



North Dakota Army National Guard Resilience Program: Training Aids

To support the readiness and resilience of the NDARNG force, the Resilience Program has produced the below vignettes to be utilized by Master Resilience Trainers (MRT) both in the field and in traditional classroom instruction.

Vignette: Getting Out of Debt

Resilience Skill: Goal Setting

- **Situation:** SPC Snuffy has been with the NDARNG for 2.5 years, works part time at a local bar and grill and is a full-time student. By all accounts SPC Snuffy is a “good Soldier”, reports to drill on time, stays late when asked to do so, responds to leadership taskings, and is fully engaged in the missions occurring over the course of an IDT weekend. However, SPC Snuffy has fallen into the trap that many college students do...using credit cards to pay for day to day living expenses. This has resulted in multiple credit cards being maxed out, a cycle of just meeting minimum payments, and has reduced his flexible spending to the point of threatening his ability to afford transportation to attend drill.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** What kind of resources (military and community) can be provided to SPC Snuffy? Facilitate small or large group instruction on how the resilience skill of Goal Setting can be used to lessen SPC Snuff’s financial stress.

Vignette: Improving Relationship

Resilience Skill: Goal Setting

- **Situation:** PVT Smith is 19 years old, traditional M-Day Soldier and has just returned from basic training and AIT. She has completed two (2) IDT weekends with her newly assigned unit. She is unfamiliar with her unit leadership and her leadership is still getting to know her as a Soldier. PVT Smith recently moved out of her parental home where her two younger siblings ages 15 & 17 currently reside. PVT Smith has always had a close relationship with her younger siblings, at times relying upon them as a support system, and is worried their relationship has been impacted by her time away from home (basic training & AIT) and will continue to be impacted as a result of her move to independent living.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** What kind of resources (Military/Community) and support can be provided to PVT Smith by her unit leadership team? Facilitate small or large group instruction on how the resilience skill of Goal Setting can be used to strengthen PVT Smith’s sibling relationship during this time of transition.

Vignette: Overdue Bill

Resilience Skill: Activating Event, Thoughts, Consequences (ATC) and/or Put It Into Perspective (PIIP)

- **Situation:** PFC Johnson was recently in a car accident which resulted in a knee injury requiring a trip to the ER and multiple follow up medical appointments to include physical therapy. Additionally, PFC Johnson didn’t have proper vehicle insurance at the time of the accident and currently can’t work due to his injuries. This has resulted in multiple credit cards being maxed out, he struggles to afford daily living expenses, he has no transportation to get to required medical appointments, to school or to attend IDT weekends. Just prior to drill he receives two

overdue notices from credit card debtors. He is sad, hopeless, and depressed. He has thoughts of giving up as he sees no way out of his current physical or financial situations.

- **Discussion & Instruction:** What kind of resources (military and community) can be provided to PFC Johnson? Facilitate small or large group instruction on how the resilience skills of ATC and/or PIIP can be used to lessen PFC Johnson's financial and mental health stress.

Vignette: Vehicle Breakdown

Resilience Skill: Activating Event, Thoughts, Consequences (ATC) and/or Put It In Perspective

- **Situation:** SGT Jones is 24 years old, married and has a six-month-old daughter. He has been in the NDARNG for five years. He is a by all accounts a high achieving Soldier, who has checked all the boxes and attended the required courses to further his career. His leadership team describes him as "high speed". He has a strong relationship with his spouse, immediate family, and friends. However, increased costs associated to day care and increased living expenses associated to a move to a larger home; SGT Jones and his family are experiencing financial strain. Recently his vehicle broke down and he doesn't have the financial means to pay for the repairs putting at jeopardy his ability to get to work and to his upcoming AT period.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** What kind of resources (military and community) can be provided to SGT Jones? Facilitate small or large group instruction on how the resilience skill of ATC and/or Put It In Perspective can be used to lessen SPC Snuff's financial and mental health stress.

Vignette: Personal Cell Phone Usage

Resilience Skill: Assertive Communication

- **Situation:** SSG Johnson has been a squad leader of a group of ten subordinates for the past two years. Recently, a new Soldier has joined the team. The new team member appears to spend a high amount of time on his cell phone which is impacting the completion of required tasks over an IDT period. SSG Johnson addressed the entire team by explaining her expectations of personal cell phone usage during IDT. Over the course of several more IDT periods, it becomes clear the new team member is not complying and the behavior is now impacting team cohesion.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** Facilitate small or large group instruction on the resilience skill of Assertive Communication using the IDEAL Model. Discuss how the participants can tailor their own personal communication styles to the situation and maximize the probability of a good outcome.

Vignette: Finals

Resilience Skill: Real-Time Resilience

- **Situation:** SFC Fields, has been with the NDARNG for 14 years, he is an AGR-Readiness NCO, has been in a long term committed relationship for 16 years, and is a father of two. He has his undergraduate degree in accounting and is taking his last online class to attain his master's degree in business. The last week of his final course and his final exam occur over his AT period. He is having some problems finding daycare during his AT period and knows AT will be at a location which will limit his WI-FI access. His level of stress is also fueled by thoughts of failing the test, failing the course, and not graduating within his expected timeline.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** Facilitate small or large group instruction on the resilience skill of Real-Time Resilience. Discuss using sentence starters. "That's not completely true because ...(evidence)"; "A more optimistic way of seeing this is ...(optimism)"; "The most likely implication is...and I can...(perspective)".

