



# OPERATIONAL RESILIENCE TRAINING



# Stress Reaction Scale

	OPTIMAL READINESS	READY	REACTING	STRAINED	COMBAT INEFFECTIVE
MOOD	Balanced Calm Grateful	Mostly balanced Composed Content	Occasionally irritable Uneasy Dissatisfied	Frequently irritable Anxious Distressed	Emotionally unstable Panicked Hopelessness
COGNITION	Clear focus Manages complexity Excellent understanding	Attentive Handles complexity Good understanding	Sometimes distracted Adequate capacity Fair understanding	Often distracted Limited capacity Poor understanding	Confused Overwhelmed Unable to comprehend
SLEEP	Excellent sleep quality Fully rested Peaceful sleep	Good sleep quality Mostly rested Occasional bad dreams	Fair sleep quality Partially rested Frequent bad dreams	Poor sleep quality Barely rested Recurrent nightmares	Terrible sleep quality Not rested Nightmares dominate
PHYSICAL	Fully charged Peak condition No health issues No pain	Energetic Ready Minor health complaints Mild pain	Tired Reduced readiness Moderate health complaints Bothersome pain	Drained Low readiness Frequent health complaints Disruptive pain	Exhausted No readiness Severe health issues Incapacitating pain
CONNECTIONS	Strongly supported Feeling understood Deep trust in close others No loneliness	Generally supported Mostly understood Trust in close others Minimal loneliness	Occasionally supported Sometimes understood Partial trust in close others Some loneliness	Rarely supported Seldom understood Limited trust in close others Frequent loneliness	Unsupported Not understood No trust in close others Constant loneliness
BEHAVIOR	Pro-active self-care Excellent care for others Excellent judgement Socially engaged	Good self-care Cares for others Good judgement Socially involved	Adequate self-care Some care for others Fair judgement Occasionally withdrawn	Reduced self-care Little care for others Poor judgement Often withdrawn	No self-care Neglects others Impaired judgement Isolated



# Operational Resilience Skills

OPTIMIZE	MAINTAIN	COUNTERACT	SEEK HELP
<b>SELF CARE</b> <p>Maintain sense of purpose Practice acceptance and gratitude Hone use of mental skills Commit to a healthy lifestyle Maintain and build support networks Practice self-care</p>	<p>Be self-aware and know personal limits Solve problems proactively Apply range of mental skills Use social connections Appreciate others</p>	<p>Use helpful thinking Try <i>progressive muscle relaxation</i> Practice preparation skills (such as <i>deliberate breathing, self-talk, visualization, worry postponement</i>) Practice performance skills (such as <i>pre-action routines, what's important now, control the controllables, grounding</i>) Practice recovery skills (such as <i>5,5,5, distraction by design, active appreciation</i>) Optimize sleep environment; follow routine Reach out to others</p>	<p>Seek immediate assistance from health personnel or other resource Expect recovery</p>
<b>BUDDY CARE</b> <p>Listen actively Encourage goal attainment Inspire team professionalism Integrate newcomers Leverage emotional contagion Cultivate optimism</p>	<p>Listen actively Engage in <i>buddy talk</i> Communicate effectively Appreciate others Encourage mental skills Establish rules of communication</p>	<p>Listen actively Offer support Encourage <i>progressive muscle relaxation</i> Encourage practicing preparation, performance, and recovery skills Monitor for changes Maintain boundary Avoid group think Watch for signs of social isolation</p>	<p>Remove access to lethal means Check-in frequently Refer to professional Escort to care Help unit stabilize Encourage purposeful action in team Practice <i>ICOVER</i></p>

