



SMSD Information and Resources

Service Members and Military Families

April 6, 2020

NOTICE! 2020 Spring Election and Presidential Preference Vote on April 7th

Presently, the Spring 2020 election is still scheduled to be held Tuesday, April 7, 2020 from 7:00AM - 8:00PM.

Keeping Your Relationships Strong...Don't Squash Their Joy!

Since we have more time together, take a relationship moment, and spend time each day to focus on your closest social connections. Did you know that it is just as important to give your partner, your children, and your friends your full attention when they are coming to you to celebrate their joys, their successes, and their dreams equally when they reach out with a problem? Make sure to avoid these 3 sneaky damaging relationship habits:

#1: *Excitement Extinguisher* offers positive feedback without emotion, and the conversation quickly ends. Often the support offered is distracted, quiet, delayed, or low in energy. For example, you're watching TV and your child comes up to you excited to share a picture he or she just drew. You respond, "Wow, that's great!" and then you return to watching TV. People often respond this way, thinking their positive response is enough to build a relationship, but the lack of authentic interest and enthusiasm has the opposite effect, and over time it will cause your relationship to deteriorate.

#2: *The One-Upper*. You're a One-Upper when you make the conversation about yourself rather than the other person's excitement. It's normal and appropriate to share similar experiences in conversations, but when you steal someone's excitement by making his or her good news seem less important because of your "better" version of their story, you're now damaging your relationship.

#3: *The Problem Detector*. When you point out any problems or negative aspects of good news that's being shared with you, you become a Problem Detector. Often this comes from a place of genuine concern and a desire to help someone improve. Still, that genuine concern crushes the other person's excitement and damages your relationship. Instead, realize you can voice your concerns at a later time, when the person is less excited. Later, she or he might be more receptive to your concerns. This approach still allows you to build your relationship by sharing in the initial excitement when he or she tells you the good news.

How to build a relationship: Excitement Magnifier

The best way to build your relationships is by being an Excitement Magnifier! Try to consciously share in someone's excitement and help him or her leave the conversation as, or even more, excited. Do this by showing authentic, enthusiastic support. Help the person relive what happened. And make sure to ask what he or she enjoyed most about the experience

Do you want to work on your social fitness and connections? Check out the Human Performance Resources Center and add tools to your total fitness toolbox at <https://www.hprc-online.org/>.



Stay Mentally Strong Through the Stress

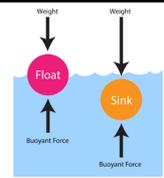
Adapted from Rebecca Fazel (PSYCOM 31 March 2020)

- **Acknowledge what is happening, and that it is stressful.**
- **Stay connected.** Use texting, Google Voice, Facebook, or Skype and reach out friends and family.
- **Do benefit finding.** "Looking for the good" is an important emotion and coping strategy.
- **Try breathing exercises.** As little as three minutes has long lasting impacts.
- **Be kind.** It helps you and it helps others.
- **Share something good.** Pictures, purposeful sayings, and memes when shared amplify positive feelings.
- **Change your expectations.** We can actually add to our stress when our goals are unrealistic.
- **Manage your news intake.** Checking in once or twice a day is enough to stay informed.

*If you need assistance,
You are not alone!
Call 1-800-292-9464 opt 1.*

Resiliency vs. Buoyancy

by Lt Col Christina Schmoker, Chief, Service Member Support Division



I don't think there's one person currently serving in the military who hasn't heard a presentation on resiliency in one form or another. But what does it really mean? I've heard so many say, "it's the ability to bounce back from a difficult time or adversity" or some variation. But the definition always includes the ability to "bounce". I always like to look at the dictionary for inspiration because I often learn something new about a word or concept that tends to get overused or watered down...like *resiliency*.

According to Merriam-Webster, "*resiliency*" is "the ability of something to return to its original size and shape after being compressed or deformed" or the "ability to recover from or adjust easily to adversity or change". Weird. Bouncing isn't even a part of the definition—so how did we get there? Many of us over the course of our lives experience adversity or change that affects us in many different ways. Some have experienced adverse childhood experiences, dealt with grief and loss, or even have witnessed or experienced a traumatic event that has shaped or impacted our life. If there's anything I have learned in my 40+ trips around the sun, it's that change is inevitable—but some have the ability to "bounce back" or as I like to view it, "stay afloat" despite the internal and external pressures we face as part of life.