Vignette: Physical Fitness Test

Resilience Skill: Real-Time Resilience

- **Situation:** SPC Hays has been with the NDARNG for three years. He is currently flagged for height/weight which is impacting his ability to go to optional and required schools to further his career within the organization. Additionally, this flagging has hindered his ability to apply for fulltime ADOS/AGR positions within the organization; and his tuition assistance has been suspended. He has struggled with maintaining motivation for change which impacts his diet and physical workout routines. He has been notified that the unit will be completing the Army Combat Fitness Test at their next IDT period. Instantly, his thinking is negative, expecting failure, continued military career impacts and barriers to achieving personal and professional goals. He begins to question his continued commitment to the military.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** Facilitate small or large group instruction on the resilience skill of Real-Time Resilience. Discuss using sentence starters. "That's not completely true because ...(evidence)"; "A more optimistic way of seeing this is ...(optimism)"; "The most likely implication is...and I can...(perspective)".

Vignette: Qualitative Retention Board/Selective Retention Board

Resilience Skill: Activating Event, Thoughts, Consequence (ATC); Put It In Perspective and/or Problem Solving

- **Situation:** SFC Jones has been with the NDARNG for almost 20 years. He had a medical issue, which he failed to disclose and prevented him from passing his ACFT. Which additionally precluded him from attending his next level PME. He has just been notified that his packet will be going in front of the QRB. He has concerns that he will not be retained due to his lack of a passing ACFT and inability to attend his next level PME.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** Facilitate small or large group instruction on the resilience skills of Activating Event, Thoughts, Consequence (ATC); Put It In Perspective and/or Problem Solving. Highlight the initial reaction from receiving the QRB notice, walk through the steps of PIIP and get to the key root of the problem.

Vignette: SOMB/SEMB Results are Released

Resilience Skill: Activating Event, Thoughts, Consequence/Put It In Perspective and/or Detecting Icebergs

- **Situation:** MAJ Smith has been a fulltime employee of the NDARNG for 15 years. She has just been notified that her new fulltime duty assignment is 200 miles away from her current duty assignment. MAJ Smith is married with two children who are in grade school and her spouse is the owner operator of a small business. Additionally, they are very involved in their current home community.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** Facilitate small or large group instruction on the resilience skills of Activating Event, Thoughts, Consequence (ATC), Put It In Perspective and/or Detecting Icebergs. Highlight the initial reaction from receiving the SOMB notice using the ATC model, utilizing the 4 "what questions" from Detect Icebergs and/or utilizing the steps of PIIP.

Vignette: Family Day

Resilience Skill: Hunt the Good Stuff

- **Situation:** SSG Snappy has been under a lot of stress preparing for an inspection. The inspection happened right before a three-day weekend, and he passed the inspection with very high marks. He was able to enjoy the long weekend by camping and boating with his wife and two sons.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** Facilitate small or large group instruction on the resilience skill of Hunt the Good Stuff. Highlight hunting the good stuff builds resilience and gratitude by reflecting on why this good thing happened, what this good thing means, what they can do tomorrow to enable more and what you did to contribute to this good thing.

Vignette: Promotion at Work

Resilience Skill: Hunt the Good Stuff & Problem Solving

- **Situation:** SGT Jones is a M-Day Soldier of 10 years. He works full time in his home community as a financial advisor. He has been a financial advisor at the same firm for 5 years. He was recently informed by his supervisor that he was promoted which included title and a pay increase. Although he is excited about this promotion, he has concerns that he will no longer be able to fulfill his increasing military obligations, as well as be an involved father for his three children. He is debating his continued commitment to the NDARNG.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** Facilitate small or large group instruction on the resilience skill of Hunt the Good Stuff. Highlight hunting the good stuff builds resilience and gratitude by reflecting on why this good thing happened, what this good thing means, what they can do tomorrow to enable more and what you did to contribute to this good thing. Additionally, discuss concerns SGT Jones has based on his increasing civilian & military obligations utilizing the steps of problem solving.

Vignette: Picking Up (or not)

Resilience Skill: Avoid Thinking Traps or Problem Solving

- **Situation:** SPC Davidson is ten minutes late for formation, he looks irritated and grumpy. His squad leader confronts the SPC on being late for formation. SPC Davidson takes responsibility for being late, however, indicates that he had an argument with his girlfriend of 13 months. The argument was over her frustration of him not picking up his dirty uniform off the floor and placing it into the laundry basket.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** Facilitate small or large group instruction on the resilience skills of Avoid Thinking Traps and/or Problem Solving. Highlight what the squad leader's thoughts were when the Soldier arrived late, as well as the root cause of the SPC's not picking up after himself.

