



READINESS SUPPORTIVE LEADERSHIP TRAINING

# FIELD HANDBOOK

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## Introduction

Soldiers look to you, as their leader, to set an example. If you are supportive, they will follow your lead and will be more likely to give back, not just in their professional lives in the Army, but also in their personal lives.

That's why we designed the Readiness Supportive Leadership Training (RESULT) specifically for you. As part of the overall Gaining Resiliency in Training (GRIT) initiative, RESULT engages leadership, which benefits multiple levels of prevention. As platoon sergeants and leaders, you have a great deal of influence on your Soldiers. What you do sets the tone for what they will do, and trickles down to the individual Soldier.

We know that you've already had a great deal of training to improve resilience in the military. The RESULT training builds on the training you already have and adds some additional skills to help you be even more supportive of your Soldiers. Your support can lead to improved psychological readiness in your Soldiers, which means they will have improved psychological readiness and well-being, and be better prepared for battle and military service

Psychological readiness is just as important as physical readiness, and Soldiers need both to perform at the highest levels. RESULT is evidence-based training that will lead to improved Soldier retention, satisfaction, well-being and reduced stress, which improves overall unit readiness.

## What you will learn

- How to support your Soldiers' readiness and resilience by building on what you already know
- How this support can lead to better, safer, more effective Soldiers and cohesive units
- How to appropriately respond to situations where your Soldiers are in distress or are struggling

This handbook contains materials from the RESULT in-person training as well as follow-up activities that reinforce the key concepts of the training. You are expected to complete two follow-up activities per week for the next 6 weeks in an effort to reinforce what you learned during the in-person training and provide you tools you can refer back to at any time.

To review resources and start your first follow-up activity visit  
**[www.resultstudy.org](http://www.resultstudy.org)**

## Benefits of proactive support

When Soldiers are supported, they benefit and so does their Army unit and their family. As leaders, you have an opportunity to provide this support, which can lead to many benefits including more unit cohesion and improved psychological readiness -- which is essential for battle and military service. Studies show that the opposite is also true --without this support personal and family stress increases, engagement decreases, there is more relationship conflict and an increased chance of injury.

### BENEFITS OF BEING PROACTIVE

#### DECREASES

Personal Stress

Injury at Work

Relationship Conflict

Parental Stress

#### INCREASES

Mental Health

Flexibility

Esprit de Corps

Organizational Commitment

Unit Cohesion

Unit Safety

Relationship Satisfaction

## Case study

MacDonald is on the recommended promotable list. He has been an acting squad leader within your platoon for the past year.

MacDonald has demonstrated an exceedingly high work ethic and desire to achieve. He is devoted to the Army and has a tendency toward perfectionism. You have found him to be a good leader who is friendly and professional with his Soldiers.

Yet, lately you've noticed a few incidences where MacDonald has seemed irritable and impatient with his Soldiers.

Yesterday you overheard him angrily telling another Soldier, "If you're late to your CQ shift again, I'll see to it that you pull extra duties!"

When you confronted him, he broke down and told you he and his wife had been fighting constantly.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### OBSERVE

What changes have you observed in your Soldier?

### RECOGNIZE

Could your Soldier be experiencing a behavioral health issue?

What else might be going on?

### ENGAGE

How will you engage your Soldier?

What will you do and say?

### SUPPORT & MONITOR

What kind of support will you offer your Soldier?

What solutions will you discuss with your Soldier?

### FOLLOW-UP

When and how will you follow up?

## Personal readiness domains

Helping your Soldiers protect and foster these 5 domains of Personal Readiness, will help them to be more battle ready.



### Physical

Performing and excelling in physical activities that require aerobic fitness, endurance, strength, healthy body composition and flexibility derived through exercise, nutrition, training, and sleep.



### Emotional/Psychological

Approaching life's challenges in a positive, optimistic way by demonstrating self-control, stamina and good character with their choices and actions.



### Spiritual

Purpose, core values, beliefs, identity, and life vision define the essence of a Soldier and enable them to build inner strength, make meaning of experiences, behave ethically, and persevere.

**Social**

Developing and maintaining trusted, valued relationships and friendships that are personally fulfilling and foster good communication, including a comfortable exchange of ideas, views, and experiences.

**Family**

Being part of a family unit that is safe, supportive and loving, and provides the resources needed for all members to live in a healthy and secure environment.

## Emotional support

Emotional Support: What you do to help your Soldiers feel heard, and to show that you understand their family and personal demands.