From a systems perspective, I think it's important to note that once you've experienced something positive or negative—you're forever changed because of this new experience. I think in terms of the positive and negative things I've experienced in my own life and how they have shaped me as a human. I consider myself *resilient*, and many of you probably consider yourself *resilient*, too, but do we ever really stop and think about how others tend to be more *resilient* than others? Does *resiliency* even make sense given the definition? I have a theory that instead of being "*resilient*" we should actually be "*buoyant*".

Merriam-Webster defines "*buoyancy*" as, "tendency of a body to float or to rise when submerged in a fluid"; "the ability to recover quickly from depression or discouragement"; and "the property of maintaining a satisfactorily high level". This actually makes more sense to me. In other words, what allows us physically, mentally or metaphorically to keep our heads above water, recover from a non-supportive environment and also maintain a high level? Perhaps there's no immediate answer to this question but when I think of buoyancy, I think of equilibrium. We carry the weight the world on our shoulders while our friends, families, wingmen and battle buddies, as well as community supports us through the rough times. When internal and external pressures increase, we start to sink assuming there's no change in the supportive environment below. When there's more support and encouragement, we rise. We spend our entire lives floating in between positive and negative *buoyancy*.

One of my observations over the past few years is just how socially isolated we've become as a society—and that was before COVID-19! Technology has really made life easier in so many ways. There's so many things I can do without ever leaving my home. I can stay connected to my friends and post every detail of my life online, I can apply for and interview for jobs, and recently, I am even working from home! I can buy things from the online marketplace and have my items delivered to my doorstep, file my income taxes, make an offer to purchase a home, do all of my banking, investments and my husband and I recently were able to refinance our home (although we still had to go to a title company to physically sign the documents)! I can order groceries for delivery, have my favorite pizza delivered to my door, and, last but not least, I can go to school—all without ever leaving my home. Sounds nice, right?

But when you're "stuck" at home, all you want to do is leave! In my opinion, COVID-19 has initiated an incredibly powerful shift in our community. Earlier I mentioned how things or circumstances, positive or negative, will influence--if not change your life in some way, shape or form. Given the current "Safer at Home" Executive Order people been spending more time at home and with loved ones and finding innovative ways to connect with their communities. Here's a few of the things I've seen: families doing more physical activities like walking and biking, I've witnessed the most beautiful sidewalk art around my community and some with notes of encouragement! I've seen so many hearts in the windows of homes for the "happy heart hunt", I've seen teachers parading through communities honking their horns because they miss their students, and just this weekend, Badger Fans were seen "jumping around"! More people are connecting through video chats just to "see" and "hear" their friends or families. Folks, we've always had these opportunities, but somehow in the face of the current pandemic, the human spirit has found a need to re-connect with each other and my hope is that trend continues long after we've globally put COVID-19 to rest.

I'm inspired by the soldiers, airmen and state employees within the Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs as well as other state agencies and non-governmental organizations who have pulled together in state's time of need and provide resources for our community. One of the strengths of the Wisconsin National Guard is and always has been our people. I'm extremely proud to be a part of the Wisconsin National Guard and leading the Service Member Support Division—I have an incredibly talented team comprised of contractors, state employees, Federal Civilians, AGRs, FTNGD as well as M-day individuals who are here to serve you! We're in this together and regardless of what challenges or pressures you face, we're ready to help you "bounce back" or "remain afloat".

Contact Your CVSO for Veteran Financial Assistance



Financial assistance for various issues can be found through your County Veterans Service Officers Association of Wisconsin (CVSO). They assist currently serving, veterans and families with many things along with resource and referral. CVSO is an organization of professional veteran's advocates. In Wisconsin the CVSO plays a critical role in the veteran's advocacy system and is often the initial contact in the community for veterans services. The association is committed to Wisconsin counties to provide a vital and efficient system of services and advocacy to veterans, their dependents, and survivors. The officer for your county can be found on the WI CVSO website or you may call their toll-free number: 1-844-WIS-CVSO (947-2876) (This number is not manned, but the voicemails will be directed to appropriate person for response.)

TRICARE Update for T32 National Guard Members & Families

TRICARE is the Department of Defense's health care program for active duty service members (SM), military retirees, National Guard (NG) and Reserve members, family members, and survivors worldwide. NG SMs and their families are eligible for TRICARE benefits when placed on active duty orders **for more than 30 days** in a row.



