RECRUIT SUSTAINMENT PROGRAM  
SOLDIER TRAINING READINESS MODULES  
Resilience Training (Red Phase)  
19 January 2012  

SECTION I.  ADMINISTRATIVE DATA  

Lesson Plan Series  
Resilience Training (1 of 3)  

Task(s) Taught  

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<th>Task Number</th>
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Academic Hours  
The academic hours required to teach this lesson are as follows:  

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<td>The Warrior Ethos and Soldier Combat Skills</td>
<td>28 Jan 2008</td>
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<td>FM 4-02.51</td>
<td>Combat Operational Stress Control</td>
<td>06 Jul 2006</td>
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<td>FM 6-22</td>
<td>Army Leadership: Competent, Confident and Agile</td>
<td>12 Oct 2006</td>
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<td>14 Feb 2008</td>
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<td>Walter Reed Army Institute of Research Protocol #1543</td>
<td>Basic Training and Mental Fitness Study: Enhancing Performance and Mental Health</td>
<td>30 Jul 2009</td>
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Student Study Assignments  
None
**Instructor Requirements**

a. 1 Instructor per 35 Soldiers

b. Be familiar with this Training Support Package (TSP)

**Equipment Required**

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**Materials Required**

- **Instructor Materials:**
  a. This Training Support Package (TSP)
  b. Student Handouts #1 - #3

- **Student Materials:**
  a. TR Pam 600-4, Soldier's Blue Book
  b. Other materials as directed by Unit SOP

**Classroom, Training Area, and Range Requirements**

Organizational Classroom

**Instructional Guidance**

**NOTE:** Before presenting this lesson, instructors must thoroughly prepare by studying this lesson and identified reference material.
SECTION II. INTRODUCTION

NOTE: SHOW Slide 1 (STRM)

Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion
Instructor to Student Ratio is: 1:35
Time of Instruction: 5 minutes
Media: Slide Presentation

Motivator

Today we are going to discuss what it means to be resilient and mentally tough. We’re going to talk about the vital Soldier skills you will be learning while at the RSP, during Basic Combat Training (BCT), later during your Advanced Individual Training (AIT) and Professional Military Education (PME). We’re going to talk about achieving optimal performance, to work towards meeting your goals and we’re going to talk about teamwork – the ability to accomplish much more as a member of a team than you can ever accomplish as an individual. Some of you may feel like you don’t need training such as this to remain mentally tough. That may be true, but all Soldiers need resilience and we can all benefit from more training on how to look out for our buddies.

Going through Basic Combat Training (BCT) can be a big adjustment as you transition from your civilian life to being in the military. It can be challenging, it can be tough – it’s designed to be tough. As we’ll be discussing, no matter how difficult or challenging an experience may be there is always the potential for personal growth as an individual and as a Soldier.

Terminal Learning Objective

NOTE: SHOW Slide 2 (Terminal Learning Objective)

NOTE: Inform the students of the following Terminal Learning Objective requirements.

At the completion of this lesson, you [the student] will:

| Action | Discuss resilience, teamwork, buddy aid, and our initial reactions to situations and events |
| Conditions | In a classroom environment given an overview of initial reactions to include thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and physical reactions |
| Standards | Discussing resilience, teamwork and the elements that comprise the way we all react to given situations and events will consist of the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) concepts and the principles contained in The Resilience Factor, 01 Jan 2003 and the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research Protocol #1543, 30 Jul 2009 |

Safety Requirements

Conduct a safety brief prior to training as needed and IAW unit and installation policies.

Risk Assessment Level

Low - Risk Assessment to be produced locally IAW FM 5-19, July 2006.

Evaluation

None

Instructional Lead-In

Introduce yourself and welcome students to this training.

Good morning/afternoon, my name is ____________ and this block of instruction is part of the Army’s Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) program and provides
training in mental fitness and resilience. Mental toughness is just as vitally important as physical toughness and is key to succeeding in the RSP, during Basic Combat Training (BCT), in your military career and the rest of your life.

First of all this training is interactive; in other words, if you participate, you’ll get a lot more out of it and so will your buddies. Please if you find yourself getting drowsy, have the discipline to stand up to the side/in the back. If you see your buddy getting sleepy, wake them up and ask them to stand up. Finally, if you find something amusing about this training it’s OK to laugh.