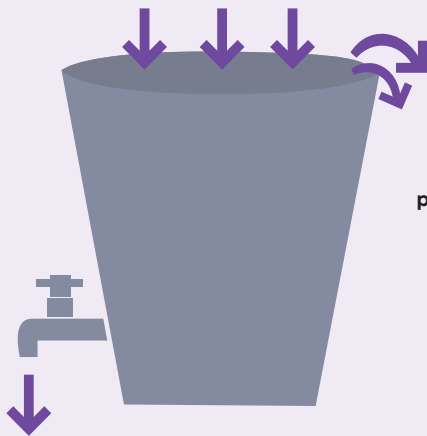
# Compass of Resilience



**STRESS & RESILIENCE**

# The Stress Bucket

**Stress flows into the bucket**



**If the bucket overflows  
problems develop  
("snapping")**

**Good coping = tap working, let the stress out**

**Bad coping = tap not working, so water fills the bucket**

## STRESS & RESILIENCE

# iCOVER

## identify buddy in need

*look for lack of purposeful action, perform blood sweep*

## Connect

*speak, make eye contact, touch*

## Offer commitment

*tell them you are with them*

## Verify facts

*ask 2-3 short, fact-based questions*

## Establish order of events

*tell them: 1) what happened, 2) what is happening, 3) what will happen*

## Request action

*give them a specific, mission-related task*



iCOVER Training Video

# ACUTE STRESS REACTION

# Active Listening

Active listening supports teammates, builds trust, and reduces stress. Practising this skill regularly can strengthen unit cohesion and improve operational readiness.

## RECEIVE

### Be fully attentive:

- Avoid distractions and interruptions
- Maintain eye contact and keep an open posture
- Use minimal prompts ("uh-huh", nodding)



## CONTAIN

### Hold their story:

- Be present without judgment
- Don't rush solutions
- Reflect key feelings clearly

Example:

**Soldier:** "My partner was injured and I'm really stressed"

**Listener:** "Sounds like you're concerned about how they're doing"

## RELEASE

### Let go of stress after listening:

- Mentally release the conversation
- Maintain confidentiality
- Avoid dwelling on others' stress





# Helpful Phrases for Assessment

## Exploring Questions

## Clarifying Questions

## Confirm or Summarize

## Express Concern

### Exploring questions

How have things been going for you recently?

I've heard/noticed..., can you tell me more about what's been going on?

What have you been doing to manage stress?

How do you think you're handling this situation?

### Clarifying questions

Tell me more about that.

What makes you think that?

When did you first notice this?

Is this the first time you've experienced something like this?

### Confirm or summarize

So you are saying...

Do you mean...

It sounds like...

### Express concern (i-statements)

I worry about how the team is doing.

I'm concerned about how much you are snapping at people.

After what happened, I wanted to see how you're doing.

# Mental Status Examination Domains

*Use the following domains to guide your observation during a clinical interview:*

## Appearance and Behavior

*Do they look put together?*

## Mood and Affect

*How do they say they are feeling?*

*What emotional state do you observe that they are in?*

## Motor Activity

*Are they pacing, wringing hands, unable to sit still?*

## Orientation

*Are they able to recognize where they are?*

## Speech

*Do they have any notable aspects to their manner of speech?*

## Thought Process

*Do their thoughts appear organized and follow a logical train of thought?*

# Challenging Unhelpful Thinking

Under stress, soldiers tend to focus on the negative and get stuck in unhelpful thinking patterns. Being aware of these patterns and counteracting them is a key mental health skill.



Common Patterns of Unhelpful Thinking	Example of Unhelpful Thoughts	Example of Helpful Thoughts
<b>Over-generalizing:</b> conclusion based on single piece of evidence	<i>"I am a bad person because I made this mistake"</i>	<i>"I made a mistake and feel guilty, but that does not make me a bad person"</i>
<b>Mind-reading:</b> assuming the thoughts and intentions of others with limited information	<i>"My partner hasn't messaged me back right away so they must not care about what I'm going through"</i>	<i>"My partner might be busy, and there's probably nothing more to it"</i>
<b>Emotional reasoning:</b> using feelings to make conclusions without balance of other information	<i>"I feel incompetent, therefore I must not have what it takes to do this job"</i>	<i>"Everybody feel incompetent sometimes, but I'm doing my best and I'm always focusing on doing better"</i>

## Help Soldiers Under Stress:

- Recognize Unhelpful Thoughts
- Counter Unhelpful Thoughts

# FORWARD MILITARY MENTAL HEALTH

# Problem Solving

*Help soldiers solve problems that add to their stress by coaching them to follow systematic steps.*



