



WARFIGHTER SPIRITUAL FITNESS DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

JULY 2025



FORTIFYING THE WARFIGHTER SPIRIT AND WARRIOR ETHOS FOR LARGE-SCALE COMBAT OPERATIONS

“A strong spirit promotes resiliency and enhances one’s ability to mitigate adverse responses to stress.”

-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Total Force Fitness Framework

Large-scale combat operations are not simply a question of relative forces but a much deeper belief about the nature of government and, ultimately, about human dignity and respect. To prevail on the battlefield, warfighters must forge a warrior ethos built on beliefs, purpose-meaning, and values –they must have something that transcends beyond themselves for which they are willing to serve, face hardship, and sacrifice. The Chaplain Corps is uniquely equipped to help forge a warrior’s ethos for the demands of the profession of arms, enabling them to *find hope and purpose before the fight, in the fight, after the fight, and beyond their time in uniform.*





HOW COMPREHENSIVE AIRMAN FITNESS AND THE SPECTRUM OF RESILIENCE INTERSECT

Comprehensive Airmen Fitness (CAF) is a holistic (mental, spiritual, physical, social), strength-based, integrated framework that plays a role in sustaining a fit, resilient, and ready force. It is a multiagency approach of programs and activities working together across the DAF to create a Spectrum of Resilience. Familiarize yourself with CAF and how its domains and tenets influence your resilience, then use the resources in this quick start guide to develop your own Spiritual Fitness.

Many internal and external factors influence our personal resilience. It's critically important we give attention to and foster improvement in each CAF domain to remain resilient for ourselves, our families, our teammates and our Air Force Invisible Wounds, like PTSD, traumatic brain injury or emotional abuse may impair our fitness. Click here for information and resources about **Invisible Wounds**.

COMPREHENSIVE AIRMAN FITNESS (CAF)

Resilience Domains and Tenets

 <p>MENTAL The ability to effectively cope with unique mental stressors and challenges.</p>	 <p>PHYSICAL The ability to adopt and sustain healthy behaviors needed to enhance health and well-being.</p>	 <p>SOCIAL The ability engage in healthy social networks promoting overall well-being and optimal performance.</p>	 <p>SPIRITUAL The ability to adhere to beliefs, principles or values to persevere and prevail in accomplishing missions.</p>
<p>Awareness Adaptability Decision Making Positive Thinking</p>	<p>Endurance Recovery Nutrition Strength</p>	<p>Communication Connectedness Social Support Teamwork</p>	<p>Core Values Perseverance Perspective Purpose</p>

CAF is a holistic, strength-based, integrated framework that plays a role in Sustaining a fit, resilient and ready force. CAF is not a standalone program—it is multiagency programs and activities working together across the DAF.



Spectrum of Resilience

Supporting Airmen and their Families to help them thrive

SELF	FAMILY & FRIENDS	PEER/SOCIAL CONNECTIONS	SUPPORT ENTITIES	CLINICAL MEDICAL HEALTH
<p>Stress Management Physical Fitness Mental Fitness Spiritual Fitness Financial Services Wellness</p> 	<p>Spouses Partners Friends Virtual Friends Other Family Members Mentors</p> 	<p>Religious Groups Morale, Welfare, & Recreation Shared Hobbies Professional Organizations Sports Teams Clubs Co-Workers</p> 	<p>Chaplains Military & Family Readiness Center Military Family Life Consultant Integrated Operational Support Team (IOS) Victim Advocates Victims Counsel Employee Assistance Program Unit Leaders First Sergeants Military OneSource</p> 	<p>TRICARE Mental Health Clinic Behavioral Health Counseling ADAPT</p> 

