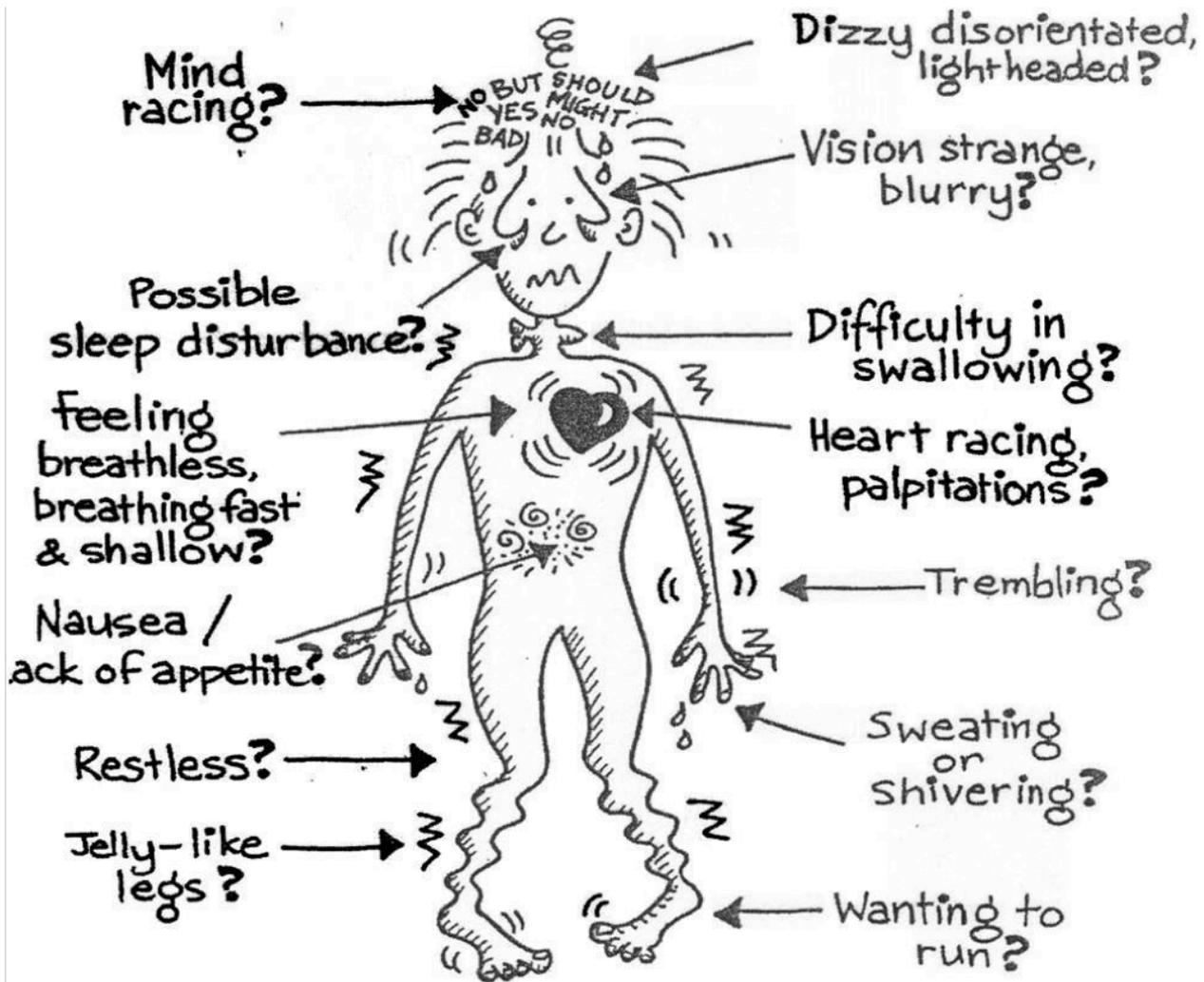
TRAIT ANXIETIES MAY SEEM IRRATIONAL TO SOMEONE LOOKING FROM THE OUTSIDE-IN. HOWEVER, TO THE INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCING THEM... THEY ARE ABSOLUTELY RATIONAL—AND THEY AFFECT THE BODY IN NEGATIVE WAYS.

ANXIETY

WHAT ANXIETY FEELS LIKE...

The sympathetic nervous system is activated system by signals sent to the adrenal glands, which pump epinephrine into the bloodstream—or as you know it... turns on the adrenaline!

WHEN THAT HAPPENS, PHYSIOLOGICAL CHANGES OCCUR INCLUDING...



ANXIETY

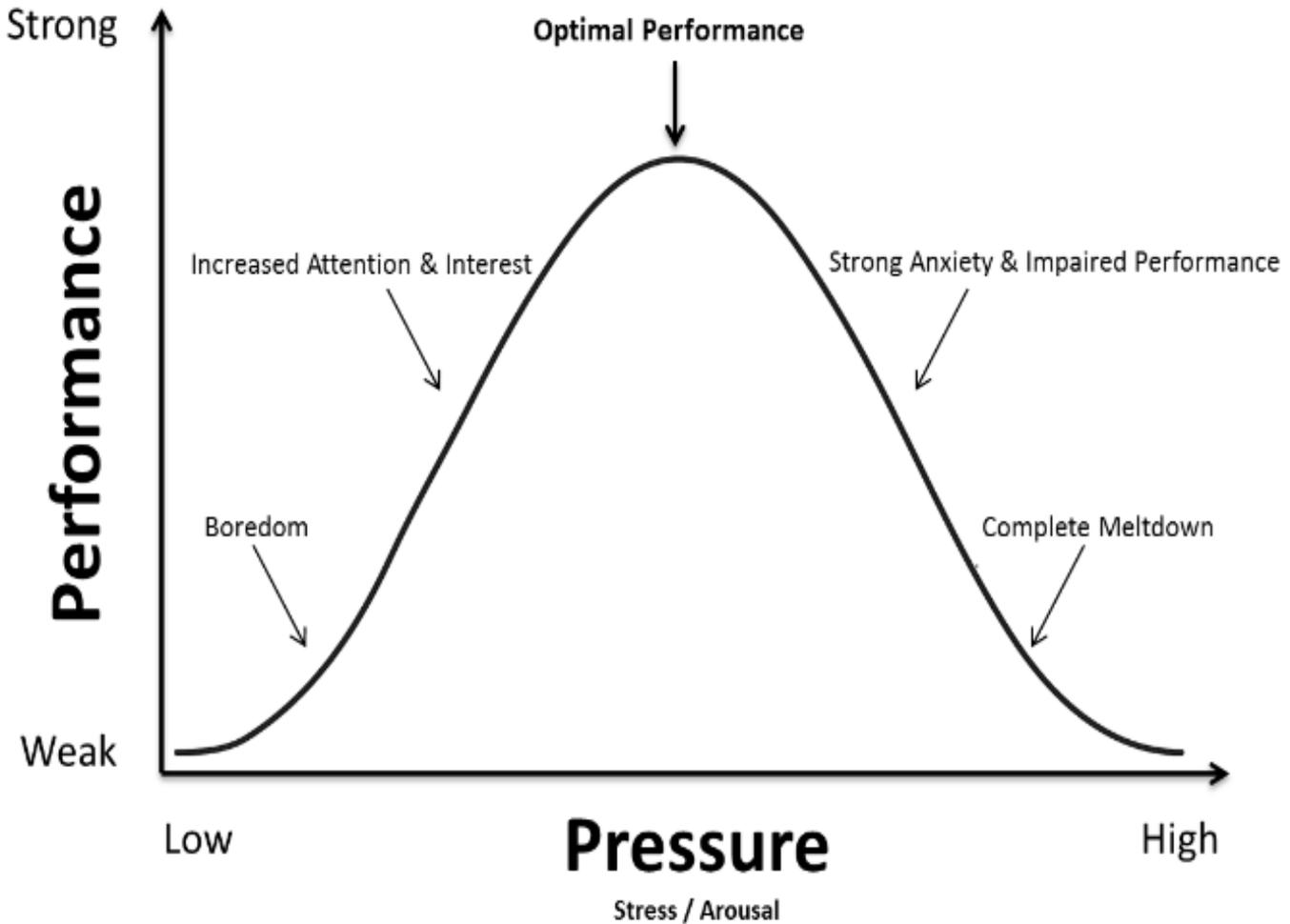


ANXIETY IS GOOD.

That's right... we need anxiety in order to properly function. Anxiety is the key to Fight, Flight, and Freeze responses that keep us alive!

If we didn't have anxiety, we would've been eaten by dinosaurs and never would've evolved.

THE INVERTED-U



TOO LITTLE ANXIETY:

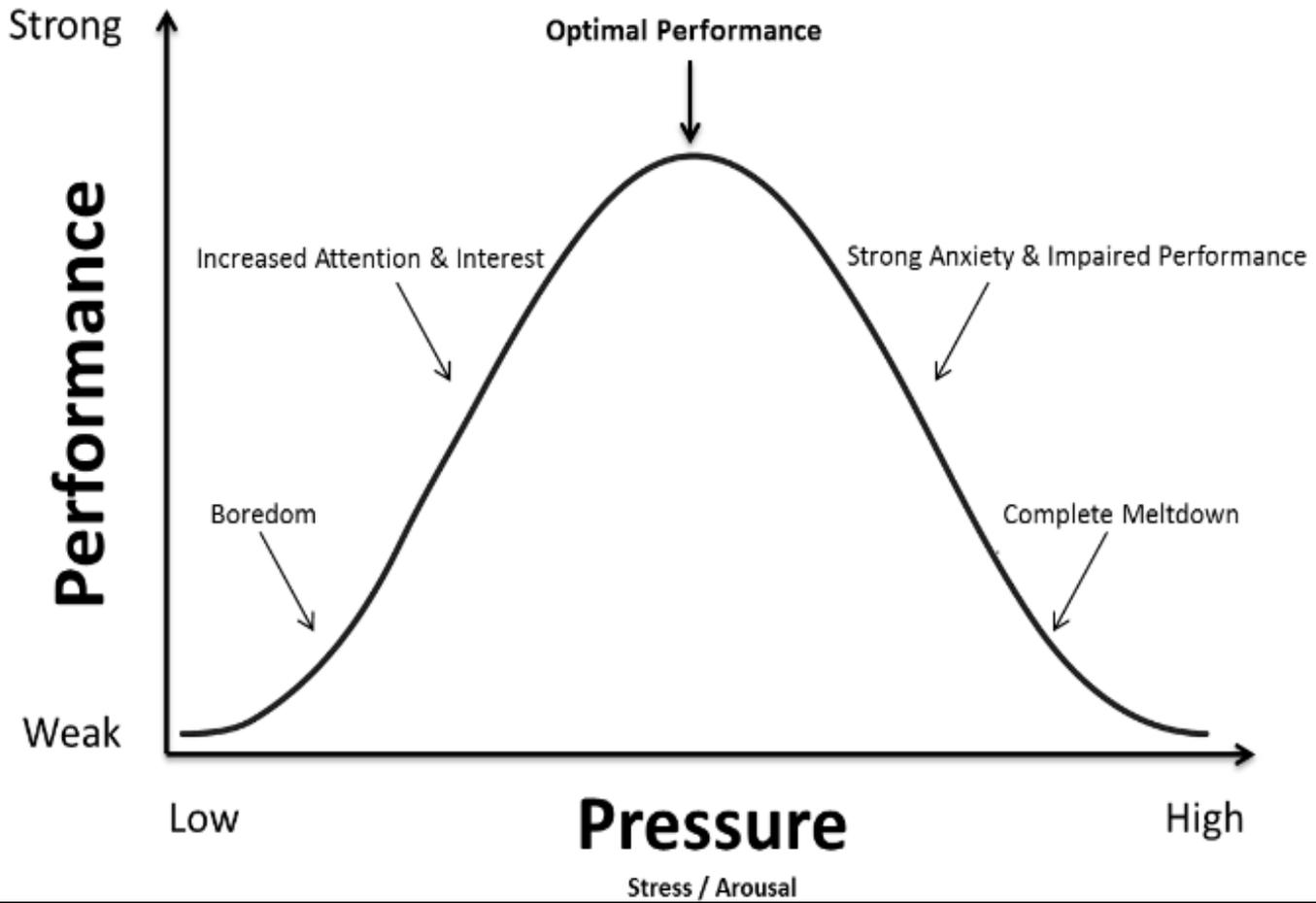
- Decrease in motivation
- Reduced intensity
- Decrease in effort
- Decrease in Situational Awareness

TOO MUCH ANXIETY:

- Increased muscle tension
- Difficulty concentrating
- Impaired decision-making
- Hyper focus
- Jumpy

UNDER PRESSURE!

RATE WHERE THESE STRESSORS LAND FOR YOU ON THE INVERTED-U DIAGRAM, BY JUST PLACING THE NUMBER WHERE IT WOULD FALL ON YOUR SCALE.

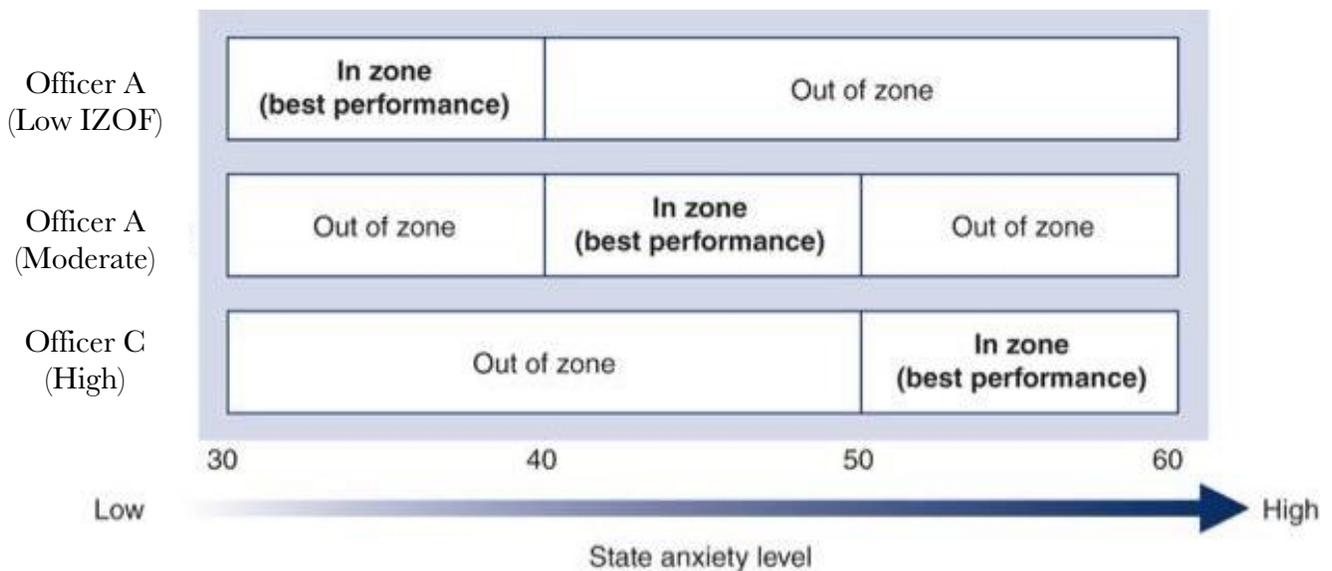


1. Approaching someone very attractive to tell them you're interested in going on a date with them.
2. Approaching someone not as attractive as you are—but they're *really* nice, funny, and easy to talk to, and ask *them* on a date.
3. Game point, in your favor.
4. Game point, in the opponent's favor
5. Walking into a gym with WAY sexier people in it.
6. Walking into a gym with and you're the sexiest person in it
7. Death
8. Dying
9. Going up for promotion
10. Traffic stops in the day time
11. Traffic stops in the night time
12. Crowds while not in uniform
13. Crowds while in uniform
14. You can see one person in the car during a traffic stop
15. You can see three people in the car during a traffic stop

ANXIETY

ALTHOUGH THE INVERTED-U IS A GREAT REPRESENTATION OF OVERALL ANXIETY, SOME PEOPLE RESPOND TO ANXIETY DIFFERENT THAN THE AVERAGE INDIVIDUAL—AS WE CAN SEE FROM THE LAST EXERCISE. IN SCIENCE, WE CALL THEM OUTLIERS!

You can spot these guys by hearing other people make remarks like, **“How are you so calm right now?”** or, **“It takes a lot to get him going...”** Those are just some things you may hear around these people... but that is not backed by science at all... but seeing the Individual Zones of Optimal Functioning below, those questions might make more sense.

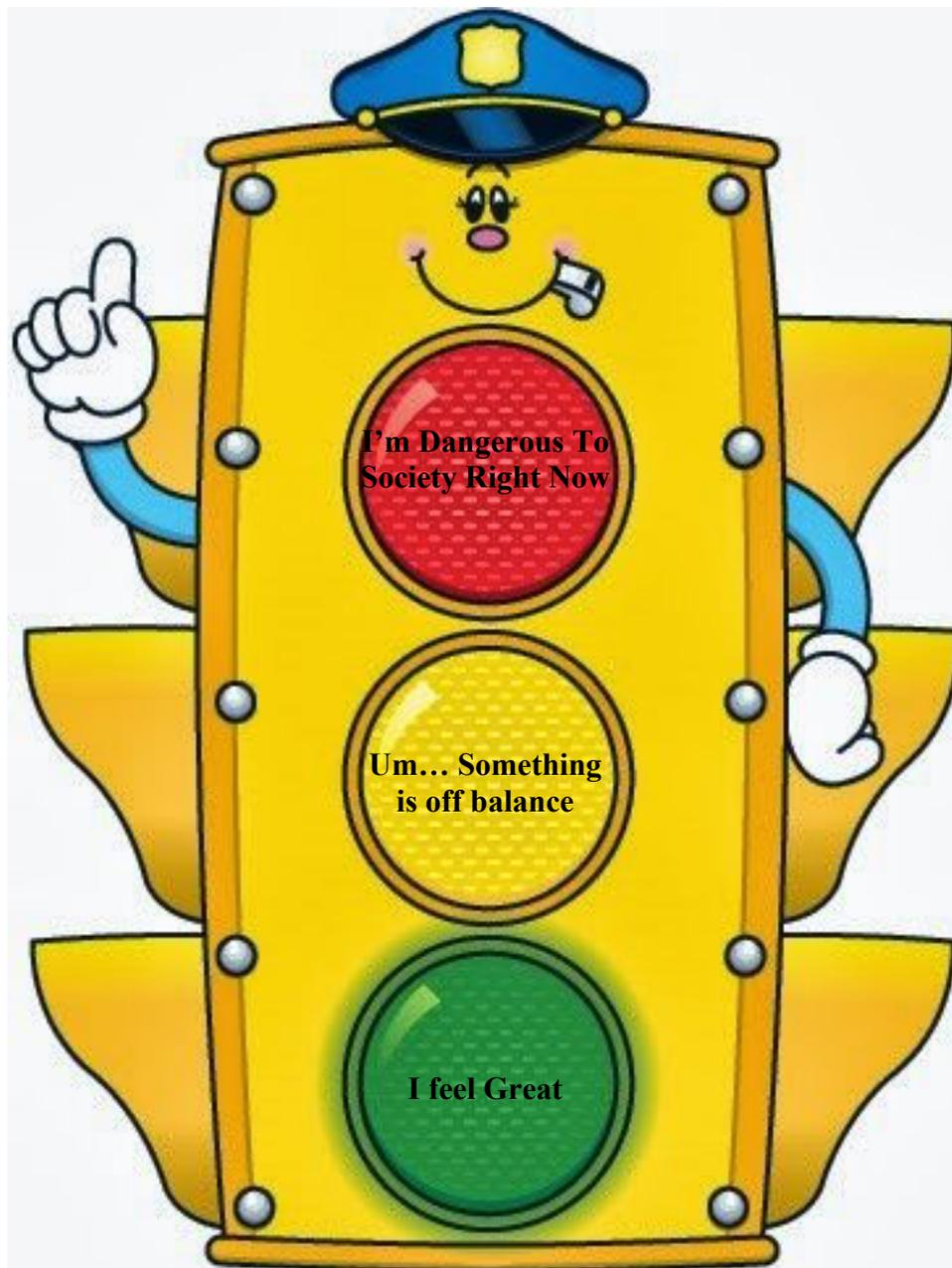


KNOWING HOW YOU BEST PERFORM IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT IN HOW WE APPROACH SITUATIONS THROUGHOUT THE DAY, BUT IT'S MORE IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND WHAT AROUSES YOU, AND HOW TO GET TO, OR GET BACK TO YOUR OPTIMAL LEVEL OF AROUSAL WHEN YOU'RE TOO LOW, OR TOO HIGH.

RED LIGHT, GREEN LIGHT

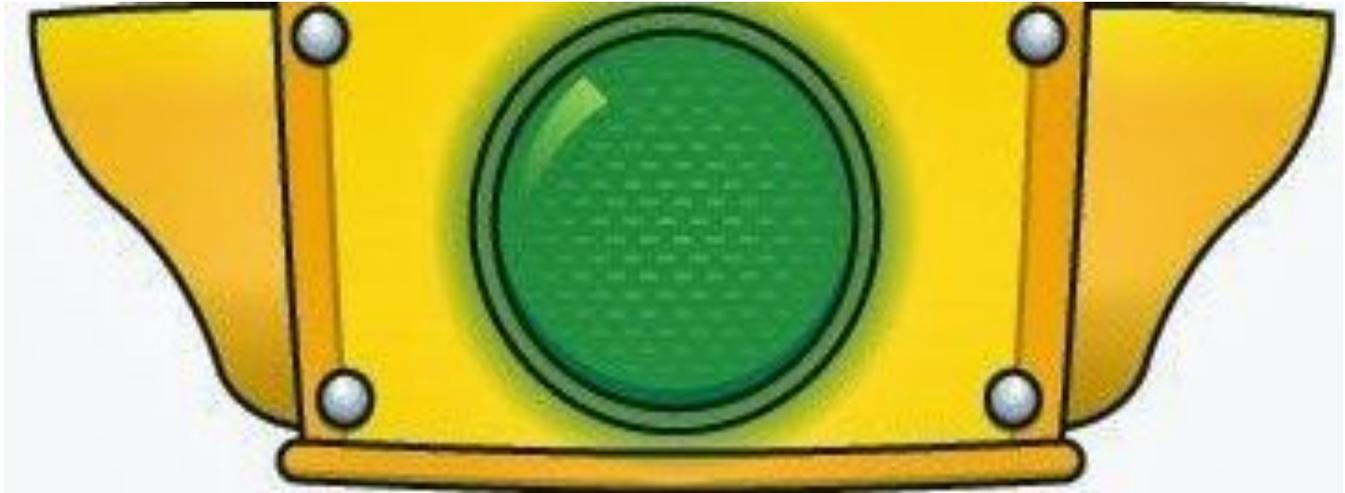
ONE OF THE MOST WELL KNOWN SPORT & PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGIST, KEN RAVIZZA, TEACHES HIS ATHLETES THE STOP LIGHT MODEL.

And It Works Like This...



THE PROCESS OF THE STOP LIGHT MODEL IS THAT AN INDIVIDUAL SHOULD ALWAYS BE WORKING IN A STATE OF OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE (GREEN). WHEN AN INDIVIDUAL IS OVER AROUSED AND HAS BECOME INEFFECTIVE THEY ARE IN THE RED ZONE. YELLOW REPRESENTS THE STAGE OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT...

GREEN LIGHT



GREEN LIGHT

In order to get to the green light when needed, we need to know how we behave when we're at our best. So take a minute and think about a time that you were at your best. A time you could do no wrong. Work life flowed. Personal Life flowed. You felt that there was a bond between you and every citizen you came in contact that day. You may have even saved a puppy out of a tree that day...

IS THERE A KEY TIME IN MY LIFE THAT I CAN REMEMBER WORKING AT MY BEST, OR BEING IN FLOW, WHEN I HAD A CLEAR AND DEEP CONNECTION WITH THAT MOMENT.

WHAT ABOUT THIS TIME MAKES ME CERTAIN THAT I WAS PERFORMING AT MY BEST?

WHAT KEY FEELINGS, EMOTIONS, OR THOUGHTS STAND OUT ABOUT THIS MOMENT?

GREEN LIGHT

STAY IN THE FEELING OF YOU IN YOUR BEST MOMENT:

How did I prep for this moment? What was my focus on?

What was my self-talk like?

Did the moment seem to speed by or can I remember most of the moment in detail?

What does it feel like to really reflect on the moment now? What happens physically *and* mentally?

RED LIGHT



RED LIGHT

In order to get out of the **red light** when needed, we need to know **how we behave when we're at our worst**.

So take a minute and think about a time that you were at your worst. Everything

that happened made you constantly ask “why me?” Nothing that you tried to get out of the funk you were in worked, and your work life, and personal life felt the hit. You just wanted to crawl in a dark hole, or even wanted to take out your hurt, sadness, or fear out on someone who really didn't deserve it. You may have even gotten bit by a puppy that you tried to save out of a tree that day...

A time that I was most aware that I could do nothing right is:

What about this time makes me sure that I was performing at your worst?

What key feelings, emotions, or thoughts stand out about this moment?

RED LIGHT

STAY IN THE FEELING OF YOU IN YOUR WORST MOMENT:

How did I prep for that moment (or lack of)? Where was my focus?

