



ARMY RESILIENCE COMMUNITYLINK

SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH
SPECIAL EDITION

THE ARMY RESILIENCE DIRECTORATE NEWSLETTER | AUGUST 2022

Understanding trauma reactions is the first step to healing. (U.S. Army photo by Pvt. Adeline Witherspoon, 20th Public Affairs Detachment)

Hope & Healing: Understanding the Impacts of Trauma on the Road to Recovery

By Antonieta Rico, Army Resilience Directorate

Trauma affects the brain, body, and mind in ways people may not understand. This can include self-isolating, finding it hard to bond with people—even a spouse or kids—being constantly angry, thinking people can't be trusted, or feeling guilt and shame.

"I wouldn't talk to anybody, I cut off all my friends ... it was hard to have emotional connection with people," said Mojisola Edu, a former Army specialist who was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder due to Military Sexual Trauma. "I didn't feel like I deserved to be loved, I felt like most of the things that happened with me were my fault, I blamed myself for a lot of things."

Reactions to trauma vary, but regardless of how long people have had PTSD symptoms, healing is possible.

In-the-Moment Reactions to Trauma

Part of starting on the road to healing includes understanding the reactions people have at the moment of trauma. The brain's reactions to traumatic events—like fight, flight, freeze—are not within the conscious control of people, as their body's survival mechanism takes over to keep them alive. This can include running away during a firefight or freezing if they experience a sexual assault.

Emotional reactions—like fear, helplessness, or anger—may also occur, although there can also be no emotional reaction—such as numbness or dissociation—said Dr. Abigail Angkaw, a consultant with the National Center for PTSD and clinical psychologist who works with veterans with PTSD in the San Diego, California, VA system.

No reaction at all is normal, especially if it is dangerous to process the trauma in

the moment, such as in the middle of a firefight, said Angkaw. Bodily reactions, such as tunnel vision, increased heartbeat, or bladder urgency, are also normal, as the body is preparing itself to fight.

In the case of sexual assault, bodily reactions such as arousal, erection, and ejaculation during the assault are also outside the person's conscious control. A person's body can involuntarily respond to physical stimuli—that does not mean the person wanted the assault.

"We often will work in therapy on helping to separate those (bodily) reactions from a sexual assault that happened without your freely given consent—those are independent (of each other)," Angkaw said.

Long-Term Responses to Trauma

In the weeks, months, and years after a traumatic event, symptoms can evolve into constant intrusive thoughts, unwanted memories, nightmares, flashbacks, hypervigilance, shifts in thinking such as believing you no longer have control in your life, and avoidance.

"Avoidance is really a hallmark (reaction) after a trauma," Angkaw said. "If somebody experienced a traumatic event it's really common for them to avoid both their thoughts and their memories about it."

"People who avoid the most are more likely to have PTSD—and some people get really good at avoiding—avoiding public places, going out at night, places that feel unsafe or anything that might remind them (of the trauma)," Angkaw said.

For sexual trauma, people may experience sexual dysfunction and confusion about their identity—especially straight people who were assaulted by

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DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Team,

The Army remains committed to the prevention of harmful behaviors, including sexual assault, suicide, domestic violence, child abuse, substance misuse, and all forms of harassment.

One major action to prevent these harmful behaviors – before they occur – is the on-going rollout of Integrated Prevention Advisory Groups, or I-PAGs. I-PAGs will include new, dedicated positions for primary prevention and will work with commanders to formally integrate primary prevention across the range of harmful behaviors. We're presently implementing I-PAG Phase 1 across five Army installations: Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Riley, Kansas; Fort Sill, Oklahoma; Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; and Camp Humphreys, South Korea. We will continue to expand I-PAGs across the entire Army, including the Army Reserve and the Army National Guard, with the intent of reaching full operational capability by FY27.

These professionals examine and synthesize relevant data at an installation to provide recommendations to commanders on installation-specific risk and protective factors, and develop and support the implementation of focused prevention activities. This will enable the Army to get ahead of negative behaviors before they occur, take care of Soldiers, and create healthy, positive climates that foster mission success. Additional policy changes to better take care of Soldiers are underway. On July 6, the Army implemented the safe-to-report policy in Army Directive 2022-10. This policy aims

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New Army Initiatives Combat Harmful Behaviors

By U.S. Army Public Affairs

WASHINGTON — The Army has implemented two new initiatives to further remove the barriers on combating harmful behaviors and sustain positive command climates. The Safe-to-Report policy safeguards sexual assault victims from disciplinary action for minor collateral misconduct that might be in time, place, or circumstance associated with the sexual assault incident. The Office of Special Trial Counsel is an independent prosecution office that will be dedicated to the investigation, referral, and trial-level litigation and prosecution of covered offenses such as murder, rape, and child abuse.

SAFE-TO-REPORT

This policy, directed by the National Defense

Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021, applies to all Service members who are victims of sexual assault, including cadets at the United States Military Academy, regardless to whom the victim reports the sexual assault, and regardless of whether the investigation or prosecution is handled by military or civilian authorities.

Studies have shown that victims consider the possibility of disciplinary action against them to be a significant barrier to sexual assault reporting within the military.