**NOTE:** It has been found to be beneficial to announce to the Soldiers that, for this training and this training only, if you wish to say something or have a question simply remain in your seat and raise your hand. It’s not necessary to stand. This way the material can be covered at a more fluid pace.
SECTION III. PRESENTATION

1. Learning Step / Activity 1. Resilience and Teamwork
   Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion
   Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:35
   Time of Instruction: 10 mins
   Media: Slide Presentation

NOTE: SHOW Slide 3 (Resilience)

a. Resilience Training for Basic Combat Training (BCT) is the first of many resilience blocks of instruction you will receive during your military career - in the Army’s various schoolhouses, during your leadership training and as part of your military deployments. We’re going to discuss some things you can use here to help you be successful during BCT, your Advanced Individual Training (AIT) and throughout your time in the military. Much of what we’ll be discussing today will apply to everyday life as well. BCT can be challenging but you’ll find that no matter how difficult or challenging an experience may be, there is always the potential for personal growth as an individual and as a Soldier. While you are here, look at every challenge as an opportunity for growth. Let’s begin with what resilience is: resilience is the ability to grow and thrive in the face of challenges and bounce back from adversity. Resilient Soldiers have the inner strength to face the realities of the environment with courage and confidence. These are very powerful words so let’s be sure we know what we’re talking about.

NOTE: Ask students to define courage and confidence. Often participants of this training will mistakenly associate courage with an absence of fear.

(1) What is courage? It’s about facing your fears head-on and taking action, even when you may be afraid.

(2) Confidence. That means believing in yourself, in your equipment and in your leaders.

(3) Resilience also means meeting the many mental challenges of training, operations, combat, and transitioning home. It’s important to remember that even the most resilient Soldiers have challenging moments and everyone can increase their mental toughness.

b. Taking care of your buddies is a common theme throughout this training and you’ll hear it several times today. It’s what’s going to help you get through BCT and get through deployments too. It’s the basis for being successful in the military.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 4 (Purpose of Training)

c. Much of what you’ll experience during BCT is stressful – it’s designed to be so and resilience is the key to being successful there. All of you come from different backgrounds and have experienced different things in your life. One of the goals of this training is to make certain you all have the same fundamental level of information when it comes to resilience and mental fitness. The purpose of this training is to develop resilient Soldiers who:

NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block

(1) Are able to function well under stress; able to sustain resilience in the face of high intensity situations.
NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block

(2) Are able to “bounce back” as required.

NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block

(3) Are able to take care of themselves, their buddies and those they lead.

d. BCT will be a new environment for each of you and at times many of you may be pushed farther than ever before in your life - beyond what you thought you could do. And you will accomplish things that you never thought you could but it’ll require resilience and mental toughness.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 5 (Soldier’s Creed)

e. I know you have seen this creed – you've been saying it every drill. Hopefully it speaks to you as it has spoken to me and speaks to me still. All of it is important but there are a couple of things that deal with resilience and mental fitness; can you highlight them for me?

NOTE: Query students regarding the above question.

NOTE: Left-click mouse to highlight text

(1) Never accept defeat - as long as you have the means to go on – to continue the mission at hand.

(2) Never quit - quitting can get to be a habit, but guess what – so can succeeding!

(3) Never leave a fallen comrade - never leave a buddy behind – does that just mean combat? Does that just mean physically?

(4) Mentally tough…maintain…….yourself - lastly, while you need to be physically tough, you also need to train and develop mental toughness. The fine principles found in The Soldier’s Creed are sound principles to lead the rest of your life.

What are the challenges to your mental toughness? We’re going to talk about stress now.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 6 (What is Stress?)

f. How many of you like roller coasters? How many of you find them stressful?

NOTE: Query students regarding the above questions. Look for diversity of responses. If none are offered, provide examples that some thoroughly enjoy roller coaster rides while others don’t.

Why such different responses? After all, it’s the same event, but is it the same for all of us? How is it some people love roller coasters while in others it evokes thoughts of uneasiness or even terror? Ultimately it’s all about how you perceive situations and events that matters. These perceptions may be based on life experiences or finding yourself “outside of your comfort zone”. People are different and will find different things stressful to them; remember, it’s our perception of a situation or event that determines whether something is stressful to us or not. By the way, is all stress bad?
NOTE: Query students regarding the above questions; pause for responses.

No – there is a misconception that all stress is bad, destructive or needs to be avoided. The truth is, some stress can actually help you improve and perform better. You’re all doing PT to stress your body so that you can improve your performance. Likewise before a big game, that feeling of being pumped up – of adrenalin – helped you get an edge. Can you think of other times in your life when stress might have been beneficial to give you an edge? Can you provide some examples?

NOTE: Query students regarding the above questions; examples such as concerts, sports, public speaking, etc.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 7 (Basic Combat Training Stress)

g. What events and situations have you found stressful since you’ve been here at the RSP?

NOTE: Query students regarding the above question; examples such as lack of sleep, being away from family, Drill Sergeants.

How about having orders “barked” at you for the first time? Do you think there’s a reason for this technique? What are you training for: combat, is that stressful? Do you think that might be part of the reason orders come at you forcefully? Realize that it’s according to a program and a plan. How many of you have experienced stress since you’ve been here? Look around – you all have. Remember, everyone at some point will get stressed. We all have weaknesses – but I want you to know something - your Drill Sergeants expect you to succeed.

h. Once again, when’s one time you have stress on your body? PT - as you apply stress to your bodies, you’ll see improvement. It’s the same thing with mental challenges. As your Drill Sergeant challenges you, as you challenge yourselves, as you challenge each other - you’ll become much stronger mentally. As we discussed, resilience is the key to success here and you’ll find that the things that cause you stress today won’t later on. It's a system that works. What happens in the first drill you’re each going to look back and think, “that wasn't so tough after all.” What you really have to get you through this, BCT, AIT and military deployments is each other. What are some of the methods you used at home to help you deal with stressful situations?

