Defensive and Offensive Spirituality: The Foundations for the Super Soldier

Padre Harry Crawford
LCol Dave Grossman: Psychological and Spiritual Inoculation?
Victor Frankl


Logotherapy:
» Frankl’s concept is based on the premise that the primary motivational force of an individual is to find a meaning in life. The following list of tenets represents basic principles of logotherapy:
» Life has meaning under all circumstances, even the most miserable ones.
» Our main motivation for living is our will to find meaning in life.
» We have freedom to find meaning in what we do, and what we experience, or at least in the stance we take when faced with a situation of unchangeable suffering.
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

- **Physiological**: breathing, food, water, sex, sleep, homeostasis, excretion
- **Safety**: security of body, of employment, of resources, of morality, of the family, of health, of property
- **Love/Belonging**: friendship, family, sexual intimacy
- **Esteem**: self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others, respect by others
- **Self-actualization**: morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, acceptance of facts
Research

» Journal of Family Psychology (American Psychological Association, 2014)
  ✤ Ability to cope with stress (especially in committed partnerships) increases when one or both persons in the relationship are engaged in “spiritual disciplines”

» Werner (1989)
  ✤ 32-year longitudinal research project
  ✤ 698 individuals in the U.S.
  ✤ Resilient individuals were significantly more likely to report having sources of spiritual and religious support

» Seligman (as cited in The New Yorker, 11 Feb 2016)
  ✤ Those with an internal “locus of control” shaped and informed by religious and/or spiritual experiences cope better
Religion (spirituality) and its relationship to Mental Health (Wellbeing)

“The vast majority of empirical research as well as Clinical knowledge indicates that religion has a positive influence on mental health as well as on the ability of a person to function well.” (Miller & Kelley, 2005, p.464)
Spirituality Metrics

- **rCOPE** Religious Coping Methods Measure This is a 21 item measure of positive and negative patterns of religious coping mechanisms Pargament et al., 1998
- **SWBS** Spiritual Well-Being Scale This 20 item scale assesses well-being in terms of spirituality-Paloutzian and Ellison, 1982
- **DPRI**-Deployment risk and resilience inventory-sees resilience as a multi-dimensional construct and measures-assess risk and resilience variables that are related to well-being after deployments
- **TCI** Temperament and Character Inventory The Self-Transcendence character scale. Three factors in the scale include (1) self-forgetful vs. self-conscious (11 items), (2) transpersonal identification (9 items), and (3) spiritual acceptance vs. Materialism (13 items). Cloninger, Svrakic, and Przybeck, 1993
Spirituality Indicators/Metrics

- (EXCEL) survey, it measured spirituality as one variable as a dimension of character among Soldiers. Excellence in Character, Ethics, and Leadership
- **Brief R-Cope**\(^{36}\) Psychology/Medicine Measures belief in God to help with coping following a major event or illness
Spirituality, Forgiveness, and Quality of Life: Correlation with PTSD Victims

What is important to note is that the concept of spirituality is not necessarily linked to religion as a part of collective consciences (Lenoir, 2003; Lewis et al., 2005). Religion always involves collective practice of a faith (e.g., Christianity, Islam, and Judaism). It includes theological or dogmatic norms, customs, and beliefs that are adopted by societies, groups and/or individuals as convictions (Durkheim, 1897-1898). Thus, an individual can manifest their spirituality by either belonging or not belonging to a religious group. One can be spiritual and not be religious and vice versa (Hatch et al., 1998). The concept of spirituality implies interior autonomy and does not require alignment with an exterior power and control mechanisms.
The report and the research constructs contained within were designed to support air force leaders in promoting resilience among Airmen, its civilian employees and air force family members.