To read the full article visit https://www.army.mil/article/258422/army_establishes_two_new_initiatives_to_combat_harmful_behaviors

RHC-C Selects SARC, Victim Advocate of the Year

By Karla Gonzalez, Regional Health Command-Central

Regional Health Command-Central recognized their top Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, or SARC, during a ceremony on June 28, 2022. The ceremony was part of the Region's Sexual Harassment and Assault Response Prevention Program summit held at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Roger Davidson, from William Beaumont Army Medical Center, Fort Bliss, Texas, was named the RHC-C Exceptional SARC of the Year for 2022. Staff Sgt. Pamela Davis, from Evans Army Community Hospital on Fort Carson, Colorado, was named the 2022 Exceptional Victim Advocate. To read the full article visit <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/424377/rhc-c-selects-sarc-victim-advocate-year>



Brig. Gen. E. Darrin Cox, RHC-C commanding general, awards the Army Commendation Medal to Staff Sgt. Pamela Davis, from Evans Army Community Hospital, Fort Carson, Colo., who earned RHC-C Exceptional Victim Advocate of the Year. (Courtesy photo)

Army SHARP Academy Recognizes SARC/VA Career Course Participants During Graduation Ceremony

Fort Leavenworth, Kan. – The Army SHARP Academy graduated 34 students from the SARC/Victim Advocate Career Course at the end of spring. During each course graduation ceremony, individuals are recognized by the academy staff and their peers for their exceptional performance. Mr. Gregg Buehler, Chief of Academic Operations, Ms. Becki Restrepo, Career Course Manager, and Col. Michael Jeffries, Command Chaplain, Combined Arms Center, personally acknowledged each of the Class 22-005 recipients. Awardees included Staff Sgt. Russell Robinsky, Fort Riley, Kansas, Staff Sgt. Brittany Hernandez, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and Sgt. 1st Class Kathryn Litherland, Camp Afrikan, Kuwait.



Front Row: Staff Sgt. Russell Robinsky, Staff Sgt. Brittany Hernandez, Sgt. 1st Class Kathryn Litherland. Back Row: Ms. Becki Restrepo, Col. Michael Jeffries, Mr. Gregg Buehler. (Photo courtesy of SHARP Academy)

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The Bounce Back—Cultivating Emotional Resilience to Heal After an Injury

By Maj. Kimberly Brutsche, Command and General Staff College, Student

Physical resilience is an essential part of Soldier readiness. Healthy behaviors like sleep, diet, and exercise provide [self-confidence and the ability to overcome challenging situations in life](#). However, despite preventative measures, there is always a potential risk of physical injury. A 2020 study for [Military Medicine stated that noncombat musculoskeletal injuries might account for nearly 60% of Soldiers' limited duty days, and more than half of all active-duty Soldiers sustained at least one injury in 2017](#).

When you are injured, professionals will often

prescribe a plan to help you physically recover. But this is only half of the equation. Recovery from physical injury is not always as simple as easing back into one's old routine – the proverbial “bounce back.” In some cases, you may never return to your pre-injury condition, and your state of fitness is temporarily or permanently changed. What happens when an injury makes you no longer feel as “fit” as you once were? This may have negative effects on your self-esteem or confidence.

Recovering from an injury is as much a journey in

emotional resilience as it is in physical. This is no coincidence, given the [positive psychological benefits of a healthy lifestyle](#). Luckily, the roadmap to emotional healing resembles the steps you may see in a physical recovery plan. If an injury or other circumstances have affected your strength or endurance, and thus how you feel in a fitness-minded community like the Army, consider the steps and supplemental questions below to help you “bounce back.” Your body may not return to what you once were, but your mind will be strengthened to recover, reset, and move forward.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF WHEN RECOVERING FROM INJURY

Identify the Source of Injury

Ask yourself: **1.** What emotionally drains me during my recovery? **2.** Do I feel inadequate? **3.** Am I frustrated I cannot do things I enjoy?

De-Compress

Ask yourself: **1.** What factors are putting pressure on me? Are they self-inflicted or coming from others? **2.** Is there a pattern for when I feel tense? **3.** What activities help calm my mind and reduce negative thoughts?

Rest

Ask yourself: **1.** How many hours of sleep do I get a night? **2.** Do I feel mentally and physically drained during the day? **3.** What factors affect my ability to get a full night's rest?

Keep it Cool

Ask yourself: **1.** When do I feel most frustrated during this recovery? **2.** How do I respond when I am frustrated? **3.** What strategies help me cope or return to a sense of calm?

Little Things can Prevent Future Injuries

Ask yourself: **1.** What little things am I doing daily to maintain my confidence? **2.** Do I wait until I feel bad before I engage in self-care? **3.** What have I done today that makes me feel good about myself?

Embrace Setbacks as Normal

Ask yourself: **1.** How do I respond when I feel like progress is stalled? **2.** Am I placing unrealistic expectations on myself? **3.** Who can I talk to that can keep me motivated?

Ask for Help

Ask yourself: **1.** Who can help me understand what I am feeling? **2.** Who do I trust in my inner circle to support me when I am having a difficult time? **3.** What is stopping me from seeking professional help?