Examples:

- Increasing face-to-face contact with each Soldier
- Communicating genuine concern about your Soldiers' lives and well-being
- Expressing empathy and understanding, or offering assistance when a Soldier shares a personal challenge
- Expressing appreciation for your Soldiers' service and their contributions to the unit
- Making sure that you have time with your Soldier to engage in an emotionally supportive conversation
- Asking open-ended questions about a Soldier's emotional health, physical health, and general well-being

Why is this important?

Despite the challenging atmosphere and self-reliance valued in the military, the personal connection and support between service members and their supervisors is critical to their readiness and resilience. Talking to your Soldiers and checking in by asking how they are doing are critical steps.

## Instrumental support

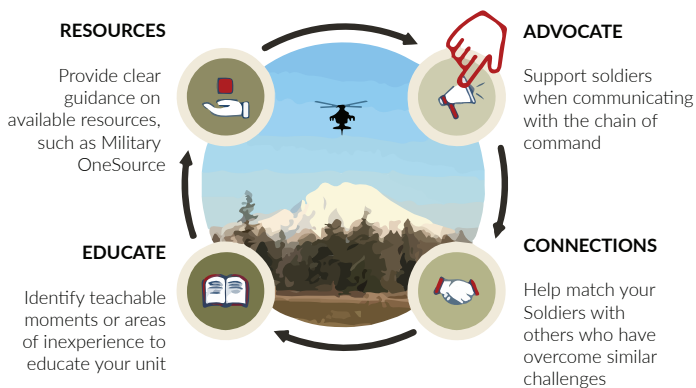
Instrumental Support: Making practical arrangements so Soldiers can meet ongoing service demands as well as unexpected family or personal demands.

Examples:

- Providing clear guidance on available resources.
- Matching your Soldier with a fellow Soldier who has overcome similar challenges (e.g., debt, divorce.)
- “Going to bat” for or supporting Soldiers when communicating with the chain of command.
- Publicly supporting your Soldiers in seeking behavioral health care.
- Adjusting Soldiers’ duties to avoid conflicting with family responsibilities or outside challenges.
- Identifying areas of inexperience to educate your unit on healthy coping skills.

Why is this important?

As the leader, you are the one Soldier go to for helpful information, and knowing about available resources can be helpful. Family and personal stress and demands are common and being able to respond when Soldiers express a need for assistance is part of supporting your Soldiers’ readiness and resilience.



## Role modeling

Role modeling: demonstrating by example that you are taking care of your own personal well-being.

Examples:

- Approaching required mental health training with support and optimism
- Allowing Soldiers time off to seek treatment or get behavioral health support
- Using clear language that cannot be misinterpreted
- Sharing your own or your subordinates' success stories of overcoming adversity

Why is this important?

Soldiers see their leaders as demonstrating appropriate and inappropriate ways to behave. They look up to you, so remember that what you do sets the state for what your Soldiers will do.

## Reducing stigma

Reduce stigma associated with seeking help: communicate that it is safe and healthy to seek help and support.

Examples:

- Ensure that when Soldiers seek help and are provided with treatment plans, there is little impact to the mission and that other Soldiers see it as healthy and normal
- Seek your own help when needed
- Know about the mental health resources available to your Soldiers and make appropriate referrals when necessary
- Educate Soldiers, Army civilian employees, and family members about anxiety, stress, depression, PTSD, and treatment options
- Acknowledge the misconception regarding Soldiers abusing the system and understand that this is only a small percentage of Soldiers
- Emphasize that it is okay if Soldiers need to seek behavioral health support, by doing this when in formation it will reduce the stigma among the entire unit
- Invite a behavioral health officer to unit to meet with Soldiers

Why is this important?

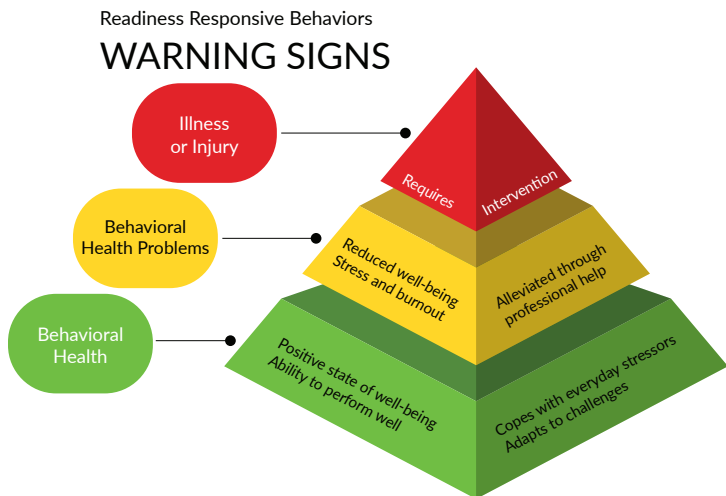
It is your job to teach your Soldiers that mental toughness, like physical toughness, includes seeking help for mental or emotional wounds, even though these wounds are often hidden and harder to recognize.