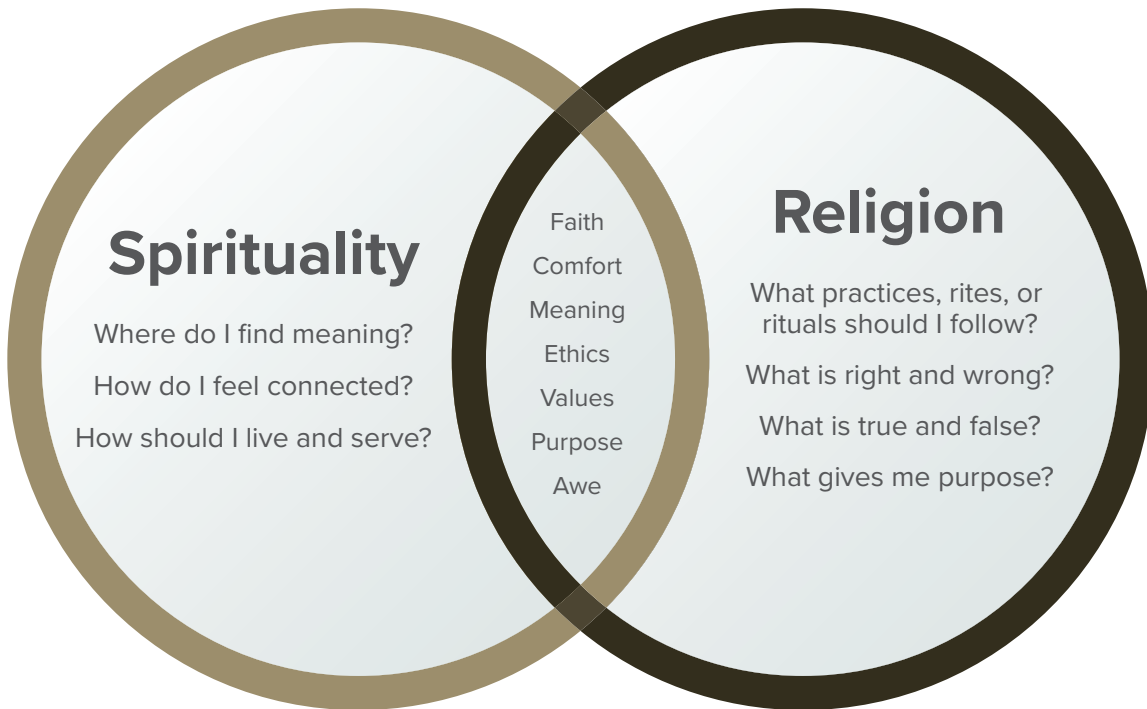
We encourage Airmen and their Families to seek out the help needed at any level, and to be a support, help, or bridge for others across the full Spectrum of Resilience.

Go to <https://www.resilience.af.mil/> for more information on the resources available to you and your family.
*Available resources may vary by installation.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS

As far back as 2011, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs identified the essential nature of spiritual fitness for the warfighter and defined it as *“The ability to adhere to beliefs, principles, or values needed to persevere and prevail in accomplishing missions.”* (CJCSI 3405.01, 2011, A-2). Since then, the Air Force Chaplain Corps has defined “spiritual fitness” for Airmen and Guardians as *“The ability to adhere to beliefs, virtues or values needed to develop a fulfilling life with quality of service.”* (DAFI 52-101). For some, this involves religious faith and practice; for others, religion is not a part of their spirituality. The Department of Defense and Department of the Air Force recognize the operational advantage spirituality provides to ensure warriors flourish across the spectrum of operations.

For some, religion is a part of their spiritual fitness.
For others, religion is not a part of their spirituality.



Religion is a set of beliefs and practices.
Spirituality is a state of being.

COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE OF SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Spiritual fitness has physical and neuropsychological benefits. While spirituality is metaphysical, its impact is seen in the brain. Using MRI imaging, research from Columbia and Yale Universities using MRIs shows spiritual activities activate the left inferior parietal lobule (integrating sensory input) and the prefrontal cortex (judgment). This is crucial for Airmen, Guardians and Families as meaning, sense-making, and judgment are vital for combat decision making. Thus, spirituality strengthens key neuropsychological areas for operational effectiveness.



2018

- Yale Univ & Columbia Univ Cerebral Cortex journal
- brain-imaging studies (functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging - fMRI)
- conducted in US, China, India & Brazil
- universal, cognitive basis for spirituality

Left Inferior Parietal Lobule

- “Neurobiological Home of Spirituality”

Prefrontal Cortex

- thickened through regular practice of faith/spirituality (vs. cortical thinning w/ chronic depression)

Research from Columbia University’s Spirituality Mind Body Institute found that engaging in transcendent (sacred/significant) spiritual activities provides significant protection: **80% against substance dependence, 60% against major depression, and 50-80% against suicidal ideation.** Additionally, **over 70% of an individual’s spirituality is influenced by their environment.** Therefore, commanders, leaders, and Religious Support Teams (RST) can significantly support Airmen and Guardians’ flourishing through spiritual fitness development.¹

ACTIVE TRANSCENDENT SPIRITUAL FITNESS LEADS TO:

More of This:

- Stronger parent-child relationships
- Educational aspirations & attainment
- Effective work habits
- Longevity & physical health
- Well-being & happiness
- Higher recovery rates from addictions
- Self-control & self-esteem
- Stronger coping skills
- Charitable giving & volunteerism
- Community cohesion & social support