Steps	Description
Define problem	Identify what needs fixing
Generate alternatives	Develop as many possible alternatives as you can
Make decisions about what to do	Compare between alternatives and choose the best solution
Implement action	Make plans and carry out the chosen action
Check back in to assess	Assess results and plan a new action alternative if the desired outcome is not achieved

**FORWARD MILITARY MENTAL HEALTH**

# Progressive Muscle Relaxation

## Basic Rules:

1. Focus on muscle groups
2. Work your way through your body
3. Hold tension & then release
4. Pay attention to both sensations



*The script below is an example you can follow or read to someone. Allow time for tensing and releasing of muscles, without straining yourself.*

**Make sure** you are in a comfortable position, either sitting or lying down with legs uncrossed. Bring your focus to your breathing, and take a few slow full breaths.

**Bring your** awareness to your head. Breathe in through your nose, and as you do, tense the muscles in your forehead by arching your eyebrows upward.

**Hold that** for a few seconds and notice what that tension feels like. Release that tension as you breathe out.

**Lift up your shoulders**, trying to touch them to your ears. Hold them there. Now release. Feel their heavy weight as they relax.

**Clench your fists** tightly — hold — and release. Wiggle your fingers and notice how loose they are. Continue to breathe fully and slowly, noticing any feelings of tension leaving your body as every muscle is released.

**Tighten your buttocks** by clenching them — hold — and release. Feel the looseness around your hips.

**Pull your toes up** and towards you, feeling the tension as your calves stretch — hold — release. Curl your toes under, tensing your feet. Hold, and then relax. Feel the weight of your legs sinking down. Take a low and slow breath.

**Do a gentle scan** through your body — feel the heaviness and the feeling of relaxation — breathe.

## FORWARD MILITARY MENTAL HEALTH



## Meaning & Purpose

*Maintaining a sense of meaning and purpose can strengthen resilience and reduce stress during operations. Engage regularly in conversations to reinforce purpose among your teammates.*

### Remembering Purpose:

- Highlight each person's valuable contribution
- Regularly discuss:
  - "What drives you?"
  - "What's important in your life?"
  - "What's meaningful about your military service?"



### Challenges to Personal Values:

*Soldiers may struggle when outcomes conflict with personal values.*

- Acknowledge and validate difficult experiences
- Remind soldiers that war is unpredictable, and adverse outcomes aren't always within their control
- Encourage self-forgiveness and compassion
- Ask reflective questions:
  - "How would you respond if a friend felt the same way?"



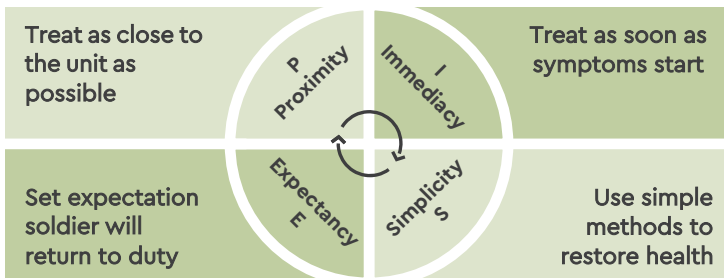
# Treating Combat and Operational Stress Reactions (COSRs)

*To treat soldiers with Combat and Operational Stress Reactions, use the 5 Rs and the PIES principles:*

## 5 Rs

- **Reassurance** that what they are experiencing is normal
- **Rest** as close to the front lines as possible
- **Replenish** with sleep, food, and water
- **Restore** confidence by assigning purposeful activity
- **Return** to duty

## PIES



## FORWARD MILITARY MENTAL HEALTH

# Psychosis

## Signs and Symptoms:

- **Delusions** (unrealistic, bizarre beliefs)
- **Hallucinations** (sensory perceptions unrelated to reality)
- **Disorganized thought** (tangential or unintelligible thoughts)
- **Disorganized behavior** (agitated, disconnected, inappropriate, non-sensical behaviors)
- **Passive and unresponsive** (blunted emotional expression, minimal speech)
- **Paranoia** (suspiciousness)