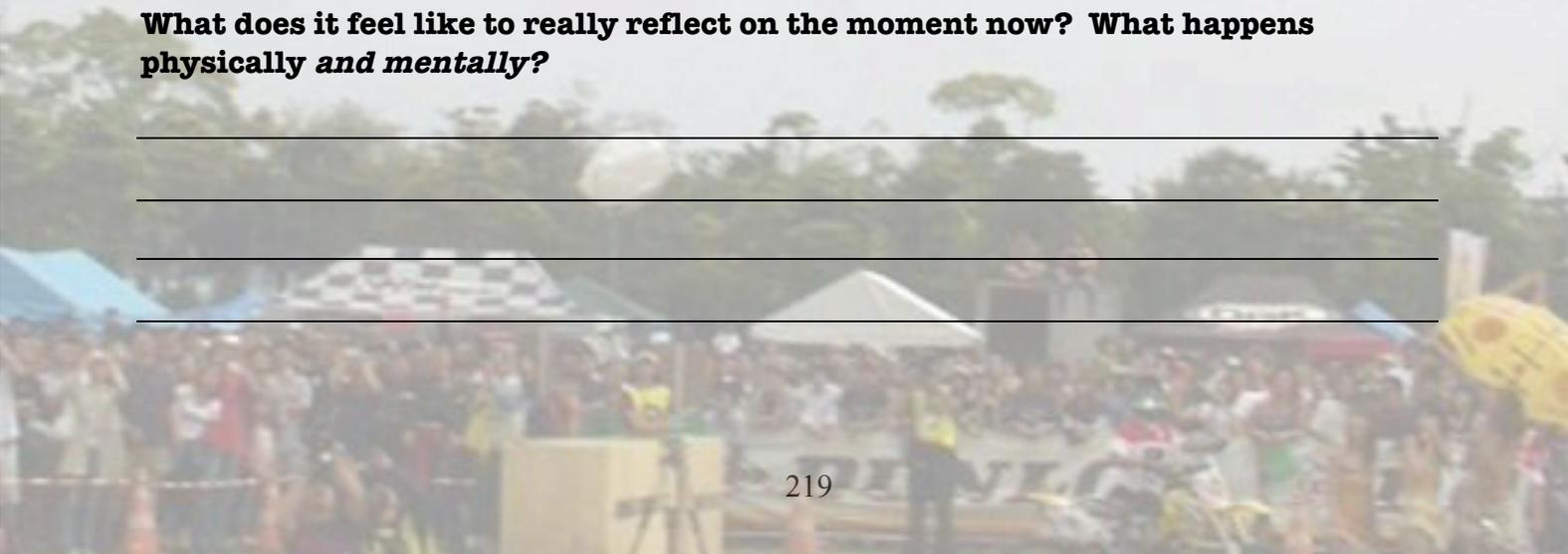


Shit.. shit.. shit..

What was my self-talk like?

Did this moment seem to speed by or can I remember most of the moment in detail?

What does it feel like to really reflect on the moment now? What happens physically *and* mentally?



YELLOW



YELLOW LIGHT

The way you develop the skills to properly use this model, is to first be able to acknowledge when you are moving from your optimal arousal state. Take all the information you reflected on from the Red Light and Green Light states, and record them here for quick reference.

IN MY INEFFICIENT STATE I AM...



IT MIGHT BE BETTER TO...

Bossy

Actively Listen

TRIGGERS & CUES

Triggers and Cues are events or stimulates that arouse a response. Triggers are personal, and are usually adopted from something learned in the past, and held on to by the subconscious to keep the body alive.

So that we can move forward into learning to control our emotions, we're going to separate triggers and cues. So from this moment on, for clarity—we will refer to **Triggers** as the event before the negative reaction, and **Cues** the positive stimulus that creates positive behavior

TRIGGERS HAVE BEEN CATEGORIZED INTO 5 AREAS OF STIMULUS:

1) TIME

The time of day is important to the body's circadian rhythm (sleep & wake cycles). Time primarily Cue's the body to sleep, eat... regulate "movement." If you've noticed, we've been getting up to move around and get active, because there are moments—especially around 2-4 am and 1-3 pm, that your brain naturally gets tired and begins to slow down response time.

ARE THERE ANY *TIMES OF THE DAY* THAT I NOTICE MYSELF BEING CUED OR TRIGGERED TO BEHAVE OR REACT IN A SPECIFIC WAY?

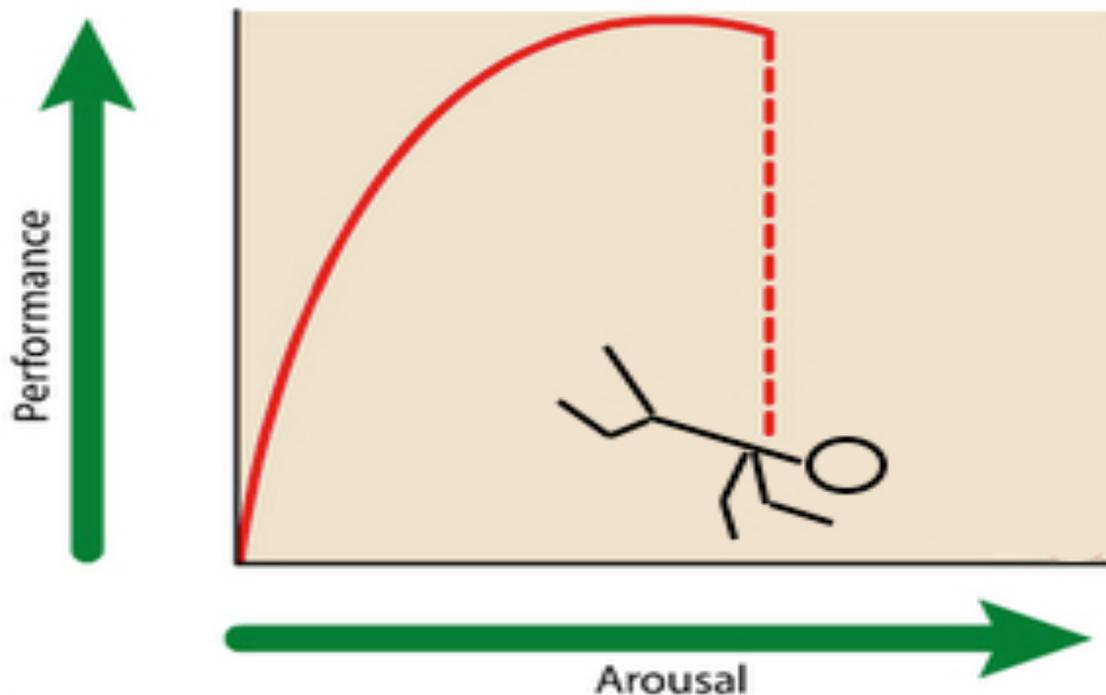
TIME OF DAY
(CUE OR TRIGGER)

BEHAVIOR | EMOTIONAL STATE | FEELINGS | THOUGHTS

GOING RED

Acknowledging your emotional states throughout the day is the key to keeping yourself from going to the red light and breaking down. Similar to IZOF and the Inverted-U, there's a theory that illustrates what happens when you get to the red light, and it's called,

The Catastrophe Theory



IF THIS : THEN THAT

Lastly, let us talk about a large reason that people tend to behave in the manner they do. Sometimes when a behavior or an emotional state creates a sense of empathy from someone in your life, that person may reward the behavior—without even knowing it.

A SECONDARY GAIN IS AN INCENTIVE TO A BEHAVIOR.

“When I’m sad, my butcher gives me free meat.”

“When I feel sorry for myself, my mother does my chores.”

“When I’m angry, my wife leaves me alone and gives me *my space*...” (uh oh... did I just hit some nerves...)

Secondary Gains typically illicit the emotional or physical state more often than normal, and these behaviors become a characteristic of the individual.

If you have any secondary gains that you can think of right now, write them down. As you start to reflect more on what you’ve learned today, come back and write them down as you start to notice them.

“ I’ve noticed that IF I do THIS... then I get THAT”

CONTROLLING ANXIETY

So you've put in a lot of really hard work up until this point. Many people move through life never understanding the reason they behave the way they do. Many people refuse to acknowledge that anything that happens to them is a result of something that they contribute response to. Many people choose to stay in the red, because as you've learned, the individual benefits from secondary gains.

SO WHAT DO WE DO WITH ALL THIS INFORMATION?

Well... if you knew that if you light this string that leads to the dynamite, you would just not do it right? Sure.

Avoidance is absolutely a way to not activate a reaction to an action. However, our goal is to become more mentally tough and resilient—and that means learning how to cope with the triggers, and learn to activate stronger cues to control our emotions.

You've done a large amount of the work by acknowledging what makes you tick. Now let's learn what grounds you best to be able to cope with your triggers.

Ways to Control Anxiety

TO BUILD (WHEN AROUSAL IS LOW):

- Through Breathing-** increase breathing rhythm focusing on generating energy with each inhalation
- Using Imagery-** using cues that invoke a feeling of powering up
- Verbal Cues-** “explode,” “go,” “charge”
- Using your arousal techniques that you've acknowledged that you use in the 5 areas of Stimulus (page 97)

TO REDUCE (WHEN AROUSAL IS HIGH):

- Learning to release tension from muscles
- Breathing- slow, deep belly breaths from the diaphragm which triggers relaxation
- Progressive relaxation- becoming sensitive to muscle tension and how to let it go
- Meditation- quieting the mind by focusing on a mental device, such as a mantra

BUILDING ANXIETY

Power Breathing

What comes to mind when you hear power breathing?

IMAGINE THAT EVERY TIME YOU TAKE IN A DEEP BREATH THAT YOU'RE ADDING A NEW LAYER OF ENERGY, CONFIDENCE, COURAGE, OR WHATEVER INGREDIENT FOR SUCCESS ENGAGEMENT YOU NEED—TO AN ALREADY STRONG BODY.

Imagine filling in every small empty space in your body with the state you need to build, and as you're doing so—create the feeling (or imagine what a person in that state would feel like).

EXAMPLE:

There's been an uncharacteristically large amount of violence against police officers in the last week due to yet another officer related death in a separate part of the country. Even though you're a pretty nice and fair officer, and you work in a relatively calm community, the fear of social retaliation has been on your mind during every traffic stop for the last 3 days—and frankly... you'd rather not even engage with individuals that fit the profiles of individuals who've attacked other officers you know of.

However... these kids ran a red light, and you *are* the person to handle this, if anyone... right...?

BEFORE YOU GET OUT OF THE CAR, CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES! DO NOT LET YOUR ANXIETY GET THE BEST OF YOU.

- SIT TALL
- PICK A POWER WORD (TYPICALLY THE ATTRIBUTE YOU WANT TO FILL INTO YOUR BODY)
- THROUGH YOUR NOSTRILS SUCK IN SO MUCH AIR THAT IT RAISES YOUR POSTURE AND SIMULTANEOUSLY RAISES YOUR SHOULDERS—AND BREATHE IN YOUR WORD, CREATING THE FEELING.
- BLOW OUT THROUGH YOUR NOSTRILS, WHILE ALLOWING THAT FEELING THAT YOU BREATHED IN, TO TRAVEL DOWN INTO YOUR FEET... BUILDING UP TO CHEST WITH EACH BREATH.
- OWN THE MOMENT.

SEEING IS BELIEVING

Imagery & Visualizing the Process

We touched on imagery a little in the last exercise, and that's because we use imagery a lot more in our lives than we actually know.

ACCORDING TO HARVARD, WE TYPICALLY DAYDREAM HALF THE DAY. SO WHY NOT MAKE IT WORK FOR US.

The day after the red light stop, you wake up still feeling a little uncertain about the emotional blowout that could likely happen in the community, and you actually think about calling in sick. It's unlike you, and not standing up to a challenge or fulfilling your obligations isn't like you at all. So you incorporate some of the things we've learned about so far. Immediately before you get out of bed you think about the reason you became a police officer in the first place—and then you think about the value you want to bring to your community. Instead of picking up the phone and calling in sick, you:

- ❑ Sit Up Tall, let your shoulders fall, take a deep breath in, focusing on filling up your belly with the air first, then allowing it to fill your lungs without letting them expand out of your control slowly releasing the air out of your mouth while letting your shoulders drop deeper and becoming more and more relaxed. Focus on as many deep breaths as you need to, before letting your body automate that process and beginning to focus on visualizing how your day is going to play out.
- ❑ Close your eyes and remember the reason you wanted to protect and serve your community. Try to remember the day you put the badge on your chest for the very first time, and breathe in the pride you felt that day. Take your time to remember a time that you felt sad and hurt like those in the community do, and try to remember what you needed at that moment. Was it compassion? Was it to simply be heard? Was it anger?
- ❑ How do your Character strengths fit in with helping those community members affected? Visualize yourself using your strengths in as many scenarios as possible. Will it take you creating courage to act in that manner? Confidence? Rationality?
- ❑ Notice if you are 1st person or 3rd. There is not a right way to be, but notice your external actions and reactions if you're third person, and notice your body's calmness and fluid movement if you're first person.
- ❑ Try to change your approach to a different character strength, or see yourself in a separate more challenging scenario, and visualize and imagine what you would do if things quickly went bad. How would you react to diffuse the situation in order to get everyone out alive? How would you respond if injured?

THE BETTER YOU GET AT VISUALIZING, THE MORE EXPERIENCE YOU CAN GET ON THE JOB. NEUROPATHWAYS ARE CREATED IN THE BRAIN LINKED TO PHYSIOLOGICAL RESPONSES... AND THE MORE YOU TRAIN YOUR BRAIN, THE MORE LIKELY YOU ARE TO EXPERIENCE RECALL—OR MUSCLE MEMORY.

TALK TO YOURSELF

YOU EVER HEAR THE SAYING, “YOU’RE YOUR OWN WORST CRITIC?”

SELF-TALK

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MOST NEGATIVE THINGS I SAY TO MYSELF?

AND WHY

IT

MATTERS

Self-Talk is a large factor in how we hold ourselves in regard to the environment around us, because we are most suggestible to ourselves. People can tell us anything they want all day long and we’ll blow them off and could care less what they think— but when we tell ourselves that same thing, for some strange reason, you own it!

For example, think of your biggest physical insecurity that people compliment you on often? Why don’t you believe them? (Rhetorical question)

Now take that same insecurity and say it out loud. Ok... now say it out load and OWN it. Do it again. Do it AGAIN. OWN IT, STAND UP TALL... AND OWN THAT ISH!!!!

What’s the difference from now and before? Yeah, you may still not *own* it, but you can definitely feel that *it* doesn’t own you. This is how positive self-talk works.

TALK TO YOURSELF

POSITIVE SELF-TALK HELPS TO RE-ROUTE FAULTY BELIEFS AND EITHER CREATE NEW BELIEFS FROM THEM, OR AT LEAST TAKE AWAY THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS THAT THEY ONCE HELD... WHICH WAS, DOWN...

YOUR NEGATIVE TALK HOLDS YOU DOWN!

Return to the negative things you wrote down on the last page, sit up tall, take a deep breath in, and make it a positive statement. Don't move on to the next one until you have said it to yourself with so much conviction, that even though you may not fully believe it, the negative thought has become irrational and is now irrelevant to your life?

OTHER WAYS TO USE POSITIVE SELF-TALK:

- If you're so hard-wired to be a Negative Nancy... break yourself out of that slowly by including "**Yet.**"
"I'm not happy, YET." "I don't have enough money... YET" "Nobody Love Me... YET."
- Reframe: Change the verbiage of your statement to words that make big things seem attainable - "It's just a bigger 20..."
YouTube: Girl's First Ski Jump
- OWN IT!!! Say it OUTLOUD.
YouTube: Adrian Peterson, Emmanuel Sanders Mic'd Up Self Talk | NFL Films Presents
- Create Verbal Cues to PUMP IT UP! You can anchor an emotion or a feeling into a phrase, that when you use it, reminds you to behave a certain way, or focus on an aspect of the process.
Common Cues: "It's GO TIME," "FOCUS," "Think thin..."

A GUT FEELING

WE'VE COVERED HOW TO RAMP UP! BUT HOW DO YOU WIND DOWN?

You have one of the most stressful jobs on the planet, next to Air Traffic Controllers and Dentist (allegedly...) It's no secret that this job can create stress—and with stress comes gray hair!

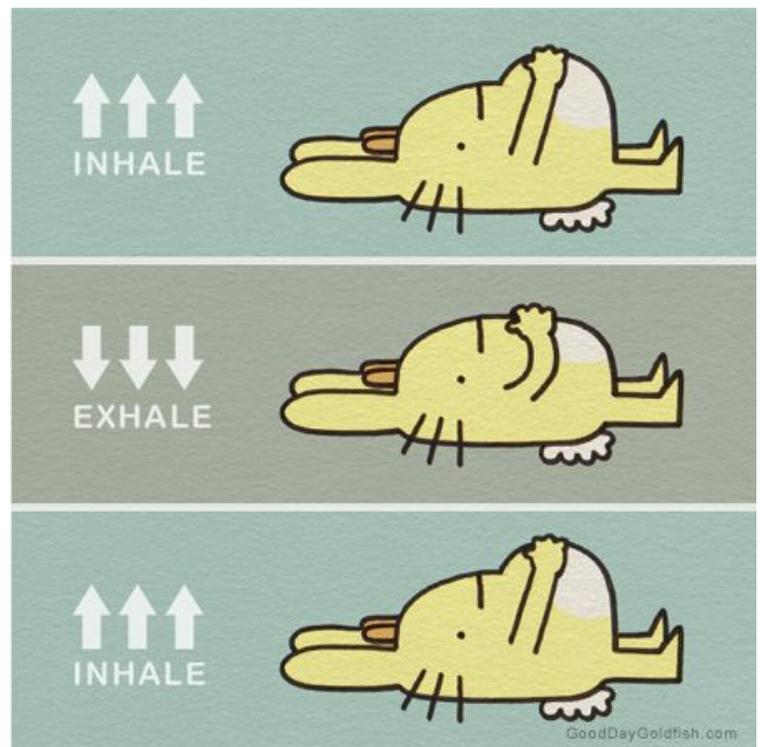
BUT BECOMING A SILVER FOX LIKE GEORGE CLOONEY SHOULD BE THE LEAST OF YOUR WORRIES!

What stress ALSO does is physical affect your ability to perform properly. Stress creates a cluttered brain, as well as muscle tension, and can also create sickness. In order to perform your duties properly, you must be able to perform. And so—we must learn to relax when the tension is high!

LET'S FIRST LEARN HOW TO BREATHE AGAIN... FOR THE FIRST TIME.

BELLY BREATHING

- Sit up tall so that your torso is stretched out
- Place one hand on your abdomen, and the other on your chest
- Close your eyes, and choose a word that makes you feel relaxed (not “beer”; Try “relax,” “calm,” “focus,” “centered,” “balance,” something down that lane...)
- Breathing in through your nose, focus on filling your belly with air first—before your lungs.
- You should feel the hand on the belly rise and very little movement of you hand on your chest, except the expansion of the lungs, instead of the rising of the lungs.



WHY IS THIS A THING?

Well for one... we have a LOT of neural tissue in our bellies that are directly linked to your brain. Those feelings of “butterflies in your stomach,” or “getting sick to the stomach” during a moment of high anxiety, isn't just a coincidence.

LEARNING TO FOCUS ON YOUR BREATHING IN THIS WAY:

INCREASES MENTAL FOCUS & PERCEIVED CONTROL OVER YOUR BODY

RELAXING BODY & MIND

NOW THAT YOU KNOW HOW TO BREATHE YOU CAN ADD IN A PROCESS OF PURPOSEFULLY TENSING UP YOUR BODY, AND THEN RELEASING THE TENSION.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

WE DO THIS TO:

- 1) Create comfort through the body, but
- 2) To teach the body to be aware of what tension feels like so that we may release it at will.

PMR STEPS

- 1) Find a quiet place where you'll be uninterrupted for 15-20 minutes
- 2) Squeeze one muscle group at a time starting from the little muscles in the feet all the way up to your head.
- 3) As you target one group of muscles, take a slow deep breath in, and squeeze the muscle and tight as you can that doesn't cause discomfort, and hold it for about 5-10 seconds.
- 4) Blow out your breath on the relax phase.
- 5) Move into the next immediate muscle group, until you get to your face, and end with a lemon face, then count slowly from 1-10 focusing on one new aspect of the surrounding environment that you didn't notice before the last... the temperature, the sound of quiet, the feel of the floor, your clothes on your body, etc...

Try this prior to going to sleep, or give yourself 20 minutes in the middle of the day during a break to work on this. Once you master this, you will be able to relax the body at will, and get some goooooood sleep. That's a promise.

OTHER FORMS OF RELAXATION:

- ❑ **Guided imagery:** Similar to ramping yourself up, take yourself through a guided journey of calmness. There's thousands of prerecorded guided imagery scripts online, but you can also create one for yourself that is specific to you.
 - If you create one for yourself, remember to pay attention to the details. Since the brain loves to play make believe, created images are just as real as actual images to the mind's eye—so make sure you include visuals, sounds, tangible feelings (like the softness of the hardwood floor), taste, and smells.
- ❑ **Yoga, Tai Chi, Qigong, etc.** These forms of movement increase focus, as well as fluidity between joints, without the pressure of added resistance other than your own!
- ❑ **Meditation.** In my studies of mindfulness, there is no right way to meditate. Whether your choice of meditation revolves going for a long quiet walk, sitting in one spot and focusing on one word, chanting, or even transcendental mediation where you just let the mind explore the ideas that come into its' presence... if you find one that works for you—stick with it. From it, growth happens, because peace happens.

THOUGHT-FULL

IN TWO OR THREE SENTENCES, *DESCRIBE WHERE YOUR MIND BEGINS TO GO:*

- 1) You're on a date, and it's been a while. You started to test out online dating, and you have your first date this Thursday night. You decided to meet at Lucky Strike, and without doing your research about the venue you show up to this nightclub type of bowling alley dressed like you're about to attend a wedding. Your date shows up with a bowling shirt on, and makes the comment, "you don't get out much do you?"

- 2) You had knee surgery, and it's been a hard rehab. You've put on 20 lbs, and after a few months of this cycle of trying to get back active, and having physical setbacks, when you think about playing ball again, you:

- 3) It's been 15 years since you left high school, and you enroll in college to get your degree in order to progress in your career. After failing the math entrance exam, you are told that in order to graduate on this particular degree plan, you're going to have to take Calculus 1, 2 & 3, Business math, and 2 separate stats classes:

- 4) In order to win this particular meritorious board, there are 5 stages that you must show proficiency in. You had an abnormally bad day on the range, and because of your knee injury, your run time was garbage. There are still 3 test left, but your company nemesis has seemingly had a good run of competition:

BRAIN SAND

...IT'S LIKE QUICKSAND...

...BUT FOR YOUR THOUGHTS.

We get caught up in Thinking Traps that consume our thoughts, and are often irrational. Although we can typically (ir)rationalize the reason why we think the ways we do... we hold on to the unlikely scenarios—primarily to protect our ego, our emotions, our pride, or our lives.

THOUGHTS LIKE THIS AFFECT YOUR:

- Self-esteem
- Self-Efficacy
- Confidence in your abilities...
- Ability to stay focused in the present moment.

And can turn into long-term thinking that can become overpowering, and establish itself as a character trait... one strong enough to sink a ship!

THOUGHT-FULL-STEAM AHEAD

IN TWO OR THREE SENTENCES, *FINISH THESE SCENARIOS*:

- 1) You have a teenage daughter. You dropped her off at school today as usual, but you get a phone call around dinner time saying she'd missed a handful of classes. When you were a teenager, you were sexually active, and smoking a LOT of pot. She must be:

- 2) Your mother was a life-long hypochondriac, although she actually passed from cancer last year. You have been feeling weak lately. You haven't really thought about it really because you've been working some overtime to go to New York for vacation later this year, but nothing that you haven't done before. Yesterday you collapsed with no warning signs, and after spending a day at the doctor's getting test and many different types of scans, the doctor himself calls you and asks you to come into his office to speak personally:

- 3) Deathly afraid of airplanes—although semi-obsessed with researching plane crashes, you've been asked to give a speech at your 20 year reunion in the Bahamas. During a violent bout of turbulence, your captain accidentally hits the intercom as he says "Uh-oh...":

THOUGHT-FULL-STEAM AHEAD

4. You've been laid off from pretty much every job you've had since the crash in 2008. It's been a rough month at the precinct. There have been rumors of having to reallocate personnel and even downsize because of State budget cuts. You've had a few public complaints against you personally over the last two weeks. You just got lucky enough to get upgraded from sedan to SUV, and then someone ran into you running a red light—and now you're in an investigation over that. Also earlier today your chief walked by as you were getting snappy at Lt. Jones for not refilling the coffee pot! The Chief calls you into his office at the end of the day:

5) It's been a few years since aliens have made contact, and in the last 3 months, you've been swung at by, spit on by, and have had to physically wrestle seven different lineman sized purple Martians down to the ground. Each one of them profiled the same; Tattoos of Katy Perry on their bare chest, and only wearing suspenders tied to their socks. You didn't start off this job with any being biases, but after hearing your pessimistic partner tell you to "give it some time" you may think he's right. Last week you had a death ray pulled out on you by a similarly profiled Martian. That rocked your core a little bit and you can't stop thinking about it. Now when you pull up to a group of Martians:

ICEBERG THINKING

LIKE THE QUICKSAND, THESE ICEBERGS BELIEFS LINGER AROUND THE MOST NEGATIVE ASPECT OF AN EVENT.

Unlike the quicksand, these beliefs create failure for a person even before they are able to give an experience a shot.

Like an iceberg, these beliefs are so deep rooted underneath the surface that these beliefs are irreversible by rational reasoning. And the Titanic, if you get too close to the mass of ice cold beliefs—the ship will sink.