Cadets Use R2 Skills to Conquer Cadet Summer Training

By Tara Davis, Army Resilience Directorate

Cadet Summer Training, or CST, helps to prepare the U.S. Army's future leaders to take on tomorrow's challenges. It is the largest annual training event in the Army, welcoming 10,000-15,000 cadets to Fort Knox, Kentucky, from around the country.

This milestone event is often the first Army immersive training many Reserve Officers' Training Corps cadets will experience. Training in marksmanship, first aid, etc., builds important skills they will need throughout their career. However, cadets also learn important lessons in resilience that can impact their personal and professional lives. Priya Ford, Master Resilience Trainer-Performance Expert at the Fort Knox, Kentucky, R2 Performance Center coached cadets on how to perform at their best during

CST by teaching them resilience techniques.

“(We help) reframe their thoughts, or shift them, so they can have more productive thoughts so that they can actually attempt and be successful at the task ... our mission is just being on the ground with them, providing them those mental skills and techniques so that they can be successful right there on the spot,” Ford explained. Reframing thoughts teaches them to avoid jumping to conclusions about certain events or to change their thinking when they believe they can't perform an event.

MRT-PEs, like Ford, can also help cadets navigate any anxiety that might inhibit their ability to perform.

Ford shares that her favorite technique to teach

at CST is “self-talk” because of its ability to be applied to multiple situations. Self-talk is your internal dialogue and can be negative or positive. Positive self-talk can help cadets feel optimistic and motivated to perform tasks and can increase overall confidence.

“Self-talk is so universal ... it's really important to be aware of your thoughts as a cadet such as when you're about to go down the rappel tower. It's important to be aware of your thoughts when you have downtime like how you are speaking to yourself. It's important to be aware of your thoughts just in general, like as a student when they go back to school. I mean all the time I think self-awareness about your thoughts is just so crucial to just being a well-functioning and effective human.”

SPM

STORIES OF HOPE

**SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH
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September is Suicide Prevention Month. The Army remains dedicated to preventing suicide among Soldiers, DA Civilians, and Family members. This special feature tells the stories of suicide prevention advocates and survivors, shares the latest news in Army suicide prevention awareness, and provides access to materials and resources.

Erasing the Stigma: Addiction is Not a Character Flaw

By Shirley Tien, Army Resilience Directorate

There are many misconceptions about addiction and who it impacts. However, addiction can happen to anyone. It is a disease that can be treated and it does not define who you are. Addiction is not a choice. According to Dr. Yngvild Olsen, director for the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in Rockville, Maryland, "People often do not fully understand the risk factors for the disease, including that about 50% of that risk is genetic." This means there are genes that could be passed down from family members which increase a person's risk for substance abuse. It can also start out as drinking socially with your battle buddies to unwind or taking prescription drugs to get better sleep after a long day of training. Your brain can get used to these substances which require more of them to have the same effect. Before you know it, you may feel like you can't function without it.

Relapse is not a weakness. Seeking treatment after years of not having any substance use is common and does not reflect an individual's willpower or desire to get better. It is important for friends and Family to show support in an effective manner. Dr. Steven Ramos, a military Veteran and assistant clinical director at American Addiction Center's River Oak Treatment Center in Riverview, Florida, suggests avoiding critical comments such as "... oh, you're going to rehab again?" Instead, say something like "You're going to rehab, and this could be the time you win, this could be the time you get healthy."

Recovery is possible. There is no one treatment plan that works for everyone. There are options that vary from behavioral therapy and rehabilitation programs to counseling. The Army Substance Abuse Program at <https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/ASAP> has informative resources for Soldiers and Family members. "Often, hope gets lost in the midst of addiction, but there are a lot of people who are ready to help," said Olsen. You can overcome addiction, it's a matter of finding what works for you. Remember, addiction can happen to anyone. Don't let the stigma deter you from seeking help. "I would encourage the patients to understand that this disease does not indicate their worth as a human being," Ramos said.

Sierra Depot Staff 'Purple Up' for Suicide Prevention

By Rebecca Durocher, LCSW



The Sierra Army Depot located at the U.S. Army's Center for Industrial Technical Excellence, California, dedicated the month of June to a campaign entitled Purple Up in recognition of the Department of Defense's suicide prevention awareness efforts. This initiative encouraged employees to make connections and build a supportive community.

Every day in June, employees were encouraged to wear purple to bring awareness to the observation. Participants were encouraged to share suicide prevention information and resources including Ask, Care, Escort and the new 988 hotline phone number. The depot also hosted a suicide prevention luncheon with keynote speaker Lt. Col. Amy Cory.

By Antwaun J. Parrish, Army Resilience Directorate



ARLINGTON, Va. – The Army continues to focus on suicide prevention by developing a podcast series aimed to increase understanding of the factors that lead to suicide and the importance of seeking help.

The Stories of Hope podcast was created to inform key audiences on the Army's efforts to address suicides by increasing awareness and emphasizing prevention efforts.

"We're building resilient, cohesive teams with engaged leaders who foster a culture of trust and intervention," said Dr. James Helis, Director, Army Resilience Directorate. "The Army uses a multidisciplinary, holistic approach that includes awareness, research, and clinical/non-clinical initiatives. A collaborative community response that focuses on enhancing connections is critical to reducing harmful behaviors and suicide."