## Behavioral health

When Soldiers are able to perform well, cope with everyday stressors, and adapt to challenges, they are in the “green zone”. When they experience a compromise in their health or psychological readiness, they are in the “amber zone”. Stress, burnout, and extreme fatigue are all common in this zone. If Soldiers do not get adequate support, they risk entering the “red zone”, where they may experience serious illness or injury.

## Warning signs

These warning signs can be indicative of stress or more serious mental health issues, so it's important to recognize them early. Stress and resilience are like a rubber band, the rubber band can be flexed and stretched only so many times before it breaks. If you can recognize when your Soldier is being flexed too much or stretched too thin, you can intervene to prevent them from reaching a breaking point.

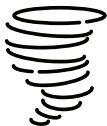


## Stages of stress



### Stage 1: Strain

Overt and active stress, almost like bubbles building to the surface of a boiling pot. Stage 1 usually has more noticeable warning signs, such as angry outbursts, rude behavior, terse exchanges, crying, and more emotion.



### Stage 2: Burnout

Passive and quiet. It is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. Burnout can occur when Soldiers feel overwhelmed, emotionally drained, and unable to meet constant demands. You might see issues related to attendance and performance.



### Stage 3: Crisis

At crisis, everything has boiled over, and Soldiers may experience illness or injury -- both mental and physical. When someone has struggled for a prolonged amount of time without adequate support, their health declines. It's your job to help Soldiers before they get to this point.

## How to A.C.T

Early Intervention: Supporting your Soldiers to seek out and use the resources available to them.

**Attend.** Recognizing the warning signs, paying attention to your Soldiers by asking them how they're doing, paying attention to their body language when they respond, getting to know your Soldiers' versions of "normal."

**Communicate.** Openly discuss available resources, focus on behavior patterns, and use open-ended questions that directly address specific concerns.

**Touch base.** Contact Behavioral Health or encourage the Soldier to contact Behavioral Health, suggest specific resources, and always follow up to make sure the Soldier is getting the resources/support they need.

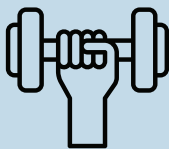
### Why is this important?

Early recognition of warning signs is critical to maintaining readiness and resilience. The sooner you recognize a pattern of warning signs, the sooner you are able to provide even better, more tailored support to your Soldiers.

## Healthy coping mechanisms

Healthy coping mechanisms are positive, healthy behaviors in response to stress. There are many ways that people deal with stress. It is important that you model and encourage healthy coping mechanisms for your Soldiers. Examples of healthy coping mechanisms include:

### EXERCISE



Have a regular workout routine

### ACTIVITIES



Enjoy leisure activities and hobbies

### SIMPLIFY



Limit email and social media

### LAUGH



Find humor in your life

### BREATHE

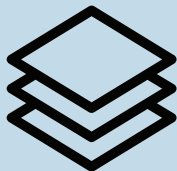


Practice meditation to calm yourself and increase oxygen

### BE PRESENT



Focus on now instead of past or future

**ORGANIZE**

Remove clutter  
and excess in life

**SUPPORT**

Reach out to co-  
workers, friends, and  
family

**SEEK HELP**

Talk to a counselor  
who can help you  
manage stress

Practicing healthy coping mechanism can help Soldiers work through the stress in a way that promotes health, well-being, and success.

Find more at

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/health-wellness>

## Mindfulness

### Mindfulness TED Talk

- Mindfulness helps us focus on the task at hand.
- Mindfulness helps reduce the damage that can be caused by mind-wandering.
- Mind-wandering occurs for about 50% of our waking minutes.
- Mind-wandering leads to errors, missing critical information, and difficulty making decisions.
- Mindfulness is the opposite of mind-wandering.
- Mindfulness helps us experience the moment-to-moment unfolding of our lives.
- Mindfulness training improves attention over time and can protect against the distracting effects of stress.
- Pay attention to your attention through mindfulness.