The thinking traps are mostly triggered as a result of the moment's event, whereas the iceberg thinking is result to an association from the past that has augmented a your future reality.

They can blend within the two, but think of the thinking traps as a fear, and thinking of an Iceberg as a phobia.

FEAR VS. PHOBIA

FEAR:

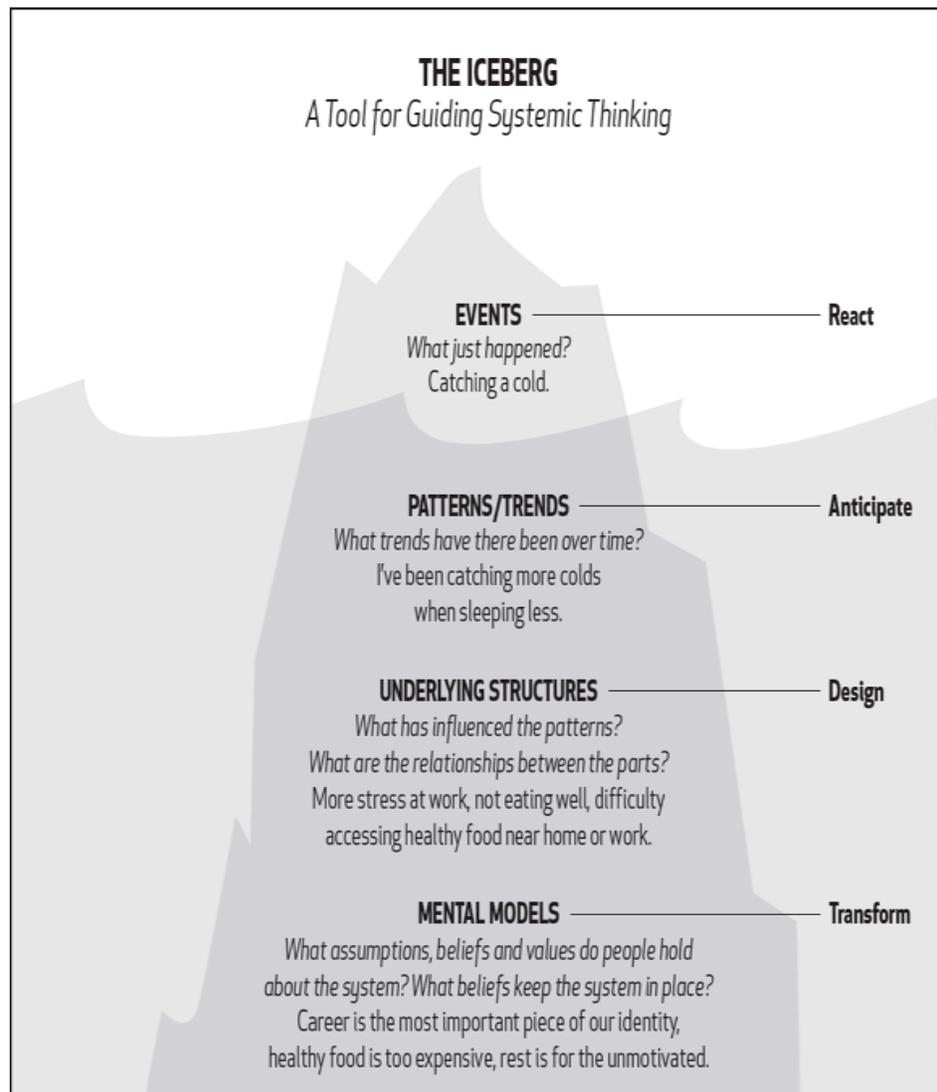
“Fear is the emotional response to real or perceived imminent threat, whereas anxiety is anticipation of future threat,” -Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5)

PHOBIA:

Phobias are anxiety disorders involving fear or anxiety that is excessive or out of proportion to the object or situation

So How Do We Get Out Of Our Own Way?

FIRST, WE BECOME AWARE OF WHAT WE'RE DOING TO OURSELVES. WE'LL DO THAT BY EXPLAINING THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF TRAPS



BRAIN SAND

THINKING TRAP	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLES
Fortune Telling	Thinking we have the ability to predict the future; often our predictions are in favor of worst-case scenario	“Nobody is going to cover my shift, so I might as well not ask” “I know I’m going to mess it up, I’m not even going to try”
□		
Black & White Thinking	Thinking in extremes. Either this is happening or it’s not. Things are either This or That , never can things happen in middle ground.	“I never got a call back from that commercial I read for. I’m a bad actor” “You can either be a Democrat or a Republican.”
□		
Mind-Reading	Assuming what other people are thinking... and here’s a hint... they are thinking the worst of you.	“Why is Sarah looking over here and laughing with everyone. I hate when people are talking about me.” “He hasn’t said anything to me all day. I don’t know why he’s mad at me”
□		
Over-Generalization	If one thing happens one way, then it will ALWAYS be that way... Or if it has never happened to us, it will NEVER happen.	“All of them smoke weed.” “I’ll never get selected for the cool security details.”
□		

BRAIN SAND

THINKING TRAP	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLES
Labeling	Summing ourselves up negatively in single word or a phrase	“I’m a loser.” “I’m garbage.”
		<input type="checkbox"/>
Over-Estimating Danger	Expecting the most dangerous thing to happen	“I don’t get on planes because they might crash.” “You shouldn’t go to the party. Someone’s going to drop a pill in your drink, and you’ll end up getting raped.”
		<input type="checkbox"/>
Filtering	Focusing on the negative information, filtering out all the positive information.	“I thought I was having a good time, but I don’t think they liked me because that girl in red... Stacey... she looked bored every time I said anything.” “I only hit 4 for 10 today at the game...” (well, isn’t .300 a good batting average?)
		<input type="checkbox"/>
Catastrophizing	Creating the absolutely worst-case scenario.	“I can’t date just anyone. We’ll end up getting pregnant on accident, and then we’ll have to get married and I’ll be stuck with them for at least 18 years... in shitty marriage”
		<input type="checkbox"/>

STOP GETTING TRAPPED

SO FAR WE HAVE LEARNED, THAT TO CHANGE A BEHAVIOR, WE MUST ACKNOWLEDGE THE BEHAVIOR.

1) Where are you getting trapped in your thoughts?

WHAT BELIEFS HAVE HELD YOU BACK FROM ACHIEVING YOUR GOALS?
WHAT CREATES THE MOST ANXIETY?

2) Reflect on Why.

THIS IS CHALLENGING, AND IT TAKES SOME REAL INTERNAL WORK THAT MANY PEOPLE PAY A LOT OF MONEY FOR. BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO.

BECAUSE **WHY** ISN'T IMPORTANT, **BUT** IT CAN HELP BREAK THE CYCLE OF BELIEFS THAT AREN'T ADDING VALUE TO YOUR LIFE.

For example: You might fear rejection today because when you went to ask your first love out when you were in 2nd grade and they were already holding hands and playing tag with Pat... and then you cried for the whole night.

TRACING EMOTIONS THAT YOU'VE HELD ON TO FROM THE PAST **MIGHT** HELP YOU SEE THAT THE REASON YOU'RE TRAPPED—ISN'T REALLY RELEVANT TO YOU TODAY.

3) How is this belief affecting you?

HOW HAVE THESE TRAPS AFFECTED YOUR LIFE? HAVE YOU EVER PERSONALLY HELD YOURSELF BACK FROM SOMETHING THAT YOU'VE REALLY WANTED?

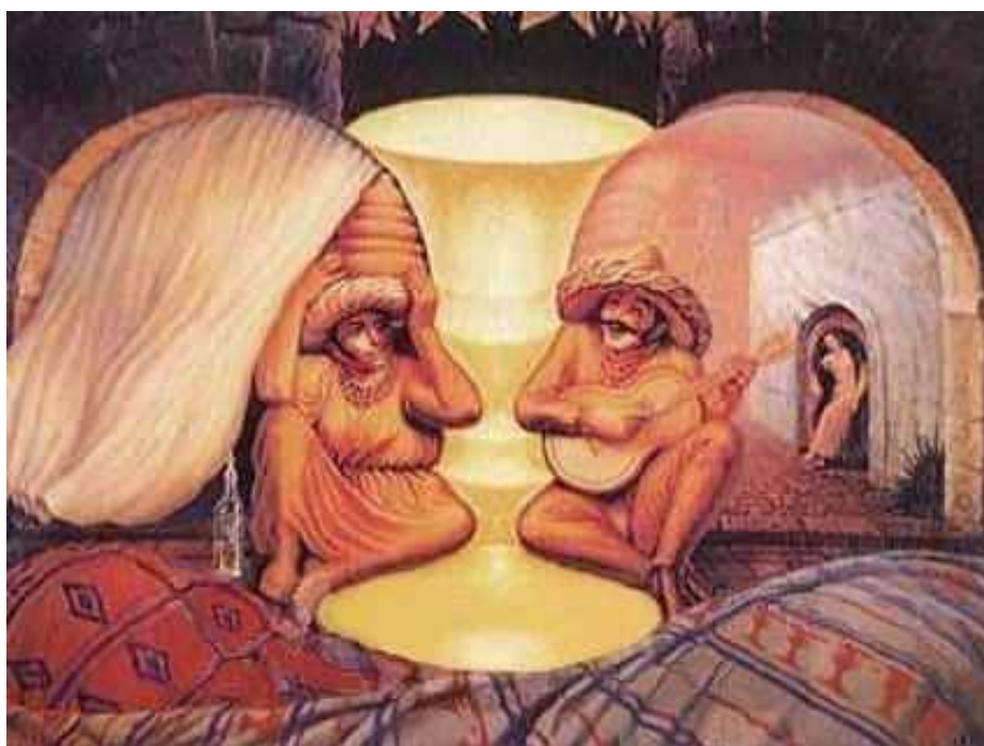
Now that you've acknowledge *what*, *why* and *how*—it's time to reprogram your mindset to new known associations into beliefs that benefit you...

...AKA CREATE AND/OR REINFORCE MORE USEFUL BELIEFS.

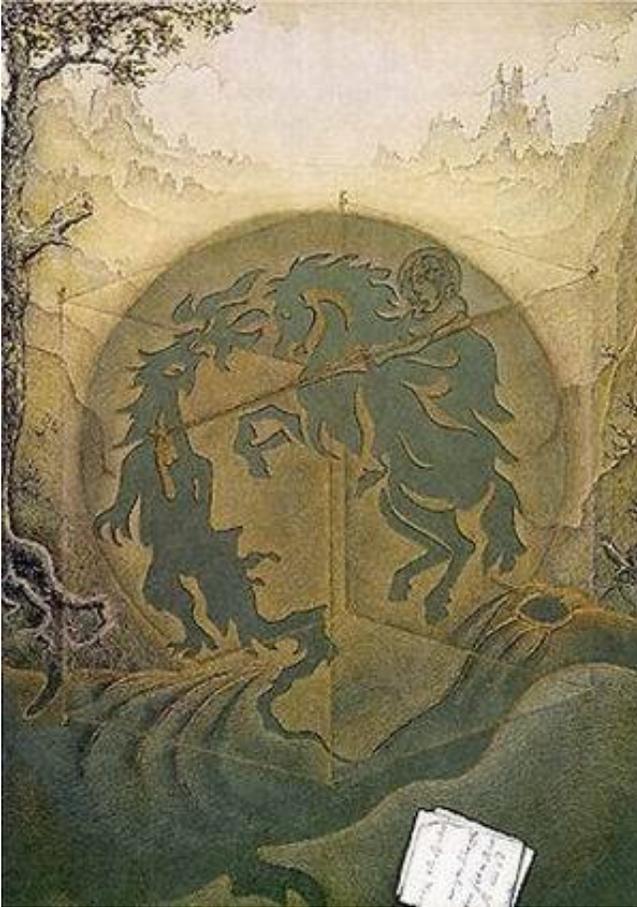
WE DO THIS BY REFRAMING.

WATCH YOUTUBE: DAILY AFFIRMATION: MICHAEL JORDAN - SNL

REFRAMING

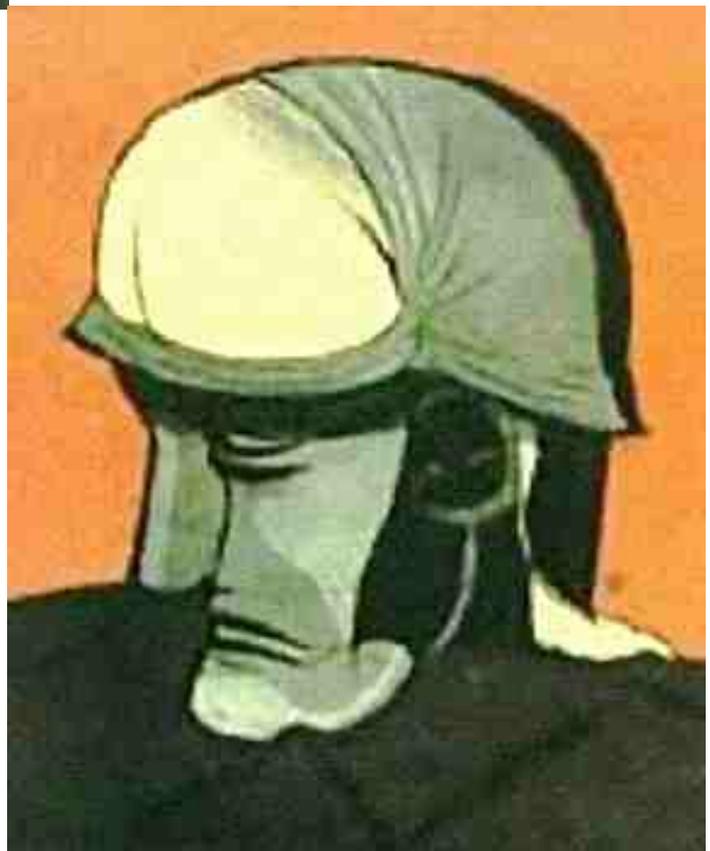


REFRAMING



“The difference between success and failure is one more time”

“If you believe you will succeed, there is always a chance you might. But if you believe that you will fail, then you will always fail.”



REFRAMING



REFRAMING



REFRAMING

Reframing is the process of changing an irrational thought as it occurs, and replacing it with a more rational and effective thought.

Some Examples of Reframing are:

“TRYING TO LOSE THIS WEIGHT IS WORTHLESS. I’LL NEVER GET IT OFF.”

“I haven’t figured out what works best for me to lose this weight yet.”

“I’m bored.”

“I’VE GOT SOME TIME TO MYSELF.”

“IT’S BEEN SIX MONTHS SINCE THE ACCIDENT, AND I STILL CAN’T RUN FOR MORE THAN 10 MINUTES WITHOUT MY KNEE STARTING TO HURT.”

“I’m improving. I’m able to run for at least 10 minutes. A little more if I can suck up the pain.”

“I’ve tried that. It’ll never work...”

“I’VE LEARNED WHAT WE SHOULDN’T DO SO FAR.”

“THOSE KIDS DON’T CARE ABOUT THEIR FUTURE, THEY’LL KEEP ENDING UP IN JAIL.”

“We should figure out a way to teach these kids that they have a future, so we stop seeing them end up back in jail.”

“I hate that guy...”

“I’M NOT A FAN OF HIS.”

As you can see, statements of reframing do not necessarily need to be always turned into a positive statement... they just need to be—*more* positive.

One solid way to fight trap statements are to remember a time when...

“I can’t date a guy with dogs... I’m afraid of dogs”:

- ❑ In this scenario, you would have to do some internal work and work off the “why.”
 - “Well, I was bitten by a dog when I was 8.”

CREATE NEW PATTERNS OF THOUGHT THAT OVERPOWER THAT MEMORY THAT IS NO LONGER SERVING A PURPOSE FOR YOU.

“Have you had a positive experience with any dog since the time you were 8?”

“Did THAT dog break your trust? If so, have you had any other positive experiences?... Are there any more... how bout more than that?”

“Ok... so you ARE ABLE to be around dogs, and feel safe and comfortable... and not be bit”

REFRAMING

BREAKING NEWS....

YOU CAN ALSO REFRAME PROFILE PREJUDICES & BIASES!

LET'S TAKE AN EXAMPLE FROM AN ACTUAL CONVERSATION:

“All cops are bad.”

“ALL Cops. Have you ever heard of a story police officer that’s done something good?”

“Yes. But I haven’t seen it in person.”

“Do you need to see something to know it’s there?”

“Yeah.”

Have you ever seen The Great Wall of China?

Silence...

“Do you know that everyday people sign up to become police officers? Do you believe that Cops are just people, like you and me?”

“Yes.”

“Do you believe that ALL people are bad?”

“No.”

Reframing one’s thoughts can work in many different ways, but the main goal of reframing, is to change a negative belief system that **does not add value to your situation** by restructuring it to give it the ability for future success.

WATCH YOUTUBE:

A CLASS DIVIDED (BLUE EYES VS. BROWN EYES)

REFRAMING

RETURN TO YOUR THOUGHT-TRAPS, AND WORK THROUGH THEM TO REFRAME YOUR BELIEFS, IN ORDER TO GIVE YOURSELF THE ABILITY TO SUCCEED IN THE FUTURE.

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6)

7)

8)

APPROPRIATE EMOTIONS

One reason people do not buy into Mental Training, is because it gets too “touchy-feely,” and requires you to be happy *all of the time*.

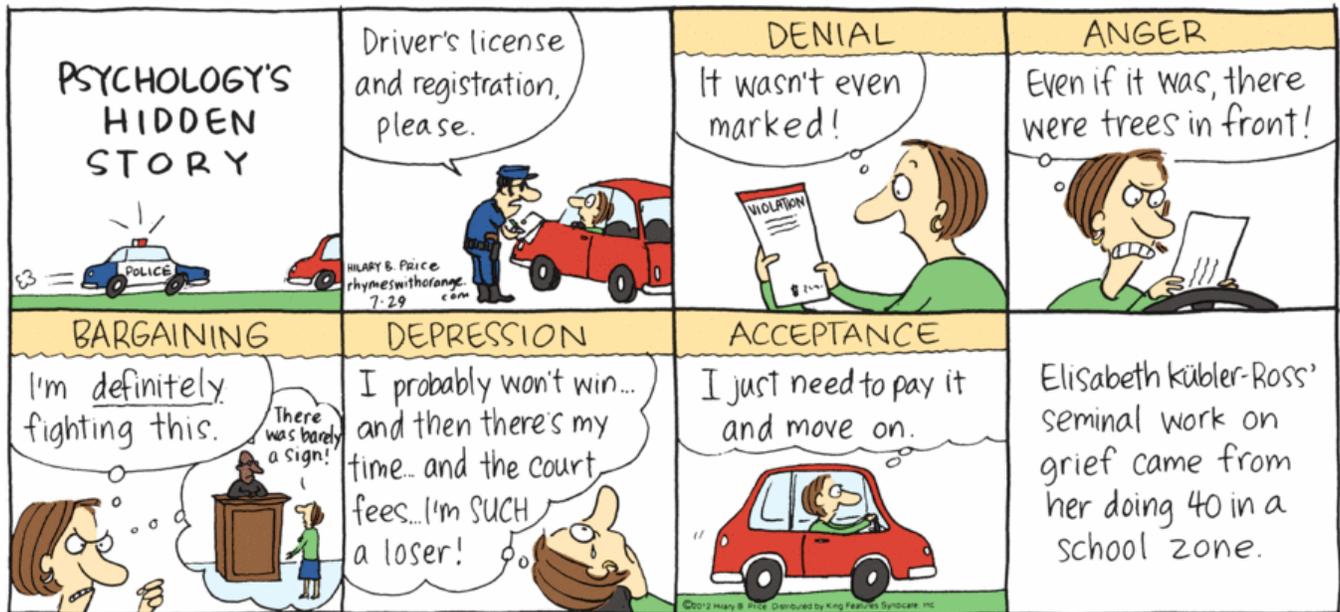
THERE’S TRUTH TO THAT, BUT IT’S NOT 100% ACCURATE.

The process of increasing resiliency is understanding your emotions in order to allow them to be there unjudged, not denying them and making them something that they aren’t. Which in time, once you acknowledge them and pull the information you need from them in those moments, healing and growth will happen.

THE KEY EMOTIONS THAT DRIVE OUR DAILY BEING ARE:

ANGER | CONTEMPT | FEAR | DISGUST | HAPPINESS | SADNESS | SURPRISE

Sometimes we experience some really hard times.



APPROPRIATE EMOTIONS

Stages of the Grief Cycle

"NORMAL" FUNCTIONING



Shock and Denial

- Avoidance
- Confusion
- Fear
- Numbness
- Blame

Anger

- Frustration
- Anxiety
- Irritation
- Embarrassment
- Shame

- Empowerment
- Security
- Self-esteem
- Meaning

Depression and Detachment

- Overwhelmed
- Blahs
- Lack of energy
- Helplessness

RETURN TO MEANINGFUL LIFE



Acceptance

- Exploring options
- A new plan in place

Dialogue and Bargaining

- Reaching out to others
- Desire to tell one's story
- Struggle to find meaning for what has happened

WE ALL EXPERIENCE LOSS, AND WE EXPERIENCE DIFFERENT VARIANCES AND LEVELS OF LOSS. BUT MOST OF ALL, WE ALL EXPERIENCE LOSS DIFFERENTLY.

ABOVE IS A DIAGRAM ON THE KÜBLER-ROSS 5 STAGES OF GRIEF, AND WE GO THROUGH THESE STAGES DURING LOSS OF A FRIEND OR FAMILY, LOSS OF A JOB, AND NOT TO MAKE LIGHT OF IT—BUT WE EVEN EXPERIENCE THE PROCESS PARTIALLY OR EVEN IN FULL, IF WE LOSE OUR WALLETS OR PHONES.

- ❑ The loops in the ribbons represent the fact that the journey of grief is not linear. You can experience anger, and work your way to acceptance, only to experience the anger and depression again, and maybe even harder than the last time you were in that stage.
- ❑ This is a model based off of the *typical process*, but understand this: IT IS NOT A LINEAR MODEL... Steps can be skipped and never experienced. So don't worry if you never bargained—it may have not been necessary to your grieving process.

And Last Thing...

THERE IS NO TIME LINE TO GRIEF

... but living in grief is limiting to growth.

APPROPRIATE EMOTIONS

Remember, the key emotions that drive our daily being are:

ANGER | CONTEMPT | FEAR | DISGUST | HAPPINESS | SADNESS | SURPRISE

We should approach emotions similar to how we approach *Thinking Traps*. Reframing the negative aspects into positive meaningful moments, or even positive lessons, can help ease the process and foster resilience.

HERE IS ONE WAY TO HANDLE EMOTIONS THAT TAKE AWAY FROM YOU EXPERIENCING LIFE THE WAY YOU'D LIKE TO:

- 1) Acknowledge the emotion
- 2) Acknowledge the reason behind the emotion
- 3) Give yourself a set amount of time to live in the emotion
- 4) Once that time is up, make a conscious decision to move away from that emotion, into a healthier emotion that allows you move forward from that moment.

Example:

You're roommate has been riding the lazy train, and has completely dropped the ball on all of their chores. You know they're in a rut because they got laid off and it's not like they haven't been looking for work... but today wasn't a good day for you either—and the last thing you wanted to see, was this *same* pile of dishes that's been addressed 3 times earlier this week. You have a tendency to take arguments too far, and it never helps your cleanliness crusade. Today, you decide to go into your room and give yourself 10 minutes: 7 minutes to be angry, and 3 to breathe and think about all the things that you're grateful for.

THAT SCENARIO CAN WORK HOWEVER YOU LIKE. WITH AS LONG OF TIME AS YOU LIKE. WITH WHATEVER OUTCOME YOU'D LIKE.

SOME THINGS TO TAKE AWAY:

- Everyone deals with grief differently
- You can jump from one stage to another, or not experience a stage at all.
- There is something to learn from everything. **EVERYTHING.**
- You don't need to label the process as you, or someone you know is experiencing it, but to understand it—is to acknowledge it. Acknowledging your emotions helps to embrace the process, and aids resilience.
- Time can heal. But you can help the timeline by being present in how you are experiencing and limiting the thinking traps that come up, and using reframing techniques to foster resilience.

MOTIVATION

IF GETTING WERE ONLY AS EASY AS LOOKING AT A PRETTY PICTURE!

BELIEVE IT OR NOT...

That works for some people. But if it's not your thing, no worries. We're going to learn how to find what best motivates you to achieve your goals!

WHAT MOTIVATES ME?

Write down some things that motivate you regarding:

MY PROFESSION: _____

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

MY FREE TIME: _____

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

MY FAMILY: _____

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

MY HEALTH: _____

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

FOR ME OR FOR YOU?

MOTIVATION IS THE UNDERLYING REASON BEHIND A FOCUSED ACTIVITY THAT LIKELY EXPLAINS A PERSON'S ACTIONS:

THERE ARE TWO MAIN CATEGORIES TO MOTIVATION:

INTRINSIC MOTIVATION:

Internal motivation that drives us to satisfy a need to please ourselves.

BUILDS:

- Self-Efficacy
- Autonomy
- Competence
- Self-Determination
- Self-Esteem
- Mastery
- Well-being

DRIVEN BY:

- Pride
- Self-created challenges
- Spite
- Self-Improvement
- Self-Actualization
- Self-Respect

EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION

External motivation that drives us to perform for some type of compensation for effort.

BUILDS:

- Drive
- Knowledge
- A *sense* of mastery
- Temporary joy from self
- Temporary joy from others

DRIVEN BY:

- Money
- Fame
- Grades
- Praise
- Fear

Both will help drive an individual toward their goals, yet each have a very different affect on how an individual perceives the reward of accomplishment!