The podcast series will address suicide through the interviewees sharing their first-hand experiences of dealing with mental health challenges, suicidal thoughts, and their journey to healing.

[READ MORE](#)

'Green Company' Promotes Healthy Climate, Reduces Harmful Behaviors at Fort Hood

By Antwaun J. Parrish, Army Resilience Directorate

The 13th Expeditionary Sustainment Command, Fort Hood, Texas, has implemented an initiative that is leading the way in how the unit receives its Soldiers in an effort to ensure they are better prepared to support the mission.

Green Company is an initiative started by 13th ESC, and is a three-week program, for Soldiers in the ranks of E1-O5 that receives, integrates, trains and provides Soldiers the opportunity to meet with the unit leadership before they enter the formation.

"We receive the Soldiers after they complete processing through the Fort Hood reception battalion," said Capt. Stephen Bracken, Green Company commander. "The name Green Company derives from the fact the Soldiers are new or 'green' when first arriving to 13th ESC, and that they are green and ready to go when they leave the company."

Another benefit of the Green Company is the fact that it provides Soldiers with time to get settled at Fort Hood.

"We want to make sure they are finished house hunting, their pay is settled, Family (is) settled, and make sure they are aware of the services provided at Fort Hood," said Bracken. "It's important when they leave the Green Company they understand the climate and culture of the organization and they are ready to work as a member of our team and our Family."

Visit <https://www.army.mil/article/258392> to read the full article.

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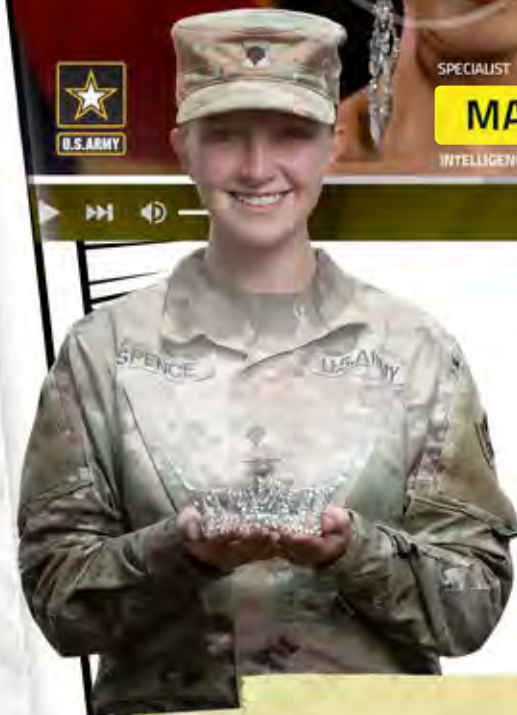
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2021 Miss Colorado Makes Suicide Prevention her Mission

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OqyvZ_QYsOo



ARD Webinar Guest Conveys Importance of Effective Communication and Listening

By Lytaria Walker, Army Resilience Directorate

During the July webinar, Sgt. Maj. Thomas E. Campbell talked about how the idea of listening is underused, but most valuable. He debunked death by suicide myths, offered ways to intervene and how to stay engaged once you intervene.

Campbell emphasized that sometimes there are some injuries you just can't see, and that it's ok to ask for help. He stressed the importance of leaders knowing their Soldiers and reinforced the idea that talking about difficult subjects can positively affect lives.

"Shut up and listen. Don't make it about you. You own the problem until it's not the other person's problem any longer," Campbell said.

Campbell candidly chronicled his struggles with suicidal ideation, anger, guilt, shame, and recovery.

"Leaders have to be able to tell their stories," Campbell said. When Soldiers see leaders open up, they too can feel comfortable engaging and seeking help. He left participants with three important tips:

- 1) Be open and available.
- 2) Be transparent.
- 3) Be honest.

Remember, you cannot take care of your Soldiers if you haven't taken care of yourself, he said. He ended with the idea that small acts make a huge impact.

Every month ARD hosts an Outreach Webinar to facilitate professional development and discussion. Join ARD next month for the August webinar on ethics. To find out more about ARD's monthly webinar series, visit the ARD website at <https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/ard/webinar.html>.

Basic Connections: Fostering Basic Trainees' Resilience Through Social Connectedness

By Antonio Best and Richard Gonzales, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research

To help trainees overcome myriad personal and professional challenges they may experience during Basic Combat Training, instructors are teaching trainees a Basic Connections lesson, developed in coordination with the Center for Initial Military Training, the CIMT Command Chaplain, and the Army Resilience Directorate.

Basic Connections was created to provide education and actionable skills that help trainees leverage emotional intelligence, social connectedness, and spirituality when coping with failure—such as a failed relationship or failing to achieve a personal objective.

Taught by chaplains or chaplain assistants, trainees learn skills like "Recognize It, Name It, Explain It." This skill, developed specifically for the Basic Connections lesson, enables Soldiers to be aware of, regulate, and manage their emotions by recognizing their response to circumstances. Trainees then name the specific emotion they are feeling. They receive a "feelings wheel" handout to help them put feelings into words with a high degree of accuracy and specificity that leads to less reactivity and less vulnerability to mental health issues. Finally, trainees (internally) explain the circumstance with a narrative meant to inspire a successful outcome and which may help to avoid degraded performance, anxiety, or even feelings of loneliness, isolation, and despair.