NOTE: Query students regarding the above questions; examples such as listening to music, petting a dog, going for long walks/drives, smoking and/or drinking, etc.

The main point is that some of the stress coping skills you used at home are not available to you during BCT. At the moment, the biggest adjustment you are making is the transition from your civilian life to life in the military. New Soldiers arrive at BCT with different levels of independence (some may have only lived with their family, others are quite independent). Some of you have been through tough times. Some of you may have been born into circumstances that required you to develop resilience early in life. For some of you, such challenges are brand new and a big adjustment. But all of you have encountered stressful situations and events before this time. It’s important to support each other during these new experiences and we’ll teach you some strategies that will help you become more resilient.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 8 (Why is Teamwork Important?)
i. Why is teamwork so important?

(1) You are going to have to put in a great deal of individual effort to be successful during BCT. You'll learn to be physically fit, technically proficient and tactically aware — all desirable individual Soldier skills. But the Army has always been about being a part of a team, be it your squad or platoon. Being part of a team helps units get the job done and complete the mission.

(2) You’ve probably already learned that you will need to rely on your battle buddies as much as they’ll need to rely on you. If not, it will soon be obvious to all of you that by working together and supporting one another, you can achieve a lot more than working as an individual. You can benefit by capitalizing on each other's strengths and overcoming each other’s weaknesses to achieve any mission you are tasked to do.

(3) How many hands on these boots? Three – that’s a couple of buddies looking out for each other; do you think you can get over this ten-foot wall without this kind of teamwork? It’s vital in this environment and the entire Army is based on this principle. Will you always be the strongest? All of you will have an area of strength but you must know it’s also a sign of strength to say, “Hey, I'm not as strong here and I need some help.” You all have strengths; have you seen them? Have you seen your weaknesses?

NOTE: Query students regarding the above questions; pause for a diversity of responses.

(4) As a team, you can gather together and use all of your strengths. As I’ve said, there’s a method to Basic Combat Training.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 9 (Applications of Teamwork)

(5) Physical tasks: there will be more than a few physical tasks that will be expected of you at BCT and you'll find that applying teamwork to many of these physical challenges will carry you through. As a member of a team you'll find additional inner strength to continue on.

NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block

(6) Mental tasks: as important as these physical tasks are, there are many mental tasks you must accomplish. Being mentally strong is just as important as physically strong. Again, teamwork is a critical element.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 10 (Sometimes you will need to “carry” a team member…)

j. Yes – teamwork is pretty much integral to everything that you'll do at BCT. This is because in military service if you don't cooperate as a team and work together, you won't get the job done. “Sometimes you’ll need to “carry” a team member...”

NOTE: SHOW Slide 11 (...and sometimes the team will “carry” you)

“...and sometimes the team will need to “carry” you.” As we already stated, we all have strengths.....each of you will have at least one area of weakness. It's important to offer help to those who appear to be struggling at something, that's part of being a professional Soldier and you may need to ask for help yourself; remember, at some time it might be you who needs to be carried. Am I just speaking of being carried physically as in the picture? No – never leaving a buddy behind doesn’t just apply to combat – it starts in BCT!
Never forget that it takes courage to ask for help when you need it. It doesn’t mean you’re weak or less of a Soldier.

NOTE:  SHOW Slide 12 (How do I look after my buddies? (& myself))

k. In the next few slides, we’re going to show you a model of how you can approach handling the stressful situations that are a part of BCT and in life.

(1) First, you’ll need to know what to look for as possible signs that your stress level is getting in the way of doing a good job – both for yourself and your buddies. And then you’ll need to know how to change it.

(2) Stress affects us all and no one is immune from its effects, but learning to be resilient and mentally fit is the key. It’s something you can learn and foster and during those times when you’re in short supply, your battle buddy will be there to support you. This is the focus of today’s training.

(3) How will you know when your buddy isn’t doing so well? All of us know when we’re having a bad day. In order to be there for your buddy you need to take the time to listen; sometimes that’s all that’s needed. After we do that, we’re going to have to know how to help – what to do. In order to help you have to know what to look for. We’ll talk about signs and symptoms and what to look for. Who do Soldiers go to when they have a problem?

NOTE: Query students regarding the above questions; pause for a diversity of responses.

Typically Soldiers go to other Soldiers – their battle buddy. After all, who better? They’ll understand - they’re usually going through the very same experiences.

NOTE:  Check on Learning

QUESTION: What is the definition of resilience?
ANSWER: Resilience is the ability to grow and thrive in the face of challenges and bounce back from adversity.