LOOKING BACK AT YOUR MOTIVATIONS, HOW MANY ARE DRIVEN BY EXTERNAL FACTORS AND HOW MANY ARE DRIVEN INTERNALLY.

FOUNDATIONAL NEEDS FIRST

Outside of understanding if our motivations are intrinsic or extrinsic, we can also understand how we are motivated, by understanding what drives motivation.

According to Abraham Maslow, we are *always* working toward the pinnacle of self-actualization. Although according to the model, it may not be you and I to reach it, the concept is that we take the foundations our generations before us created, and build on top of that for the generations after us.

EXAMPLE: MOTIVATION FOR A BETTER FUTURE

YOUR GRANDPARENTS IMMIGRATE HERE AND WORK JOBS YOU WOULD NEVER FATHOM TO WORK TODAY—FOR TABLE SCRAPS AND FLOOR TO SLEEP ON. THEY DON'T SPEAK A LICK OF ENGLISH, BUT THEY HAVE SECURED A PLACE TO LAY THEIR HEADS, AND THE MEANS TO EAT.

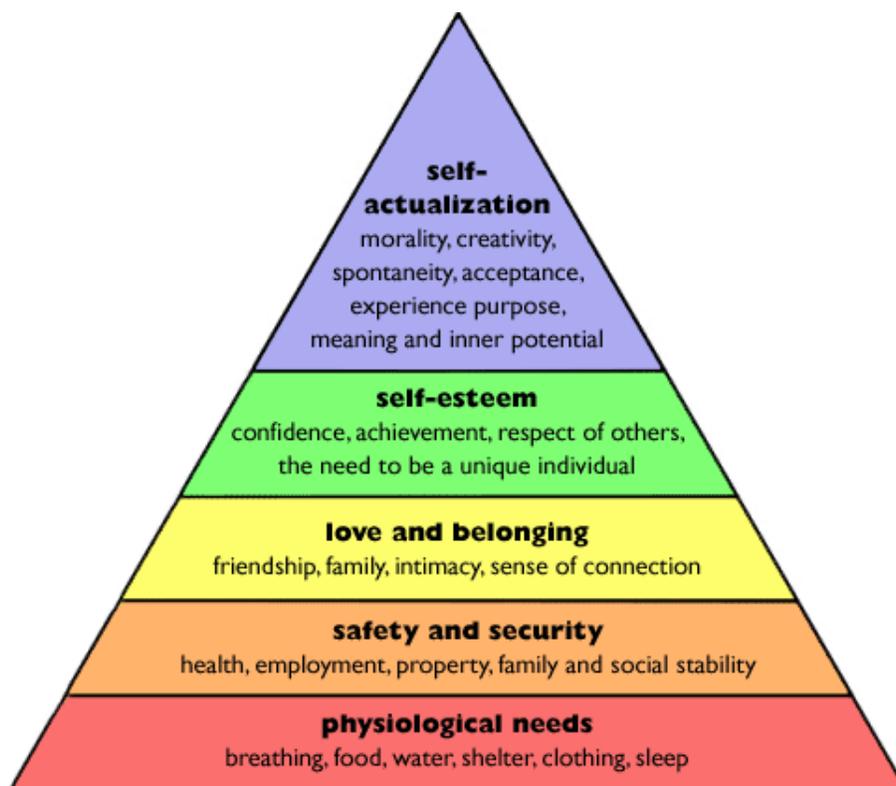
OVER TIME YOUR PARENTS WERE CONCEIVED AND YOUR GRANDPARENTS MOVED IN WITH OTHER FAMILIES; YOUR PARENTS WERE THE FIRST GENERATION TO GO TO HIGH SCHOOL, BECAUSE THAT WAS THE MOST BASIC SCHOOL NEED TO GET A DECENT JOB.

YOUR PARENTS MEET IN HIGH SCHOOL AND GET PREGNANT WITH YOU. YOUR DAD LEARNS A TRADE AND DROPS OUT OF SCHOOL—OPENING UP HIS OWN SHOP, AND MOM SLAVES AWAY AS A NANNY RAISING SOMEONE ELSE'S KID, AND CLEANS HOUSES JUST TO MAKE RENT AND KEEP YOU IN YOUR EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.

YOU ARE THE FIRST GENERATION TO GRADUATE HIGH SCHOOL—AND YOUR PARENTS PUSH THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLEGE, BECAUSE THEY DON'T WANT YOU TO STRUGGLE THE SAME WAY THEY DID; BECAUSE THEY'VE ALREADY SET THE FOUNDATION FOR YOU TO SUCCEED FURTHER THAN THEY HAVE.

And you will do they same for the generation under you... and the generation under them, setting a stronger base so that it's easier for the generations below us to achieve self-actualization.

-
- How can you use this information to flourish in *your life*?
 - How can you use this information to help *your community* flourish?



DESIRES

MOTIVATION TO SATISFY DESIRES

Steven Reiss explains that we have 16 different reasons that we do the things we do; mapping out the relationship between motives (which are the underlying basic human needs; desires), and the intrinsic feeling to show that extrinsic motives can also foster an intrinsic reward

Reiss's 16 Motives

Motive name	Motive	Animal behavior	Intrinsic feeling
Power	Desire to influence (including leadership; related to mastery)	Dominant animal eats more food	Efficacy
Curiosity	Desire for knowledge	Animal learns to find food more efficiently and learns to avoid prey	Wonder
Independence	Desire to be autonomous	Motivates animal to leave nest, searching for food over larger area	Freedom
Status	Desire for social standing (including desire for attention)	Attention in nest leads to better feedings	Self-importance
Social contact	Desire for peer companionship (desire to play)	Safety in numbers for animals in wild	Fun
Vengeance	Desire to get even (including desire to compete, to win)	Animal fights when threatened	Vindication
Honor	Desire to obey a traditional moral code	Animal runs back to herd when stared at by prey	Loyalty
Idealism	Desire to improve society (including altruism, justice)	Unclear: Do animals show true altruism?	Compassion
Physical exercise	Desire to exercise muscles	Strong animals eat more and are less vulnerable to prey	Vitality
Romance	Desire for sex (including courting)	Reproduction essential for species survival	Lust
Family	Desire to raise own children	Protection of young facilitates survival	Love
Order	Desire to organize (including desire for ritual)	Cleanliness rituals promote health	Stability
Eating	Desire to eat	Nutrition essential for survival	Satiation (avoidance of hunger)
Acceptance	Desire for approval	Unclear: animal self-concept?	Self-confidence
Tranquility	Desire to avoid anxiety, fear	Animal runs away from danger	Safe, relaxed
Saving	Desire to collect, value of frugality	Animal hoards food and other materials	Ownership

This Breaks The Belief That We Either Work Intrinsically OR Extrinsically

TASK VS. GOAL

Let's revisit the time you had to make a decision on how to train for the basketball shootout, in order to win your dream car.

REMEMBER THAT YOU ONLY HAD A WEEK TO PREPARE. DID YOU CHOOSE TO TRAIN FOR THE 30-CONSECUTIVE BASKETS FROM YOUR USING YOUR STRONGER SHOT, OR 10-CONSECUTIVE BASKETS FROM A *DOWNTOWNNNNNN*?

- WHAT IF THERE WAS MORE TIME TO PREPARE?
- WHAT IF THE INCENTIVE WAS A \$15 HOME DEPOT GIFT CARD?
- WHAT IF IT WERE 30 FREE THROWS, OR 1 HALF-COURT SHOT WITHIN 3 MINUTES?

As we can see, by changing the scenario, we change the process of how we pursue our goal. Motivation changes with our goals. Motivation changes depending on external incentive—And it also changes with out personal perception of our skill level.

TASK FOCUSED:

- Typically Intrinsically Motivated
- Understands there is always room to improve
- More inclined to take on challenging tasks
- Strategizes for goal achievement
- Focuses on effort
- Enjoys the work for the sake of meeting or exceeding requirements
- Understands the need to improve weaknesses
- Linked to mastery
- Focuses on the Process

GOAL (EGO) FOCUSED:

- Typically Extrinsically Motivated
- Experiences low arousal and boredom more than task-focused individuals
- More inclined to take on tasks, less challenging for maximum reward
- Focuses on establishing superiority against competitors or tasked assignments.
- Tends to work on strengths over weaknesses
- Focuses on Outcome



**“I fear not the man who has practiced 10,000 kicks once, but I fear the man who has practiced one kick 10,000 times.”
— Bruce Lee**

VALUES VS. VIRTUES

WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE THINGS I VALUE IN MY PERSONAL LIFE?

WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE THINGS I VALUE IN MY PROFESSIONAL LIFE?

WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE THINGS I VALUE IN MY COMMUNITY?

Revisit your Life Values Inventory (LVI) to compare

WHAT ARE MY TOP 5 SIGNATURE STRENGTHS

IS THERE A CORRELATION BETWEEN WHAT YOU VALUE AND YOUR SIGNATURE STRENGTHS?

**“IT’S NOT
HARD TO MAKE
DECISIONS
WHEN YOU KNOW
WHAT YOUR
VALUES ARE”**

- ROY DISNEY

VALUES VS. VIRTUES

WHAT ARE VALUES?

Values are a set of guidelines or beliefs of what is good or bad that drives your behavior.

THE MORAL COMPASS THAT GUIDES OUR BEHAVIOR

We can have **Individual** Values:

HONESTY | COMPASSION | LOYALTY | FAIRNESS

- Service** to Our Communities
- Reverence** for the Law
- Commitment** to Leadership
- Integrity** in All We Say and Do
- Respect** for People
- Quality Through **Continuous Improvement**

AND WE CAN SHARE **Cultural** Values:

Honor | Courage | Commitment

WHAT ARE VIRTUES?

Virtues are how we behave because of the values we possess. If values are the destination, virtues are the roadmap.

FOR EXAMPLE:

Value: Respect

Virtue:

(HOW CAN WE BE RESPECTFUL?)

- Practice patience
- Be mindful of personal space
- Be considerate of privacy
- Be mindful of an individual's role
- Practice tolerance
- Practice Patience
- Be friendly
- Practice unbiased judgment

IN TERMS OF MOTIVATION:

Values are desirable behaviors that help define the culture you wish to create; Your Goals

Virtues are measures of excellence or goodness that help you create the culture; Your Processes

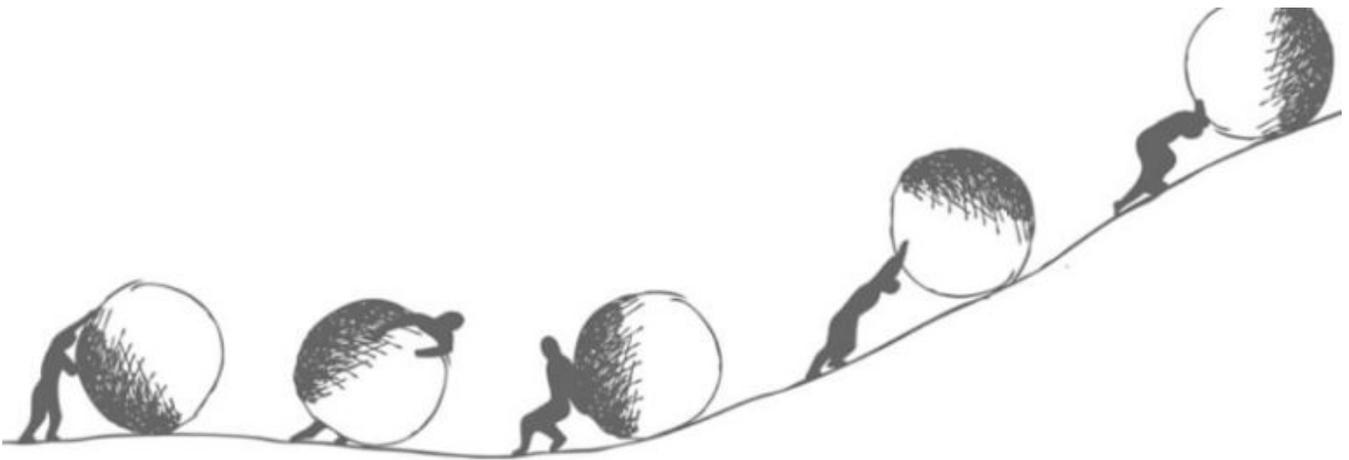
ENDLESS PURSUIT

THE STORY OF SISYPHUS

In Greek mythology, there is a story of a man—that made the gods so mad... well I'll get there in a few.

Sisyphus was a mortal man, King of Corinth (Ephyra), and he was said to be the most cunning man on the Earth, feeling that he was smarter than the Gods themselves; and he continuously upset the them... starting off with Rubbing Zeus the wrong way by snitching on him.

Zeus sent Hades—the god of death—to take Sisyphus to the land of eternity, and Sisyphus slyly imprisoned Hades in his home; and for an extended amount of time, nobody could die. This threw the equilibrium of the world off, because wars were fought, and could never be won.



Ares, the god of war released Hades, and Sisyphus was forced to report to the underworld—but first conspired with his wife to not bury his body (which in this time, required the family to place coins on the eyes to pay for passage across the river of Styx), and he beckoned that he return to the land of the living to put his wife in her place and make things right. He was granted permission, and never returned to the underworld.

HE DIED OF OLD AGE

Once finally in the underworld, Sisyphus was condemned to an eternity of pushing a large boulder to the top of a mountain, only for the boulder to roll down immediately once it got to the top. They say that the only reason he doesn't stop rolling the boulder up is because he was "promised" by the Gods that he would be able to escape the underworld once again after pushing the boulder up to the top.

BECAUSE OF HIS MOTIVATION TO OUTSMART THE GODS YET ONCE AGAIN, HE FINDS NEW AND EXCITING WAYS TO PUSH THIS BOULDER UP THE MOUNTAIN... FOR ETERNITY!

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM SISYPHUS

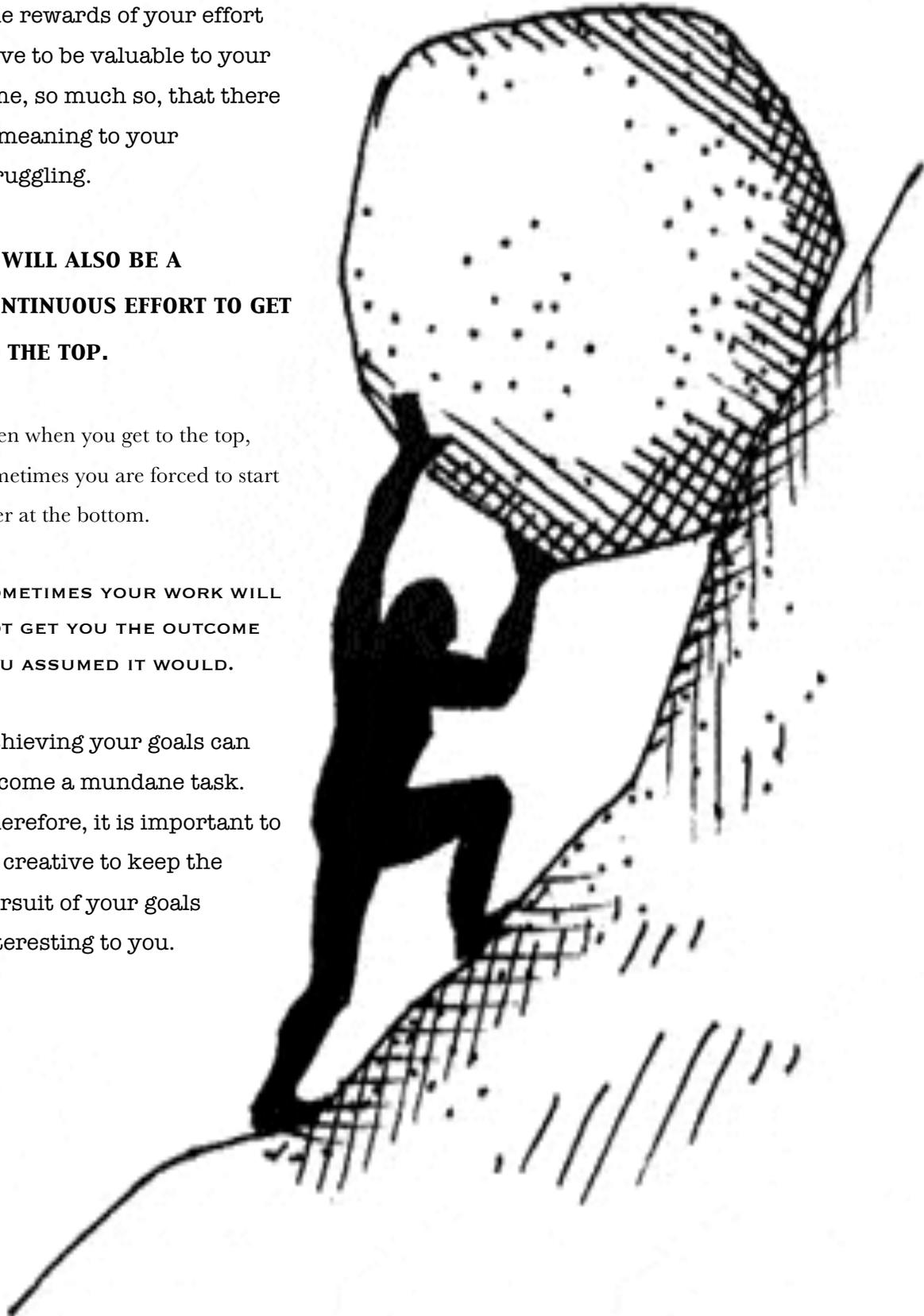
1) The rewards of your effort have to be valuable to your time, so much so, that there is meaning to your struggling.

2) IT WILL ALSO BE A CONTINUOUS EFFORT TO GET TO THE TOP.

3) Even when you get to the top, sometimes you are forced to start over at the bottom.

4) SOMETIMES YOUR WORK WILL NOT GET YOU THE OUTCOME YOU ASSUMED IT WOULD.

5) Achieving your goals can become a mundane task. Therefore, it is important to be creative to keep the pursuit of your goals interesting to you.



WHAT KEEPS US MOVING?

ANAGRAMS

BROWN EYES VS. BLUE EYES REVISITED

Research studying a group of rats, half of them had a cancerous tumor attached to them and half of them left as is, separated the rats into 3 groups.

GROUP 1

64 ESCAPABLE SHOCKS

NOW

1/4 of the rats in this group died; 3/4 rejected the tumor

GROUP 2

64 INESCAPABLE SHOCKS

WE

3/4 of the rats in this group died; 1/4 rejected the tumor

GROUP 3

NO SHOCK

WAIT

~50% of the rats in this group died

WHAT HAPPENED?

Learned Optimism

vs.

Learned Helplessness

The rats who'd learned that they the ability to control their pain & suffering, also learned that they could choose to stay strong over their sickness—ultimately rejecting the tumors that were implanted to take their lives.

The rats that had no ability to control pain—threw in the towel, and were more susceptible to allow the sickness to run its course.

- Another study following human subjects found similar findings on learned helplessness utilizing controllable noise, instead of electroshock. Those findings lead to the studies surrounding *Learned Optimism*.**
- Learned Optimism studies following individuals who'd suffered from a cardiovascular heart attack, show that the most pessimistic individuals in those groups, often died from a second heart attack.**

BUILDING OPTIMISM

Besides the anagram test, can you think of a MEANINGFUL time that you were forced to be helpless outside of your own will? (**Hint* during these moments we tend to use metaphors like, "my hands were tied," or "it was beyond my control..."*)

What did it feel like to be helpless?

Did you do anything to combat feeling helpless?

In hindsight, what could you have done to not be pushed into an area of helplessness (if anything)?

ARE YOU WORTH IT?

The Japanese ran a similar study on the effects of optimism within patients with cardiovascular disease. The study of:

ikigai...

...or the concept of having something worth living for.

THE BELIEF THAT AN INDIVIDUAL HAS SOMEONE OR SOMETHING MEANINGFUL IN THEIR LIVES WORTH LIVING FOR, HAVE ALSO SHOWN TO REDUCE THE RISK OF CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE.

These studies aren't to teach you how to beat health issues, I mean—if they do that's great; However, having the knowledge that if there is a possibility that you can control your outcome of your future based on you're the way you reframe your situations, or maintain focus of your values... how valuable is that to you?

WHAT IF YOU KNEW YOUR OPTIMISM WAS INFECTIOUS?

(Last one I swear)

A town in Massachusetts was surveyed and monitored for health reasons. However, in lieu of the information they collected, they could also map out emotions (due to knowing everyone's address). What they found:

THE CLOSER AN INDIVIDUAL LIVED NEXT TO SOMEONE EXPERIENCING LONELINESS, THEIR NEIGHBOR NEXT TO THEM SEEMED TO REPORT FEELINGS OF LONELINESS AS WELL. IF THE INDIVIDUAL WAS HAPPY, THE HAPPINESS SPREAD TO THE NEIGHBOR AS WELL AS THE NEIGHBOR TWO HOMES DOWN... AS WELL AS THE NEIGHBOR THREE HOMES DOWN.

**THIS STUDY CONCLUDED THAT EMOTIONS ARE CONTAGIOUS;
AND HAPPINESS IS MORE CONTAGIOUS THAT SADNESS.**

If that's not a reason to be more motivated to be more optimistic...

TYING IT ALL TOGETHER

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

(oh so much...)

- THE IMPORTANCE OF FLOURISHING
- TRUSTING THE PROCESS
- OPTIMISM
- PERFORMANCE LOOP – HOW THOUGHTS AFFECT PERFORMANCE
- HOW TO BREAK BAD HABITS
- THE IMPORTANCE AND PROCEDURE OF PROPER GOAL SETTING
- ACKNOWLEDGMENT IS KEY TO CHANGE
- HOW UTILIZING OUR CHARACTER STRENGTHS CAN INCREASE OUR CHANCES TO SUCCEED
- REFRAMING
- WHAT TRIGGERS OR CUES OUR ANXIETY
- HOW TO MANAGE OUR EMOTIONS
- LIMITING BELIEFS (THINKING TRAPS/ ICEBERG THINKING)
- TYPES AND TRAITS OF MOTIVATION
- LEARNED OPTIMISM AND LEARNED HELPLESSNESS...

NOW LET'S LEARN OUR ABC'S

TYING IT ALL TOGETHER

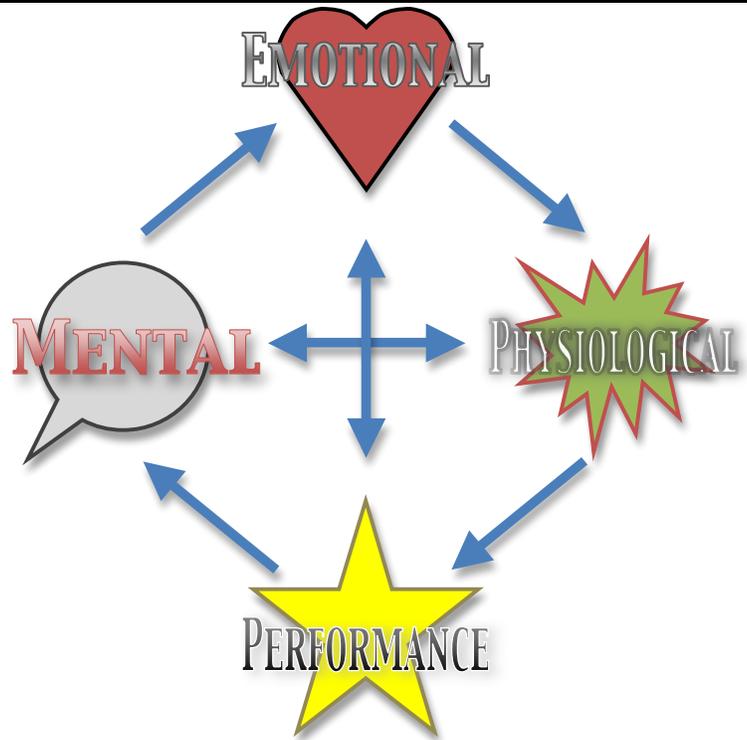
What is an event that has happened to me that I still can't get over; an event that someone from the outside-looking-in would say I'm overreacting over.

What are a few reasons why I believe this event happend.

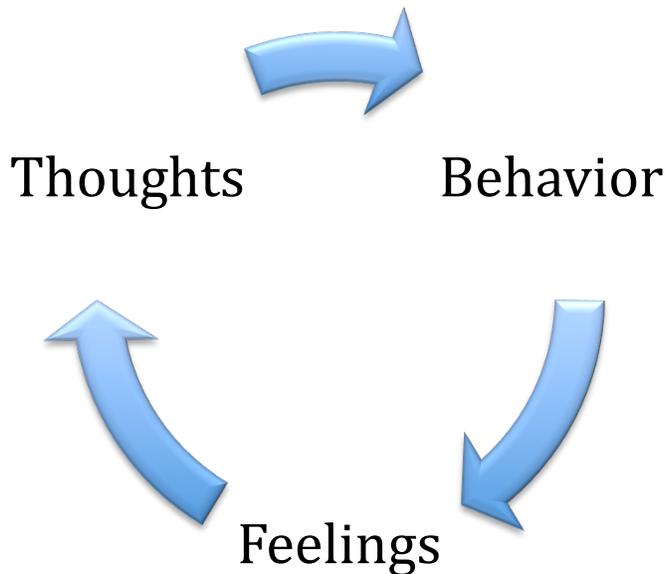
What were my actions, or your reactions because of the event?

