



Communication Tool Kit

PHYSICAL, MENTAL, SPIRITUAL, SOCIAL, FINANCIAL

QUARTER 4 (July - Aug)



Q4: (Mental) Personal Resiliency-Thinking Traps

“Always, Always, Always”



Vignette: Recently, a close friend in your unit had a series of unfortunate events that occurred in their life. They did not receive a promotion they were expecting at work, their house needs various repairs, and their partner broke up with them. You and your close friend are talking at drill and you ask them how they are doing. They respond by saying, “This always happens to me! It is never going to get better, and I am always just going to have bad luck.” How would you respond?

- A) Tell them that “It could be worse” and proceed to tell them about all the “bad luck” events you have been going through.
- B) Shrug them off and say “that’s too bad”.
- C) Explain to them that you empathize with what they are going through and ask how you can support them.
- D) Remind them that these events are only temporary and offer to connect them with some resources for additional support and insight.

BEST answer. C & D. You can display empathy with your friend but be careful so as to not make it about you. Remind them that the setbacks are temporary and there are many resources out there for them to utilize and gain additional support.

Some ideas might include:

- 1) Connect them with a Chaplain or behavioral health person for some insight and guidance.
- 2) Connect them with employment resources to see about building a resume to gain better employment.
- 3) Refer them to Military One Source for free apps and programs to help build resiliency skills.

Discussion Q&A:

- What are some pros and cons of each of the potential responses listed above?
- Why do you think it is important to not shift the discussion to what you are experiencing?
- What are some ways that you could display empathy with your friend?
- Who else within the unit do you think that you should inform about what the Service member told you?

Q4: (Mental) Personal Resiliency-Thinking Traps

“Always, Always, Always”



Takeaways:

- The “Always, Always, Always” mentality is what is referred to as a “Thinking Trap” and is one of the most toxic thinking traps in building and maintaining resiliency.
- “Always, Always, “Always” is a thinking trap which leads the individual to live in a perpetual state that they have 0 control over events in their lives. Feelings of lacking control or empowerment may often lead to feelings of hopelessness and despair.
- It is important to understand that anyone can, and is able to, identify what they **can** control in their lives VS what they **cannot**.
- Seeking resources and support from behavioral health and Chaplains not only is key in building and maintaining resiliency-these often will aid in gaining further insight and a different perspective on life and how to handle adversity as it arises!

Follow-Up Resources:

- Chaplain
- DPH Line (1-877-504-2358)
- Military One Source (1-800-345-4856)
- Employment Resources – National Guard Network: <https://www.casy4vets.org/WINationalGuard/index.html>
- Unit MRT personnel
- 211

Feedback From the Field:

We know your time is valuable and we want to thank you for setting aside some time to talk over these topics. Your feedback is highly encouraged and welcomed. We would love to hear your thoughts and ideas as to how well these discussions were implemented as well as how well they were received. For feedback, suggestions or even any success stories that you would like to share, a survey can be completed at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SMSD2021>