## Interventions



### 1. Establish safety & observe

Bring soldier to a quiet, safe place  
Observe to ensure they don't harm themselves or others  
Do NOT challenge their beliefs  
Use strategies to reduce symptoms of anxiety  
Minimize ability to act on psychotic symptoms  
Determine suicidal or homicidal risk



### 2. Assess cause of psychosis

Rule out drug use  
Determine and stabilize influence of substance



### 3. Evacuate soldier

Use short-term meds until symptoms lessen if available  
Facilitate evaluation by professional healthcare provider  
Transfer to nearest medical facility

# Suicide Risk Assessment

## Assess:

- Current suicidal thoughts
- A plan for suicide
- Intent to die by suicide
- History of prior suicide attempt(s)
- Protective factors (hopefulness & social connections)

## Considerations:

- Talking with someone about suicide will **NOT** increase the chance of them attempting
- Plans or intent increase risk
- Self-injurious behaviors are not necessarily related to wanting to die, but should still be taken seriously

## Risk Indicators:

- Persistent suicidal thoughts or intrusive thoughts
- Strong intent with plan to act on suicidal ideation
- Recent suicide attempt
- Unit exposed/impacted by suicidal event
- Alcohol as coping strategy



**FORWARD MILITARY MENTAL HEALTH**

# Suicide Interventions

	Low Risk	High Risk
<b>Signs</b>	<p>Occasional thoughts of suicide</p> <p>No intent</p> <p>No plan or rehearsal</p> <p>No history of prior attempts</p>	<p>Frequent suicidal thoughts <i>or</i></p> <p>Strong intent to die <i>or</i></p> <p>Has plan for suicide <i>or</i></p> <p>Recent suicide attempt <i>or</i></p> <p>Unit was exposed to suicide</p>
<b>1. Immediate Safety</b>	<p>Reflective listening</p> <p>Find things that bring hope</p>	<p>Remove access to lethal means</p> <p>Limited duty</p> <p>Frequent check-ins</p> <p>Consider continuous monitoring</p>
<b>2. Provide Counseling</b>	<p>Address ongoing stressors</p> <p>Offer support &amp; reassurance</p> <p>Connect with resources</p> <p>Put into perspective and normalize</p>	<p>Question them about root of ideation without judgement</p> <p>Persuade them to seek professional therapy</p> <p>Refer them to professional</p>
<b>3. Long-Term Safety</b>	<p>Monitor for changes</p> <p>Develop safety plan</p>	<p>Monitor for changes</p> <p>Develop safety plan</p>

## Safety plan

- Note signs of worsening
- Note coping strategies
- Make list of distractions from stressor
- Make list of persons to reach out to for help
- Make list of steps to make environment safe

**FORWARD MILITARY MENTAL HEALTH**



# Sleep: A Guide for Soldiers

## Loss of Sleep = Loss of Performance

Sleep is critical for sustaining the mental abilities you need for success. Even simple tasks such as communicating, driving or plotting grid coordinates can be impaired by inadequate sleep (less than 7–8 hours every 24 hours). For example, Soldiers may correctly site a target – but it may be the wrong target.

Field and deployment operations can create situations where inadequate sleep becomes the norm. Soldiers who don't get enough sleep accumulate a sleep debt that must be paid off. It's mission critical to make sleep a top priority.