ABC's

REMEMBER OUR PERFORMANCE LOOP THAT SHOWS US THAT THE WAY WE FEEL EMOTIONALLY AND PHYSICALLY, AS WELL AS THE WAY WE THINK— ALL AFFECT OUR OVERALL PERFORMANCE?



ALBERT ELLIS FIGURED THIS OUT WITH OUR BELIEFS. HE FOUND THAT IRRATIONAL BELIEFS, HINDER PERFORMANCE, AND THEREFORE NEED TO GET NIPPED IN THE BUD...



...AND RATIONAL-EMOTIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY WAS BORN (WHICH LATER FOSTERED COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (CBT))

ABC's

THE ABC MODEL IS A TOOL THAT YOU CAN USE TO ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR THOUGHT PATTERN ON PAPER, SO THAT YOU CAN UNDERSTAND WHERE YOU'RE CAUGHT UP, WHY YOU'RE CAUGHT UP, AND CHANGE THE BEHAVIOR TO SET YOURSELF FREE.

The idea behind CBT is to teach an individual that an **External Event (A)** *does not create* **Consequences (C)**. *Instead* the **Beliefs That We Attach to the External Event (B)**, influences the **Consequences (C)**...

A-B-C NOT A-C-B

A – ACTIVATING EVENT

These are your triggers that cue up the **Limiting Beliefs** (beliefs that hold you back).

B – BELIEFS

The thoughts that come up once the activating event happens.

C – CONSEQUENCES

The reaction you have (or lack of), from the activating event. (Rational beliefs tend to lead to healthy consequences, and Irrational tend to lead to unhealthy.)

D – DISPUTING THE BELIEF

Challenging the belief from a different rationale.

E – EFFECTIVE NEW BELIEF

Creating and implementing new appropriate beliefs.

ABC's

Activating Event

- Wife doesn't pick up a phone after the 3rd fight this week

Belief(s)

- She's sleeping around with someone
- She's at the lawyer getting divorce papers
- She doesn't love me any more
- She's taking the kids away from me
- She's probably hitting the bottle

Consequence(s)

- I've called her phone 42 times since lunch
- I leave work and go find her
- I call the divorce lawyer first
- I go to pull my kids from school and take them to Toys R' Us* so they'll be on my side
- I send my partner to go check up on her

Dispute the Belief

Effective New Belief

ABC's

Activating Event

Beliefs attached to the event

Consequences because of your beliefs

Can you play Devils' Advocate with the reasons you provided and dispute them?

Can you come up with a more logical reason why the event happend?

ABC's

HOW CAN YOU USE THIS TO FLOURISH IN THE COMMUNITY?

Activating Event

- You catch Deetch Hing Skuul not in class yet AGAIN, for the 3rd time this week.

Beliefs attached to the event

Consequences because of your beliefs

Can you play Devils' Advocate with the reasons you provided and dispute them?

Can you come up with a more logical reason why the event happened?

A STEP FURTHER

CAN YOU HELP DEETCH AND THE SKUUL FAMILY CREATE A PLAN TO IMPROVE THEIR SITUATION? HOW WOULD YOU GO ABOUT THE PROCESS IF YOU HAD THE OPPORTUNITY?



"Why aren't I in school? I have an app that does that for me."

FOCUS

So far you've done a lot of work up to this point, going internal and accessing your thoughts, your beliefs, your emotions, your triggers & cues, your motivations driving your actions, and your values driving your motivations.

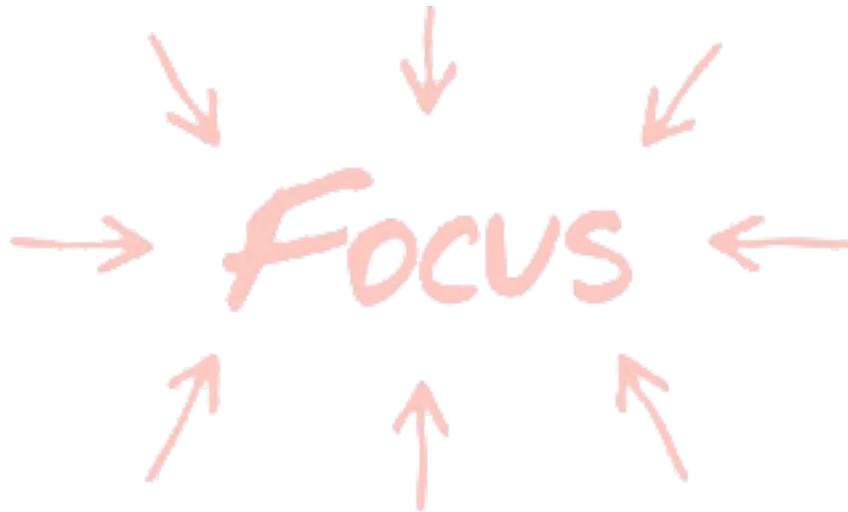
This is more reflective work than most individuals walking around will ever do—intentionally.

With the tools you have learned so far—and practice—you should be able to build resiliency by acknowledging your mental state and pulling yourself into a working state of mind at will.

But there is much more to mental toughness... especially as you patrol the streets.

TASK:

**NAME AS MANY THINGS THAT NEED YOUR ATTENTION AT ANY GIVEN MOMENT WHILE ON DUTY.
(ALL SCENARIOS ARE FAIR GAME)**



RECALL

DURING THE LAST EXERCISE, HOW DID YOU APPROACH THE TASK?

- Was there a way you structured and bundled information as you thought of it?
- Did you use categories such as personal items, car, building, etc?
- Did you stick with a technique or a mnemonic you were taught?
- Was there a method to your madness?

THINK ABOUT YOUR TIME IN THE ACADEMY. WHAT WERE YOUR STRATEGIES TO LEARN THE:

- Penal codes?
- Radio Calls?
- Ranks?

It's said that the magic number of items that an average person is able to focus on recalling without hesitation is 7 ± 2 .

**SO IF I WERE TO ASK YOU TO NAME AS MANY VEGETABLES AS POSSIBLE—
WITHOUT HESITATION, THE AVERAGE PERSON WILL NAME 5-9 VEGETABLES.**

We use a combination of short- and long-term memory to be able to remember and recall information.

...BUT MORE LONG-TERM THAN SHORT.

Short-term memory is only good for 15-30 seconds. Anything after that is considered long-term memory.

HOW YOU TAKE IN INFORMATION AND THE STRATEGIES AND SCHEMES YOU UTILIZE FOR RECALL ARE A LARGE PART OF YOUR ABILITY TO FOCUS, AND CAN BE TRAINED. BEFORE MOVING INTO CONTROLLING FOCUS, IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND HOW YOU TAKE IN AND RETAIN INFORMATION.

IMPROVING MEMORY

SO HOW DO WE IMPROVE MEMORY?

Those who teach learning strategies have dialed in on a handful of strategies that work for improving memorization.

1) CONVERT INFORMATION INTO PICTURES

The brain loves images. Create a story or attach a visual of an item that will remind you of what you're trying to remember.

2) ATTACH AN ITEM TO A NAME

Lets face it... I'll never remember that your name is Mark. But I'll remember you as Motorcycle Mark if you just rolled up on a pretty black hog; or Overly Happy Oscar if that was the vibe I picked up when we were introduced to each other.

3) USE MNEMONIC DEVICES

What are the colors of a rainbow? ROYGBIV of course! You can also use mnemonic devices to create a story that reminds you of the order of information using the first letter of each word like *Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally* which is a mnemonic for the order of math operations (Parenthesis, Exponents, Multiply, Divide, Add, Subtract). Or you can even win money by betting that you can give the first 8 numbers of pi right using, *May I Have A Large Container Of Coffee?*

4) USE RHYMES

Similar to attaching an item to a name, rhymes work because they're quick and catchy.

"I'm going on a Date. Friday night at 8. It will be so Great. Great, Great, Great, Great-GREAT!"

5) ATTACH A MEMORY TO A LOCATION

Train memory by attaching something you need to remember to a location that you often look at. For example, if you need to remember to pick up the dogs medication, try anchoring the thought of dog's medication to the medicine cabinet. Or associate your gym bag to your car. You can even create external cues to remember a portion of a speech regarding the future of the company, by anchoring it to the right side of the room—symbolizing the future.

6) ATTACH A MEMORY TO AN EMOTION

Emotions are a strong connector to memory. We remember people who've hurt us. We remember food that taste like a little piece of heaven. We can even remember where we were when we experienced a hearty laugh. Attach a memory to a feeling for a different type of recall.

7) CREATING A PATTERN; CATEGORIZATION

Group together similar items that compliment each other and will remind you of each the other. For instance if you were asked to recall what a person looks like, you might have pieced together the head first, then clothes, then their body size.

RECALL

WRITE DOWN AS MANY OBJECTS AS YOU CAN REMEMBER?



HOW'D YOU DO?

FOCUS

A KEY ELEMENT TO MENTALLY TOUGH IS HAVING THE ABILITY TO CONTROL FOCUS.

IT IS ESSENTIAL TO BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN FOCUS ON THE PRESENT MOMENT.



Focus on the Process

In order to focus on the process—an individual must be fully aware of *everything* that is happening internally and externally at the present moment; while simultaneously accessing continuously changing variables; what you know as Situational Awareness.

FOCUS, LIKE A MUSCLE, MUST BE TRAINED... AND IF YOU DON'T USE IT—YOU LOSE IT!

UNFORTUNATELY...

...we are in an age where instant gratification and constant distractions are a large part of our daily lives.

TRY THIS OUT. FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE CLASS, I WANT YOU TO TALLY A MARK EVERY TIME YOU REACH FOR YOUR PHONE TO LOOK AT IT. ALSO, TALLY HOW MANY TIMES YOU THOUGHT ABOUT REACHING FOR YOUR PHONE.

I thought about picking up my phone

I picked my phone up

FOCUS

WE OFTEN DRIFT TO NON-ESSENTIAL THOUGHTS. OFTEN. IT'S NATURAL.

However... the ability to ACKNOWLEDGE that and bring your thoughts back is a skill—and it's a skill that can be practiced.

TRY THIS:

FOR THE NEXT 5-10 MINUTES SIT IN YOUR CHAIR WITH YOUR EYES CLOSED AND THINK OF THE WORD “RELAX.” SIMPLY FOCUS ON THE WORD ITSELF, AND AS YOUR MIND STARTS TO WANDER—SIMPLY PULL IT BACK TO THE WORK “RELAX.”

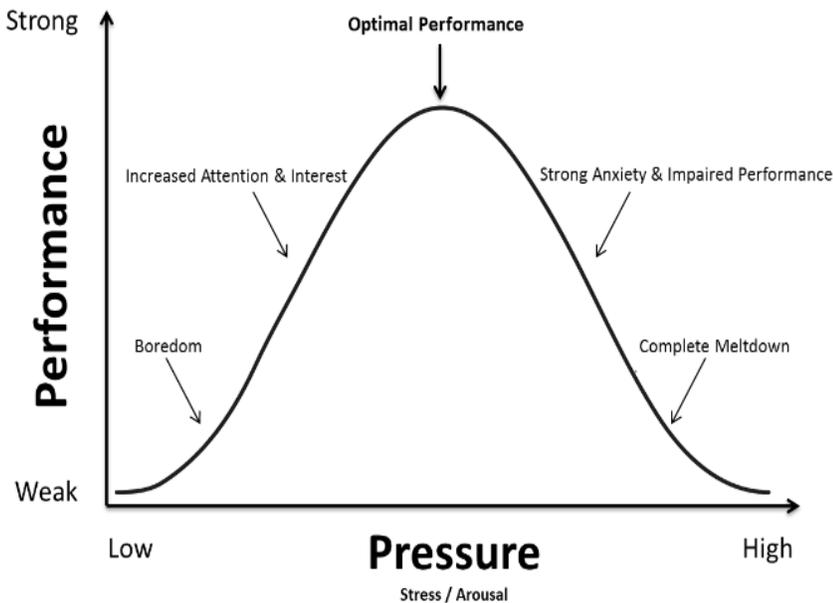
IT DOESN'T NEED TO BE AN AGGRESSIVE PULL-BACK... NO REASON TO HAVE SCRUNCHED FACES FROM TRYING TOO HARD TO FOCUS ON THE WORK “RELAX”... JUST GENTLY PULL YOUR FOCUS BACK TO THE WORD “RELAX” WHEN YOU START TO NOTICE YOUR MIND WANDERING.

WHAT DID I NOTICE?

This is called **Single Focus Meditation**... and a lot of people experience the same thing. Training this particular focus can help an individual be more focused in the present, which aides in improved rapport and relationships, as well as improved attention to detail.

You can change the level of difficulty by changing the focal point. Try focusing on the breath grazing your nostrils. Or try focusing on how many breaths you can stay focused on the single point without your mind wandering.

AROUSED AGAIN?



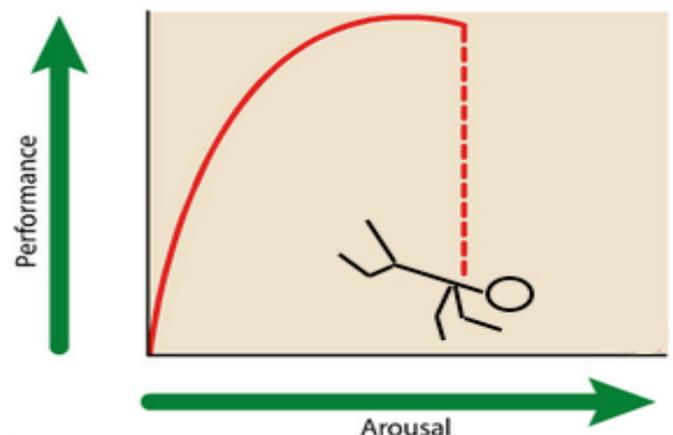
Once again, an essential part of being able to train focus is to develop a strong sense of *awareness* and *emotional control*.

Self-Awareness introduces the

thought-performance relationship; in which an individual is able to acknowledge a change in baseline thoughts, feelings, and emotions, as well as any type of change in one's physiological state.

If arousal moves too high or too low from optimal performance, you would begin to work outside of their Individual Zone of Optimal Functioning (IZOF) and soon performance would decrease, which could lead to abnormal decision-making process, or missed opportunities.

Remember... not being able to focus properly and acknowledge a change in your baseline behaviors could lead to this...



ACT

GOOD NEWS... YOU CAN TRAIN SELF-AWARENESS!

You've actually been doing this whole course so far in different ways, but let's dive a little deeper and teach you some more good information!

ATTENTION CONTROL TRAINING (ACT) IS NOT A TECHNIQUE... IT'S A PROCESS.

One that requires you to become extremely in tune with internal processing of both your cognitive and somatic triggers, cues, and responses in order to then create a response to combat the responses that are not adding value to your performance.

SCENARIO:

YOU'VE RESPONDED TO A HOME INVASION, AND THE SUSPECT IS SAID TO STILL BE ON PREMISES AND IS ARMED. YOU NOTICE THAT YOUR FEAR OF DYING IS KICKING INTO GEAR BIG TIME, AND CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT YOUR NEWBORN BABY AT HOME. THIS COGNITIVE THOUGHT HAS TRIGGERED A SOMATIC RESPONSE OF FEELING SICK TO YOUR STOMACH, YOUR MUSCLES ARE TENSE, AND YOUR HANDS ARE SWEATY.

Your ability to function optimally is gone—you cannot respond to the call like this.

WE WILL CONTINUE THIS SCENARIO THROUGHOUT THE LESSON.

ACT

BEFORE ASSESSING WHAT AN INDIVIDUAL MUST DO TO BECOME MORE PROFICIENT AT USING ACT, WE NEED TO COVER A FEW KEY CONCEPTS THAT THE TRAINING IS BASED OFF OF:

1) People Are Unable to Multitask.

No matter if you think you can drive *and* eat *and* talk on the phone at the same time, your body is doing one thing at a time... really really fast.

THIS IS DUE TO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTELLIGENCE AND SPEED.

TASK:

SING THE ABC'S TO THE HAPPY BIRTHDAY SONG.

SING THE ABC'S BACKWARDS.

Why were both difficult to begin, and maybe easier as it went on?

YOUR MENTAL SPEED IS DELEGATED BY HOW MUCH OF THE TASK YOU HAVE ON AUTOMATIC.

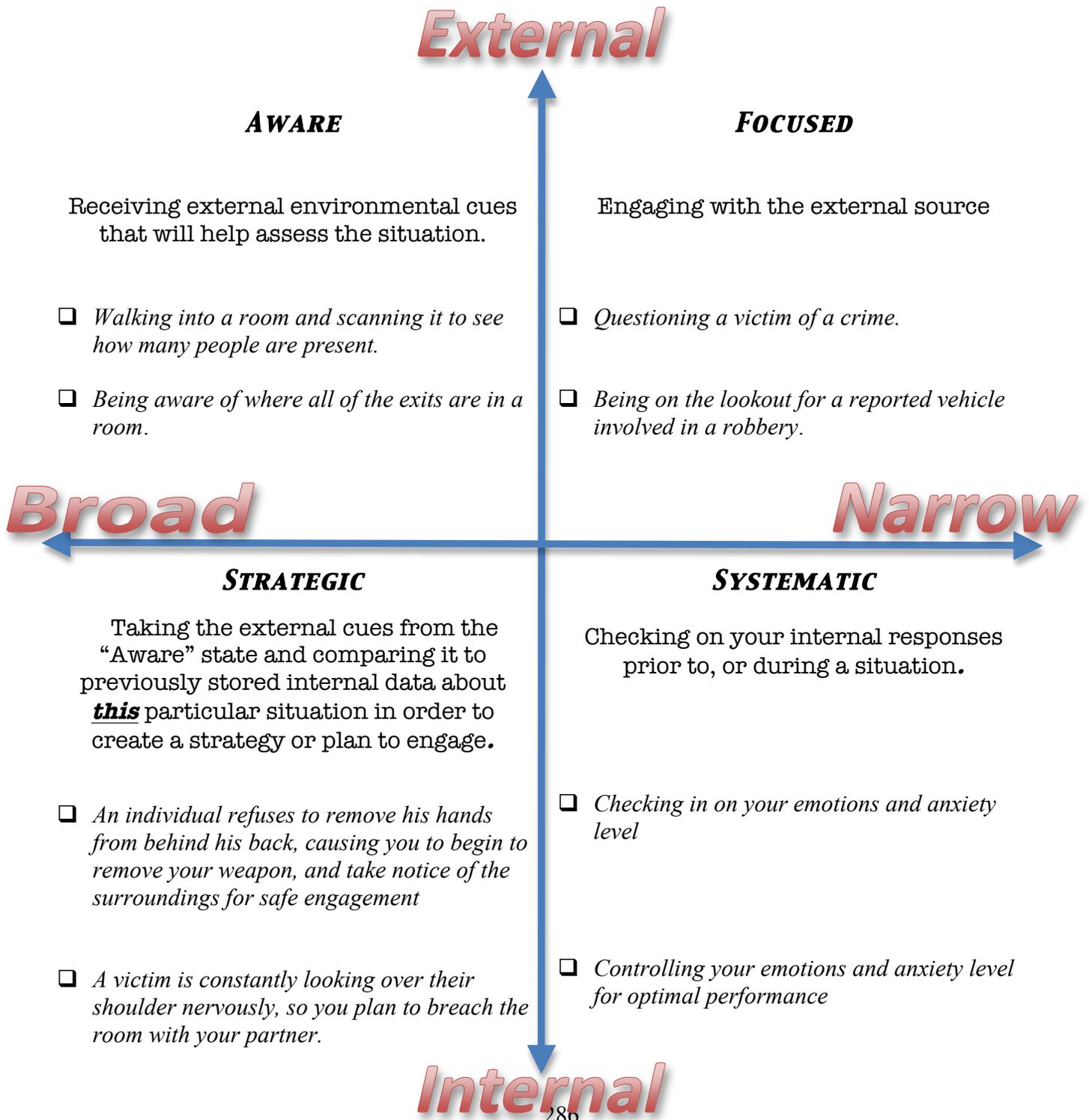
MEANING, THE MORE INFORMATION YOU HAVE STORED ABOUT HOW TO PERFORM A SPECIFIC TASK, THE LESS ENERGY AND FOCUS YOU NEED TO PLACE INTO THAT PARTICULAR PERFORMANCE. WHICH ALLOWS FOR AN INDIVIDUAL TO ASSESS AND CORRECT MISTAKES IN REAL TIME, OR EVEN ANTICIPATE THEM.

This is why mental rehearsal with imagery is a good practice to incorporate into your routine.

ACT

2) Different Situations Will Invoke Different Attentional Focus Schemas.

At any given time you are utilizing only one of four categorical focus points;
Broad-to-Narrow (width; x); External-to-Internal (direction; y)



HOME INVASION

External



Broad

Narrow

How do I piece together the information I have?

- Home Invasion
- Suspect may still be on premises
- Suspect is Armed
- Unknown count of individuals in the home

Anything else?

Internal Check-In

- My palms are sweaty
- My muscles are tight
- I feel sick to the stomach
- I'm breathing pretty fast
- It's hard to focus right now
- I'm a little hesitant to get out the car

Internal

ACT

SOME OTHER BASELINE RULES OF ACT:

3) CONCENTRATION SKILLS VARY FROM INDIVIDUAL TO INDIVIDUAL

4) INCREASES IN EXTERNAL OR INTERNAL STIMULI (AROUSAL) CAN CREATE INTERNAL NOISE.

Which in turn can cloud judgment, alter perception of the present moment, and interfere with the processes that affect the outcome.

5) HOW WE ENGAGE IN SPECIFIC MOMENTS ARE MORE TRAIT-LIKE THAN STATE-LIKE.

Meaning you are more prone to act in your dominant attentional focal schema, which can be predictable—if you have acknowledged and made note of your internal and external processing.

(See... it's all coming together!)

ASSESSING AN INDIVIDUAL'S FOCUS SCHEMA TO DETERMINE THEIR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES IS THE FIRST PART OF ACT TRAINING.

For that we use the Test of Intentional and Interpersonal Style (TAIS)

[Available once the program is funded]

FOCUS

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, BEING ABLE TO FOCUS CREATES CONFIDENCE...

...but only after mastery.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

On A Scale Of 1-5

(1 being Very Little, and 5 being A Lot)

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU...	HOW MUCH FOCUS DO YOU GIVE TO THIS TASK?
POURING A BOWL OF CEREAL 1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
MAKING EGGS 1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
CHANGING A DIAPER 1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SPEAKING ENGLISH 1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
LEARNING A NEW LANGUAGE 1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SPELLING YOUR NAME 1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SPELLING CHAUFFER. OR IS IT CHAUFER ... I CAN NEVER REMEMBER. 1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
COOKING CHICKEN 1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SOLVING: 4+5 = 1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Solving for x: $2(x-9)/3 = 20$ 1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

Well let's revisit the relationship between intelligence and speed.

DOUBT

THE OPPOSITE OF CONFIDENCE IS DOUBT...

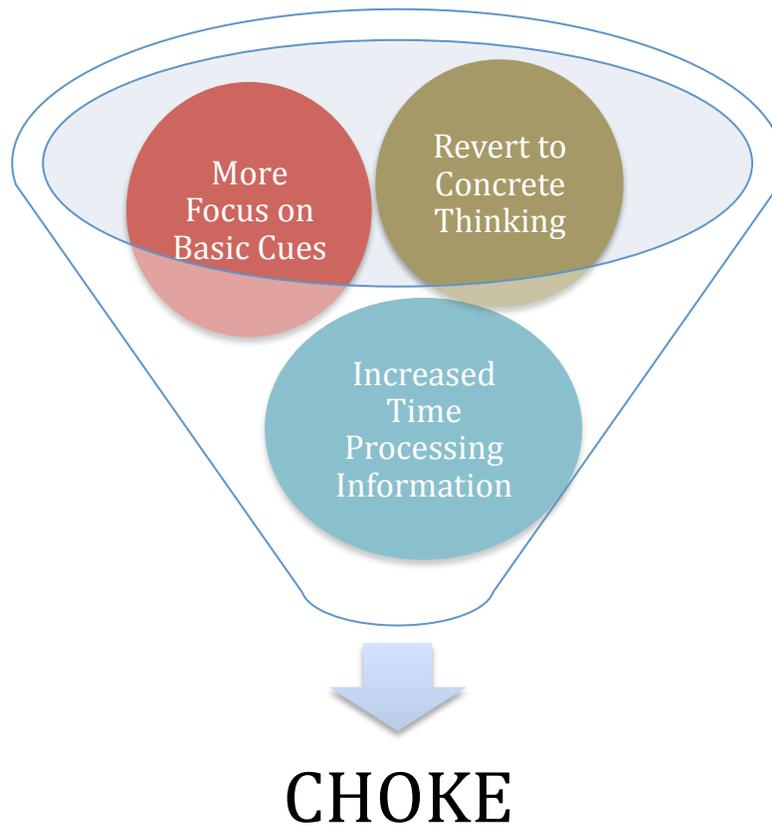
...and having doubt will make you revert back to concrete thinking

...and concrete thinking will keep you focusing on the most basic cues

...and focusing on basic cues means you'll spend more time processing information

...and processing more information in key moments increases the likeliness of

...CATASTROPHIZING BEHAVIOR



FOCUS

Many internal and External variables can decrease confidence, and this will essentially create more distraction and increased frustration.

Those who are not able to cope tend to have negative experiences; and focusing on negative experiences will foster negative expectations have the ability to bury an individual in over their head.

