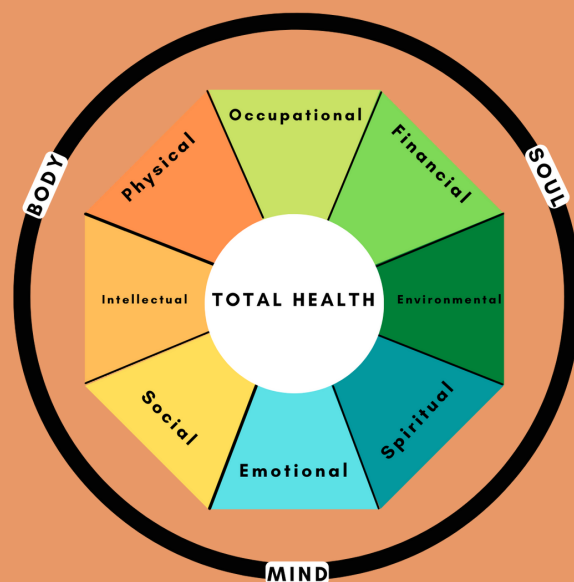


# MENTAL TOOLS GUIDEBOOK



# 10

## SIMPLE TOOLS

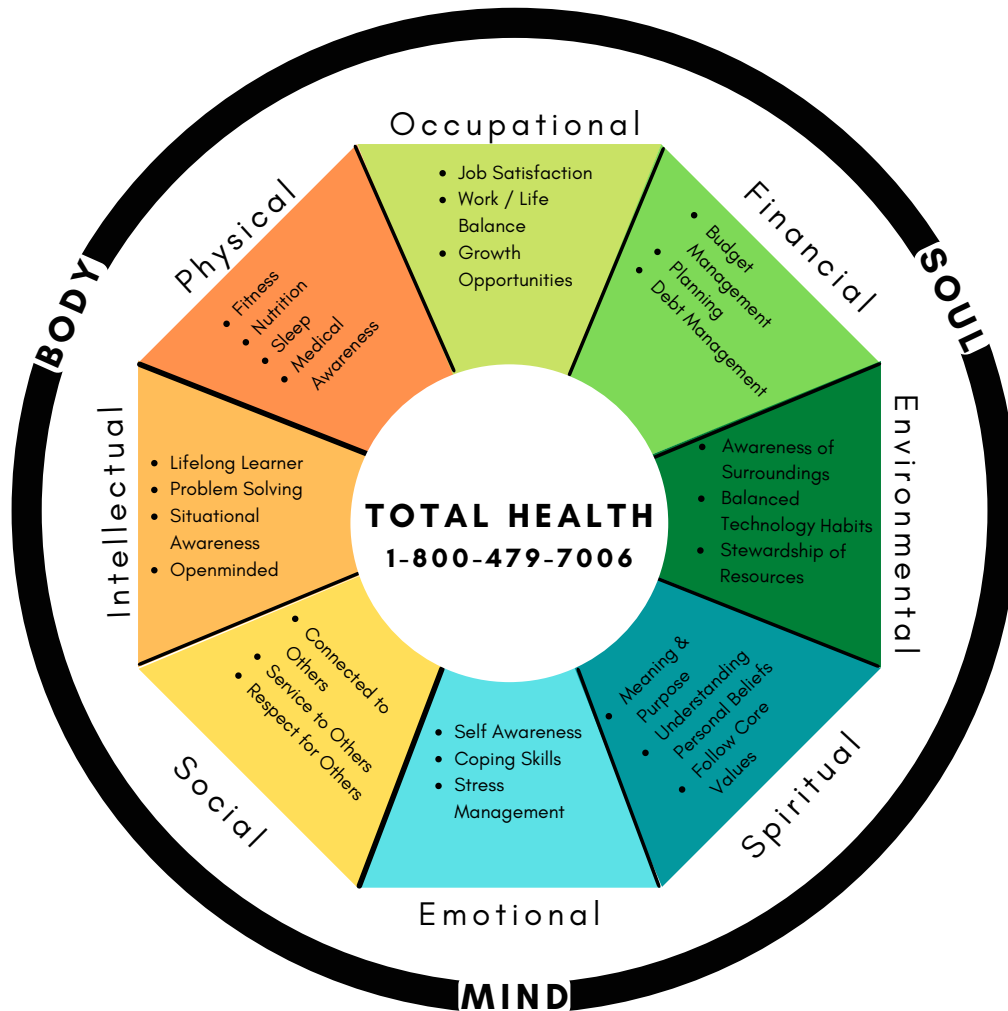
TO IMPROVE YOUR PERFORMANCE +  
HOLISTIC WELLNESS



Brought to you by the Idaho National Guard Service Member & Family Support Staff



# TOTAL HEALTH



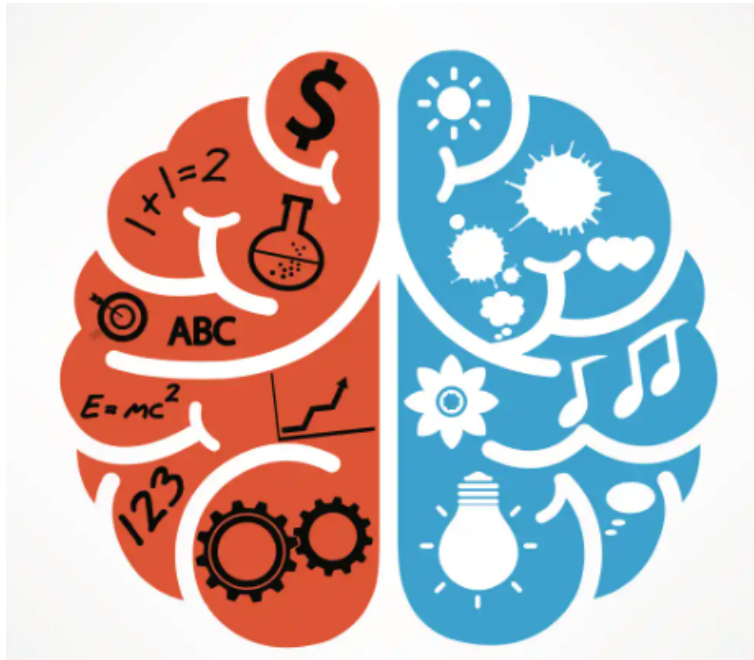
Total Health is a People First approach to help Service Members take charge of their health and wellbeing. Total Health aims to create self-awareness in the eight dimensions in order to learn and progress.

Look for these color icons throughout the booklet.

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
|  Physical  |  Occupational |  Social        |
|  Spiritual |  Financial    |  Environmental |
|  Emotional |  Intellectual |   |



# MENTAL TOOLS



Mental tools strengthen your mental toughness, similar to how you would strengthen the muscles in your body.