### Inadequate sleep impairs these (and other) abilities:

- Detecting and appropriately determining threat levels
- Requesting indirect fire
- Coordinating squad tactics
- Integrating range cards

*Sleep is **critical** for sustaining the mental abilities you need for success in training & on the battlefield.*

## Best Sleep Habits

- Sleep 7–8 hours every 24 hours
- Go caffeine-free 6 hours before sleep
- Finish PT 3 hours before sleep
- Establish a decompression routine 30–60 minutes before sleep
  - Read or listen to relaxing music
  - Avoid electronics 1 hour before sleep
  - Use the bathroom
- Prepare a dark, cool and quiet space. Use earplugs or a fan to block sounds and cover your eyes to block light
- Wake up at the same time every day
- If you practice all of these habits for 2 weeks and continue to have sleep problems, go to your primary care manager

### Signs of Insufficient Sleep

- Struggling to stay awake during breaks, guard duty or driving
- Difficulty understanding or tracking information
- Attention lapses
- Irritability, decreased initiative/motivation

### Overcoming Sleep Distractions

- Use naps to get 7–8 hours of sleep per 24 h
- Only use medications for sleep if your primary care manager determined they are necessary

# SLEEP

# Sleep Under Stressful Conditions: Quick Guide

## The challenge

Being in an environment that is dangerous or tense and being uncertain of what tomorrow brings can cause worries and anxiety that can make it difficult to sleep. Stress can cause difficulty initiating and/or maintaining sleep. Losing sleep when under stress is common.

If you are having feelings of anxiety and you are having trouble sleeping, use this guide to learn about strategies, tips, and techniques to reduce stress and improve your sleep.

## Strategies to combat daytime stress and bedtime worries



- Journal thoughts and feelings of that day and of the future.
- Make a list of reminders of tasks needed to be accomplished the next day to have some level of control and get it out of your head.
- Try these relaxation techniques: Focused attention, progressive muscle relaxation and self-guided imagery.

## Tips to improve sleep when possible

If you are in an environment where you have situational control, use the tips below to help improve your sleep. If not, prioritize the relaxation techniques to address stress and anxiety when trying to sleep. If sleep problems persist, especially when the threat or stressful event is over, discuss with your medical care provider.



- Optimize what you can control in your sleep environment (e.g., cooler temperatures or the use of earplugs or eye masks for stimulus control).



- Add elements from your bedtime routine to help signal your body to prepare for sleep.



- Limit screen time near bedtime as light can disrupt sleep.



- If you are worrying and can't shut off your thoughts and/or you have trouble falling asleep for more than 15 min remove yourself from your sleeping environment and return when you feel tired again.



- To prepare for anticipated future sleep loss or to be able to better process an upcoming stressful time, bank sleep by sleeping more than the recommended 7+ hrs.



- During the day if you can, exercise regularly, avoid caffeine before bedtime, reduce use of alcohol and nicotine, and maximize daylight exposure.



- Sleep when you can. Use a tactical nap to achieve the recommended sleep amount of 7+ hrs per 24 hrs to help sustain performance during continuous operations.

## SLEEP

# Relaxation Techniques for Sleep Improvement

## Focused attention exercise

*Try this breathing exercise to steady the mind and prepare for sleep:*

- Breathe in and out, feeling the belly rise and fall with each breath.
- Count each breath cycle from 7 to 1...
  - Inhale 7... Exhale 7...
  - Inhale 6... Exhale 6...
- Continue counting your breaths from 7 to 1.
- If you lose count or get distracted, start again at 7.
- Repeat this practice 3–5 times.

## Progressive muscle relaxation

*Try this technique that involves tensing and relaxing one muscle at a time to release bodily tension, manage mental stress, and improve sleep:*

- Tense the left leg and foot... then release.
- Tense the right leg and foot... then release.
- Tense both legs and hold... then release.
- Tense the left arm and hand ... then release.
- Tense the right arm and hand... then release.
- Tense both arms and hold... then release.
- Tense the muscles of the face... then release.
- Tense the entire body and hold... then release.

For advanced practice: inhale while tensing and exhale when releasing.



## Self-guided imagery

*If circumstances allow, try this self-guided imagery technique to induce calmness and feelings of being at ease:*

- Bring to mind a place where you feel grounded and at ease.
- It can be an imaginary place or somewhere you've been to before.
  - Include all your senses as you create this relaxing imagery
  - Build the sights and sounds that are relaxing
  - Imagine the smells and tastes that invite a sense of calm
- This place you have created can be there for you to return to each time you are getting ready to sleep.