QUESTION: Why do some individuals find some events stressful while others do not (such as the roller coasters we discussed)?
ANSWER: It’s our perception of a situation that determines whether something is found to be stressful or not.

2. Learning Step / Activity 2. Initial Reaction Model
Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion
Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:35
Time of Instruction: 15 mins
Media: Slide Presentation

NOTE:  SHOW Slide 13 (Initial Reaction)

a. The first part of developing resilience and mental fitness is to assess the “activating event”, the who, what, when, and where of a situation or event. This is the trigger; a challenge, adversity, or even positive event or situation. Let’s take a look at the model we’ll be using throughout this training. Let’s say you’re about to take your PT test or qualify at the rifle range. The activating event you’re facing may be stressful to you, but first you really need to ask yourself – is this a situation I can even
change? Analyze the situation but remember, there will be many situations you can't change in BCT; the Drill Sergeant has the playbook and is calling the plays.

**NOTE:** During “Preparation” resilience training, Master Resilience Trainers (MRT) use the “ATC Model” for identifying thoughts associated with “activating events”.

b. Next there are basically four ways we react:

**NOTE:** Point out that stressful activating events may involve serious adversity such as a significant injury to one of your buddies, or a relatively minor event such as being singled out by your Drill Sergeant for making a mistake. These activating events may also be very positive such as scoring a 300 on your APFT or your Drill Sergeant selecting you to be Platoon Guide or Squad Leader, but still not be stress-free.

**NOTE:** Left-click mouse to advance text block

1. First we're going to talk about how you might react behaviorally – with actions. We sometimes react reflexively, in “knee jerk” reactions; we don’t think about it, we just do it. Some of your reactions may first be noticed in terms of your behavior.

**NOTE:** Left-click mouse to advance text block

2. Next we're going to talk about how we react emotionally – with our feelings. Sometimes our initial emotion is to be happy, sometimes angry, and sometimes something else. Some of your reactions may first be noticed in terms of your emotions.

**NOTE:** Left-click mouse to advance text block

3. Next we're going to talk about how we react with our thoughts. Some of your reactions may first be noticed in terms of your thoughts.

**NOTE:** Left-click mouse to advance text block

4. Finally we're going to talk about our physical reactions; the effect stress can have on your bodies.

**NOTE:** SHOW Slide 14 (Initial Reaction)

c. Let’s go through an example of how this works; remember, all four of these reactions are interrelated and in no particular order. Imagine a situation where you performed poorly on your Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) or came up short and didn't perform as well as you wanted to or thought you would.

**NOTE:** Text block will appear in five (5) seconds

1. What might your initial thoughts be?

**NOTE:** Query students regarding the above questions; pause for a diversity of responses.

(a) You might think “I'm weak”, “I didn’t properly prepare”, “What am I doing here?”, “How am I ever going to graduate?”, “What the heck is wrong with me?” Even thinking you may be much less a Soldier than your buddies.

(b) Did any of you have positive thoughts such as, “Good, now that I’ve identified areas I need to work on….”? 
(2) Initial Emotions? Perhaps you may feel disappointed, angry, nervous, or frustrated. How about some more positive (motivated) emotions such as, “Next time I’ll score 300 points!”

(3) Initial Behaviors? Actions such as withdrawing, moping, distancing yourself from your buddies, or becoming apathetic (not caring about anything). There are some more positive actions you might take such as applying yourself, giving 100 percent in order to max your next APFT.

(4) What might be your Initial Physical Reactions be? Sick to your stomach? Might your heart rate and breathing rate go up, even to the point where you might be shaking, getting headaches or feel your muscles tightening?

How you react can often determine how well you adjust to the situation or event (activating event).

NOTE: SHOW Slide 15 (Initial Reactions)

d. It would be great if our initial reactions were the optimal reaction every time, but that’s not always the case. Why not? Because we may make a mistake in the way we interpret an activating event. We may have our perceptions colored by our past experiences or we may just simply misinterpret an event and make it worse than it really is. Our perceptions of these activating events determine how we react and we have powerful brains that can help us; unfortunately it can sometimes trick us.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 16 (Distorted Perceptions)

e. Observe the image on the left what do you see? Intimacy; a guy grabbing a girl; maybe you noticed the bottle with a cork in it?

(1) What if I told you this was a picture of dolphins? Look again: many of you right now have no idea where those dolphins are. Focus on the gray parts of the image.

NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block

(2) It’s interesting that when this picture is shown to young children their life experience doesn’t lead them to perceive the intimate couple as easily as perceiving dolphins swimming around. They don’t have a life experience at this point in their young life that tells them what that other image is.

NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block

(3) They see the dolphins; in fact, they see nine dolphins.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 17 (Distorted Perceptions)

(4) Still can’t find the dolphins?

NOTE: Point out the nine dolphins that are now highlighted.

NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block

(5) So what do we learn from this? That we are shaped by our experiences; that the way you view something in your life is going to depend on past experiences that you’ve had.
Your minds are all corrupted! Just kidding; the point is that sometimes the way we look at reality is distorted by our past. Just as your life experiences shape your perception of this picture, so do your experiences shape your perceptions of your world – including BCT. What you’ve gone through in life will affect how you view the activating events in your life. Some of the problems you experience will be the result of your expectations from previous experiences. Remember to look at the whole picture and keep in mind that sometimes our view is distorted. Let’s try another one…

I want each of you to stare at the cross in the middle of this image and just continue to staring at that cross. If you’re like me, you see a green dot moving around with the purple dots.

Position yourself to the side of (perpendicular to) the students so all have to look away from the image in order to look at you.

(1) Look away from the image; keep looking. In a moment I want you to look back at the image, not at the cross, just look at the dots. Most will realize there’s no green dot at all, just flashing purple dots.

(2) Sometimes when we view reality, our perception doesn’t always match or align to the “real deal” again, our view may be distorted - something to keep in mind. Stare at the cross, what color are the dots? Did the dots ever really turn green?

There are also times when our view of activating events is “distorted” by deep and pervasive beliefs. We use the term “icebergs” to refer to these deeply held beliefs. These underlying beliefs can sometimes fuel out-of-proportion reactions.

(1) What are some examples of your deeply held (iceberg) beliefs?

Query students for examples of their icebergs (deeply held beliefs). Note that not all icebergs are wrong or out of proportion.

For example one deeply held belief may be that everyone should be treated “fairly” and when that isn’t the case, our reactions are usually pretty strong and negative. In fact, when we encounter some event, like getting yelled at by a superior, this may collide with one of our deeply held beliefs or icebergs (that people shouldn’t ever be yelled at) and prompt out-of-proportion reactions. It’s good to know that our underlying beliefs might trigger this kind of response so you can have greater control over your initial reactions such as emotions and behaviors. It’s important to remember that in the Army (particularly BCT), you will have extremely limited control over these situations and events and may have to put your icebergs “on hold”.

Once again, it’s important to realize that some of our initial reactions, sometimes called “knee-jerk” reactions, are not optimal because as we’ve seen, we are all the
sum total of our skills, training and life experiences and these experiences shape perceptions that sometimes fail to align with reality. Let's talk about what may be our initial reactions in a given circumstance….Let's talk specifically about behavior reactions Soldiers often have in tough situations.

(1) What are some of your behaviors and reactions you’ve noticed in dealing with the stress of RSP?

NOTE: Query students; reveal examples following discussion.

NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block

(a) Raise your hand if you have not been sleeping as well as you would have liked since you've been here? How many of you are having a problem waking up in the morning? Being tired during the day? This is predictable and everyone goes through it. Rest (pun) assured you'll fall into a routine.

(b) How about a loss (change) of appetite? Given your level of activity, a proper diet with a sufficient caloric intake is important. So if you see one of your buddies not eating, that loss of appetite (or increased – use of comfort foods, on a “see-food” diet) could signal to you guys that something may be going on.

(c) In the future, you'll see that when Soldiers get stressed, they may drink more and smoke more or dip more than they did before; this is something to look out for. Naturally you can’t do those during BCT.

(d) Increased Aggression: this is a tricky one – aggression is a fundamental Soldier skill. Targeted aggression, controlled through sound leadership, directed at the enemy and tempered by the rules of engagement (ROE) that you'll learn about at BCT is a good thing, but aggression directed at your buddies, family, friends, or even your Drill Sergeant is not. Increased aggression can also lead to being overly critical of others or in extreme cases, may even cause your group to exhibit stress by “scapegoating” (blaming someone who is innocent) individual Soldiers within the group.

(e) How many of you have noticed that when you're in a hurry, or under pressure you drop stuff, lose stuff, forget to bring things, trip over stuff, or are klutzy or more accident prone. That can also be a reaction to stress.

(f) Social withdrawal: what does that look like? How would you know if your buddy was withdrawing socially? (moping, doesn't want to hang out, etc.). It’s ok if someone is shy, but it can be something to look out for if they were outgoing before and have now become withdrawn.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 21 (Initial Reactions to Look Out For)

(2) Let's talk specifically about emotional reactions – feelings Soldiers may have in tough situations. What are some of your emotions since you've been in this new environment?

NOTE: Query students; reveal examples following discussion; pause for a diversity of responses.

NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block
(a) Fear or apprehension: much of what you’re required to do in BCT will be new and unfamiliar. While fear shouldn’t always be considered a negative emotion (fear can stop you from doing something stupid), you must be on the lookout for signs that fear has become foremost in your or your buddy’s mind - to the point of being debilitating (keeping a Soldier from being able to take action). Fear is not only normal, to a certain level it’s healthy. Properly controlled, fear helps keep you alert.

(b) Anxiety or tension: a certain level of anxiety and/or tension is not only understandable but appropriate under certain circumstances; however, it should not interfere with enjoying life or preventing you or your buddy from completing the task at hand.