TRICARE plans and benefits are below:

- 1) TRICARE Prime is available for enrollment by eligible personnel who live within a 50 mile radius of a military treatment facility (MTF) available to assign a Primary Care Manager (PCM). Prime provides medical and vision care. Prime has no annual deductible and no out-of-pocket fees to see specialists. Prime has the fewest out-of-pocket expenses of all TRICARE Plans.
 - 2) TRICARE Prime Remote (TPR) is available for all personnel eligible for TRICARE Prime but who live more than 50 miles from a MTF. TPR provides medical and vision care. TPR has no annual deductible and no out-of-pocket costs as long as care is received from your PCM or with a referral. Care received without a referral is subject to point-of-service fees.
 - 3) a. TRICARE Select is available for family members of activated NG SMs. TRICARE Select offers family members the option to choose their PCM from a list of TRICARE authorized providers. Tricare Select has an annual outpatient deductible and cost shares for covered services. Costs may vary based on sponsor's (i.e. activated NG SM) military status.
b. TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS). TRS is available to individuals no longer covered by Prime, TPR, or Select, and that do not receive Federal Employees Health Benefits. TRS has an annual deductible, monthly premiums, and cost share for covered services. There is no assigned PCM, SMs and their families can choose to receive treatment at a MTF (based on space availability) or with a TRICARE authorized provider.
3. Additional resource for information on TRICARE Plans and Eligibility can be found at <https://www.tricare.mil/> and scroll down to the bottom left of the webpage and click "Activating."



Follow the WI Chaplain Corps

Through their Facebook page, the Wisconsin Chaplain Corps will be providing: Worship services, daily devotions/inspirations, celebrations of religious holidays and more. Follow them on [Facebook](#). @wichaplaincorp

Staying In Stateside

Museums throughout the globe are offering online and digital content. Weeks of content is available is a walk-through virtual format ranging from street views of landmarks to close-ups of museum galleries. Take a family vacation from your computer this week and visit the nation's capitol –Washington D.C.!

The Landmarks and Museums Washington D.C.

*The White House - [Google Arts and Culture](#)

*Ford's Theatre - [Google Arts and Culture](#)

National Gallery of Art, Washington DC - [Google Arts and Culture](#)

*Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery - [Google Arts and Culture](#)

*George Washington's Mount Vernon - [Google Arts and Culture](#)

*Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History - [Google Arts and Culture](#)

All sites with an * can be "walked through" via the orange Google icon



“As American as Apple Pie”

Apple pie is a classic dessert anyone of any age can enjoy. [The recipe](#) utilizes ingredients commonly found in most kitchens. Ingredients include; cinnamon, flour, sugar, salt, nutmeg, lemon juice and, the main event, apples. You may utilize premade crusts or [make your own](#). Is your kitchen lacking fresh fruit? No worries – take things back to the 1930s with a [mock apple pie recipe](#). Side note: Be sure to reduce heat from 425°F to 350°F and cover the crust with foil to prevent burning.

Peanut butter cookies are another easy recipe for small hands which utilizes an all-American staple. To make [this recipe](#), all you need is butter, sugar, brown sugar, eggs, flour, baking powder, baking soda. After the dough is mixed and cooled to firm, kids can roll the dough into little balls and flatten them by making a criss-cross pattern with a fork.

Wisconsin USO Movie Night

Join the USO as they host a Sunday Family Movie Night by watching [HOP](#) virtually. All Military Families can participate. Movies start at 7pm on 3/12. All you need to do is access the link below .



Step 1. Visit <https://www.netflixparty.com/>

Add the extension to your device. To install Netflix Party, start by clicking the “install Netflix Party” “button on this page. Once you are redirected to the Chrome Web store, click “add to chrome” to finish installing

Step 2. Join a Netflix party: (look for the link on [Facebook USO Wisconsin](#))

To join a party click on a party URL, which will redirect to Netflix's website. Then click on the “NP” button next to the address bar, and you should automatically join the party.



April is the #MonthoftheMilitaryChild in which we recognize the sacrifices and bravery of military kids who often deal with frequently moving, often being the new kid, dealing with separations from parent(s) and/or having parent(s) deployed. Military children are strong and resilient!

Practice resiliency by checking out [12 Tips to Reduce Your Child's Stress and Anxiety](#). Here's a few:

1. Encourage your child to face his/her fears, not run away from them.
2. Tell your child that it is okay to be imperfect.
3. Focus on the positives
4. Schedule relaxing activities
5. Model approach behavior, self-care, and positive thinking
6. Reward your child's brave behaviors...and more!

Follow the WI National Guard [Child and Youth Program](#) and the [Family Programs](#) pages on Facebook for more fantastic ideas during this special month!

