



LIFELINK NEWSLETTER

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The Role of Resilience after Setbacks

Health scares, forgotten deadlines, missed promotions, and failed classes are just a few of the unexpected setbacks that life can toss our way; and most of us have or will encounter some sort of setback in life. Obstacles may make us feel like we have no control and resign to accepting failure as permanent. We may have feelings of depression, anger, defeat, frustration or a depleted sense of self-worth. Or we may feel all of those at once.

They may skew our outlook temporarily, but constructively dealing with setbacks and other obstacles can improve psychological health by helping to build resilience. This resilience helps us bounce back from failures and defeats and helps us thrive in future efforts.

Risk and reward seem like they go hand-in-hand with fast-paced military life, and service members are often thought to be fearless. Success at something we took a risk on causes our brains to release a chemical signal called dopamine that makes us feel good, builds our confidence and contributes to more success. Unfortunately, it can also impact our ability to handle **failure**.

After a major setback, our brains begin to associate that risk with a threat, leading to avoidance. **Courage** is honesty about fears, willingness to be vulnerable, the desire to succeed and the **preparation** for a potential failure. It gives us the mental and moral strength to move forward.

Failure can breed some of our most creative moments that can lead us back to the rewards of success. Here are some ways to productively deal with setbacks:

- **Take a step back.** You need time to heal after encountering an obstacle. Take time to process what has happened, but try not to ruminate and cause yourself additional stress. Utilizing a **breathing** exercise can help you stay relaxed.
- **Take ownership without blame.** After a setback, acknowledge and own it. Blame is a common response, but transferring the responsibility will not change the situation and may discourage you from trying to find solutions. **Journaling** is a great outlet to boost mood and let go of negative thoughts.
- **Find support.** People who you **trust** can help you feel better when dealing with setbacks, and encouragement

from those you are **connected** to can be reassuring. Spirituality also helps many people feel motivated to persevere and recognize their **purpose**. **Chaplains** can help you explore spiritual factors when dealing with disappointment and uncertainty from setbacks.

- **Regain control.** Certain factors that caused a setback may be unrelated to your actions, but know that you still have **control**. Understanding how to apply lessons learned is empowering. Make a list of your proudest accomplishments or favorite personal attributes to remind yourself that you can succeed and are not defined by your current circumstances.

While disheartening, setbacks can be a catalyst for progress. **Thinking positively** after facing an obstacle can help you better navigate stress and feel encouraged to accomplish potential goals. Self-care after a setback can alleviate stress and frustration. And getting **SMART** about your future goals can help prevent future setbacks.

Always remember that even taking a risk is a sign of courage. If things didn't go your way this time, don't feel defeated. See a setback as an opportunity to learn and grow. Remember the words of Robert Louis Stevenson: "Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant."



Lifelink Spotlight

A Marathon for Suicide Prevention

Suicide prevention is an all hands effort, and the Sailors aboard the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) wanted to do their part to ACT.

From January 30-31, the Sailors held a 24-hour marathon in the ship's hangar bay to raise awareness about the importance of looking out for your fellow Sailor. "The goal was to show our Sailors that we care," Capt. Cassidy Norman, Truman's Executive officer, said. "Suicide prevention is such an important message, and we wanted to get the message out whatever way we can."

The marathon included machine workouts for Sailors to perform in 15-minute blocks. They could choose from stationary biking, running on an elliptical, rowing, or performing a total body workout.

The turnout for the event was better than the coordinators expected. "We aimed to have at least one Sailor working out at a time, but often had multiple Sailors exercising and supporting their Shipmates side-by-side," Norman said.

Participants received a complimentary t-shirt and a gym towel showing the telephone number and website address for the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**.

Aviation Maintenance Administrationman 1st Class Thereva Foreman, one of the event's coordinators said, "We wanted to let our shipmates know that there is help available and plenty of people aboard Truman that are there for them, as the event proved today."

For more information about the event, read this **Navy.mil story**. Visit <http://www.facebook.com/usstruman> for more information on the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75). More news from USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) is also available at www.navy.mil/local/cvn75/.



Aviation Electronics Technician 1st Class Kelly Bruner, left, signs up Ens. Edwin Ortiz to participate in a 24-hour Suicide Prevention marathon in the hangar bay aboard USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75).

Plan of the Week Notes

Below are sample Plan of the Week notes aligning with topics covered by the Every Sailor, Every Day campaign during the month of March:

1. Nutrition labels can be confusing, especially the guidance on serving sizes. And you've probably heard references to a deck of cards or the palm of your hand to measure food, but what does all of this mean? Get more information about how to maintain a healthy weight by thinking about serving sizes and portion sizes and learn how to "eyeball" them at <https://www.hprc-online.org/articles/how-to-gauge-food-portion-sizes>.
2. Social media is a great way to stay connected with friends, family and old classmates and see what's going on in their lives. It's fun to keep in touch, but it never hurts to take a break from social media every once in a while to reconnect with yourself and have some screen-free time for self-care, spending time with your buddies, or even getting quality sleep. Check out our blog for more tips on unplugging at <https://navstress.wordpress.com/2018/02/27/unplugging-from-social-media-for-psychological-health/>.
3. Being tired makes you feel miserable and want to get under the covers and sleep for hours. But did you know that fatigue can also impact your decision-making, memory, and stress response? Learn more about the effects at <https://navstress.wordpress.com/2016/07/27/fatigue-the-big-grey-elephant/>.
4. If you or a fellow Sailor is feeling down or dealing with psychological health concerns, there are resources available to help. The best thing you can do is reach out for support. Find it 24/7 from the DoD BeThere Peer Support and Outreach Center, online at www.betherepeersupport.org or at 1-844-357-7337.