Research identifies 4 major spiritual fitness constructs: Spiritual Worldview, Personal religious or Spiritual practises and rituals, Spiritual community support and Spiritual coping. Research has linked these spiritual fitness constructs to various aspects of well-being, such as improved quality of life and physical and mental health. In addition, these constructs—spiritual worldview and spiritual coping in particular—may also indirectly affect various well-being outcomes by buffering stress. Prominent Metrics of Spiritual Fitness Related to Key Constructs. Research on these key constructs shows that numerous metrics of religiosity and spirituality are related to spiritual fitness.
The Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) program is designed to increase psychological strength and positive performance and to reduce the incidence of maladaptive responses of the entire U.S. Army.

There are four program elements: (a) the assessment of emotional, social, family, and spiritual fitness; (b) individualized learning modules to improve fitness in these domains; (c) formal resilience training; and (d) training of Army master resilience trainers (MRTs) to instill better thinking skills and resilience in their subordinates.

This is to be assessed/measured by the GAT: (Global Assessment tool) a self-report questionnaire designed to measure the psychosocial well-being of soldiers of all ranks and experience in four domains.
Religion vs. Spirituality

What is important to note is that the concept of spirituality is not necessarily linked to religion as a part of collective consciences (Lenoir, 2003; Lewis et al., 2005). Religion always involves collective practice of a faith (e.g., Christianity, Islam, and Judaism). It includes theological or dogmatic norms, customs, and beliefs that are adopted by societies, groups and/or individuals as convictions (Durkheim, 1897-1898). Thus, an individual can manifest their spirituality by either belonging or not belonging to a religious group. One can be spiritual and not be religious and vice versa (Hatch et al., 1998). The concept of spirituality implies interior autonomy and does not require alignment with an exterior power and control.
DGMPRA : Spiritual Well-Being and Wellness

» Conception of the Absolute/Divine:
- this is based on a person’s image or experience of divinity. It involves categories of religions or faith-based practices, such as “monotheistic,” “deistic,” “atheistic,” “pantheistic (i.e., God in everything),” or “panentheistic (i.e., God in all things and transcending all things).”

» Meaning:
- refers to the individual’s sense that life is worth living.

» Connectedness:
- occurs with other people, God, divinity, or elements in the environment.

» Mystery:
- relates to how a person deals with ambiguity, the unexplained, and the uncertainty of life.

» Spiritual Freedom:
- is related to an individual’s capacity to experience and interpret a sense of freedom from fear and desire in living.

» Experience/Ritual:
- refers to rituals that are a healthy part of a person’s life and the experiences that accompany the behaviour of carrying out the ritual.

» Forgiveness:
- reflects one’s attitudes toward giving and receiving forgiveness.
Explore MISSION READY through the categories below or use the site's search feature to find the programs and services directly related to your concern or need:

- My Career
- My Family
- My Health
- My Relationships
- My Beliefs
- My Finances
Canadian Army Integrated Performance Strategy (CAIPS) = MISSION:READY

Spirituality guides the way we understand our life journey; its path and its practices. It gives meaning and purpose to our lives, and is often expressed or experienced through religion, philosophy, or a rule of life. It is central to the development of moral character, values, and beliefs, and is intrinsic to how we experience self, others, and community. Our spirituality is informed by our world view and is most often understood as a means through which we can connect, both privately and with others, to the source of that which is Sacred and/or greater than ourselves.
Spiritual Fitness

The ability to integrate core beliefs and values in a way that enables us to find greater meaning and purpose in life, positively affecting Army Team well-being, choices, actions, sense of belonging, and relationships.
# Spiritual Fitness Performance Continuum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPTIMAL</th>
<th>SUSTAINED</th>
<th>REDUCED</th>
<th>DISTRESSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Engages with one's life's meaning and purpose.</td>
<td>Maintaining one's life's meaning and purpose.</td>
<td>Losing one's sense of life's meaning and purpose.</td>
<td>Believes life has no meaning or purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Integrates morals, core values and beliefs.</td>
<td>Exploring morals, core values and beliefs.</td>
<td>Disregarding morals, core values and beliefs.</td>
<td>Abandons morals, core values and beliefs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Able to forgive self and others.</td>
<td>Seeking to forgive self and others.</td>
<td>Unwilling to forgive self and others.</td>
<td>Unable to forgive self and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Connected to one's worldview and/or what one believes is Sacred.</td>
<td>Engaging with one's worldview and/or what one believes is Sacred.</td>
<td>Disengaging with one's worldview and/or what one believes is Sacred.</td>
<td>Disconnected from one's worldview and/or what one believes is Sacred.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spiritual Wellness Strategy Map RCChS