Vignette: Broken Promises

Resilience Skill: Avoid Thinking Traps

- **Situation:** SGT Adams has been by all account a "good Soldier" receiving the highest blocks on his NCOERs. He was recently reassigned to a new unit where very few people know him. As he is preparing to leave for drill; his babysitter calls and says they can't watch his children. He scrambles to find someone to watch his children which results in him being 30 minutes late for drill. His squad leader counsels him for being late and tells him, "I thought I was getting a better Soldier than this".

- **Discussion & Instruction:** Facilitate small or large group instruction on the resilience skills of Avoid Thinking Traps using the mental cues and critical questions to identify information the Soldier may have missed because of a thinking trap.

Vignette: Unanswered Call

Resilience Skill: Detect Icebergs

- **Situation:** SGT Smith has been calling her 16-year-old son over the phone for the past 30 minutes. She was just tasked to do something that requires her to stay late after work and she needs to know if her son will be able to get a ride home. She also has concerns about some of the friends he has been hanging out with so she wants to hear his voice to know if he is doing something he shouldn't be. Her son doesn't answer the phone calls, but just texts her back asking why she is calling.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** Facilitate small or large group instruction on the resilience skills of Detect Icebergs utilizing the four "what" questions to identify the key iceberg and then evaluate the iceberg using discussion questions.

Vignette: Cutting Corners

Resilience Skill: Problem Solving & Character Strengths: Challenges and Leadership

- **Situation:** SGT Snuffy has been with the NDARNG for 15 years and is currently in JFHQ supporting the FMS shops completing annual inventories. He becomes aware that his immediate chain of command, SSG Jones, is making adjustments to the final counts to ensure one of the FMS shops "looks good on the books". SGT Snuffy knows that "cooking the books" is unethical and breaks Army regulation. However, he also knows that SSG Jones doesn't really care for him, their working relationship has been rocky and ultimately if the adjustments are ever caught, it is SSG Jones butt on the line, as he is the one who signed off on the inventory. SGT Snuffy still wants to do the right thing by confronting the situation.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** Facilitate small or large group instruction on the resilience skills of Problem Solving and Character Strengths. Discuss key character strengths which may play a role in SGT Snuffy moving through the steps of Problem-Solving resilience skill to determine how he is going to manage the situation.

Vignette: Can't Graduate

Resilience Skill: Mental Games

- **Situation:** PVT Carter is 18 years old and has been with the NDARNG for six months. She is a senior in high school set to graduate in 30 days. On the first day of an IDT weekend, she received notification from her High School Guidance Officer that she is missing one credit and her ability to graduate with the rest of her high school class is at risk. PFC Carter is stressed, worried and disappointed. She has a high amount of anxiety knowing she will have to tell her parents that she may not graduate. She is also worried about the potential impact on her military career.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** Facilitate small or large group instruction on utilizing the resilience skill of mental games to take her mind off of counterproductive thoughts. Pick any topic and come up with representation for each letter of the alphabet (celebrity names, countries, music groups, etc....).

Vignette: Team Building

Resilience Skill: Character Strengths: Challenges and Leadership

- **Situation:** SFC Smith has been tasked with building a team of military and civilian professionals. This is the first time SFC Smith has had to build a team from the bottom up. He has been given full support and resources by senior leaders of the organization. The team's objective is to assist recruiting and retention's personnel in achieving its recruiting mission goals through the use of social media.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** Facilitate small or large group instruction on how SFC Smith can utilize Identify Strengths in Self and Others resilience skill to build a strong cohesive team which will be able to meet the mission objective. NOTE: Facilitator may need to utilize their own VIA Character Strength Survey to facilitate discussion.

Vignette: Situations-Strengths

Resilience Skill: Identify Strengths in Self and Others

- **Situations:** Identify character strengths in yourself and in others to build on the best of yourself and best of others:
 - You have been charged with a DUI or had a drug positive UA result.
 - A family member has been placed on hospice.
 - Your best friend is struggling with addiction.
 - Your small business suffers financial strain, and you have to close it.
 - Your place of employment lays you off.
 - You welcome your first child into your family.
 - You graduate from college.
 - You get married to your high school sweetheart.
 - You find out over social media that your significant other has been unfaithful.
 - You have achieved a long-term personal goal.
 - Your sibling recently passed away.
 - Your child graduates from high school.
 - You get your dream job.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** Utilizing the VIA Character Strength Survey, identify the character strengths which each participant will use within any of the above situations; then identify the specific actions those character strengths will lead to.

Vignette: Its great....but!

Resilience Skill: Praise and Active Constructive Responding

- **Situation:** SSG Smitty is married with two children under the age of five. He has just returned home from a three-week TDY which occurred out of state. He proudly announces to his wife that he was top 5% of his class and with the completion of this course it will set him up for success to further his military career. Without blinking an eye, his wife interrupts him and indicates that both children are sick, the check engine light is on in the SUV and in the mail, they had received their property taxes which went up 15%. SSG Smitty's wife squashed the positive events of SSG Smitty by focusing on the negative. This is what Active Constructive Responding describes as "Joy Thief" and can be a destructive form of communication.
- **Discussion & Instruction:** Facilitate large or small group discussion identifying which Active Constructive Responding skills could be utilized in this situation to strengthen the communication and relationship.