Less of This:

- Fractured families
- Teen sexual activity
- Alcohol & drug abuse
- Suicide, suicidal ideation & depression
- Many infectious diseases
- Juvenile crime
- Violent crime
- Domestic violence

THE CHAPLAIN CORPS ROLE IN SPIRITUAL FITNESS

RSTs support and advise on all matters related to religion, spiritual fitness, suicide prevention, ethics, morale, and holistic well-being. Furthermore, RSTs act as the chief advisors to leadership about the spiritual aspects of Comprehensive Airman Fitness across the Spectrum of Resilience.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS FORMATION

Spiritual fitness works for those who work for their spiritual fitness. Spiritual practices enhance spiritual fitness by strengthening connections to personal beliefs, purpose, values, and relationships. Religious, philosophical, or human values inform this process. Both religious and non-religious approaches share similar practices.

SPIRITUAL FITNESS ASSESSMENT

The Uniformed Services University CHAMP/SOCOM Spiritual Fitness Scale (SSFS) is a research-based, empirically validated tool that effectively measures spiritual fitness. It offers metrics for evaluating spiritual health while fostering a shared language for discussing spiritual fitness. The SSFS is simple to use and beneficial for both theists (believers in God or spiritual beings) and nontheists (non-believers), helping Airmen and Guardians “persevere and prevail” in their missions.

To get the best available data and protect potentially privileged communication Chaplains and Religious Affairs Airmen should be the primary advisors who administer the assessment and collect the data for unit-wide assessments. The SSFS aims to foster open and purposeful communication between the individual and their RST. It is a tool for self-awareness meant to encourage further exploration.



USING THE SSFS

The SSFS is capable of informing and supporting many activities related to SF/SP, including:

- Establishing multi-dimensional baseline profiles for groups and individuals
- Assessing trends over time
- Bridging trends to individual coaching and mentoring
- Providing an evidence base for SF/SP program alignment
- Evaluating the effectiveness of programs designed to impact SF/SP, and articulate the impact of this growth with total well-being and readiness

Administer the scale within two blocks:

- Block 1: PMPV and SSGG
- Block 2: PCHP

To avoid any priming effect, the scale designers recommend administering the horizontal sub-scales (PMPV and SSGG) before the vertical sub-scale (PCHP). When administering the SSFS using an electronic system, the order of the items within each item-block can be randomized. When using paper and pencil to administer the SSFS, consider using the provided version below (this item sequence will minimize likely order-effects.)

SOCOM SPIRITUAL FITNESS SCALE (SSFS)

Reflect on your attitudes, commitments, and beliefs and answer as accurately as possible.

1. I know what my life is about.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

2. Human value and respect should be the greatest social value.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

3. I've been able to find a sense of meaning in my life.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

4. Looking at my life as a whole, things seem clear to me.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

5. I believe strongly in humanity and the power of people.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

6. I have a core set of beliefs, ethics, and values that give my life a sense of meaning and purpose.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

7. I often think about a “grand plan” or process that human beings are a part of.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

8. The greatest moral decision is doing the greatest good for human beings.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

9. Being of service to others is an important source of meaning in my life.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

10. I can find meaning and purpose in my everyday experiences.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

The next set of statements reflects commitment to God or a higher power. Even if you don't think of yourself as religious, try to answer as accurately as possible. If you believe a statement doesn't align with your belief system, then choose the option "The assumptions behind this statement aren't consistent with my world views."

11. I believe in God or a higher power.

- Yes No

12. I feel God's love for me.

- Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views.

13. I look to God for strength, support, and guidance.

- Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views.

14. I feel God's presence.

- Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views.

15. I am grateful for all God has done for me.

- Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views.

16. God comforts and shelters me.

- Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views.

17. I've decided to place my life under God's direction.

- Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views.

18. Religious beliefs are what really lie behind my whole approach to life.

- Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
 The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views.

SCORING

For profiling, sub-scales should be scored by first coding the response options, such that:

- Strongly disagree = 1
- Disagree = 2
- Neutral = 3
- Agree = 4
- Strongly agree = 5

AVERAGING

- Each sub-scale should be averaged separately; subsequently after this, the sub-scales may be averaged together.
- In the version above, PMPV items (1, 3, 4, 6, 10) and SSGG items (2, 5, 7, 8, 9) are mixed together, and must be unmixed to generate separate averages.