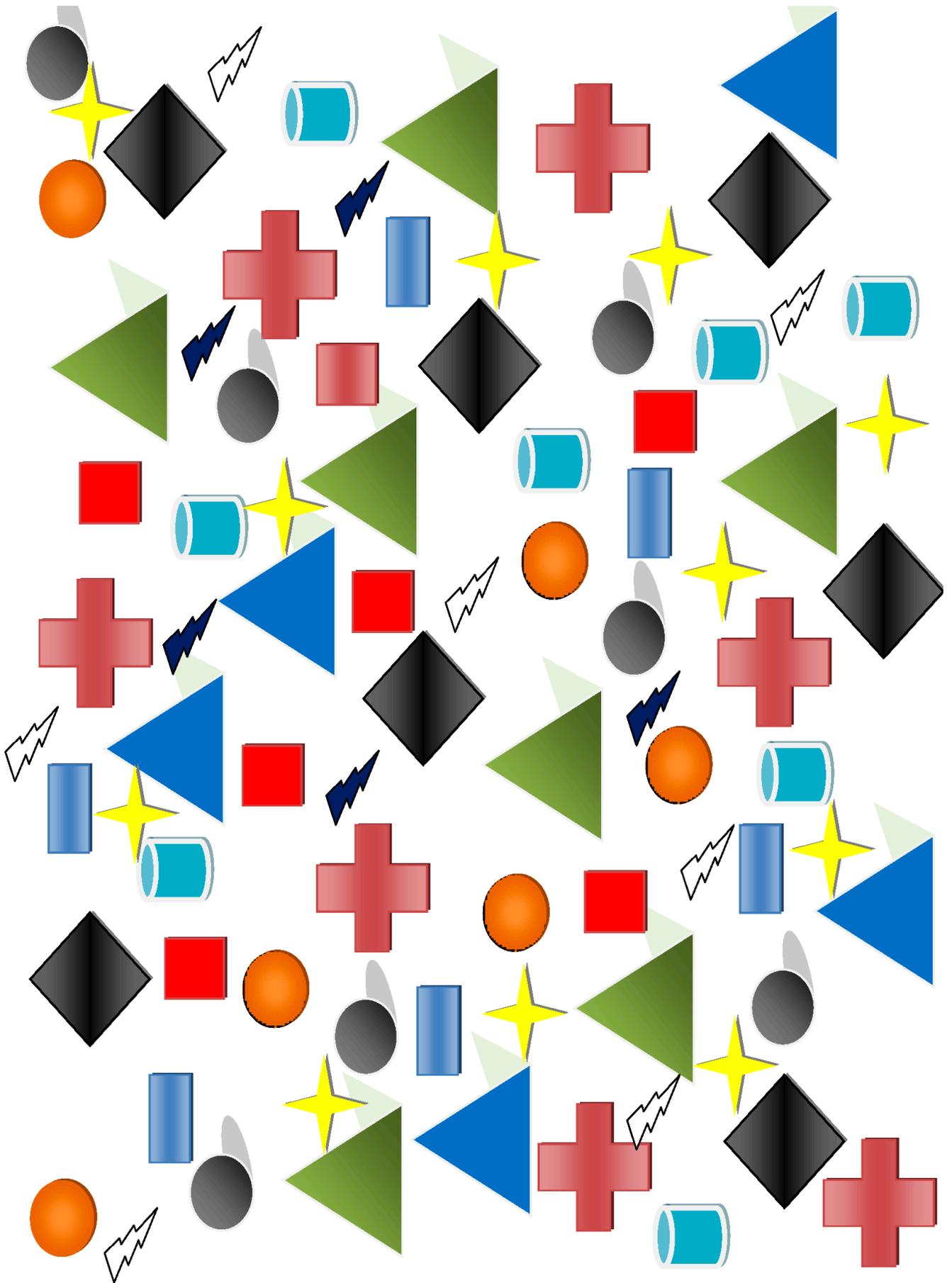
Motivation, high levels of self-efficacy, how diligent you have trained to acknowledge where your focus is and how to manipulate the thoughts that follow, tend to predict whether or not you are able to cope with your emotions and respond to the feelings of anxiety once the signs present themselves.

**IF THESE KEY CHARACTERISTICS ARE ALL MET, YOU WILL
LIKELY EXPERIENCE ENHANCED PERFORMANCE.**

**ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES, ARE SOME FOCUS
ACTIVITIES YOU CAN TRY, TO HELP TRAIN YOUR FOCUS.**

FOR THE FIRST ACTIVITY:

STUDY THE PAGE FOR 1 MINUTE AND TAKE IN AS MUCH INFORMATION AS YOU CAN.



RECALL

TRY TO RECALL AS MUCH INFORMATION AS YOU CAN:

- 1) How many types of shapes were there? _____
- 2) What shape was in the top left corner? _____
- 3) How many green shapes were there? _____
- 4) Were the green shapes triangles or plus signs? _____
- 5) Were the cylinders standing up or laying on the side? _____
- 6) What color were the lightning bolts? _____
- 7) Did you forget that there were two colored lightning bolts? _____
- 8) Approximately what's the total amount of items present on the page?

HOW YOU CAN PRACTICE THIS AT HOME:

- 1) HAVE A FAMILY MEMBER WRITE DOWN AS MANY QUESTIONS AS THEY CAN THINK ON INDIVIDUAL SLIPS OF PAPER. STUDY PICTURE FOR 1 MINUTE. ANSWER 5 QUESTIONS.
- 2) TEST YOURSELF AT DIFFERENT ALTERED STATES:
 - a. Immediately in the morning
 - b. Before bed at night
 - c. On a full stomach
 - d. After working out
 - e. Angry
 - f. Happy
 - g. _____
- 3) GO INTO YOUR JUNK DRAWER AND GRAB A BUNCH OF STUFF
 - a. Throw it on the table and study it for a minute
 - b. Turn your back and have another person quiz you.

REMEMBER TO USE YOUR STRATEGIES

FOCUS

EXPANDING YOUR FIELD OF VISION:

PURPOSE: To train your peripheral vision while focusing on a single point in front of you.

DIRECTIONS: If you have another person with you, have them stand in front of you and slowly walk out of your peripheral as you focus on a fixed point in your field of vision. Once they are out of your peripheral let them know, and they should stop moving. Your partner should start waving their arms until you're able to acknowledge their movement. Partners should slowly move back into your peripheral until you can acknowledge their movements, and then have them slowly start moving back out if it until you are no longer able to see movement again.

GOOD PERIPHERAL VISION SHOULD BE CLOSE TO 110-100° TO YOUR LEFT OR RIGHT SIDE OF YOUR FOCAL POINT

If you don't have a partner to work with, you can pick a spot on the floor, and scan small areas from left to right, opening up your field of view when you can start to make a distinction of what is in your field of view without moving out of your dedicated scan zone. Pull your focus back to the front, and try to locate objects using your peripheral vision. Expand your scan zone until fail.

STROOP TEST:

PURPOSE: To train your brain to disregard distractions

DIRECTIONS: This test displays words of color, in a particular color. When the test begins, the tester is to read the color of the word OR the word itself (which will read "red," "blue," ect...). The purpose is to confuse the brain. The test is timed, and incorrect responses count against the timed score.

TRY IT HERE: www.Opencoglab.org/stroop
(for randomized test & score)

<http://www.math.unt.edu/~tam/SelfTests/StroopEffects.html>
(This test stays the same, but it's a good reference, and fun to have friends and family try)

FOCUS

STOP, LOOK, AND LISTEN:

PURPOSE: To train your Situational- and Self-Awareness.

DIRECTIONS: Randomly throughout the day, literally stop what you are doing and check in with yourself. Take a cleansing breathe. Drop your shoulders, and notice the tension in your muscles. Ask yourself what are you feeling at the moment, if you're getting the nutrition, stimulation, or care your body needs at this moment. Then take a moment to acknowledge the sounds around you, the temperature, look for something interesting going on around you that you hadn't noticed before you stopped. This exercise will help you create more awareness automatically.

This is the same concept as "*being present*" in the here & now.

CONCENTRATION GRID:

PURPOSE: To train concentration and projection on the next immediate task.

DIRECTIONS: This is a timed test. The objective is to cross of the numbers in order as fast as you can without skipping a number.

Alternate option: A fun team challenge—print off grids, and have the team cross as many numbers off in a given amount of time.

TAKE IT HERE: [HTTPS://CONCENTRATIONGRID.COM/](https://concentrationgrid.com/)

65	8	50	31	6	13	66	49	94	95
58	48	78	98	25	89	68	10	42	70
57	52	74	69	91	41	97	76	85	18
44	60	83	39	40	96	47	32	54	75
100	55	29	37	11	90	27	77	38	99
34	23	61	7	4	15	12	59	45	92
80	28	86	26	2	46	3	71	67	17
43	14	20	84	51	9	19	5	62	79
24	35	53	21	88	72	33	22	63	73
93	64	82	87	81	56	1	30	36	16

THE ART OF SLOW

Earlier, the art of being able to master simple tasks in order to focus on more was introduced. That skill is a good skill because the faster your mind is able to process information—**THAT ALREADY MAKES SENSE TO YOU**—the more time you have to focus on the things that don't.

The art of taking your time to make sound judgments, or the art of slowing down thoughts is just as important as being able to process thoughts quickly.

The thoughts that need more time, are important to you for ultimate success—and the more time you can give them, the better your chances for success.

JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE MORE TIME, DOES NOT MEAN YOU MAKE BETTER DECISIONS...

... JUST LOOK ON ANY SPEED CHESS BLOG OR FORUM

HOWEVER, WITH MORE TIME TO ASSESS SITUATIONS, YOU CAN CONSCIOUSLY DECIDE ON A USEFUL STRATEGY THAT WILL AIDE THE TASK AT HAND.

LET'S TEST IT OUT

WE'RE GOING TO PERFORM THE CONCENTRATION GRID TEST AGAIN. HOWEVER, DURING THE FIRST RUN YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED THAT YOU RUSHED THROUGH AIMLESSLY TRYING TO FIND THE NEXT NUMBER IF YOU DIDN'T INCORPORATE A STRATEGY.

This time you have two advantages...

You Know What to Expect (semi-mastery)

You also know the length of 60-seconds.

THIS TIME BEFORE YOU START, TRY TO TAKE ONE DEEP BREATH AND SCAN THE CARD IN A PREDETERMINED PATTERN (OR WHATEVER OTHER STRATEGY YOU MAY HAVE COME UP WITH)



49	36	125	52	120	92	97	87	33	12
1	27	13	102	75	40	130	67	80	101
85	109	59	116	91	106	16	82	48	26
112	63	79	89	21	14	43	94	127	81
54	117	64	28	7	128	65	37	108	95
9	122	66	35	72	61	32	29	118	19
111	115	62	100	96	84	47	38	17	51
76	103	104	5	99	25	70	69	10	50
114	113	129	110	121	4	18	74	83	20
11	31	45	58	119	6	73	8	23	46
55	124	34	88	44	123	53	78	2	3
56	39	41	71	126	93	90	57	98	24
15	86	42	30	77	107	68	60	22	105

FOCUS ON THE PROCESS

THE LAST ASPECT TO COVER OVER THE ART OF SLOW, IS SOMETHING THAT YOU ARE AWARE OF—IF YOU HAVEN'T TUNED OUT OVER THE COURSE.

CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES

DO YOU HAVE A PRE-GAME ROUTINE?

- DO YOU START YOUR DAY OFF THE SAME WAY EVERYDAY?
- DO YOU SAY A LITTLE DITTY TO MAKE YOU REMEMBER NOT TO FORGET SOMETHING BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE HOUSE?
- DO YOU HAVE A BEFORE-YOU-SIT-DOWN-AT-WORK RITUAL OF BATHROOM THEN COFFEE FIRST?
- DO YOU RELAX THE SAME WAY WHEN YOU COME HOME?
- NIGHTLY ROUTINE TO WIND DOWN?

Pre-game routines are nothing but primers to anchor a cue for our body to know what is about to happen. If you've ever talked to an athlete, some of them will tell you they have pre-game routines or pre-shot routines.

Pelé, one of the greatest football players to ever play the game of soccer, said his pre-game routine consisted of relaxing in the corner of a locker room for an hour before a game. He would imagine himself playing soccer on the beach with his friends and a child and vividly remember the joy of the sport—simply having fun playing it. Then he would remember all the moments of accomplishment; the awards, the phenomenal goals, and the championships. Last, he would play the game that he was about to play on the field, in his mind. He would visualize the passes, the shots... the celebrations. Then he would be ready to play the game.

Jack "The Golden Bear" Nicklaus, wrote in his book that before every single shot, he wouldn't step up to the tee ball until he visualized his posture, his breathing, his swing, the trajectory of the ball—all while he included the wind on his face and the feeling of the ball against the club.

**WATCH YOUTUBE:
EVAN LONGORIA E 60 - THE BEST MENTAL GAME OF BASEBALL VIDEO**

“PRE-GAME”

**ALTHOUGH YOU’RE NOT GOING INTO A CHAMPIONSHIP SITUATION, YOUR PERFORMANCE OUT ON THE FIELD IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE ANY MOMENT THROUGHOUT YOUR DAY CAN TURN INTO A LIFE OR DEATH MOMENT...
...FOR YOU AND EVERYONE AROUND YOU.**

Pre-game routines are seen as a type of superstition to some. But for those who use them, they understand that pre-game routines:

- ❑ **PRIME THE FEELING OF OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE.**
Think about where your arousal levels need to be on the IZOF model.
- ❑ **TAKE AWAY THE GUESSING GAME OF WHAT TO DO NEXT.**
Pre-game routines are so structured, that they become automatic.
- ❑ **RAISES LEVELS OF CONFIDENCE.**
Remember: the less information you need to focus on, creates more time to focus on unknowns in order to rule out external factors creates space for assessment and increased clarity on the mission. And remember, Clarity fosters confidence.
- ❑ **ALLOWS FOR YOU TO *CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES* FROM THE VERY BEGINNING.**
Part of the perceived level of confidence begins with knowing you have control over the situation.

If you begin any process controlling how you prepare going into it, you have a better chance of continuing to maintain control when you are immersed in the task.

You also have a better chance of acknowledging and regulating internal and external factors that don’t fit the script of how this particular situation needs to play out.

[PREGAME]

CONTROLLING THE CONTROLLABLES

2. Look back to my morning routine. Is there any physical, mental, or emotional arousal state that I feel, or would like to experience at those moments? (*i.e., I eat my breakfast to be strong and energized. I drink my coffee to prepare to engage the day. When I place my feet on the floor in the morning, I want to feel grounded and connected.*)

Activity	Reason/Thought/State
Eat Breakfast	To Start my Day with Energy

CONTROLLING THE CONTROLLABLES

3. Now that I've labeled the physical, mental, or emotional arousal state I feel, or would like to experience at those moments—can I think of a cue that when spoken, it reinforces the state? (i.e., *I eat my breakfast start off the day energized. Similar to pouring gas in my truck... I'll "FUEL THE BODY"*).

Activity	Reason/Thought/State	Verbal/Mental "Cue"
Eat Breakfast	To Start my Day with Energy	"FUEL THE BODY"

THE PROCESS

Although you may never have a pre-game routine for everything you do, concept behind all the work you've just done is to help you develop a plan to create a more intense level of focus.

Incorporating cues into your functional processes throughout the day is the same as training the brain that every time you lay down in a bed, the body's function is to relax and/or sleep.

And similar to a coach, or a friend reminding you to "Pick It Up," "Snap Out Of It," or "Shake It Off..." these cues are reminders to what the proper response to a situation is.

YOU CAN *ONLY CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES*. EXTERNAL RESPONSES ARE OUT OF YOUR CONTROL.

THEREFORE, MASTER YOUR OWN ACTIONS AND AROUSAL STATES—AND FOCUS ON & TRUST THE PROCESS.

LAST QUESTION...

HOW MANY TIMES DID YOU PICK UP YOUR PHONE?

YOU MIGHT HAVE FOMO... THE FEAR OF MISSING OUT! THE AFFLICTION THAT IS CAUSED BY BEING SO DISTRACTED AT WHAT YOU COULD BE MISSING, CAUSING YOU TO BE UNABLE TO FOCUS ON THE TASK AT HAND.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is KEY!



I KNOW. THERE ARE A LOT OF KEYS IN THIS TRAINING... BUT THIS TRAINING IS KEY... HOWEVER... IF WE CANNOT COMMUNICATE—WE CANNOT SURVIVE.

HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE?

- Internally (mind-to-body; body-to-mind)
- Non-Verbally
 - WRITTEN COMMUNICATION
 - TEXT
 - FACIAL AND BODY GESTURES
 - WITH HAND SIGNALS
 - SMOKE SIGNALS
- Verbally
 - PHONE
 - FACE-TO-FACE
 - WHISPERING
 - SCREAMING
 - CUSSING
- _____

WHAT MESSAGES DO WE COMMUNICATE?

- Greetings
- Food-Orders
- Wants
- Needs
- Love
- Pain
- _____

COMMUNICATION

WHO DO WE COMMUNICATE TO?

WHO DO WE COMMUNICATE TO?

EVERYONE

We Communicate With Everyone!

And in your professions, if you cannot communicate what you're thinking accurately to the person in front of you, you cannot perform your job safely.

You cannot afford to send mixed messages in your field. So let's learn about how we communicate!



COMMUNICATION 101

IT IS EASIER TO CATCH FLIES WITH HONEY THAN WITH VINEGAR!

(this again?...)

THAT'S RIGHT! THIS AGAIN!

The most important thing about communication is actually getting people to like you!

They don't have to be your best friends, hell... they don't have to be friends at all... But if you don't establish RAPPOR, then you will have a hard time getting your message that you are trying to communicate across!

Rappor—is the connection that you share with a person.

It's as simple as that.

If you have bad rappor with an individual, you can feel it in your skin. If you have good rappor with someone... you can feel it in your skin.

WHAT DO I EXPERIENCE (THOUGHTS, FEELING & EMOTIONS) WHEN I AM AROUND AN INDIVIDUAL WHO I'D RATHER NOT BE AROUND?

-
-
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-
-

WHAT ABOUT SOMEONE I ENJOY BEING AROUND?

-
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-
-



RAPPORT

WHAT IS IT ABOUT THE INDIVIDUALS YOU DON'T WANT TO BE AROUND, THAT MAKE YOU NOT WANT TO BE AROUND THEM?

IT'S JUST SOMETHING ABOUT THEM RIGHT?

Typically... they just rub us the wrong way. And we make this decision with the first 1/10 of a second!

Most professional communicators will tell you that you have anywhere from 7 - 90 seconds to establish rapport. Or that you have 14-90 seconds to lose rapport...



LET'S JUST SEE HOW LONG 90 SECONDS FEELS.

90 SECONDS IS A LOOOOONG TIME!

HOWEVER, 1/10 OF A SECOND SEEMS WAY TOO SHORT... AND IRRATIONAL...

But by showing an image of a face for 1/10 of a second, scientist figured out that in that short amount of time a person has determined your level of trustworthiness and attractiveness. Even when given more time to see the faces—the same judgments were made, just more confidence in the judgments was recorded.

Good News...

WE CAN WORK ON TRUSTWORTHINESS

Bad News...

WE CAN'T WORK ON ATTRACTIVENESS

BUILDING RAPPORT

THERE'S A FEW WAS TO ESTABLISH GOOD RAPPORT. HERE ARE A FEW WAYS:

- THE **KEY** TO RAPPORT! GOOD (but not creepy) *Eye Contact*
- Look presentable.
 - IN UNIFORM, IT'S ALREADY A GAMBLE WHETHER OR NOT SOME LOOKS UP TO YOU OR HATES YOUR GUTS. DON'T RUIN THE IMAGE OR GIVE THE HATERS MORE AMMO BUY WEARING A WRINKLED UNIFORM.
- Enthusiasm in *your* non-verbal cues
 - A SMILE ON YOUR FACE
 - TALL AND CONFIDENT POSTURE
 - WIDE EYES
 - OPEN-WELCOMING BODY (UNCROSS THOSE ARMS AND LEGS, AND NO HANDS IN POCKETS)
- A lively greeting, using their name if you know it!
- Getting personal!
 - UTILIZE KNOWLEDGE THAT YOU KNOW, OR THAT YOU CAN PICK UP FROM THE MOMENT TO ENGAGE.

“Hey Bill! How was your son’s baseball game last night?”

“Good Evening Ma’am! Good thing you didn’t forget your umbrella!”

- WITH THAT BEING SAID, IT IS ALSO SMART TO JOT SOME NOTES DOWN ABOUT PEOPLE; ON THE BACK OF THEIR BUSINESS CARD, IN YOUR NOTES APP, MAYBE PUT THEIR BIRTHDAY IN YOUR CALENDAR IF YOU HEAR SOMEONE WISH THEM A HAPPY BIRTHDAY AND SET IT TO REMIND YOU EVERY YEAR
- Pay attention to *their* non-verbal cues.

“It looks like you’re in a rush, is there anything I can help you with?”

“Hey man, you’re going to do great. Just take a breath!”

- Break the ice with common ground!
 - ARE YOU MAKING A STOP, AND YOU HAPPEN TO KNOW A LOT ABOUT THEIR CAR? ACKNOWLEDGE THE CAR FOR THE FIRST 30 SECONDS... THEN TALK BUSINESS.
- Empathy.... not sympathy
 - REMEMBER THAT WHOLE HONEY NOT VINEGAR THING...? LET PEOPLE KNOW THAT YOU CAN RELATE
- Be Authentic
 - YOU KNOW WHEN PEOPLE ARE BEING PHONY... WELL THEY DO TOO!

LISTEN CLOSE

YEAH, YEAH, YEAH... I'M LISTENING....

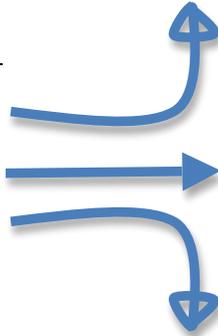
...Yeah, but are you paying attention?

There's a lot of information that you can pull from the way someone speaks. How you use your voice dictates what is currently happening or about to happen in the near future. There's five main ways to control your message:

- CONTROL YOUR VOLUME**
 - Be loud enough to hear from an appropriate distance.

- CONTROL YOUR PITCH**

Question
Statement
Command



- CONTROL YOUR TEMPO**



- CONTROL YOUR RHYTHM**
 - Use rhythm to carry meaning

- CONTROL YOUR TIMBRE**
 - The emotional quality of your voice

“Look man, you can listen to Jimi but you can’t hear him. There’s a difference. Just because you’re listening to him doesn’t mean you’re hearing him.”

-Sidney Deane (Wesley Snipes) on Jimi Hendrix

“White Men Can’t Jump”

LISTEN CLOSE

If you pay close attention to how an individual speaks, they can tell you how they communicate best. That will tell you how they learn best. And that will receive the best reaction, as well as cooperation.

We all work off of a VAK(OG) model... in fact when we learn how to visualize, we heavily rely on the VAK(OG) modalities. This acronym stands for nothing other than:

VISUAL AUDITORY KINESTHETIC OLFACTORY GUSTATORY

THAT'S RIGHT... WE SPEAK WITH OUR SENSES... PRIMARILY OUR VAK

EXAMPLE: *HOW ABOUT WE GO TO THE MOVIES AFTER DINNER TONIGHT?*

- Visual** - "*Looks* like a plan."
- Auditory** - "*Sounds* like a good time."
- Kinesthetic** - "*Solid* plan."

ANOTHER EXAMPLE: *WHILE PURCHASING A NEW CAR*

- Visual** - "*Appears* to be a good deal."
- Auditory** - "Can you *describe* how this car self parks? *I'm all ears.*"
- Kinesthetic** - "This one *feels* like the right one."

IF YOU'RE STILL NOT BUYING IT HERE'S ANOTHER EXAMPLE: *WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO BE IN 5 YEARS?*

- Visual** - "*I see* myself starting a food blog and traveling around the world."
- Auditory** - "Somewhere in the woods. *Tuning out* from the rest of the world"
- Kinesthetic** - "I'm just getting a good *grasp* on my duties. Maybe I'll *stick it out* here."

THIS IS ALL FINE AND DANDY... BUT WHAT CAN WE DO WITH THIS INFORMATION?

I'M GLAD YOU ASKED.

COPYCAT

I'VE BEEN BUILDING UP FOR THIS ONE TECHNIQUE.

MIRRORING & MATCHING

This is an actual technique that involves you being aware of an individual's non-verbal as well as verbal cues; and when utilized properly, mirroring & matching can get you into rapport with even the most difficult individual at the unconscious level.

How?

EASY. BECOME THE PERSON IN FRONT OF YOU.

MIRRORING – Essentially the process revolves around you being a copycat. If their arms are crossed, you mirror them and cross *your* arms. If they're facing outbound from you, you face outbound from them—at the same angle.

The idea is to create a human mirror. You want to mirror facial expressions, arm movement, speech patterns, posture, position, even blinking rate and most importantly—breathing.

Breathing is important because it is a good visual cue that an individual is sharing the same frequency of energy with you. Take that for what it's worth, but big 10-pound brains have been studying this stuff for ages.

MATCHING –

Similar to mirroring, the process revolves around you matching the movements, speech patterns, gestures, posture, etc... The main difference between the two is that instead of crossing your legs when Sam crosses his, you can cross your wrist. When Jill bobs her head to the beat, you can tap your foot.

You are matching the actions with similar *like*-actions. The one thing about this skill is that instead of using the same words; use words that are similar. Whereas mirroring you would use the same words. **Matching** is where the VAK model comes in handy.

Why Mirroring & Matching works is because we have a characteristic in our genetic make-up to be attracted to similarities. Similar is safe. So when we create similarity between ourselves and another individual—it subconsciously breaks a barrier that guards that protect the ego.