Trainees also learn the difference between isolation and loneliness, two emotions common in Basic Training. They are provided the opportunity to consider how they can create circles of connection in Basic Training to meet the level of need they have while distanced from their normal support systems. They may not initially view their Drill Sergeant, Chain of Command, Battle Buddy, Chaplain, or Army resources as part of their inner circle; however, many of them will find that some or all of these are critical during this time. For those trainees that have difficulty initiating connection, prompt questions are provided to help build confidence and make it easier to start dialogue. Another skill taught, "My Council," is intended to build spiritual health. The skill is not religious in nature but can incorporate religion if the Soldier considers that a source of strength. "My Council" connects to the spiritual core as trainees visualize inviting their eternal self, their higher power, and people from their inner circle to provide them with meaning and purpose as a foundation for the motivation and effort to be successful in Basic Training and life.

Currently, the lesson is approved for use at all four of the Basic Combat Training/One Station Unit Training (BCT/OSUT) training centers. However, WRAIR is validating the effectiveness of the training in a two-phase program evaluation. Phase 1, which is ongoing, consists of conducting interviews with chaplains who have conducted the training to inform revisions prior to the main evaluation in Phase 2. The second phase will begin in FY 2023 and will include chaplains and Performance Experts conducting the training.

Editor's Note: Material has been reviewed by the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. There is no objection to its presentation and/or publication. The opinions or assertions contained herein are the private views of the author, and should not be construed as official, or as reflecting true views of the Department of the Army or the Department of Defense.

ARD Joins Forces with Military Basketball Association

Sgt. Maj. Sharita Onugha, Senior Enlisted Advisor, U.S. Army Resilience Directorate, and Sgt. Maj. Thomas Campbell, Operations Sergeant Major for the U.S. Army Center for Initial Military Training, attended the Military Basketball Association's Hall of Fame Ceremony and Final Four tournament in Denver, Colo. The MBA organizes and hosts events to bring awareness to the behavioral health challenges veterans face, including suicide prevention and the stigma surrounding Post Traumatic Stress. The association recognized 11 former military athletes as MBA Hall of Fame 2021 inductees and honored them for their years of service and resilience.



Let's Go!!

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New 988 Number for Mental Health Emergencies

By LeWonnice Belcher, Army Resilience Directorate

Effective July 16, 2022, "988" now serves as the new direct dial number for the National Suicide Prevention Helpline. The number is available for use at national, state, and local levels.

The change to the helpline, operated by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, is a result of a Federal Law signed in 2020 and Federal Communication Commission guidance that all telephone service providers in the U.S. activate the number by July 2022.

Deemed the 'new 911 for mental health emergencies,' the new "988" number can be used by the individuals or those looking to assist people who are contemplating suicide or are experiencing other mental health crises. The three-digit number replaces the National Suicide Prevention Helpline's 800-273-8255 phone number currently in use.

The change to "988" also impacts the Veterans Crisis Line (VCL) and Military Crisis Line (MCL), which are operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Historically, currently serving and veteran service members or those trying to support them, were asked to "Press 1" to route their calls to the appropriate call centers. The same still applies with the new number as they must dial "988" then press "1" to connect to a call center responder with training to assist the military/veteran population. When people contact "988", they will be connected to one of the helpline's more than 200 crisis centers where trained counselors are on the receiving end of the call. These trained counselors listen, provide support, and connect callers to resources as necessary. VCL/MCL responders receive training dealing with military culture.

Overseas

Soldiers, Army Civilians, and Family members serving overseas must still contact the Veterans Crisis Line's "800" number. Use of the "800" number, which is based and operated in the United States in partnership with the SAMHSA, may result in international charges, depending upon the caller's location and network provider. Individuals residing overseas may also contact the helpline via chat and request that a responder contact the individual by phone at no cost to the requestor. The following are overseas helpline numbers:

988 MILITARY CRISIS LINE
and press 1

- In Europe, call 00800 1273 8255 or DSN 118.
- In Korea, call 0808 555 118 or DSN 118.
- In Afghanistan, call 00 1 800 273 8255 or DSN 111.
- Text 838255

Numerous studies have shown that callers in crisis felt less suicidal and more hopeful after speaking with a helpline responder, according to the National Suicide Prevention Helpline website.

"Crisis lines are an important component of a comprehensive suicide prevention program and provide a resource to deescalate and respond to emergency needs," said Carrie Shult, the Army's Suicide Prevention Program Manager. "For those who are unsure of how or when to use the crisis line, the Army Resilience Directorate developed Suicide Ideation battle drills <https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/ard/battle-drill.html> that are intended to support the identification of suicide thoughts and plans and how to navigate them." The battle drills cards are for leaders, peers, and Family members.

According to Shult, the new Helpline also provides an opportunity for the United States to rethink the approach to mental health, substance use disorders, and suicide prevention. The "988" helpline is designed to provide a resource that allows those experiencing these types of crises to call for help and get a rapid, consistent, and appropriate response for mental health emergencies.