# SLEEP

# Assessment of Substance Use Disorder

## Impaired control

- Using for longer periods of time than intended, or using larger amounts than intended
- Wanting to reduce use, yet being unsuccessful doing so
- Spending excessive time getting/using/recovering from the drug use
- Cravings that are so intense it is difficult to think about anything else

## Social impairment

- Continue to use despite problems with work, school or family/social obligations
- Continues substance use despite having interpersonal problems because of the substance use
- Important and meaningful social and recreational activities may be given up or reduced because of substance use

## Risky use

- Failure to refrain from using the substance despite the harm it causes
- Repeatedly uses substances in physically dangerous situations, like using while operating machinery or driving a car
- Continued use even though use is causing or worsening physical and psychological problems

## Pharmacological indicators: tolerance and withdrawal

- Physical tolerance and withdrawal

**Mild SUD**  
**2-3 Criteria**

**Moderate SUD**  
**4-5 Criteria**

**Severe SUD**  
**6+ Criteria**

## ALCOHOL & SUBSTANCE USE

# Mental Skills for Managing Human Remains

*Handling human remains might be highly stressful. Using targeted mental skills before, during, and after the task enhances resilience and preserves dignity.*

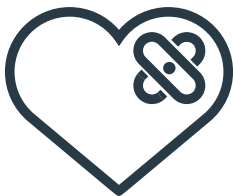
BEFORE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Get the G2</i> – Gather information</li> <li>▪ <i>Set the Stage</i> – Prepare your team for likely sensory experiences</li> <li>▪ <i>Remember the Big Picture</i> – Remember task purpose and importance</li> <li>▪ <i>Refresh</i> – Quickly review mental skills</li> <li>▪ <i>Balance Your Outlook</i> – Respect remains, maintain psychological distance</li> </ul>	
DURING	<p><b><u>Exposure control</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Set clear exposure limits</li> <li>❖ Cover remains; minimize hands, face &amp; item interaction</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Attention control</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Focus intentionally on the task</li> <li>❖ Guide yourself with self-talk</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Activation control</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Monitor activation levels (Cooper's colors)</li> <li>❖ Ground yourself physically</li> <li>❖ Use respectful humor if helpful</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Sustainment</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Hydrate, eat, maintain hygiene</li> <li>❖ Prioritize rest and sleep</li> <li>❖ Pace yourself, take regular breaks</li> <li>❖ Check on teammates</li> </ul>
AFTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Close-Out</i> – Symbolically mark task completion; briefly reflect</li> <li>▪ <i>Frame</i> – Recognize your team's contribution</li> <li>▪ <i>Connect</i> – Maintain mutual support</li> <li>▪ <i>Accept</i> – Allow intrusive memories to fade naturally</li> <li>▪ <i>Telling Your Story</i> – Strategically share brief or detailed experiences</li> </ul>	

## HUMAN REMAINS



# How to Talk to Someone Grieving

- **Provide the facts:** If you are able, provide facts about circumstances of the loss
- **Active listening:** Be present in the moment and listen to the grieving person
- **Normalize:** Without downplaying the loss, tell the grieving person their reactions are normal and understandable
- **Use the name:** Don't be afraid of using the deceased's actual name
- **Tolerate:** Be open to listening to the emotional pain of the grieving person, you do not have to "fix" them
- **Maintain your boundary:** Their loss is not necessarily your loss; you can be effective without absorbing their grief



# Operational Resilience Skills

## Preparation

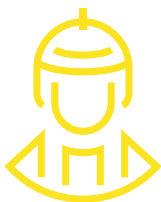
- Deliberate breathing (long form)
- Visualization
- Self-talk
- Buddy talk
- Worry postponement
- Pre-action routines

## Performance

- Cue words
- Deliberate breathing (short form)
- What's important now
- Control the controllables
- Grounding

## Recovery

- Distancing: 5, 5, 5 technique
- Distraction by design
- Active appreciation



## OPERATIONAL STRESS CONTROL

# Deliberate Breathing – Short Form

## Why

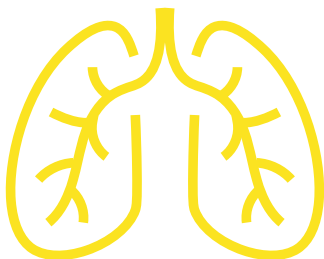
A few deliberate breaths can help regulate nervous system activation either *up* or *down*