CLASSIFYING SCORES

Rigid cutoffs to classify individual scores can be seen as arbitrary for nonclinical traits that exist along a continuum. However, for the purposes of creating working categories that can be matched with suggested readiness interventions: An average score below 3.5 for any sub-scale can be considered a 'low/lower score,' indicating ample room for growth. Accordingly, an average score above 3.5 for any sub-scale can be considered a 'high/higher score,' indicating the need for a readiness focus on both maintenance and growth.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- PCHP items (12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18) should be scored if respondents indicate they do believe in God.
- PCHP items *should not* be scored if respondents indicate they *do not* believe in God.
- PCHP also *should not* be scored if respondents use the option "The assumptions behind this statement aren't consistent with my world views" on two or more items.
- When using sub-scales to evaluate program-related growth in one of the three Core Attributes of SF/SP, extending to a 10-point, Likert-type format is recommended, with descriptors placed only on points 1 (strongly disagree) and 10 (strongly agree). Change scores in the 10-point format can then be divided by 2 to compare with scores in the 5-point format.

THE PATHWAY TO SPIRITUAL FITNESS²

The path toward spiritual development begins with:³

Personal Connection to Transcendence (PCT): Sacred (religion/religious practice) or the Significant (highest principles, ultimate values)

Pursuit of Purpose and Values (PPV): Belief/Character/Core Values/Relationships

Service and Sacrifice for the Greater Good (SSGG): Volunteerism/Service (greater community and peer group)/Relationships (personal & professional).

Guided by a personal connection to the transcendent (the sacred and/or the significant), these components connect core beliefs and values guiding behaviors like healthy relationships and ethical decisions. These components create a harmonious link between inner convictions and daily interactions, fostering a life of integrity and meaning.



Spiritual fitness plays a pivotal role in our overall health and wellness. It emanates from our inner core, offering profound purpose and meaning to our existence. It serves as a guiding light that diminishes anxiety, depression, and other emotional burdens by revealing how our struggles mold us into the individuals we are destined to become.





THE 4 SPIRITUAL STEPS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR SPIRITUAL CORE



PURPOSE

WHAT GIVES MY LIFE MEANING AND PURPOSE?

- Do I believe that my life has purpose?
- If no, why not? If yes, what is the purpose?
- What is my vision of the future?
- What is my hope for the future?
- What perceptions do I have about myself that give me inherent value?
- How do I answer the question, “Who am I?”

PATH

WHAT IS MY SPIRITUAL PATH (FAITH-BELIEF-WORLDVIEW)?

- What does my worldview and associated beliefs say about who I am in relation to others?
- What mindset do I use to progress through life?
- On what is this mindset based?
- What do I engage in that shapes this mindset?
- What am I reading to reinforce this mindset?

PRACTICES

WHAT ARE MY MOST EFFECTIVE SPIRITUAL PRACTICES?

- What, if anything, has worked well? What has not worked?
- How do I typically respond when experiencing adversity?
- How can I improve my ability to cope with adversity?
- Over what do I have ability to exercise control?
- What can I do about adverse situations in my life I cannot control?
- How do I handle guilt and shame?

PEOPLE

TO WHOM DO I FEEL MOST SPIRITUALLY CONNECTED?

- How am I reinforcing those connections?
- What connections cause significant distress?
- What are healthy ways I can disconnect from connections that cause significant stress?
- How can I mend damaged connections?
- Who, if anyone, do I need to forgive (including myself)?
- What do I consider my spiritual community?

Step 1: Identify Your Purpose⁵



This exercise will help you identify your life's purpose-meaning, helping define what you live for. Your purpose guides you in developing a path, practicing specific disciplines, and connecting with communities to help you live a life of purpose.

5 REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Reflect on these questions and write your answers in the spaces below.

1. At the end of your life, what do you want people to say about who you were, what you did, and your impact on others and the world?
2. Why are these things important to you?
3. If you could do one thing to change the world, what would it be and why?
4. What does it mean for your life to feel right?
5. Who or what is most important in your life and why?

As you answered these questions, did you start to identify your life's overarching purpose? If so, write it down here...

My Purpose in Life is: _____

Step 2: Design Your Path⁶



The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Committing to living with purpose may be the hardest step, but it can transform how we live and work. Living with purpose means striving for something greater than ourselves. This commitment leads us to adjust our lives to align with our overarching purpose. Sometimes, we struggle to live with purpose simply because we don't know how. The exercise below will help you design your path by setting core values, beliefs, principles, and commandments that guide you. It will also help you identify and remove obstacles blocking your path.

POINTS TOWARD PURPOSE

1

Determine the destination

What is your overarching purpose for your life?

2

Set the course

What core values, beliefs, and principles lead you to live for your purpose?

3

Identify the obstacles blocking your path.

What is currently keeping you from fully living for your purpose?