**CoG**
Trust in a chaplaincy inspired by the call to serve others before self

**Spiritual Care**
- Ministry of Presence
- Spiritual Accompaniment/Counselling
- Religious Services
- Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue
- Collaboration with CAF Specialists

**Advice, Training and Education**
- **Spiritual Resilience**
  - Religious Freedom and Diversity
  - Ethics, Moral and Spiritual Development
  - Unit morale, RAA, RLE
  - Chaplain Communication

**Chaplaincy Governance**
- Chaplain MOS
- Strategy, Policies and Doctrine
- Recruiting, Training and Education
- Chaplain Resources and Infrastructure
- Chaplain Care for Caregivers

**End State**
CAF personnel and their families will be morally and spiritually resilient and healthy
RCChS Spiritual Wellness Concepts

Spiritual Resiliency Definition

Spiritual resiliency is the ability to draw upon the emotional, psychological and physical strength required to adjust to adversity or a traumatic event. It means having the inner spiritual fortitude to overcome, recuperate, or even thrive through difficult experiences.
Categories: Defensive and Offensive Spirituality

» Defensive Spirituality: the training, practises and experiences which are designed to help soldiers deal with difficulties in their lives or bounce back from trauma.

» Offensive Spirituality: The development of: the belief/value systems, spiritual practises and training/education programs that enhance soldiers well-being and Quality of life.
Defensive Spirituality
Lourdes Military Pilgrimage

“During this pilgrimage I was able to feel at peace and calm, which I haven’t been able to do in over a year. Long road ahead but this trip has started the journey.”
SENTINEL

- Observe
- Confirm
- Take action
- Seek backup
Moral Injury

MI is a complex issue that develops when military members face experiences that cannot be justified within their inherent personal and moral beliefs. To date, therapeutic interventions have been unable to address the full effects of MI. Due to the reported benefit of spirituality on health outcomes and wellbeing, and the interconnection between spirituality and MI, spiritual interventions may be effective modalities for enhancing and restoring overall health and well-being.
Padre at the Table: The Role of Spirituality in the Treatment of Combat Trauma: Ian Easter

“The impact of combat trauma can affect a soldier’s spirituality in two different ways. On the one hand, the aftermath of combat trauma can increase reliance on and strengthen a soldier’s spirituality. On the other hand, the effects of combat trauma can have a negative impact, resulting in deep existential questions and often leading to a loss of faith” (Pargament et al., 2003).
Offensive Spirituality
An Introduction to Spiritual Resilience
Spiritual Resilience

Dimensions of Resilience

- Fitness and stamina
- Nutrition for energy
- Rest and recovery

- Calming and focusing
- Impulse control
- Emotional regulation
- Positive emotion
- Realistic optimism

- Self-belief
- Outlook & perspective
- Thinking traps
- Sustained focus
- Causal analysis
- Control controllables

- Values and beliefs
- Empathy
- Reaching out
Warrior Spiritual Resiliency

Padre Vic Morris
CANSOFCOM Health Framework

Multi-disciplinary approach to Health

- Cultural
- Family
- Physical
- Mental & Psychological
- Social
- Financial
- Spiritual
CANSOFCOM Spiritual Resiliency Program

With diligent application of such tools we believe that at least five outcomes are feasible, all clearly supporting the development of commissioned leaders of character for the Army:

- An increased self-awareness by each leader, most often enhancing the ability to understand and to self-author the values and beliefs that define their character;
- An evolving world-view or personal life philosophy that seeks truth and justice, appreciates diversity, and continuously seeks out new experiences and knowledge to promote growth;
- A growing social awareness that fosters respect for others' viewpoints and the ability to see and understand the world from eyes of others, an attribute critical to understanding subordinates, allies, and enemies;
- An empowered sense of control and responsibility for one's own being, existence, and development, thus fostering inner strength and fortitude, and;
- A sense of conviction or faith that one is part of a noble profession.
Resilience and Understanding/Preparedness

Sacramental and Pastoral Support

Primary Role

Analysis

Engagement

External

Internal

Adapted from Maj (ret) Steve Moore
Spiritual resiliency in the CA

Where are you Spiritually?