## What

Focus on taking 1–2 quick inhales to *increase* activation, or 1–2 slow exhales to *decrease* activation

## How

- Take a tactical pause
- Take 1–2 deliberate breaths, focusing on either the inhale or the exhale, depending on the task
- Execute task



**OPERATIONAL STRESS CONTROL**

# Deliberate Breathing – Long Form

## Why

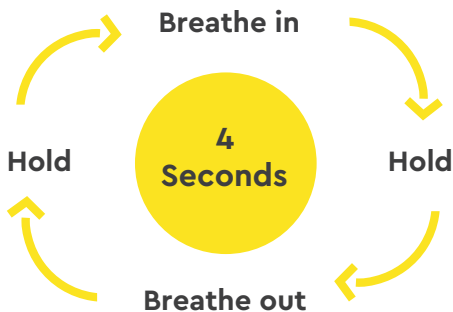
Slow breathing helps the body change into rest mode, reduce stress, and restore balance

## What

Taking slow, deep belly-breaths

## How

- Take slow, deep breaths using your abdomen
- Count to 4 while breathing in, hold for 4 seconds
- Count to 4 while breathing out, hold for 4 seconds
- Repeat the exercise for 1–2 minutes, or longer if needed



**OPERATIONAL STRESS CONTROL**

# Visualization

## What is it?

- Deliberate formation of mental images

## Why does it help with performance and anxiety?

- Enables practice
- Execution becomes efficient

## Elements of visualization

- Take a breath and relax
- Use multiple senses and bodily sensations
- Don't fast-forward, go through each step
- Visualize successful performance
- If you lose focus, accept it and try to return to the task
- Stick to a concrete task

## Examples

- Putting on a tourniquet
- Performing iCOVER



# OPERATIONAL STRESS CONTROL

## Self-talk

### What

Coaching yourself

### How

- Use motivational words or phrases that will increase confidence
- Talk yourself through a procedure for task completion

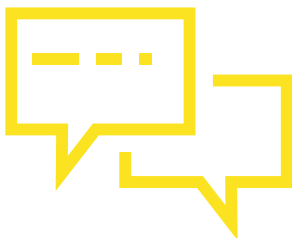
## Buddy-talk

### What

Coaching your buddy

### How

- **Motivational:**  
*"You've got this"*
- **Instructional:**  
*"Massive bleeding, Airways, Respiration, Circulation, Head injury/  
Hypothermia" (MARCH)*



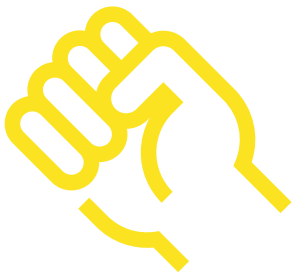
## Worry Postponement

- Set aside 10 minutes a day to worry  
(Not before bed!)
- During worry time, focus completely on worrying
- The rest of the day, when you feel like worrying, remind yourself:  
  
*"Now is not the time. It's scheduled for later!"*
- If you have no worries that day, skip worry time



## Pre-action Routines    Cue Words

- Using routine actions to get into "go mode"
  - A few physical actions can help get you into the zone
  - Examples:
    - re-tighten the straps on your vest before moving out
    - press check your weapon
- "Stay frosty"
  - "Breathe"
  - "Dig deep"
  - "Let's go"
  - "Let's do this"





# What's Important Now

## What

Focusing attention on mission-critical tasks and prioritizing doing it

## How

Ask yourself: *"What's Important Now?"*

**W • I • N •**  
**What's  
Important  
Now?**

**OPERATIONAL STRESS CONTROL**

# Putting Things in Perspective

## Control the Controllables

5, 5, 5

### What

Quickly moving attention away from things that cannot be changed

### How

Ask yourself,  
"can I change it?"