4

Identify what you have for the journey, what you need, and who is with you.

What are you currently doing to live your purpose? What else do you need? Who can best help you?

My Destination (Purpose I'm Living for): _____

My Core Values, Beliefs, and Principles that will keep me on track: _____

The Obstacles that keep me from living my purpose: _____

My Starting Point:

- What am I already doing to live my purpose? _____
- What do I need, to live out my purpose better? _____



SPIRITUAL FITNESS FOCUS AREAS⁷

This section focuses on resources to deepen one's understanding of core beliefs, values, self-awareness, and experiences. By developing one's spiritual fitness, one forges a life of stability and resilience in difficult times.

**Not sure where to begin increasing your spiritual fitness?
These focus areas may guide your journey!**



Focus Areas

Core Values/Beliefs (Spiritual and Religious)

Moral Leadership

Character Building/Air Force Values

Mindfulness/Self-awareness

Meaning and Purpose



SPIRITUAL FITNESS FOCUS AREAS

CORE VALUES/BELIEFS (Spiritual and Religious)

Includes resources for deepening your spiritual and core beliefs through general and faith-specific materials, such as religious studies, spiritual devotionals, sacred text readings (Bible, Koran, Torah), and commentaries.

MORAL LEADERSHIP

Identifies resources critical to the foundation of moral leadership and development from a spiritual perspective, including AFI 1-1, AFH 36-2618, and DAFI 52-101.

CHARACTER BUILDING/AIR FORCE VALUES

Focuses on our shared values as an Air Force and how to incorporate them into our daily lives. A couple of sources are The Enlisted Force Structure and The Profession of Arms: Our Core Values, more commonly known among Airmen and Guardians as the “Brown” and “Blue” books.

MINDFULNESS/SELF-AWARENESS

Highlights resources related to being present at the moment, being mindful of yourself and others, and slowing down and reflecting.

MEANING AND PURPOSE

Focuses on helping individuals explore the “why” from various perspectives, including existential meaning, professional purpose, and individual roles within family or community.

BEHAVIOR

This area offers resources to promote positive behavior, impact decision-making, foster healthy relationships, and to live your life with a greater sense of purpose and meaning.

SERVICE TO OTHERS: Identifies ways to serve others, the positive impacts of service, and links/resources to various service opportunities.

FORGIVENESS: Provides resources on the “what” and “how” of forgiveness, which is necessary to forgive others and yourself.

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES: Will provide tangible “how-to” on various spiritual disciplines, both generally (e.g., meditation or journaling) and faith-specific (e.g., Prayer from a Christian, Jewish, Muslim, etc. perspective).

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS: Provides helpful relationship techniques (communication, conflict management, active listening, team building, etc.) to improve your personal and professional relationships. A resource for service members and veterans can be found at <https://strongerfamilies.com/> **this is not an official endorsement or representative of the United States Air Force.*

ETHICAL DECISION MAKING: Provides material to assist in developing ethical decision-making through various methods, including vignettes, decision-making models, articles, and training plans.

FAITH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Assists in connection to faith communities and demonstrates the value of being connected to a like-minded group to promote healthy accountability, spiritual growth, and development. It utilizes various resources (links to online religious services, groups, communities, articles on the benefits, etc.)

MORAL INJURY



Understanding Moral Injury

Moral injury (MI) is “The enduring consequences of perpetrating, failing to prevent, bearing witness to, being the victim of, or learning about acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations. It is a soul wound characterized by and resulting in feelings of guilt, shame, anger, and disgust within an individual.” Definition adopted by AF/HC, AF/SG, (2024). Moral injury, its impact, is correlated with PTSD and other issues.