Editor's Note:

The National Suicide Prevention Helpline call centers are in need of trained staff to address the anticipated surge in calls as a result of the change to "988". If you're interested in volunteering or working as a paid employee, contact samhsa.gov/988-jobs.

There is hope.



**SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH
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Helpful Resources

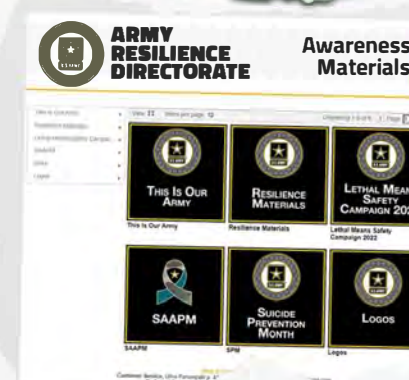


Lethal Means Safety Resources



Together we can take actions to ensure safe storage of lethal means and prevent suicide.

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STEP 2: Select "New Users" to register.

STEP 3: Once inside, select "This is Our Army," then choose Lethal Means Safety Campaign 2022 or Suicide Prevention Month.

ARD Products on Demand:

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Suicide Prevention Month

This year's Suicide Prevention Month materials are now available. Visit our microsite for posters, factsheets, social media posts, and more.

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The Road to Healing From Trauma *HOPE & HEALING Continued from page 1*

someone of the same gender as them. Distorted thinking, such as blaming yourself instead of blaming the perpetrator, is also a symptom of PTSD.

When these symptoms persist after a few months, a person may be diagnosed with PTSD, Angkaw said. Of those people who have ongoing PTSD symptoms, about 80% will also have another mental health issue such as depression, anxiety, and substance misuse, she said.

Hope & Healing

In the immediate aftermath, healing means just taking care of yourself and focusing on getting through the day, said Angkaw. Connecting with people if they find themselves withdrawing is also important, she said.

Angkaw also suggests some of the following steps to help people heal and recover long term.

1. **Learn and understand as much as you can about trauma and PTSD.** Understanding the brain's automatic responses, bodily reactions, and the emotional impact of trauma can help people cope.

"That can help ... to realize that (the reactions) they experienced make sense, that they are not alone," Angkaw said. "That's such an important piece in healing—first understanding."

2. **Seek treatment.** "PTSD is unlikely to improve on its own without treatment," Angkaw said. There are many new treatments, people should give them a try, she said.

"They deserve it and we would hope for them to experience those positive outcomes that we have seen with so many of our patients that we work with here."

3. **If you are not ready to seek treatment.** There are self-help apps available to help cope with PTSD symptoms. The PTSD Coach mobile app is available at the National Center for PTSD [website](#).

People should also try to avoid unhealthy coping mechanisms such as drinking, using substances, or binging on food. Angkaw recommends trying healthier ways to cope like exercising in moderation, taking up a healthy hobby, or talking to loved ones or spiritual or religious leaders.

Edu found yoga and meditation, which she tried during an event hosted by [Challenge Aspen](#), an organization that provides adaptive activities for people with physical or cognitive disabilities, helped her become calm. She now teaches a free trauma-informed yoga class for veterans once a month through the DC Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs.

4. **Family and friends are important.** Loved ones of a person with PTSD should also learn about trauma, it will help them understand some of the behavior their loved one is exhibiting, Angkaw said. Other ways Family and friends can help is by reminding their loved one to take their medication, helping them with their therapy exercises, or supporting them during appointments. Angkaw said it's important they continue to do regular Family activities and encourage their loved one to stay connected to their support network. Angkaw recommends Family members also remember to [take the time for their own self-care](#).

Family is extremely important in encouraging their Soldier to seek help, Angkaw said.

"There are so many veterans and service members I've worked with who say that their primary motivation for seeking help is their Family or their relationships," Angkaw said. "A lot of folks will say 'I'm here for my wife,' or 'I'm here because of my kids,' because they have encouraged them, so that is meaningful and I think that is helpful."

For Edu, healing from trauma is not a 'one and done' situation.

"Healing is an everyday process, it's not something that happens overnight ... every day you're healing, but every step that you take gets you closer and closer to your goal," Edu said.

"For people who are living with PTSD, know that it is not over for you, know that you are not alone," said Edu. "The things that happened to you in your life are not your future. That is not your whole story, there is more to you than just your PTSD. Re-finding that person, and coming home to yourself, is the biggest accomplishment that you can do. Give yourself grace."

For additional resources on understanding trauma and healing, see the National Center for PTSD website: <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/apps/aboutface/>

The book "The Body Keeps the Score," by Dr. Bessel van der Kolk, gives in-depth information on trauma and healing, and is based on his research and work with veterans and trauma patients.

The Army Resilience Directorate website also offers resources on resilience Family members and Soldiers can use to help them cope with daily stressors: <https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/ard/R2-home.html>

Prevention Policy Developments *DIRECTOR'S COLUMN Continued from page 2*

to remove barriers to reporting sexual assault by protecting victims from facing disciplinary action for minor collateral misconduct—such as underage drinking—connected to the incident.

Effective July 15, the Army also stood up the Office of Special Trial Counsel. When OSTC becomes fully operational in December 2023, it will oversee the investigation and make prosecution decisions for select serious crimes formerly under the purview of commanders, such as sexual assault.