(c) What is hyper-alertness? It means being overly-hyped up – so hyperaware of your surroundings that you find it impossible to relax.

(d) Low frustration tolerance: little tolerance for what you may consider “stupid stuff” or “stupid people”.

(e) Irritability/mood changes: being easily irritated – if you don’t get to know your buddy, you won’t pick up on this when this happens!

(f) Anger: while not always wrong or inappropriate, anger can lead to inappropriate aggression (for example towards the Soldier in front of you who seems to be continually out of step today).

(g) Low motivation: those who are low in motivation are not going to do well here or at BCT. Motivation is an individual thing. You’ll have a Drill Sergeant who’s an expert in motivation. But ultimately you need to “motivate” yourself because motivation actually comes from within.

(h) Depression: being sad, withdrawn or feeling hopeless to the point where it may be preventing you or your buddy from enjoying life and other things they used to enjoy doing.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 22 (Initial Reactions to Look Out For)

(3) Let’s talk specifically about thought reactions Soldiers have in tough situations. How does your thinking change when you get really stressed out?

NOTE: Query students; reveal examples following discussion.

NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block

(a) Concentration difficulties: you’re still adjusting to this environment – difficulty focusing can be a predictable thing in the first week or two of training at BCT. The good thing about BCT is the routine; it helps new Soldiers adjust to the environment. But it’s important to look for these reactions in yourself and your buddy because concentration difficulties may lead to poor problem solving or difficulty remembering.

(b) Negative self-talk: telling yourself, “I’m an idiot” or “I can’t do this.”

(c) Irrational ideas: believing things that are not reasonable like “I shouldn’t make mistakes, no one else here does!”
(d) Catastrophic thinking: thinking in absolute terms of never and always, like always thinking the worst is going to happen. (e.g. “I just know I’m going to fail” or “I’m never going to graduate!”

**NOTE:** Left-click mouse to advance text block

(e) Thoughts of “escape” (AWOL, suicide/self-harm): many of your buddies may be away from their family and friends for the very first time and away from their social support while facing what is probably the most challenging thing they’ve ever had to do in their life. As Soldiers we’re not immune to the pressures of life and all of the things everyone else in society goes through. If someone tells you they are thinking of hurting themselves, notify a Drill Sergeant immediately and get them the help they need even though you may worry that you’re overreacting or they might get mad at you. Never apologize for doing your duty!

**NOTE:** SHOW Slide 23 (Initial Reactions to Look Out For)

(4) Finally let's talk specifically about some of the physical reactions Soldiers have in tough situations. What are some physical reactions people typically have during stress?

**NOTE:** Query students regarding the above question; reveal examples following discussion.

**NOTE:** Left-click mouse to advance text block

Naturally this list is not all-inclusive but it’s pretty concise; note that there are also some ambiguous reactions – butterflies – to some degree may indeed be helpful!

(a) Increased breathing rate: which can often lead to an increased heart rate and feeling dizzy.

(b) Shaking: that is common with pent up tension.

(c) Pains: from being all continually tensed up; often with associated headaches.

(d) Nausea.

(e) Face goes pale/ashen: when all of the blood rushes out of the face from the body’s response to stress.

(f) Thousand yard stare: “where the lights are on but nobody’s home”.

**NOTE:** Check on Learning

**QUESTION:** What are the four ways we basically react to situations?

**ANSWER:** With thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and physical reactions.

**QUESTION:** Our past life experiences often shape our ____________ of situations and events.

**ANSWER:** Perceptions.
3. Learning Step / Activity 3. Checking and Adjusting
Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion
Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:35
Time of Instruction: 15 mins
Media: Slide Presentation

NOTE: SHOW Slide 24 (What Next?)

a. You or your buddy may have a perfectly appropriate reaction; remember I’m not saying these reactions are wrong, I’m saying they may not be helpful or get you closer to your goals. So what’s next? Let’s look at how you might check and possibly adjust your reaction. When do we need to check and adjust?

NOTE: Query students regarding the above question; pause for a diversity of responses.

(1) If the initial reaction is unhealthy, not helpful or not getting you to where you need to be, ask yourself, “Is this the reaction that helps me meet my goal?”

NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block

(2) You need to check those reactions. They might be counterproductive, harmful and definitely not helping you get where you need to be. Also never forget that your actions have consequences and define your character.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 25 (How to “Check”)

b. There may be times when your heart rate goes up or when you are afraid and that's normal and predictable, even helpful (may prevent you from doing something stupid). At times our bodies work to rev ourselves up to handle tough situations or may even rev you up to the point where it’s interfering with your ability to accomplish the task. You just need to figure out if this is one of them. If you're not sure ASK YOUR BUDDY, it'll usually help you figure out how typical the reaction is. Bounce it off your buddy – get a reality check.

(1) Is the reaction normal or understandable given the situation (activating event)?

(2) Is it interfering with performance?