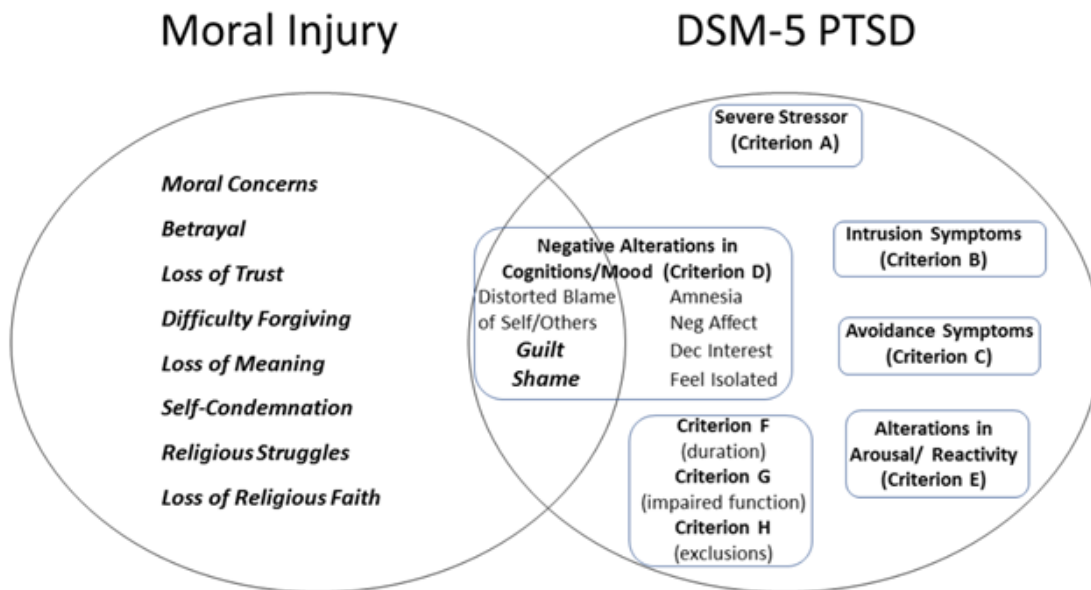
Post-Traumatic Growth After Moral Injury

This is designed to provide individuals with resources and connections on how to thrive after healing from moral injury or other traumatic experiences. A Post-Traumatic Growth resource for veterans can be found at <https://bouldercrest.org/> *this is not an official endorsement or representative of the United States Air Force.

MORAL INJURY IS AN INVISIBLE WOUND LIKE PTSD:

excessive shame	broken belief system	loss of hope
unresolved guilt	shattered innocence	extended isolation
a loss of faith	betrayal by friends or leaders	feelings of abandonment
extreme sorrow	uncertainty between right and wrong	repulsion to death
intensely negative thoughts	feeling that sacrifices go unnoticed	broken relationships

HOW IS MORAL INJURY DIFFERENT FROM PTSD?



MORAL INJURY

SELF-ASSESSMENT

A I feel betrayed by leaders I once trusted
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10

B I feel guilty over failing to save the life of someone in war
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10

C I feel ashamed about what I did or didn't do during this time
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10

D I'm troubled because my actions violated my morals or values
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10

E Most people aren't trustworthy
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10

F I don't have a good sense of what makes my life meaningful
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10

G I can't forgive myself for what happened to me/others in combat
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10

H All in all, I feel that I'm a failure
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10

I I wonder what I did for God to punish me
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10

J Since I first joined the military, my religious faith has weakened
1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10

INSTRUCTIONS

With 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, indicate to what degree each statement applies to your situation or mindset.

Consider contacting your chaplain if you score one or more items a 9 or 10, or if three or more questions score more than 5.

You are not alone



1. What is it?

Moral Injury is the aftermath of perpetrating, failing to prevent, bearing witness to, being the victim of, or learning about acts that transgress your deeply-held moral beliefs and expectations.

Moral Injury occurs when your sense of “what’s right” or “how the world should work” gets shaken up by something you experience.

Moral Injury can be a consequence of a betrayal by legitimate authority that breaks your moral compass. It can affect anyone, anytime, anywhere regardless of background.

2. Causes

- Acts of betrayal
- Disproportionate violence, death or harm to civilians
- Being the victim or witness of “same team” violence
- Concealed acts of cowardice
- Failure to perform one’s duty
- Inability to prevent death or suffering
- Exposure to dead or wounded teammates or civilians
- Sexual trauma

3. Symptoms

- Social withdrawal
- Loss of trust
- Aggression
- Loss of meaning
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Alcohol abuse
- Spiritual doubt
- Fatigue
- Poor self-care
- Memory/attention trouble
- Irritability
- Insomnia
- Risk of suicide

4. Prevalence

An estimated 50-65% of active-duty U.S. servicemembers have experienced some degree of Moral Injury. Twenty-five to 34% of incidents that cause/contribute to PTSD can also result in Moral Injury.

5. Factors

Combat engagements and other potentially traumatic events can increase the risk of Moral Injury. A person’s upbringing, culture, spiritual beliefs or education can affect how they process events. A servicemember’s military background - from those who are young and inexperienced to those seasoned leaders who carry a great sense of responsibility - can factor into their susceptibility to Moral Injury.

You are not alone

Contact your chaplain’s office for Moral Injury resources and support

This assessment aims to foster open and purposeful communication between the individual and their RST. It is a tool for self-awareness meant to encourage further exploration.