### What

Maintain perspective on hassles

### How

Ask yourself,  
"how will this event affect my future in:"

- 5 weeks?
- 5 months?
- 5 years?



## OPERATIONAL STRESS CONTROL

# Grounding

## What

Bringing attention back to the present moment

## How

Identify 3 things you:

See	Hear	Feel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ A fellow soldier</li><li>■ A weapon</li><li>■ A helmet</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Someone talking</li><li>■ An engine running</li><li>■ Artillery firing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The weapon in my hands</li><li>■ The shirt on my back</li><li>■ My toes in my boots</li></ul>



**OPERATIONAL STRESS CONTROL**

## Distraction By Design

### Auditory

- Identify sounds in the environment
- Switch focus between them every 10 seconds

### Arithmetic

- Count backwards from 1000 by 4s
- Add or multiply numbers together

### Architect

- Build your dream house in your mind
- Imagine as many details as possible



$1,000 > 996 > 992 > 988$   
 $1+2=3+4=7+8=15$   
 $4*1=4; 4*2=8; 4*3=12$



## OPERATIONAL STRESS CONTROL

# Active Appreciation

## What

- Focus your attention on the good things that are happening
- Find the small moments in everyday life

## When

- Daily, on-going
- When you have time to reflect

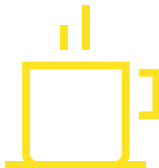
## How

**Step 1:** Identify things that have happened that you appreciate

**Step 2:** Notice 3 good things that happened

**Step 3:** Spend a moment reflecting on each

- Ask yourself what it means to you
- Identify ways you can generate more of this experience



# How to Prevent Groupthink

## Unit members

- Take turns playing "devil's advocate"
  - Thinking critically
  - Punching holes in the plan
  - Offering opposing points of view
- Have everyone say something critical
- Discuss with someone you trust outside the group to get an unbiased view

## Leaders (formal and informal)

- State preference last
- Assign people tasks of skeptic: make them responsible
- Set up small groups to work on a specific task at the same time to get different points of view



## COHESION

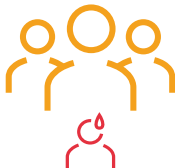
# How to Prevent Social Isolation

## Indirect action

- Check in with a buddy
- Keep an eye out for them
- Create opportunities to have everyone feel included
- Provide a role for every soldier
- Mention concern to informal or formal unit leaders

## Direct action

- Check in with them
- Ask questions
- Invite them to share meals
- Personally invite them to social events
- Task with specific role
- Follow-up (not one and done)
- Offer assistance



**COHESION**



## Norwegian Armed Forces Joint Medical Services

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 2. Stress Reaction Scale                          | 20. Relaxation Techniques           |
| 3. Operational Resilience Skills                  | 21. Substance Use Disorder          |
| 4. Compass of Resilience                          | 22. Managing Human Remains          |
| 5. The Stress Bucket                              | 23. Talk to Someone Grieving        |
| 6. iCOVER   | 24. Operational Stress Control      |
| 7. Active Listening                               | 25. Deliberate Breathing - Short    |
| 8. Helpful Phrases for Assessment                 | 26. Deliberate Breathing - Long     |
| 9. Mental Status Examination Domains              | 27. Visualization                   |
| 10. Challenging Unhelpful Thinking                | 28. Self-talk / Buddy-talk          |
| 11. Problem Solving                               | 29. Worry Postponement              |
| 12. Progressive Muscle Relaxation                 | 30. Pre-action Routines / Cue Words |
| 13. Meaning & Purpose                             | 31. What's Important Now            |
| 14. Treating COSRs                                | 32. Putting Things in Perspective   |
| 15. Psychosis                                     | 33. Grounding                       |
| 16. Suicide Risk Assessment                       | 34. Distraction By Design           |
| 17. Suicide Interventions                         | 35. Active Appreciation             |
| 18. Sleep: A Guide for Soldiers                   | 36. Groupthink                      |
| 19. Sleep Under Stressful Conditions: Quick Guide | 37. Social Isolation                |

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