(3) Is it helping me (or my buddy) be a good Soldier? Is it getting in the way? No? Then keep doing what you’re doing.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 26 (Check the Initial Reaction)

c. So check the initial reaction.

NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block

(1) If the reaction is normal and helpful - go with it; you have the optimal reaction.

NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block

(2) If not and you check it and it is not helpful, you need to adjust.

NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block

Let’s talk about how to do that.
d. Resilience and mental fitness means adjusting reactions to achieve optimal performance and well-being. You can practice this and as you’ve seen, a key point to this lesson is that you need to rely on your buddies. When you perform less than optimally, the reason is often that you have failed to work together. You’ve made it through stressful situations before, long before you will arrive at BCT. While this is a new and foreign environment you’re going into, everyone has dealt with difficult and stressful situations successfully. Let’s have some fun and talk about your “powerful brain” again.

e. What language is this? English? Can anyone read through this paragraph?

(1) It’s interesting that you’ve never been taught to read words like this but most of you are able to read it pretty easily. Before I showed you this if I had asked you if you could read a paragraph in which every word was misspelled you might have thought you’d have trouble doing it.

(2) We showed you how your brain can alter your perceptions – but your powerful mind can also do many pretty amazing things that will be helpful, to see through the distortions and come up with the right answers – pretty impressive huh? Like many things that you will do during BCT, you will do things you have never done before and because the stuff is new, you might doubt you can do it. But as you just saw, your mind is powerful and you can do things you didn’t know you could. When you attend the many fine college courses the Army can send you to, remember that I never said spelling’s not important!

f. Again, let’s talk about how to adjust your initial reactions once you’ve checked and determined they’re not helpful or optimal to performance. Once you’ve accomplished this, it’s important to identify which parts of the situation or event can be changed. What are some examples of activating events you cannot change while at BCT?

While it’s true you can’t change the environment or change the weather, remember “You can’t change the wind but you can adjust the sails....” Sorry, this example works a lot better for the Navy than for the Army.
(1) Step 1: Identify the controllable parts of the situation or event and take action and make adjustments.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 30 (How to “Adjust”)  
(2) Step 2: Identify the uncontrollable parts of the situation or event and adjust your initial reaction.

NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block  
The reality is that, in the BCT environment, there will be very few situations that you are going to be able to change. But you can change your reaction to them. There are times when events are out of your control there – don’t waste your time and energy on what you can’t change or control. Focus on what you can change – your reaction. Now we’ll talk about how to do that.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 31 (How to “Adjust”)  
g. We’re going to review how to adjust each element or type of initial reaction.

NOTE: Left-click mouse to advance text block  
You should know that they overlap. So changing a thought reaction, for example, may end up changing an emotional reaction. Or changing a behavior may change your way of thinking about events or situations. Let’s go over each of these elements:

NOTE: SHOW Slide 32 (“Adjust” Thoughts)  
(1) How are we going to adjust our thoughts?  
(a) First identify and accept realities.  
(b) Change your self-talk: for example, telling yourselves that you can do it! We’ll be talking more about this later.  
(c) Maintain your sense of humor: you’ll need your sense of humor; often Soldiers who use humor tend to be the ones who adjust most effectively. You can practice trying to be funny at appropriate times. When is it not a good time? In front of your Drill Sergeant.  
(d) Restructure your thoughts: while the first reaction we tend to be most aware of is our emotions (how we feel); it’s our thoughts that most often “drive the train” although they may be hardest to identify.  
(e) Identify thinking traps: there are common patterns in the way we think that cause us to jump to conclusions, miss information and limit our ability to accurately perceive an activating event. These “thinking traps” undermine mental toughness and optimal performance. We’ll talk about this more in the second period of instruction of Resilience training.

Your thoughts may be the hardest reactions to identify, but changing your thoughts can often “drive the train”.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 33 (Accepting Reality)  
h. Let’s start with accepting reality.
As we discussed, for many of you this will be the first time you're away from home. This may be difficult for some of you – you may feel homesick, but you're going to get through this.

What are some of the "realities" of Basic Combat Training?

Many of the realities of BCT include:

(a) Many of us require praise when we get it right – this will probably be in short supply but hey...

No news is good news during Basic Combat Training.

(b) You will have at least one area of weakness. You may have already noticed some of these areas in yourself. Reflecting on your weaknesses will build your competence; reflecting on your strengths will build your confidence.

(c) And you will make mistakes – that’s why they call it “training”. Are you expected to make mistakes? Is this the place to make them? In fact, it is a good place to make mistakes – and to learn from them and not make the same mistake twice. Your mistakes later may have a much greater impact. Because mistakes are expected here, there are tight controls and lots of rules in order to keep everyone safe.

Query students regarding the above questions. Discuss how no Soldier will be allowed to “run” until their Drill Sergeant is assured they can “crawl and walk” first.

Fortunately, when you do make a mistake, your Drill Sergeant will let you know (in their own subtle and understated way).