Yes... it takes practice... and yes... it requires you to be absolutely present in the moment.
So good thing you've been improving your focus huh!



RESPONDING

Typically, the way we respond to people sets the tone of how this interaction is run its course. We tend to incorporate our emotions into our verbal and non-verbal cues, as well as our reactions to our environment.

THERE ARE 4 TYPES OF RESPONSES THAT WE GENERALLY BEHAVE WITH:

❑ ACTIVE CONSTRUCTIVE

Responding in a way that is authentic, and enthusiastically supportive

❑ PASSIVE CONSTRUCTIVE

Responding in a way that is unenthusiastic, yet still supportive

❑ PASSIVE DESTRUCTIVE

Responding in a way that completely ignores the individual's statement or event.

❑ ACTIVE DESTRUCTIVE

Responding in a way that points out the negative aspects of what was shared

EXAMPLE: YOUR NEIGHBOR RUNS INTO YOU AT THE POST OFFICE AND SAYS TO YOU, "HEY! I JUST BOUGHT THAT NEW JEEP RUBICON! SHE'S PRETTY... I WAS THINKING ABOUT GETTING GREEN, BUT CHOSE THE KHAKI COLOR. 4-WHEEL DRIVE. LIFTED... THE WORKS."

ACTIVE CONSTRUCTIVE

Responding in a way that is authentic, and enthusiastically supportive

"That's fantastic! You've been working your ass off man... you really deserve it. Don't forget to let me borrow it one day! I'll take it to the mountains and break it in for you!"

PASSIVE CONSTRUCTIVE

Responding in a way that is unenthusiastic, yet still supportive

"Cool."

PASSIVE DESTRUCTIVE

Responding in a way that completely ignores the individual's statement or event.

*"Can you believe these dill weeds raised the prices of stamps **again?!?!?**"*

ACTIVE DESTRUCTIVE

Responding in a way that points out the negative aspects of what was shared

"You should've gotten a hybrid. You're just adding to the problem. And who needs a 4x4 in Los Angeles anyway! When do you ever go off-roading. You shouldn't have wasted your money. Take it back and get a Toyota... they're more reliable anyway..."

RESPONDING

THINK ABOUT THE WAY YOU RESPOND.

What type of information needs to be shared with you to respond in the **Active Constructive** manner? How is your emotional level typically when you respond like this? Physical levels? Are there any conversation topics that you would never respond authentically and enthusiastically?

What typically drives you to respond in the **Passive Constructive** manner? What is usually going on physically or mentally in the moments where you respond like this?

When you respond in the **Passive Destructive** manner, do you do it on purpose or not? Is there a reason to respond this way on purpose? If its not being done out of spite, what are you experiencing mentally and/or physically during these moments? Do you ever catch yourself, apologize, and respond differently?

What drives you to respond in the **Active Destructive** manner? When someone responds to you in this manner, what emotions and thoughts do you tend to go through? What purpose does this type of response serve to you?

RESPONDING

TRY THESE OUT. RESPOND ALL 4 WAYS TO EACH SCENARIO:

SCENARIO 1: Your retired father just told you he picked up bird watching.

SCENARIO 2: Your unemployed spouse just told you *they* picked up bird watching.

SCENARIO 3: Something you ate at lunch is really beating up your guts, and Jones comes to tell you that he got shot at during the hostage situation.

SCENARIO 4: You know you it was bad pork chow mien, and Jones comes to tell you that he was at the hostage situation, holding people back around the perimeter... and heard the gunfire.

SCENARIO 5: Your 4 year old writes her name for the 1st time by herself and runs into the room to show you.

SCENARIO 6: Your 4 year old writes her name for the 1001st time by herself and runs into the room to show you... and frankly... it could be neater.

TIME OUT!!!!

*IT'S NOT OUR INTENTION TO BE OFFICER POSITIVE PANTS ALL THE TIME!
LET'S JUST GET THAT OUT THE WAY.*

BUT IT IS OUR INTENTION to build strong relationships within our department, our homes, and our community! So ask yourself, besides being *enthusiastically supportive* just for the sake of being supportive, what could we incorporate into our responses to promote **flourishing**?

THAT'S RIGHT!

Try to figure out how you can incorporate your signature strengths into your responses, in order to focus on building strong relationships using your authentic and natural skills! If one of your strong signature strengths is *curiosity* or *love of learning*, respond by asking questions. If your strength is *humor* show interest and throw in a joke.

**LET'S RUN THROUGH THESE SCENARIOS AGAIN UTILIZING
YOUR PERSONAL SIGNATURE STRENGTHS.**

LET ME LET YOU IN

Let me let you in on a little secret about me.

What if I told you

Who's on the seat of their pants?

One last way you will learn to build rapport quickly is through the power of *self-disclosure*.

Self-disclosure fosters strong intimate relationships because the individuals you choose to self-disclose information to, are given information that makes them feel like they're *in-the-know*.

The more information individuals feel like they're given, the more they feel connected to the product.

THIS GOES FOR INFORMATION ON:

- A. THE COMPANY THEY WORK FOR
- B. THE UPCOMING MISSION
- C. POLITICS
- D. THEIR FAVORITE TEAMS/ATHLETES
- E. THEIR COMMUNITIES

Sharing your intentions, goals, and motives for your actions with your community (whether that community be your household, department, or the citizens you work for) will give a sense of inclusion, into something seemingly private—and that creates trust.

AND TRUST EASES COOPERATION.

You must be careful that you don't disclose too much information, because that can backfire on you. If too much information is given, two things can happen—1) you lose credibility because of a sense of need-for-approval, or 2) you come off as an individual who cannot maintain confidentiality.

There's no secret equation. Just know that empathy works best if you approach the other party's situation, having first thought of what would be the bare minimum to make you most comfortable to follow-the-leader and play in that realm of self-disclosure.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

There really is a lot of information regarding communication, and the question that should be on the forefront of your mind is, *how can I be a better communicator?*

We'll wrap up Communication with some **key** notes... but do understand that similar to emotions and focus, you should be checking in on your communication skills.

PERIODICALLY CHECK YOURSELF:

1. TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE USING "I" STATEMENTS FREQUENTLY

THE ONLY TIME YOU SHOULD BE SPEAKING FOR ANYONE ELSE IS IF:

- You have the leadership role at the moment of debrief. And in that case use "we," unless you are taking blame for a mistake. Believe me—this is a **trust builder** on team, and leadership above you takes notice of a leader who takes accountability for their actions, and stands up for their team when it is warranted.
- You have their permission to.

2. TO MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT IS BEING SAID TO YOU CLEARLY.

If you literally have to repeat word for word what was said, and then follow up with, "is that correct," you will gain respect for at least attempting to have a clear line of communication. And VICE-VERSA! Make sure that what you are communicating is being received properly. It's ok to ask people "hey, do you mind repeated what I said for clarity."

3. FOR YOUR NON-VERBAL CUES!

You may think your face is always the most pleasant thing to look at, even when you're angry... but know that if you want to be approachable, you have to radiate approachableness! Open your body gestures by uncrossing your arms, and using your eyes more in conversation

4. FOR YOUR HOW YOU RESPOND TO OTHERS.

It's actually pretty easy to know if you're rubbing others the wrong way. They'll let you know with their reactions toward you. If you are receiving negative feedback from others verbal or non-verbal language, just take a moment to "shake-it off" and do some internal self-reflection on what's affecting you at the moment.

5. TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE HONEY, AND NOT VINEGAR.

Yes, you have authority. You can absolutely abuse it however, and it can instantly kill rapport within the community if you don't respect your own authority.

6. REMEMBER THE LOSADA RATIO

IN YOUR OWN WORDS DESCRIBE WHAT CHARACTERISTICS A RESILIENT PERSON MAY HAVE, OR HOW AN INDIVIDUAL BECOMES RESILIENT.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____
- 10) _____
- 11) _____
- 12) _____
- 13) _____
- 14) _____
- 15) _____

Who is the most fictional resilient person I can think of?

Who is the most resilient person I know in real life?



“THE ITALIAN STALLION”



REFRESHER

SO WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

BEFORE WE TALK ABOUT WHAT RESILIENCE IS, WE SHOULD TALK ABOUT WHY WE'RE TALKING ABOUT IT.

REVISITING THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS, WHEN WE TALKED ABOUT WHY F.I.R.S.T...

1. We've been asking our armed forces to be vigilant with not only the safety inside of our borders, but also vigilant against terrorist attacks against us for decades now
2. Many of our brothers and sisters in uniform have been exposed to traumatic events that people think only happen in movies.
3. In a given year, over 20% of those in uniform are diagnosed with PTSD and suffer from anxiety & depression.
4. Studies have shown that after traumatic events occur, first responders report higher levels of suicide ideation.
5. The coping resources individuals have turned to in the past have historically not benefitted these individuals nor their units, communities, and family systems.
6. 56% of officers surveyed say the job has made them callused; 72% say they're less willing to approach suspicious individuals; and 93% say they're more concerned with their safety.
7. The society we live in today is not getting kinder, and we are plagued with constant struggles of hatred, prejudice and war.
8. So it is clear that it is extremely important to strengthen the ability to foster resilience into the lives of service members and first responder, the focus now is how?
9. Our job is to make the most correct decision in a split second's time. A poor decision may very well permanently affect an individuals' life.

PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE IS KEY...

...to keeping those individuals who have to make tough and sound decisions, fit for duty.

WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

BEFORE BEHAVIORIST BEGAN TO REALLY INCORPORATE THE TERM RESILIENCE INTO WHAT WE KNOW IT AS TODAY... IT WAS KNOWN AS “HARDINESS.”

A research study in 1979 observed 169 businessmen in a stressful environment in order to determine if the ability to deal with stress correlated with producing symptoms of illness. It was determined that those that could endure the stress, experienced symptoms of illness less than those who did not. These individuals were labeled “*hardier*” than counterparts. They also had a stronger commitment to themselves, controlled their environments better, valued their worth in their roles more, and believed that outcomes in their lives were because of their own actions. Because of this research, “*hardiness*” embedded itself as a stable and testable personality characteristic, which involves the ability to predict an individual’s courage, adaptability (commitment), and composure to perform optimally when exposed to higher-than-normal stressful situations (challenge). “Hardiness” became a gold standard when studying coping strategies, stress, and transformational leadership, and today it is still high in regard in the conversation of psychological resilience (*which is key to...*)

HOWEVER, HARDINESS DOES NOT DEFINE RESILIENCE BY ITSELF.

DEFINING RESILIENCE

RESILIENCY HAS ALSO BEEN DEFINED:

1. As a personality trait that intricately weaves in and out of an individual's life experiences, the individual themselves, and the context of the situation.
2. As the struggle of challenge; continuing to exert effort and persist against adversity, sometimes being set back or even failing.
3. As the ability to "bounce back" from downfalls as well as unfavorable and even traumatic events, such as a death in the family.
4. As the ability to find a way to grow from the lessons that failure and negative experiences teach us.

A PAID RESEARCH GROUP SPENT A LOT OF TIME RESEARCHING RESILIENCY PROGRAMS FOR THE U.S. MILITARY, AND AFTER SCREENING A TOTAL OF 340 DOCUMENTS WRITTEN ON THE TOPIC OF RESILIENCE THEY IDENTIFIED 122 SEPARATE DEFINITIONS OF RESILIENCE.

NOW LET'S LEARN ALL 122 DEFINITIONS OF RESILIENCE.

...Kidding.

WHAT ***DID*** COME FROM THE RESEARCH WERE ***3 BASIC MODELS*** WHICH RESILIENCE IS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

1. ***BASIC*** - A trait as a process or an ability that an individual (or a group) can develop over time.
2. ***ADAPTATION*** - also be described as the ability to "bounce back" to a baseline state after a hardship or traumatic event.
3. ***GROWTH*** - develops after experiencing a hardship or a traumatic event.

UTILIZING THE THREE CLASSIFICATIONS, THE GROUP DECIDED ON A DEFINITION OF RESILIENCE TO BASE THE REST OF THEIR RESEARCH ON:

"THE CAPACITY TO ADAPT SUCCESSFULLY IN THE PRESENCE OF RISK AND ADVERSITY"

How does this definition match up with the characteristics you used to describe resiliency?

NOW THAT WE HAVE A WORKING DEFINITION OF RESILIENCE, HOW CAN WE BUILD THE TRAIT WITHIN THE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE TAKEN AN OATH TO SERVE THE CITIZENS OF THEIR COUNTRY?

BECOMING A PHOENIX

How Do I BOUNCE BACK?

1. Have I ever been all of a sudden fired, laid off, cut from a team, or any type “being let go” from something that I was a part of? What was the activating event?

Did “being let go” affect me? If so, how?

What types of emotions did I experience?

How long did it take me to bounce back? What did I do to bounce back from this moment?



BECOMING A PHOENIX

2. Have I ever failed at something I did not expect to fail at, or ever lose a big game?

What was the activating event?

What types of emotions did I experience? Did I experience them at different stages?

How long did it take me to bounce back? What did I do to bounce back from this moment?

Did I pull then, or can I pull now in hindsight, something positive from the experience? Was there a learning, or teaching moment?

BECOMING A PHOENIX

3. Have I experienced a loss of a friend or a family member? How long did I mourn before starting to feel like myself once again?

What types of emotions did I experience/am I experiencing?

Did my mourning affect other people? Did it affect my work? Did it affect my personal productivity? Is it still?

Did I use a strategy, take guidance from someone, try therapies, etc...? What worked for me, and what didn't work for me?

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

4. When a friend, family member, co-worker, or an associate of mine has been fired, laid off, cut from a team, or any type “being let go,” how do I respond?

How long do I let them live in those emotions before I lose emotional involvement?

When I start to become less emotionally involved, what are some things I might say to them, or behind their back to someone else?

What type of consoling or guidance would I give in this type of loss? If my guidance depends on the person, what is my *best* general guidance?

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

5. When a friend, family member, co-worker, or an associate of mine has lost a friend or a family member, how do I respond?

How long do I let them mourn before I lose emotional involvement?

Are the things I say when I lose emotional involvement in this scenario different than the last two? If so what are some things I might say to them?

What type of consoling or guidance would I give in this type of loss? If my guidance depends on the person, what is my *best* general guidance?

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

WE'RE ALL BIG BADASSES, AND WE DON'T NEED NOBODY!

I Get It. I Do. Believe Me.

But so do 9% of the veterans that end up homeless, or the 22 veterans a day that commit suicide, or the 243 First Responders who took their own lives in 2017 alone—they “get it” too.

SUICIDE TOOK MORE OF YOUR BROTHER'S AND SISTER'S LIVES, THAN THOSE WHO DIED IN THE LINE OF DUTY.

67% MORE LIVES.

We MUST Learn how to build, and practice strengthening resilience within ourselves as well as mental toughness in order to develop, strengthen, maintain, and *utilize* effective coping skills.

THE BEST THING THAT YOU COULD'VE DONE FOR YOURSELF IN THIS PROGRAM, IS ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR CURRENT PROCESSES... AND NOTICE HOW THEY WORK FOR OR AGAINST YOU!

But again... you don't have to do this on your own.

Keeping citizens safe is a team sport.

AND THAT'S WHY WE ARE GOING TO RECOGNIZE FOUR **KEY** AREAS THAT FOSTER RESILIENCE:

INDIVIDUAL

FAMILY

UNIT

COMMUNITY

If the factors within each level can be developed and/or strengthened, then you are more likely to ***“adapt successfully in the presence of risk and adversity”...***

YOU ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE MORE RESILIENT

THE INDIVIDUAL FACTOR

L

The individual level revolves around the belief that self-improvement or self-care is contributory to how I am able to manage myself in a stress environment or situation. The intrinsic factors that make up the *individual* level are: Positive coping, positive affect, positive thinking, realism, behavioral control, and physical fitness.

A LOT OF THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL HAS BEEN COVERED OVER THE COURSE OF THIS PROGRAM. SO LET'S REVIEW:

THE STRENGTH OF ***FLOURISHING***

- POSITIVE _____
- E_____
- R_____
- M_____
- A_____

PURPOSE (MY WHY)

DAILY GRATITUDE

THE QUALITIES THAT MAKE ME MENTALLY TOUGH

THE PERFORMANCE LOOP

OPTIMISM

MY GOOD & BAD HABITS

GOAL SETTING

MY CHARACTER STRENGTHS

HOW I PREPARE

MY STRENGTHS VS.

WEAKNESSES

HOW TO CLOSELY MONITOR
AROUSAL LEVELS

MY TRIGGERS OF ANXIETY

HOW TO CUE APPROPRIATE ANXIETY

WAYS TO RELAX

MY THOUGHT TRAPS

EMOTIONS

WHAT MOTIVATES ME

MY VALUES & VIRTUES

MY ABC'S

MY FOCUS TACTICS

MY PRE-GAME PROCESS

HOW I COMMUNICATE

THE INDIVIDUAL FACTOR

AKNOWLEDGMENT & AWARENESS

THE FAMILY FACTOR

The family level framework revolves around the belief that the closest people in an individual's life act as a support system that promote improved communication through closeness and nurturing. The intrinsic factors involved at the *family* level are: Emotional ties, communication, support, closeness, nurturing, and adaptability.

This baseline of work revolves me focusing on creating and/or maintaining quality relationships with my family. This includes my family behind the badge that extends pass my bloodline.

SOME OF THE QUESTIONS I NEED TO ASK MYSELF ARE:

- Why am I not comfortable sharing the thoughts that affect me, and keep me guarded with those in my family?
- What is the worst scenario that could happen if I open up to my family?
- How likely is the worst-case scenario? (Think back to iceberg thinking)
- If I cannot talk to my immediate family, is there a healthy back up? (Healthy meaning an appropriate person to confide in... not a bartender, not a new girlfriend...if you're married...)
- Can I possibly prep my family, by asking them what their comfortable with me sharing?
- Can I set up a verbal or non-verbal cue for them to know that instead of "prying," I just need for them to be fully present in this moment, and be around?

"I WAS NOT ISSUED MY FAMILY. THEY ARE MY PEOPLE. THEY ARE MY BACKBONE. AND IF I AM NOT CAREFUL, I CAN ABSOLUTELY PUSH THEM FAR AWAY FROM ME... OR I CAN CHOOSE TO BRING THEM CLOSER IN."

THE UNIT FACTOR

L

At the unit level, the belief that the more an individual believes that the organization has their best interest in mind as well as how strong the bond the team shares, is instrumental toward how much value they add to the team, and how valuable the team is to them. The intrinsic factors that make up the *unit* level are: Positive command climate, teamwork, cohesion, belongingness, cohesion, connectedness, and collective.

TEAM WORK, MAKES THE DREAM WORK!

One issue with today's culture is that some people believe that if someone else isn't behaving fairly, justly, or in line with what their role is—then why should we.

“I AM A LEADER, AND I AM AN INTEGRAL ASSET TO MY UNIT AS WELL AS MY COMMUNITY. ALTHOUGH MY OWN ACTIONS REFLECT ON ME PERSONALLY, I KNOW THAT THERE ARE OTHER INDIVIDUALS LOOKING TO ME AS THE STANDARD. AS LONG AS I DO THE RIGHT THING ALWAYS, EVEN WHEN NOBODY IS LOOKING—I KNOW THAT THE GENERATIONS BEHIND ME WILL ALWAYS HAVE SOMEONE TO LOOK TO, FOR WHAT I WISH EVERY LEADER BEFORE ME, PRESENTED WHILE I WAS GROWING UP IN THIS CULTURE. I AM THE STANDARD; THEREFORE THOSE WHO ARE POISONOUS TO THE VALUES OF THIS UNIT WILL NOT TAINT MY ACTIONS.”

This is an example of an individual's mission statement to themselves on how they chose to lead. This individual was annoyed with the statement, “we've always done it this way,” and decided that as he moves up through the ranks, he would be a positive influence to everyone around him, and try to be contagious in that manner.

Working in an organization with so many people, so many personalities, so many cultural and individual backgrounds—it will be hard to get *everyone* to see things your way, and even harder to police your peers... but work from your “Why,” and work from your “Values.” Seeing people strive to be better, sometimes makes those same people strive to be better themselves.

Open communication up to your team. If you have a desk job, have an open door policy. If you're on the road, make yourself available to rookies to ask anything they want.

Challenge your team to learn from mistakes, and find information on their own. Buy your team tacos on Tuesdays. Learn the names of their kids, and periodically ask how they're doing.

THERE'S A SAYING...

“They won't care how much you know unless they know how much you care.”
A team that feels like they are connected, strong, righteous, and valuable—is unstoppable.

THE UNIT FACTOR

ONCE AGAIN, PEOPLE OFTEN BELIEVE THAT THEY MUST CHANGE OTHERS TO MAKE CHANGE. ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS TO SEE HOW YOU CAN BUILD RESILIENCE IN THE UNIT.

What would I like my unit to do better?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Why are these important to me?

What are some steps that “**I**” can take to get my unit to move in these directions?

What (or who) is holding me back from taking these steps?

- DO I WANT TO RUN A SPRINT, OR AM I WILLING TO RUN THE MARATHON?
(AM I WILLING TO GO THE DISTANCE)
- AM I OK WITH NOT HAVING POPULAR OPINION, OR EVEN BEING BLACKBALLED?
- ARE THERE WAYS TO MAKE CHANGE WITHOUT GOING AGAINST THE GRAIN?

THE COMMUNITY FACTOR

L

The community factor embodies the mindset that “it takes a village.” The community reaches beyond the environments that an individual has the most interaction with, and includes the social services, religious institutions, schools, local post office, etc. The intrinsic factors that make up the *community* level are: Belongingness, cohesion, connectedness, and collective efficacy.

Haven't you ever wanted to go in to a place where everyone knows your name?

Or go into someone and they say, “you gonna have the usual today?”



IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Some people like their privacy and would rather not engage with strangers. Plus realistically, they're strangers—they're strange. But if you broke your leg today, is there someone in your 10-minute walk zone that could help you get groceries? How about anyone in your neighborhood to feed the cats when you're on vacation? Or someone to tell you who it was that keyed your car—because you know that your neighbors have your back!

WHAT ABOUT YOUR CLEANERS; HOW MANY OF YOU KNOW YOUR DRY CLEANERS NAMES? GROCERS? MAILMEN? GARDENERS? TRASH MEN? BARISTAS?

Believe it or not, a little goes a long way. Small conversations that can be fit in to the short time you're interacting with these people allows them to build a relationship with you and vice versa. You see these people once a week at least! They've seen you happy, sad, mad, grumpy, sick... They've seen you after your team has won the championship, and they've seen you after a tough loss. They've seen your kids grow up. They were there when you decided to go back to school—and graduate! And the same goes for the reverse!

The more connected you are to your community, whether it'd be your neighbors, your church, or your city counsel—the feeling of connectedness will help you enjoy coming home at night.

PTG

Strengthening these areas of family, unit, self, and community add to your ability to cope through extremely hard times and can foster a more resilient you; however sometimes the emotions, feelings, and images that some of us experience are so severe that even therapies and treatments have not been effective, let alone being around other people... and putting in effort into any of these four areas is just that—effort.

Unfortunately PTSD has been at the forefront of society's mind for so long, that it has become common to immediately attach the disorder to the symptoms an individual shows.

This commonality creates the issue, that if all an individual is aware of as a coping mechanism is to create a self-fulfilling downward spiral, then how are we to expect individuals to bounce back?

THIS IS WHERE WE TEACH HOW TO TURN POST TRAUMATIC STRESS, INTO POST TRAUMATIC GROWTH.

Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) is the reframed mindset that traumatic experiences do not have to cause stress or depression in one's life, but instead those same experiences have the ability to enhance personal relationships, enhance spirituality, create a space for personal growth and personal strength, as well as give a new positive appreciation for life.

EVEN THOUGH THERE HAS BEEN A LOT OF PRESS AND RESEARCH SURROUNDING PTG, IT REMAINS TO BE AN UNDERUTILIZED MODEL OF PROMOTING IMPROVED MENTAL HEALTH.

- ❑ **A SURVEY TAKEN AT WEST POINT MILITARY ACADEMY ASKED A GRADUATING CLASS OF CADETS WHO HAD HEARD OF BOTH POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AND POSTTRAUMATIC GROWTH.**
 - More than 90% knew about PTSG
 - Less than 10% of those same cadets had heard of PTG.

TAKE THE POST TRAUMATIC GROWTH INVENTORY ON THE NEXT PAGE TO SEE WHERE YOU FALL ON THE SCALE OF HOW YOU HAVE DEALT WITH A PAST TRAUMA.

PTG INVENTORY

Indicate for each of the statements below the degree to which this change occurred in your life as a result of the crisis/disaster, using the following scale.

- 0 = I did not experience this change as a result of my crisis.*
- 1 = I experienced this change to a very small degree as a result of my crisis.*
- 2 = I experienced this change to a small degree as a result of my crisis.*
- 3 = I experienced this change to a moderate degree as a result of my crisis.*
- 4 = I experienced this change to a great degree as a result of my crisis.*
- 5 = I experienced this change to a very great degree as a result of my crisis.*

Possible Areas of Growth and Change	0	1	2	3	4	5
1. I changed my priorities about what is important in life.						
2. I have a greater appreciation for the value of my own life.						
3. I developed new interests.						
4. I have a greater feeling of self-reliance.						
5. I have a better understanding of spiritual matters.						
6. I more clearly see that I can count on people in times of trouble.						
7. I established a new path for my life.						
8. I have a greater sense of closeness with others.						
9. I am more willing to express my emotions.						
10. I know better that I can handle difficulties.						
11. I am able to do better things with my life.						
12. I am better able to accept the way things work out.						
13. I can better appreciate each day.						
14. New opportunities are available which wouldn't have been otherwise.						
15. I have more compassion for others.						
16. I put more effort into my relationships.						
17. I am more likely to try to change things which need changing.						
18. I have a stronger religious faith.						
19. I discovered that I'm stronger than I thought I was.						
20. I learned a great deal about how wonderful people are.						
21. I better accept needing others.						