New Navy Suicide Prevention Handbook Now Available

The new Suicide Prevention Handbook is available on the Navy Suicide Prevention webpage. The new handbook is designed to serve as a ready reference for policy requirements, program guidance and educational tools to strengthen local suicide prevention efforts. It supersedes the Commanding Officer's Suicide Prevention Program Handbook from 2015 and is designed for all levels of leadership (deck plate through command triad), as well as Suicide Prevention Coordinators, members of the command resilience team and high touch-point groups. The handbook is available [here](#).

News and Resources

How to Develop Healthy Sleep Habits
[Real Warriors](#)

Embedded Mental Health Care Providers Break Down Barriers to Care
[Psychological Health Center of Excellence](#)

Be a Meal Prep Monster
[Guard Your Health](#)

Master Your Taxes with MilTax
[Military OneSource](#)

Inhale. Exhale. Repeat: Control your Feelings through Breathing
[Human Performance Resource Center](#)

Department of Defense Summer Camps
[Military OneSource](#)

Behavioral Fitness: Healthy Behaviors to Build Strength
[Real Warriors](#)

Health Care of the Future: Virtual Doctor-Patient Visits a Reality at NCR
[Health.mil](#)

Do You Have a "Gold-Medal" Mindset?
[Human Performance Resource Center](#)

Hydration Basics
[Human Performance Resource Center](#)

Growth through Trauma
[Human Performance Resource Center](#)

Current and Upcoming Events

Navy Nutrition Month
March
Resources available [here](#).

Sleep Awareness Week
Mar. 11—17

Brain Injury Awareness Month
March

Dialogue with DSPO
Mar. 14, 10 a.m. CST
[Log in here](#)

SPC Training Webinars
Mar. 21, 6 p.m. CST
Apr. 12, 10 a.m. CST
[Register here](#)

Fueling Your Body and Mind with Food

The foods we eat have a chemical effect on the brain and impact how we feel. Processed foods—from nutritional supplements like **protein powders** to combo meals from your favorite drive-thru—can keep your body from accessing the beneficial nutrients it needs to help you feel and perform your best. Many of the essential and naturally occurring nutrients—fiber, phytonutrients and other healthy compounds—are stripped, altered or replaced during processing.

Current studies show that a balanced diet high in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean protein promotes optimal health and better mood. These whole foods are made of vitamins and minerals that are broken down during digestion, making them available for the body to use as energy and for essential processes.

Supplement vs. Whole Food

Supplements typically use artificial or synthetic vitamins and minerals, which may not offer the same benefits as whole foods. The human body is designed to recognize and utilize the nutrients in natural and whole ingredients more effectively than man-made vitamins and minerals, which often isolate particular nutrients and leave out essentials.

Comfort Food vs. Whole Food

Our mood often influences what we eat, but what we eat can also **influence our mood**. Foods like cookies, potato chips and soda are all highly processed, high in added sugar and fat, and low in nutrients. The vitamins and nutrients needed for your body to produce serotonin are missing or less effective in these foods because they are in a man-made form that isn't as accessible to the body. Healthier options such as grilled chicken, vegetables and water help your body produce serotonin, boosting mood and providing energy to do something productive, and also help improve sleep, focus, and alertness

How to Make Changes

Healthy eating doesn't have to be difficult or expensive. Here are a few ways to make the switch to whole or less processed foods:

- Re-think fast food. For a quick and healthy meal, opt for a rotisserie chicken at your local grocery store, a salad and fresh fruit.
- Shop the perimeter of your grocery store for fresh meats and produce. Most frozen food is good too; just skip items with gravies and sauces. Check out these **tips** on our blog to eat healthy in the barracks.
- Swap out your sugary snack stash for your favorite fresh fruits and vegetables; the original **comfort foods**. Pair them with 10-15 nuts or a tablespoon of peanut butter or other healthy spread.
- If going for a processed food (something that comes in a bag, box, container or package), aim for five ingredients or less. Watch out for high-fructose corn syrup and other **hidden sugars**.

Talk to your Health Promotions Office or Registered Dietitians (RD/N) office for more information and resources.

LT Pamela Gregory, OPNAV N17 Nutrition Program Manager, is a Registered Dietitian with over nine years' experience in counseling a wide variety of clientele on nutrition and health-related diseases/ topics. LT Gregory uses a functional nutrition approach to assist clients in their treatment phase.