Mistakes provide opportunities for you to become a better Soldier and although BCT is hard, thousands make it through. If Basic Combat Training was easy you could simply watch the training on “YouTube” and say you were “good to go”. Your Drill Sergeants are there to help you get through BCT, not to weed you out. You’re qualified to be there and your Drill Sergeants expect you to succeed.
(f) Remember that you’ve now joined and become part of a great tradition – most things that you do the rest of your life will pale in comparison to this commitment you’ve made as you are now part of something much bigger than yourself and you always will be.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 36 (The Realities of Basic Combat Training)

i. Again, there are many things that you cannot control at BCT.

(1) Worrying about things you cannot change is a waste of time and energy.

(2) These difficulties are predictable. I can tell you every Soldier is going to experience things they can’t control. Don’t fight your Drill Sergeants and what they’re trying to do for you.

(3) Your time is better spent on other things, things you can control.

(4) Use your strengths – “Hunt the good stuff”. Make a habit of appreciating what you have and what went right, even if it’s that you have a good pillow, two-ply toilet paper and sufficient “snivel gear”. Fight the tendency to pay more attention to the bad things that happen to you. Hunting the good stuff will build resilience skills such as optimism and gratitude.

(5) Remember having stress and sleep difficulties is normal during the early stages of training. Your body will adjust over time. In the Resilience period of instruction we’ll talk more about ways to adjust these initial reactions.

NOTE: Check on Learning

QUESTION: When “checking” your initial reactions, which three questions should you ask yourself?

ANSWER: Is the reaction normal or understandable, is it interfering with performance, is it getting in the way?

QUESTION: The reality of BCT is that there are very few situations you can change while here; if you can’t change the situation, what can you change?

ANSWER: Your reaction to the situation.

NOTE: SHOW Slide 37 (Homework Assignment)

NOTE: Instructors provide class with Student Handouts #1, #2 and #3 at this time. Give the students a few moments to look over the handouts and answer any questions they may have. Instruct students that this phase of Resilience training is to be turned in to Cadre at the next drill. (per SMOM 11-038)

NOTE: SHOW Slide 38 (Terminal Learning Objective)

TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE

| ACTION: | Discuss resilience, teamwork, buddy aid, and our initial reactions to situations and events |
| CONDITIONS: | In a classroom environment given an overview of initial reactions to include thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and physical reactions |
| STANDARDS: | Discussing resilience, teamwork and the elements that comprise |
the way we all react to given situations and events will consist of the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) concepts and the principles contained in The Resilience Factor, 01 Jan 2003 and the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research Protocol #1543, 30 Jul 2009
SECTION IV. ASK FOR QUESTIONS AND SUMMARY

Method of Instruction: Discussion
Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:35
Time of Instruction: 5 mins
Media: None

a. Ask students if they have any questions.

b. Answer all questions or agree to get back to students with a complete or appropriate answer.

NOTE: SUMMARY

As we stated, Resilience Training for Basic Combat Training (Red Phase) is the first of many resilience blocks of instruction you will receive in the Army’s various schoolhouses, your professional leadership education and as part of your military deployments. Much of what we discussed applies to everyday life as well. We also highlighted the fact that no matter how difficult or challenging an experience may be there’s always the potential for personal growth as an individual and as a Soldier.

We talked about resilience: the ability to grow and thrive in the face of challenges and bounce back from adversity and how resilient Soldiers have the inner strength to face the realities of the environment with courage and confidence.

We discussed the amount of individual effort that will be required of you in order to be successful at BCT, but that you must learn to operate as a member of a team. That you’ll need to rely on your battle buddies as much as they’ll need to rely on you because being part of a team helps units get the job done and complete the mission.

We showed you a model of how we initially react to situations and events and the need to always ask yourself – is this a situation you can even change? We discussed the four basic ways we react: behaviorally (with actions; sometimes reflexively, in “knee jerk” reactions), emotionally (feelings Soldiers may have in tough situations), thought reactions Soldiers have in tough situations, and finally physical reactions Soldiers typically have in stressful situations. We also discussed how some initial reactions may not be helpful or get you closer to your goals – so you must always check and possibly adjust these reactions. Remember the questions you must ask yourselves: is the reaction normal or understandable given the situation, is it interfering with my performance and is it getting in the way.
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## Appendix A - Viewgraph Masters

**VIEWGRAPHS**

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<td>Sometimes you will need to &quot;carry&quot; a team member</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>and sometimes the team will &quot;carry&quot; you</td>
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### Appendix A - Viewgraph Masters (con’t)

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Appendix B - Test(s) and Test Solution(s) (N/A)
Appendix C - Practical Exercises and Solutions

Built in Lesson Plan
Appendix D - Student Handouts (N/A)

Student Handout 1 – RSP Online Resilience Training Module Instructions

Student Handout 2 – Comprehensive Soldier Fitness / Global Assessment Tool (GAT) Survey Instructions