Additionally, the Suicide Prevention Regulation is scheduled to publish soon, and a Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention regulation is scheduled for release in October of this year.

I also had the opportunity to speak to many of you about these changes during the Program Improvement Forum, hosted by ARD Aug. 9-10 in Arlington, Virginia, and virtually. I was inspired by the enthusiasm with which our ARD

professionals throughout the Army have embraced these unprecedented changes, knowing that ultimately, we are transforming our Army to better take care of our Soldiers and achieve mission success. I know the entire Army team is fully committed to meeting the challenges ahead.

Thank you for your continued commitment to our Soldiers.

People First, Army Strong!
James A. Helis, Ph.D.

SELF-CARE ROUTINE TO MANAGE STRESS

A self-care routine can help you manage your physical and emotional health, which in turn can help you:

- Strengthen the connection between your body and mind.
- Prevent stress that can be avoided.
- Develop healthy responses to stress.

To learn more about how to sustain your personal readiness, set up a one-on-one session with an MRT-PE at your nearest R2 Performance Center:
<https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/ard/R2/R2-Performance-center.html>





Resilience Spotlight: Sgt. James Sowell Keeps a Positive Outlook

By Jasmine Taylor, Army Resilience Directorate

Sgt. James Sowell III is a self-professed “country boy” at heart who has never met a stranger. His friendly, welcoming demeanor makes him a perfect fit as an instructor and Soldier Family Readiness Group coordinator at Fort Hood, Texas. However, it is his experience as a Master Resilience Trainer which has allowed him to weave together his best qualities and make a remarkable impact during his 14-year career.

“I have the personality, which is a sword. But the sword was dull. MRT training sharpened my sword,” explains Sowell.

Early in his career, Sowell had his personal readiness put to the test while deployed. He was able to utilize the R2 lessons he had learned to build his resilience.

“My mother got really sick, and I was stationed in Turkey, and I was having to make medical decisions for her and being stressed and deployed and away from my mom while she was dying.



Sgt. James Sowell organizes candy collected for a Trunk or Treat Halloween event at Fort Hood, Texas.

I used small skills that I could remember ... It got me through my year and a half away, got me through being away from my sick and dying mother, as well as just handling the stresses of the Army and all that,” Sowell reflected.

Many years later, Sowell was recommended for the Master Resilience Training Course by a superior. The course not only opened his eyes to new skills, but also pushed him to be a better trainer and mentor.

“I incorporate everything from my life (and) other people’s lives that I have experienced (into the MRT lessons), and I put a bow tie on it to make it more interactive and not boring. And when you create that (environment) where it’s not boring you plant more seeds that we can harvest.”

He also believes MRT has given him a more positive mindset. He looks for opportunities to pour back into his community and credits modules like Hunt the Good Stuff, which is the skill to notice and analyze what is good around you.

“If it wasn’t for the MRT training that I received I don’t think my outlook would be as bright. It’s allowed me to keep things in perspective. And it’s made me a better and more approachable leader.”

Camp Zama Employees Build Cultural Empathy at Resilience Workshop

By Erik Moshe, Ready and Resilient

Members of the Department of the Army Civilian and Japanese Master Labor Contractor workforce participated in a 3-day multilingual workforce development workshop at U.S. Army Garrison Japan as part of a larger five-day symposium.

“The exercise allows participants to explore the current core values and value-driven behaviors that are unique to them because of their cultural backgrounds. We explored how these values impact communication in the workplace for both U.S. and Japanese participants, separately and then together. Work culture is the collective values of individuals in that workforce,” Kirill Grinchenko, Master Resilience Trainer–Performance Expert stated.

The USARJ R2 Performance Center identified cultural awareness, assumptions of intention, and lack of self-regulation as primary targets of the workshop. Grinchenko suggested that to improve communication, both the Japanese and

U.S. employees would do well to understand their counterparts’ cultural values, develop cultural empathy, and avoid overly rigid patterns of thinking that result in unmet expectations.

Grinchenko and his team of instructors explored how core values and beliefs can affect people in ways that may be outside of their awareness and addressed how beliefs cause people to have very strong emotions and reactions. They explored how certain activating events such as workplace conflict, arguments, or disagreements may be a result of core values and beliefs coming to the surface, and how some values may clash.

“Understanding how to separate our activating events, thoughts, and emotional consequences gives us more control during those important moments,” Grinchenko said.

This workshop concluded with applying all of the skills as part of an Assertive Communication exercise to help participants stay Clear, Confident,



Employees at Camp Zama, Japan, explored how their values and beliefs impact their connections with others in the workplace during a R2PC training on cultural empathy. (Courtesy photo)

and Controlled during tough conversations. The Three C’s help to resolve issues while strengthening connections.