Step 3: Practices for Progress⁸



Practices I already have in place or established:

Practices that will help me better live out my purpose:

Practices I would like to learn more about to help me live out my purpose:

MY COMMITMENT TO DAILY PRACTICES OF PURPOSE & MEANING

I am making the commitment to daily practice the following...

PRACTICE	WHEN I WILL DO IT EACH DAY

*You can also create personalized “Spiritual Fitness Plans.” See your Chaplain or Religious Affairs Airman for more details.

PRACTICES FOR PROGRESS⁹

Staying on track requires continually remembering our purpose. The more we think about it, the more we align our lives with it. The best way to maintain this focus is to discipline ourselves with daily practices that renew our sense of purpose, align our actions with it, and strengthen our ability to stay on course.

Reading: Reading helps us focus on our purpose by filling our minds with relevant information, teaching us skills to live better, and providing examples from others who have shared and lived our purpose.

Journaling: Journaling helps us track our progress toward our purpose. It allows us to freely write about our successes, struggles, and questions regarding living our purpose.

Meditation: Meditation helps us focus intensely on living with purpose. It dedicates mental energy to cultivating specific qualities, such as principles, teachings, core values, or beliefs vital to our purpose, bringing peace and calm to our lives.

Mindfulness: Mindfulness helps us focus on our current position and live our purpose. It involves being fully present in the moment, training our mind to concentrate on the now without distractions from the past or future.

Prayer: Prayer keeps us in communication with God. It is a religious discipline where we seek guidance, provision, and favor to live our purpose better. Prayer brings peace to our lives.

Confession: Confession frees us from guilt that hinders our purpose. By admitting our faults to God, a spiritual guide, a trusted friend, or someone we've wronged, we shed the emotional weight of guilt, helping us stay on the path to our purpose.

Gratitude: Gratitude cultivates thankfulness and trains our minds to focus on the positive. It helps us appreciate the impact others have on our growth and progress toward living our purpose.

Generosity: Generosity reminds us that living our purpose is not just about us. It involves giving our time, talents, possessions, words and lives to help others progress and fulfill their purpose.

Forgiveness: Forgiveness frees us from anger, bitterness, hurt, and guilt that distract us from our purpose or undermine our core values, beliefs, and teachings.

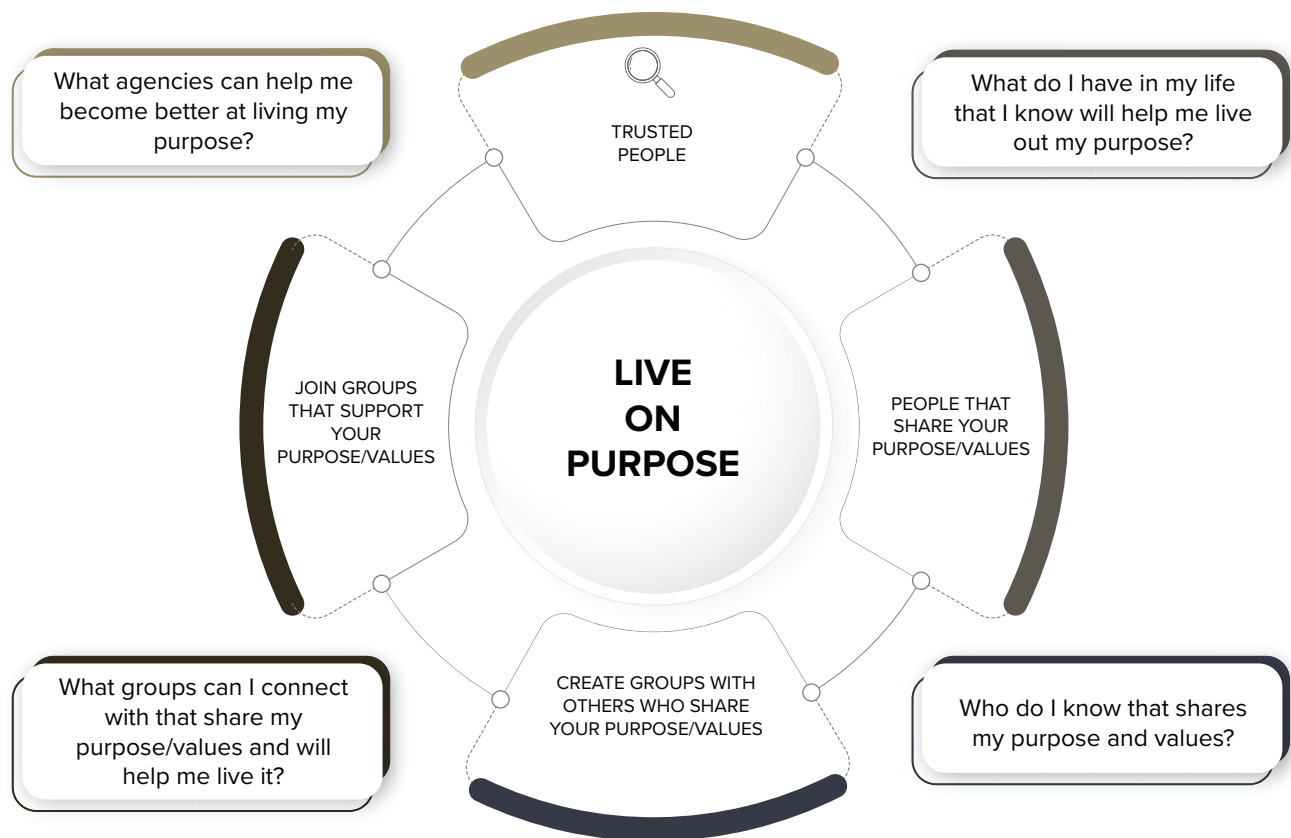
Self-Denial: Self-denial teaches us to prioritize our purpose over our wants and desires. It shows that our purpose is more significant and critical than momentary satisfaction.