When you're done, add up your scores

Relating to Others		Factor I: 6 + 8 + 9 + 15 + 16 + 20 + 21:	_____ out of 35
New Possibilities		Factor II: 3 + 7 + 11 + 14 + 17:	_____ out of 25
Personal Strength		Factor III: 4 + 10 + 12 + 19:	_____ out of 20
Spiritual Change		Factor IV: 5	_____ out of 5
Appreciation of Life		Factor V: 1+2+13:	_____ out of 15
Total Score:			_____ out of 105

HOW DO WE BUILD PTG?

If you notice from the PTGI, there are 5 factors that someone who is said to endure a more PTG foundation score higher in. If we can build up these factors, we will start to become more resilient to hardship and trauma:

- RELATING TO OTHERS**
- NEW POSSIBILITIES**
- PERSONAL STRENGTH**
- SPIRITUAL CHANGE**
- APPRECIATION OF LIFE**

This is very similar to Dr. Seligman's model of Flourishing (or the theory of Well-Being), which says in order to Flourish, we need to enhance our:

POSITIVE - EMOTIONS - ENGAGEMENT - RELATIONSHIPS - MEANING - ACHIEVEMENT
(P.E.R.M.A)

So it seems as if we were to make the decision to not fall down the rabbit hole of where we allow our thoughts take us about the tragedy that we have seen, and will continue to see as long as we are servants to the community, we need to figure out to be more positive about how we live our lives.

IT'S HARD. I KNOW!

But it's also really simple... I know.

Here are some ways to build up PTG:

- JOURNALING**
 - **UTILIZE THE "WHAT WENT WELL" MODEL**
 - **PRACTICE DAILY GRATITUDE**
- POSITIVE REFRAMING**
- REVISITING YOUR "WHY"**

- CULTIVATE A *GROWTH MINDSET***

GROWTH MINDSET

The model of learning spotlighted by Stanford Professor of Psychology and one of the leading experts in the field of Motivation, Dr. Carol Dweck, published her book shining a light into how to create better learners, encourage challenge, and create resilience.

MINDSET

NOT ONLY THE BOOK'S TITLE... BUT ALSO THE FOUNDATIONAL COMPONENT OF SUCCESS.

A STUDY FOLLOWING A PAIR OF IDENTICAL TWINS ASKED WHY ONE WAS AN ALCOHOLIC, AND ONE WASN'T.

Twin Drunk Danny stated that he “grew up around a father who was an alcoholic. Alcohol was always present in the house, and therefore it was inevitable.”

What do you think Twin Sober Samuel said?

...That he “grew up around a father who was an alcoholic. Alcohol was always present in the house, and he knew what not to do to be successful.”

When it comes to Mindset, we say that one twin had a Fixed Mindset—leaving no room for improvement due to concrete beliefs in ability, talent, and choice; whereas the other twin displayed the concept of Growth Mindset—learning from the past, and improving for the future...

... BUT WE KNOW THAT IT'S NOT ABOUT THE OUTCOME RIGHT...

IT'S ABOUT THE PROCESS.

Focusing on the process is essential to fostering a Growth Mindset. Primarily because it determines what we give praise to.

If we praise an **OUTCOME**:

WE END THE CHALLENGE TO GROW.

If we praise **EFFORT**:

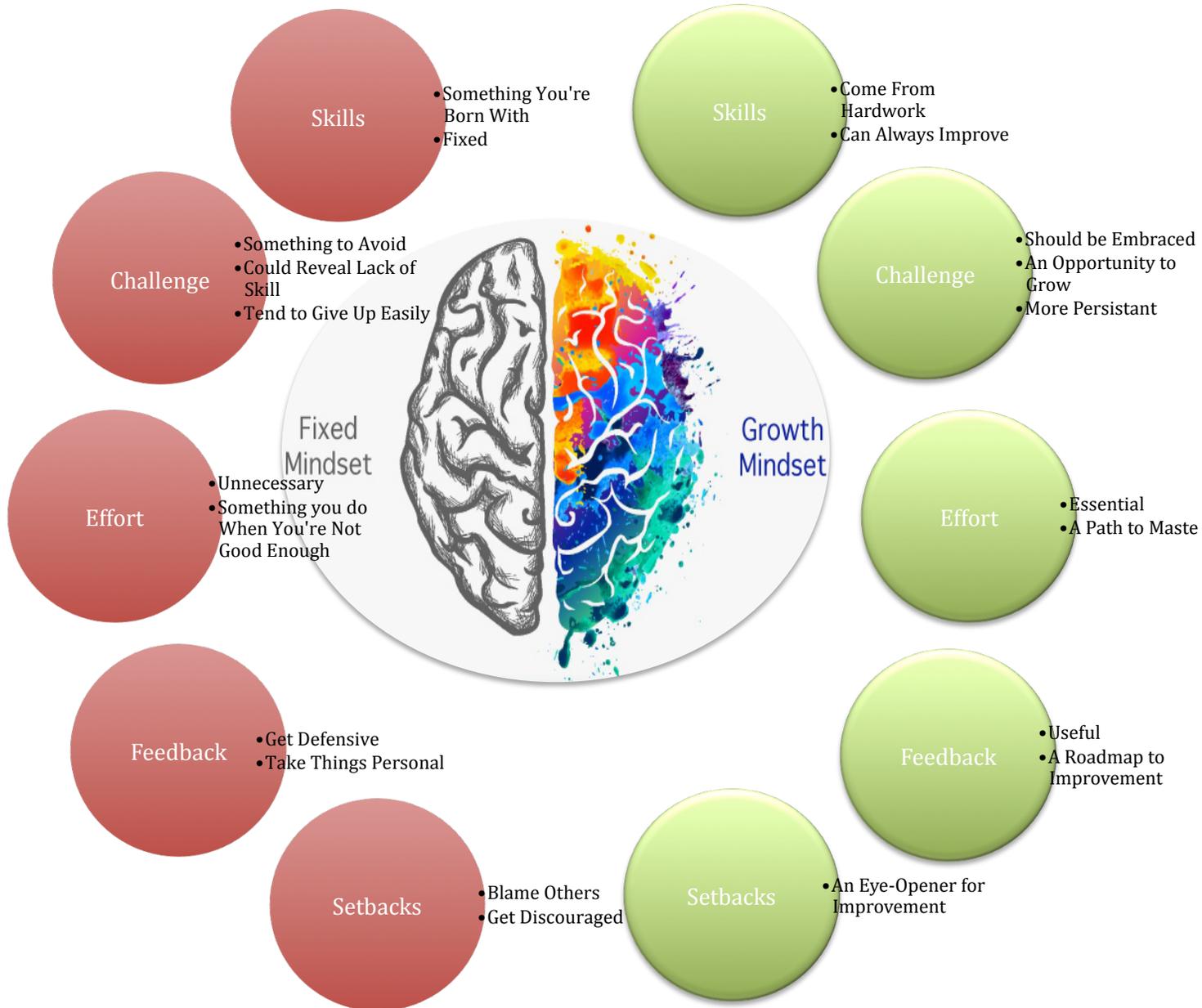
WE CREATE CHALLENGE TO IMPROVE.

EXAMPLE: Pauline Hit 8 For 10 Today At The Free throw Line. You Say To Her, “Great Job, You Really Are A Phenomenal Player.”

This is how we normally speak, so you may not see anything wrong with this. But what if Pauline goes out next week, and hits 4 for 16. Then the next week 1 for 5...? What does this do to her confidence of being a phenomenal player? What if we got into our time machine and instead praised her effort?

“GREAT JOB TODAY! ALL THAT FOCUS YOU’VE BEEN PUTTING INTO YOUR TECHNIQUE REALLY SHOWED UP AT CLUTCH MOMENTS TODAY.”

GROWTH MINDSET



GROWTH MINDSET

THERE ARE COLLEGE COURSES DEDICATED TO LEARNING THE FOUNDATIONS OF MINDSET, SO TO FAST TRACK YOU ON HOW TO DEVELOP A GROWTH MINDSET, TAKE NOTE OF THE TIPS BELOW AND SEE HOW MANY YOU'RE WILLING TO INCORPORATE INTO YOUR LIFE STARTING TODAY:

- Acknowledge** your areas needing improvement.
- Embrace challenge, and view them as opportunity.
- Begin to incorporate “**learning**” into your vocabulary instead of “**failing.**”
- Work from your intrinsic motivation. You don't need other's praise or approval.
- Enjoy the process. If you **focus on the process**, the outcome will come.
- Embrace your “**Why?**” What is the purpose of your actions?
- Be proud of your growth, and celebrate it when you can.
- Stress **Process** over speed.
- Reward the action, not accomplishment.
- Welcome critiques, and learn from them.
- There is NO FAILURE. Only attempts to succeed next time.
- Awareness.** Constantly check in with yourself.
- Understand that the outcome may not look the way you imagined it, and be ok with that.
- “**Yet**”
- Most likely, other people have been down this road. Learn from other people's lessons...
- There is always a higher peak... figuratively. Keep setting goals to continue moving forward
- Lose the ego. Don't worry about how you look in front of others, while you're working to become better.
- Use proper **Goal Setting**, to encourage success.
- Take accountability for your actions. Own the process of success!

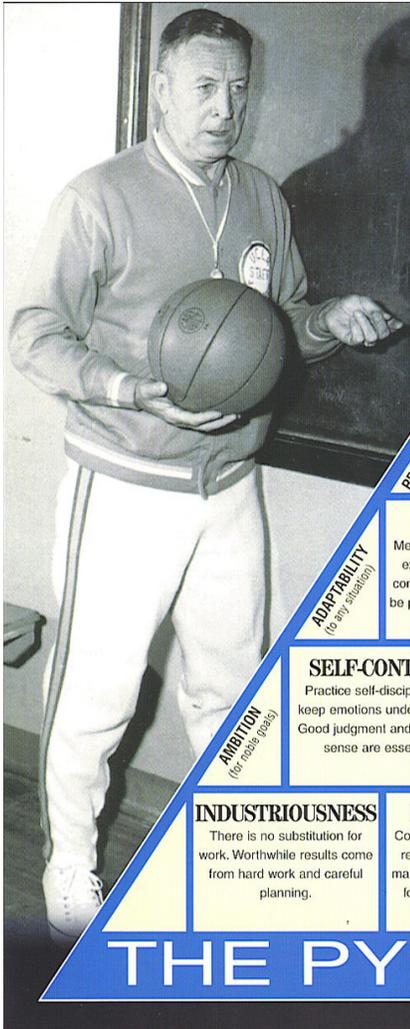
THE BIGGER PICTURE

As you can see, we've actually covered a lot of the knowledge that you need to become more resilient in your personal and professional lives. The reason we hold so much weight on ourselves during times of *perceived failure*, is because we sometimes hold an image of what success should look like, and often don't understand the what it takes to get there.

Often we lose sight of the bigger picture, and our points of reference are misconstrued from what our role actually is in the mission.

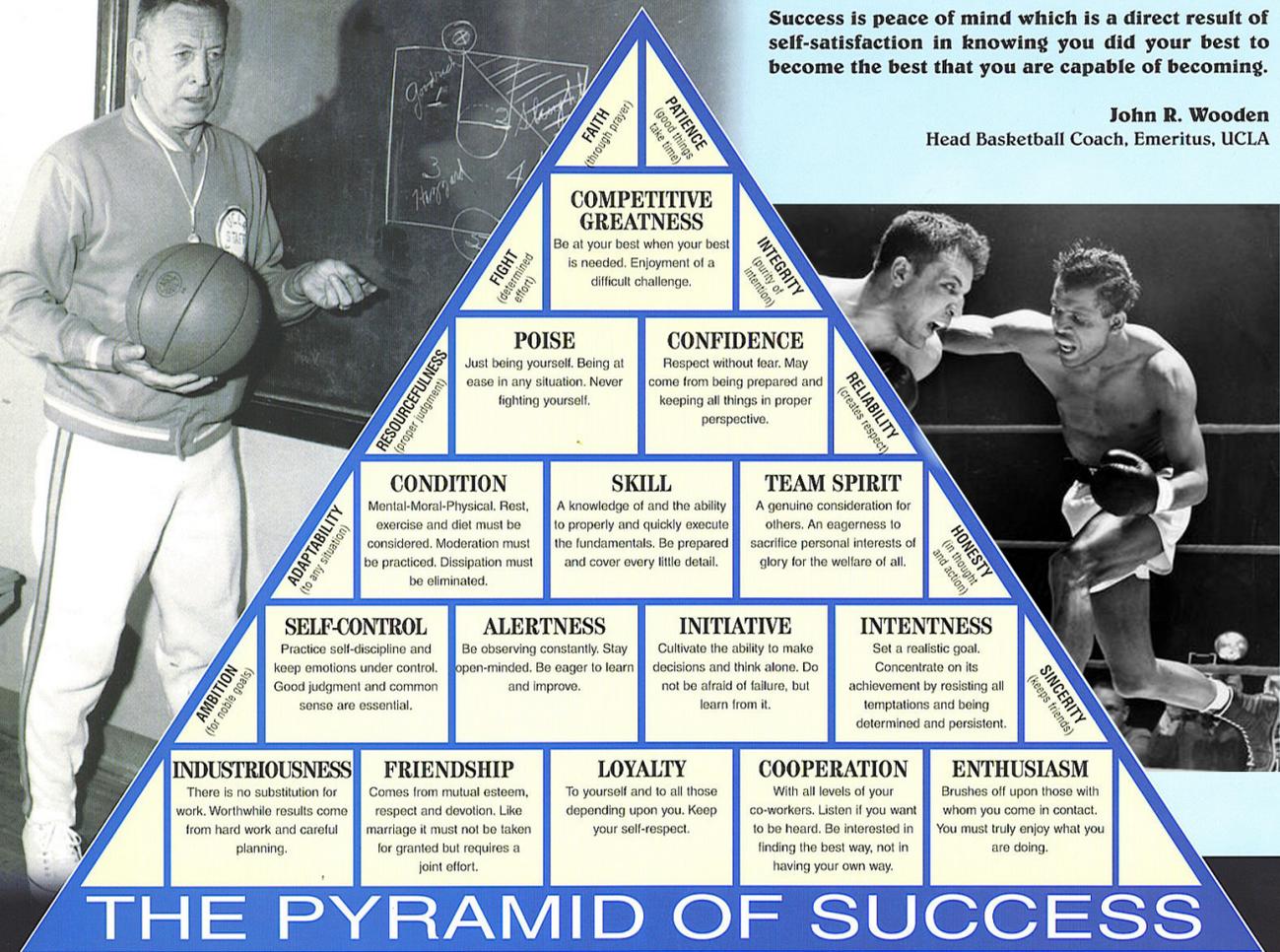
For instance; What is the ultimate goal of a little league coach? Is it to create a winning team? Sure... but only if the foundations of teamwork, integrity, hard work, effort, focus, and the structural foundations of baseball have been taught. A little league coach's BIG PICTURE should actually be to get the players ready for the next level, as well as incorporate lessons that help the athletes become better students, members of society, and children in the home.

Our role in life is to positively affect the world in some way, so that all we've worked to accomplish, doesn't die with us... but that's only my opinion. What's yours?



Success is peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming.

John R. Wooden
Head Basketball Coach, Emeritus, UCLA



THE PYRAMID OF SUCCESS

THE NEXT STEP

F.I.R.S.T has been full of a ton of knowledge that you may or may not have known, or already been practicing. There are a lot of techniques and activities throughout this course that you can incorporate into your daily lives, and I hope that you have already started to!

Some **KEY** points to really drive home is that:

You don't have to do any of this by yourself! You have a team of people who can empathize and relate to most if not all of what you're going through!

Challenge yourself to be *more* better today, than you were yesterday; and plan on how to be *more* better tomorrow than you are today! It doesn't take much... **TRUST THE PROCESS!**

How will you help create a better life in your home? In your profession? In your community? How will you help **FLOURISH?**

Practice! Practice! **PRACTICE!**

I know what happens after courses like this. You're all motivated for the time being... want to hug, kiss, and dance with each other—and then you get back into your old ways of how it used to be. Change that right now!

- FILL YOUR ADDRESS BOOKS WITH THIS MASTERMIND GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS
- CREATE AN ACCOUNTABILITY ROSTER
- CREATE A CLASS FACEBOOK PAGE
- TAP INTO EACH OTHER ONCE A MONTH... A QUARTER... A YEAR.

Everyone in here is cheering you on to succeed in life; whatever that may look like to you!

TEACH! There's no better way to learn, than to teach somebody else. And don't worry if this is too weird to you now, know this... all this information is going to be common knowledge soon. Mindfulness is on the rise, and it is being incorporated everywhere. Consider yourselves on the leading edge of improving performance, based on the only thing you can rely on... Yourself!

NEVER FORGET... CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES!

You can't control anyone else's actions or reactions. Be attentive to your processes, and be clear on your actions.

INCORPORATE YOUR F.I.R.S.T. TRAINING, INTO YOUR FIELD TRAINING.

In order to benefit from this type of training, it is imperative that you work to make it second nature.

If anything... **IF ANYTHING**... Make sure you leave here more **AWARE** of your processing strategies! The better you can acknowledge what you're experiencing in real time, the more control you have over your next move.

RESOURCES

1st Alliance

<http://1alliance.org/>

California Peer Support Network

(619) 667-1447

<http://www.californiapeersupport.org>

Peer support for 1st Responders

Copline (Law Enforcement Only)

1-800-267-5463

<http://www.copline.org/>

A Confidential Helpline for US law enforcement.

Crisis Text Line

Text “Start” or “Help” to 741-741

<https://www.crisistextline.org/>

Text Based Counselor

Fire/EMS Helpline

1-888-731-3473

<https://www.nvfc.org/fireems-helpline/>

Help line | Text based help service | Resources

First Responder Support Network

(415) 721-9789

<http://www.frsn.org/>

Frontline Helpline

1-866-676-7500

<https://frontlinerehab.com/helpline/>

24/7 First Responder Call-Takers.

Kristin Brooks Hopeline

1-800-442-4673

<https://www.imalive.org/>

National hotline for people suffering from mental health issues.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-8255

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

NVFC Volunteer Firefighter Support Fund

1-888-ASK-NVFC (275-6832)

<https://www.nvfc.org/>

Responder Life

877-516-6688

<https://responderlife.org/first-responder-resources/>

Church Rest Stop | Marriage Mentoring and Seminars | Peer Mentoring

Reviving Responders

<http://www.revivingresponders.com/needhelpnow/>

Safe Call Now

1-206-459-3020

<https://www.safecallnow.org/>

24/7 Help Line staffed by first responders for first responders and their family members

StartYourRecovery.org

For those suffering with substance use issues as well as family, friends, & co-workers

Suicide.org

List of local help lines for all 50 states

Suicide Prevention Resource Center

1 (800) 273 TALK (8255)

<https://www.sprc.org/settings/first-responders>

The Code Green Campaign

<http://codegreencampaign.org/>

206-459-3020

Raising Mental Health Awareness | Providing Education for Self-Care

Veterans Crisis Line (Veterans only)

1-800-273-8255 & press 1; or text 838255

F.I.R.S.T

FIRST RESPONDER INTERACTIVE RESILIENCE & MENTAL STRENGTH TRAINING

Appendix C: *6-Month Follow-up Email*

Dear (Student),

6 months ago we were getting to know a lot about ourselves as it pertains to how we think, behave, and what drives us to be better personally and professionally? I hope the F.I.R.S.T program added value to your lives... period. I hope it added value to you professionally, and I hope it added value to you personally. I hope you were able to take *one thing* from the course, and use it to alter something you were doing in the past, or even become more aware of something you want to change about yourselves.

Remember... a lot of the work you put into yourselves during that week together, is more insight than most people ever get about their underlying truths and values, and I hope that was beneficial to you.

I hope that you remain open to a lot of the skills and techniques, and I hope this email gets you to flip through your workbooks to give yourself a quick refresher on all the work you went through to be here today!

As always, if you have any questions on content, or want clarification of skills or techniques introduced... If you have questions on how to best incorporate the skills into your units, or into your personal life... If you're experiencing stress or trauma, and you're looking for an ear to speak to... Please feel free to reach out to us—or even those you connected with in the cohort.

Remember:
It Takes a Village

Respectfully,
Robert Graves
LIVE@CoachGraves.com
(310) 756-5986

For the 6-month follow up, please complete the following and send the information back to me.

Your assistance allows for me to track strengths and weaknesses of the course, in order to improve it for the generations behind you!

F.I.R.S.T

FIRST RESPONDER INTERACTIVE RESILIENCE & MENTAL STRENGTH TRAINING

Self-Reported Test (Remember, all data is confidential)

[The Life Values Inventory](#)

[Hospital Anxiety and Depression \(HADS\)](#)

[The VIA Survey of Character Strengths](#)

[GRIT](#)

[The Hardiness Test](#)

[COPE](#)

[The Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist](#)

[Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test \(AUDIT\)](#)

[Social Support Questionnaire](#)

6 Month Check-in:

1. How often would you say you use a technique you learned from F.I.R.S.T? (highlight or circle)
Every day Often Sometimes Rarely Never

2. If you're using skills from F.I.R.S.T, which skills are you using?

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

3. Which skills would you use more if you understood them more? (if any)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

4. Outside of skills, what information do you feel you have taken from F.I.R.S.T, and have incorporated it best into your life?

5. Is there anything from F.I.R.S.T, that does not work?

6. At this point, 6 months out, what would make this course better for you personally, today?

7. Are you a better person today, than when we first met? (highlight or circle)

Yes No Maybe
Yes. But Not Because of F.I.R.S.T No. But Not Because of F.I.R.S.T

F.I.R.S.T

FIRST RESPONDER INTERACTIVE RESILIENCE & MENTAL STRENGTH TRAINING

Appendix D: *12-Month Follow-up Email*

Dear (Student),

Can you believe it's been a year?

I wanted to shoot you a quick email following up with you at the 12 month mark since our time together during the F.I.R.S.T program. This email is obviously sent by design of the course, but I want you to know that the email is also genuine with the message, reach out to me if you need to.

If you have any questions on content, or want clarification of skills or techniques introduced.... If you have questions on how to best incorporate the skills into your units, or into your personal life... If you're experiencing stress or trauma, and you're looking for an ear to speak to... Please feel free to reach out to us—or even those you connected with in the cohort.

I hope that you remain open to a lot of the skills and techniques, and I hope this email gets you to flip through your workbooks to give yourself a quick refresher on all the work you went through to be here today!

Remember:
It Takes a Village

Respectfully,
Robert Graves
LIVE@CoachGraves.com
(310) 756-5986

For the 12-month follow up, please complete the following and send the information back to me.

Your assistance allows for me to track strengths and weaknesses of the course, in order to improve it for the generations behind you!

F.I.R.S.T

FIRST RESPONDER INTERACTIVE RESILIENCE & MENTAL STRENGTH TRAINING

Self-Reported Test **(Remember, all data is confidential)**

[The Life Values Inventory](#)

[Hospital Anxiety and Depression \(HADS\)](#)

[The VIA Survey of Character Strengths](#)

[GRIT](#)

[The Hardiness Test](#)

[COPE](#)

[The Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist](#)

[Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test \(AUDIT\)](#)

[Social Support Questionnaire](#)

(Survey on the next page)

F.I.R.S.T

FIRST RESPONDER INTERACTIVE RESILIENCE & MENTAL STRENGTH TRAINING

12 Month Check-in:

1. How often would you say you use a technique you learned from F.I.R.S.T? (highlight or circle)

Every day

Often

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

2. If you're using skills from F.I.R.S.T, which skills are you using?

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

3. Which skills would you use more if you understood them more? (if any)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

4. Outside of skills, what information do you feel you have taken from F.I.R.S.T, and have incorporated it best into your life?

5. Is there anything from F.I.R.S.T, that does not work?

6. At this point, 12 months out, what would make this course better for you personally, today?

7. Are you a better person today, than when we first met? (highlight or circle)

Yes

No

Maybe

Yes. But Not Because of F.I.R.S.T

No. But Not Because of F.I.R.S.T

F.I.R.S.T

FIRST RESPONDER INTERACTIVE RESILIENCE & MENTAL STRENGTH TRAINING

Appendix E: *After Action Report*

After Action Report

These reports are confidential. But if you would like to talk about what you've written please leave me your information! All feedback is good feedback!

- I would like to remain confidential
(You Do Not have to fill in your information below)
- I would like to have a conversation about how to improve this course
- I would simply like to have a conversation

Name:

Best Way to Contact Me:

This has been an interesting week! But wait... there's more! As we learned over the week... there's always room for improvement, and F.I.R.S.T needs your help to improve. Below are some questions that will give us a little insight on how you believe this course went. Be as blunt as necessary, be as creative as necessary, but no matter how you respond... be as honest as necessary!

2. Prior to coming to the course, what did you know about F.I.R.S.T?

3. Looking back prior to coming to the course, would it have benefited you to know more about the course?

F.I.R.S.T

FIRST RESPONDER INTERACTIVE RESILIENCE & MENTAL STRENGTH TRAINING

4. Outside of the initial email, is there a way that we could've better prepared you for the Day 1?

5. Reflecting on Day 1, how efficient were we breaking down the barriers and getting everyone involved? Explain.

6. Reflecting on Day 1, how efficient were we explaining why this course is valuable?