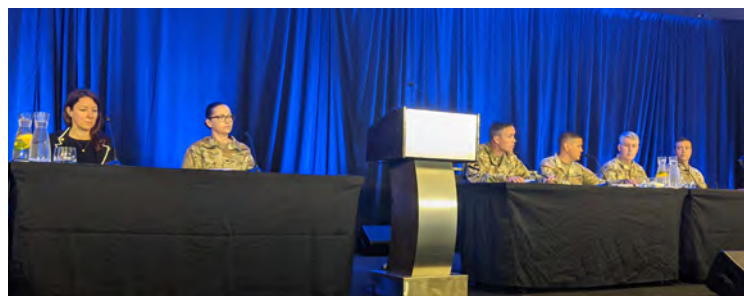
“This workshop helped me be more objective and specific when dealing with an issue, and helped me re-think my patterns of thinking,” a participant said.

Program Improvement Forum Provides Army 'Perspective on Prevention'

By Army Resilience Directorate

ARLINGTON, Va.-- The Army Resilience Directorate hosted its annual Performance Improvement Forum Aug. 9-10, Arlington, Va., and virtually. This year’s theme “Perspective on Prevention” derives from the Army People Strategy—seeking to create a people-focused culture that destroys harmful behaviors and builds cohesive teams across our formations. The two-day conference allowed Army professionals to learn, share, and enhance prevention strategies.

Dr. James Helis, Army Resilience Directorate director, provided opening remarks and spoke on the importance of conducting the PIF. According to Helis, the past interactions of the PIF were almost exclusively a Sexual Harassment/ Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) program event. To read the full article, go to <https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/ard/pdf/PerspectiveonPrevention.pdf>



The PFTF panel at the PIF discussed efforts over the past year to address sexual assault and sexual harassment in the Army in response to recommendations from the FHIRC and guidance from the DoD 90-day IRC. (U.S. Army photo by Jasmine Taylor)



ARMY RESILIENCE

THE ARMY RESILIENCE DIRECTORATE NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2022

HAIL AND FAREWELL

We invite the Army Resilience Directorate community to join us in welcoming new members to ARD headquarters. Congratulations to current members on taking new positions, and a fond farewell to outgoing members departing the Directorate.

Hail

- Lt. Col. (P) Yolanda Gore, Strategy Division Chief
- Ms. Latoya Johnson, Prevention Evaluations Specialist
- Dr. Katherine Schaugency, Prevention Data Scientist
- Dr. Brantley Jarvis, Substance Abuse Prevention Integrator
- Dr. Stephane Hall, Multidisciplinary Prevention Integrator
- Col. Jen Steele, R2I & Training Division Chief
- Maj. Serene Staples, Health Promotion Officer

Farewell

- Dr. John Foubert, Senior Advisor (Prevention)

UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST

Institute on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma (IVAT)

Aug. 28-31: The 27th San Diego International Summit's theme is "Amplifying Voices for Recovery, Resilience, Reconciliation, and Reformation." The summit is a unique forum for professionals across all disciplines and philosophies to gather for in-depth exchange of current information on all facets of violence, abuse and trauma prevention, intervention, and research.

Location: Atlanta, Ga. **Learn more:** <https://www.ivatcenters.org/san-diego-summit>

Fort Bragg Special Victims Summit and SHARP Leadership Forum

Aug. 31: The Summit will take place at the Iron Mike Conference Center and is for all interested Medical, Law Enforcement, Legal, FAP, and Victim Advocacy personnel, as well as SARCS, Behavioral Health Providers, Social Workers, First Responders, and Command Teams. Jill Londagin, Director of the Army SHARP program, will present.

Location: Fort Bragg, N.C. **Learn more:** <https://bragg.armymwr.com/programs/sexual-harassmentassault-response-and-prevention>

SEPTEMBER

CASCOM and Fort Lee SHARP and Resiliency Summit

Sept. 20: The SHARP and Resiliency Summit will bring professionals from across CASCOM and Fort Lee to spend the day focusing on Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention and resiliency issues. ARD will be presenting.

Location: Fort Lee, Va. **Learn more:** <https://home.army.mil/lee/index.php>



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TOP TWEET



Impressions: 2.7K

Army Resilience Directorate

ARD COMMUNITYLINK

August 25, 2022. Volume 6, Issue 4

The ARD Community Link newsletter is an authorized bi-monthly publication produced by the Army Resilience Directorate for the Army community. The contents of the ARD Community Link are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Army. The editorial content of the ARD Community Link is the responsibility of the Communications, Outreach & Leadership Engagement branch at ARD. For questions, or to subscribe or submit articles and photographs to ARD Community Link, please contact the editor at antonietta.rico.ctr@mail.mil. This publication is available for download at: <https://www.dvidshub.net/publication/1102/r2-community-link-newsletter>

Director
Dr. James A. Helis

Sergeant Major
Sgt. Maj. Sharita N. Onugha

Deputy Director
Col. Stephen Howell

Strategy Division Chief
Lt. Col. (P) Yolanda Gore

Director of Communications, Outreach & Leadership Engagement
Ms. LeWonne Belcher

Editor-in-Chief
Ms. Antonietta Rico

Editor
Ms. Jasmine Taylor

Design Editor
Ms. Liz Briones

Army Resilience Directorate
2530 Crystal Drive, 6th Floor
Arlington, VA 22202
www.armyresilience.army.mil

Connect with ARD!

Contact ARD Communications & Outreach at usarmy.pentagon.hqda-dcs-g-1.list.dape-ars-sp@army.mil

@ArmyResilience
www.armyresilience.army.mil