Worship: Worship is the intentional act of honoring and responding to the sacred, often expressed through practices that connect an individual with the divine or ultimate meaning. Worship strengthens spiritual fitness by fostering purpose, aligning values, and deepening resilience through connection with something greater than oneself.

ENGAGE WITH PEOPLE WHO SUPPORT YOUR PURPOSE¹⁰

No one can live out their purpose alone. We need others to walk with us along life's journey. Relational connections provide motivation, education, strength, and support, increasing our effectiveness and success in living our purpose. On this journey we will face fatigue, struggles, and moments of doubt. Trusting people who support our purpose help us stay on course and complete the journey successfully. Likewise, community empowers us to live with purpose. In community, we find value, understanding, trust, and a sense of connection.

Below is an exercise to help you build connections that support your purpose:





PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER¹¹

Congratulations on living a life of purpose aligned with your beliefs and values.

My core beliefs, values, and principles are:

Obstacles hindering me from living my purpose:

How I will remove the obstacles:

Practices I will do to help me live in alignment with my purpose:

People I will connect with to help me live my purpose:

FORGING THE WAY FORWARD

1. **Use the information in this guide and the upcoming resources to achieve your goals.**
2. **Contact your Religious Support Team (RST) for assistance with your spiritual growth.**
3. **Take the “SOCOM Spiritual Fitness Scale” to assess your beliefs and behaviors and identify areas for growth.**
4. **Design a Spiritual Fitness Plan (SFP) tailored to your spiritual goals and growth.**

The importance of supporting the human spirit in combat is nothing new, Gen. George C. Marshall noted that *“The soldier’s heart, the soldier’s spirit, the soldier’s soul, are everything. Unless the soldier’s soul sustains him, he cannot be relied on and will fail himself and his commander and his country in the end.”* Chaplain Corps personnel specialize in helping to fortify a warrior’s spirit, purpose, meaning, and values, critical elements supporting a warrior ethos and a life of flourishing.

We are excited about your journey ahead as you develop your spiritual fitness! The best is yet to come!

For more information, please reach out to your local Chaplain Corps team for additional support and resource.

External Link Disclaimer Policy

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ENDNOTES

- 1 Miller, L. *The Spiritual Child* (2016); and *The Awakened Brain* (2021).
- 2 Adapted from USASOC Spiritual Performance and H2F Spiritual Readiness Guides. 2022 and Dr. Lisa Miller, Professor of Psychology, The Importance of a Spiritual Core, Spirituality Mind Body Institute, Teachers College, Columbia University. 2022. Spiritual Fitness Core: <https://vimeo.com/>
- 3 Douglas Yeung, Margret T. Martin, *Spiritual Fitness and Resilience: A Review of Relevant Constructs, Measures, and Links to Well-Being*, The Rand Corporation (2013)
- 4 Adapted from USASOC *Spiritual Performance Guide* and H2F *Spiritual Readiness Guide* (2022/2023) and Dr. Lisa Miller, Professor of Psychology, *The Importance of a Spiritual Core*, Columbia University.
- 5 Adapted from H2F *Spiritual Readiness Guide* (2023). Pg 9.
- 6 Ibid, 10.
- 7 Ibid, 11-12.
- 8 Ibid, 13.
- 9 Ibid, 14.
- 10 Ibid, 14.
- 11 Ibid, 17.