## Psychological readiness

### Psychological readiness (podcast)

- **Soldiers need optimal mental health and well-being in order to be psychologically ready for military service. This is just as important as being physically ready for military service.**
- There is generally more stigma around psychological readiness than physical readiness
- The Army's policy is clear that there should not be stigma around psychological readiness
  - Good leadership can create a culture that supports psychological readiness.
- Soldiers enter the military with their own personal issues, and they may have trouble adjusting to the stressors of being in the military
  - Early warning signs include lack of sleep, social isolation, and misconduct
  - If these are identified early, Soldiers can get the help they need and avoid unhealthy coping skills and crises
- It's important that leaders share their own experiences with Soldiers to show them that they understand and support them
- Soldiers not only have mental health conditions from their service but also from other parts of their life
  - It is important to be empathetic
- It's important that leaders know the resources available to help their Soldiers
- Leaders have the ability to send their Soldiers to behavioral health even if the Soldier doesn't want to go due to stigma

## Malingering

### Malingering (podcast)

- Malingering is making up physical or mental health problems to get out of duty
- Malingering may be a concern for leaders, but the prevalence of malingering is extremely low -- one study looking at 28 million healthcare visits found that only .004% of Soldiers seeking medical and psychological help were malingering
- Remember, it is not the leader's responsibility to determine whether their Soldiers' mental and physical health problems are legitimate
  - Let the Soldier go to behavioral health and the provider will determine whether the Soldier is malingering
  - It isn't appropriate to challenge the Soldier over whether they are making up their illness or symptoms.
- Some Soldiers might even pretend like they are going to behavioral health to get out of work when they are really going for a mental health issue
  - This is because they want to avoid stigma
- Overall, it is better to have a tiny percentage of Soldiers malingering than to have many Soldiers not getting the help they need because they don't want to be perceived as malingering
- By trusting and supporting their Soldiers, leaders can improve the climate in their unit

## Stigma

### Stigma (podcast)

- 3 types of stigma for getting help with a psychological problem
  - Career-related: seeking mental health treatment will lead to career consequences
  - Social: seeking mental health treatment will lead to distrust and negative perceptions from peers and leaders
  - Self: seeking mental health treatment will harm self-image, will lead to feelings of weakness
- Stigma is actually more likely when Soldier does not seek help and mental health condition worsens and leads to behaviors that reflect poorly on the Soldier
- The biggest sign that a Soldier is having a mental health issue is a change in behavior from how they normally are
  - Often times, leader and peer support can resolve these cases
  - If problems persist, a leader can recommend that the Soldier seek help from behavioral health
- The culture of silence in the military leads Soldiers to believe they should be able to overcome mental health issues on their own
  - Supportive leaders can reassure Soldiers that mental health struggles are a normal reaction to the type of trauma they may have faced and seeking help is not a sign of weakness
  - Seeking help can improve resilience

## Key takeaways

- Psychological readiness is just as important as physical readiness, and Soldiers need both to be ready for military service.
- What you say and do sets the tone for what your subordinates and Soldiers will do
- Provide instrumental AND emotional support to your Soldiers. They need it and they need you.
- There are 5 domains of readiness (psychological/emotional, physical, spiritual, social, and family.) A compromise in any of these domains could mean a compromise in battle readiness.
- By taking ACT-ion, you can help keep your Soldiers stay in the 'green zone'.
- Take care of yourselves -- be a role model and lead by example.

## Resources

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### ON POST

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#### **EMERGENCIES**

Madigan Emergency Room  
9040 Jackson Ave.  
Tacoma, WA 98431

#### **Primary Care**

Appointments scheduled through  
Puget Sound Military Appointments Center  
800-404-4506

#### **Embedded Behavioral Health**

1-2 Embedded Behavioral Health (EBH)  
Bldg R-3742, Lewis Main  
Serving Soldiers from the 1-2 SBCT  
For information call: (253) 966-3640

2-2 Embedded Behavioral Health (EBH)  
Bldg R-1880, Lewis North  
Serving Soldiers from the 2-2 SBCT  
For information call: (253) 967-1481

**Chaplains**

General Office 253-967-3718

Emergency on call Chaplain - 253-967-0015

Chaplain Family Life Center- 253-967-1723

**Substance Abuse Program**

2008B N 3<sup>rd</sup> St

JBLM Main

(253) 267-1411

**Military Family & Family Life Counselors (MFLC)**

(253) 293-2223

**Child/Family BH Services (CAFBHS)**

Madigan Annex

Bldg. 9923A

Tacoma, WA 98431

**Family Advocacy Program (FAP) - Prevention**

Waller Hall

2140 Liggett Ave

JBLM Main

(253) 967-5901

Family Advocacy Program (FAP) - Treatment

Madigan Annex Building 9905

JBLM Main

(253) 968-4159

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## OFF POST

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### **Military One Source**

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/>

800-342-9647

### **Military Crisis Hotline**

800-273-8255

### **RealWarrior**

Realwarrior.net





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