A first step may be to gain awareness. Consult the Spiritual Inventory for insight into your present state of spirituality....
Canadian Armed Forces’ Chaplains as a Primary Source of Spiritual Resiliency: Maj (Dr) Harold Ristau:

» Personal faith offers people the ability to endure hardships, and to move forward in light of adversity and difficulties.

» Spirituality *may* or *may not* be experienced within formal religious structures. The usefulness of chaplains in the aftermath of a crisis intervention, and their role in the healing process remains undisputed.

» However, they also play a key role in equipping members for those critical events, making them more effective in all their tasks and duties. Establishing resiliency is as relevant in a post-war setting with no foreseeable major deployments in sight, as it is during a major high-stress operation.
The Future
Spiritual Path: Potential for Growth or Decline

Path, Practice, and Processes

Human Decline
Disintegration, unresolved struggles, disconnection

Human Potential
Integration, wholeness, holiness

Person

Spiritual Struggles including Moral injury

Brémault-Phillips, et al., 2017; Pargament, 2007, Fig 7.1, p. 136
Alignment of Total Health and Wellness Strategy\(^1\), CMOP-E\(^2\) and VAC Domains of Well-Being\(^3\)

ND/CAF Resiliency Pillars

- Familial Fitness
- Spiritual Fitness
- Physical Fitness
- Emotional Fitness
- Intellectual Fitness

Performance – operational readiness

CMOP-E

- Environment
- Occupation
- Person
- Social
- Cultural
- Institutional

VAC Domains of Well-Being

- Social integration
- Cultural

- Housing

- Physical environment

- Health

- Life skills
- Employment
- Finances
Maj (Rev Dr) Harold Ristau and Maj (Rev) Matthew Lucas

Spiritual resilience (in contrast with resilience in general) not only enables military members to be ‘stronger,’ it also results in a more ethically-inclined individual (Ristau 2014)

The results of this study show that there are several reasons to believe that a spiritually integrated fitness program would significantly contribute to the overall physical and mental readiness and resilience throughout the entire CAF and its operations at home and abroad (Lucas 2017)
The Super Soldier: Spiritual and Religious?

» From a slightly different perspective, Koenig (2012) a world renowned expert in the field of religion and health, addresses what he believes is a key issue with respect to the purpose and meaning for soldiers fighting in a war. He notes that Islamic terrorists in the past decade have only a small fraction of the resources that Western militaries possess. But these organizations have been able to sustain their fighters because there members are convinced that they are fighting against a greater evil. Koenig notes that many Western soldiers are not able to cope with trauma, if their motivation is patriotism to their country, allegiance for their family, or even for their own personal survival. A greater motivator lies in the belief that they are fighting a godly war.

Questions
Bibliography


Fonséca, Félix. *Social and Spiritual Well-Being and Wellness: Definitions and Indicators* Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis, Technical Note, DGMPRA TN 2013, April 2013

Bibliography

- Spirituality, Forgiveness and Quality of Life: Testing a Mediational Model with Military Veterans with PTSD. Currier, Drescher, Halland, Lisman and Foy. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10508619.2015.1019793
Bibliography


» Lucas, Matthew. Enhancing Military Fitness through Spiritual Integration in the Canadian Armed Forces, St Paul’s University. March 2017

» Easter, Ian. Padre at the Table: The Role of Spirituality in the Treatment of Combat Trauma. St Paul’s University. 2015
Bibliography


» Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) (2017). Total Health and Wellness Strategy.