Improving your mental toughness can help you improve in other areas of life.



# MISTAKE MANAGEMENT



RECOVER QUICKLY AND PERFORM AT YOUR BEST

Being able to recover quickly from mistakes is an important part of performing at your best. Use the Learn, Burn, Return tool to learn and let go of mistakes and remain present.



## LEARN

Dr. Cindra Kamphoff-Beyond GRIT

Was the mistake within your control? If it was, what did you learn? How will you change things next time?

## BURN

Choose a verbal or physical cue that represents 'burning' or letting go of the mistake. Use this cue in the moments after the mistake.



## RETURN

After using your burn cue, return to the present moment. Make a conscious effort to return to a calm state and continue your performance.

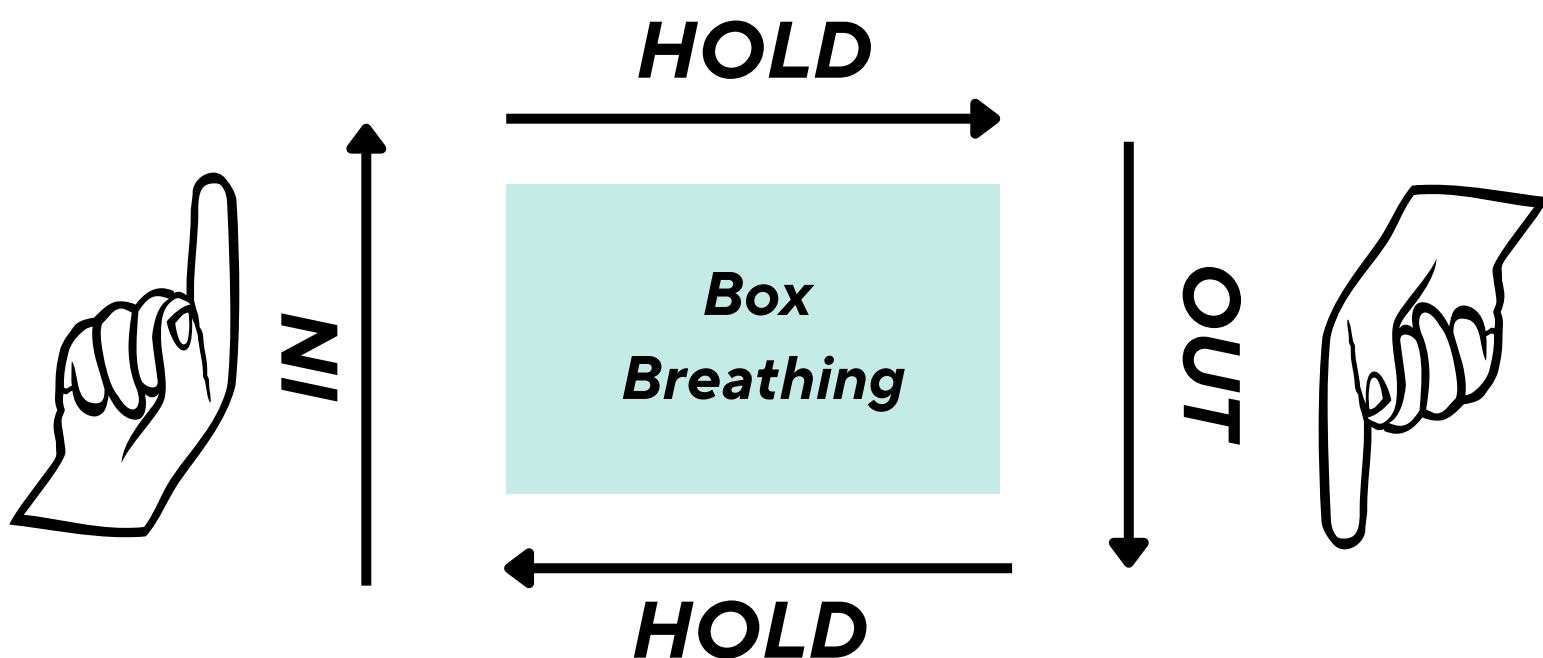


# STRESS



## COMBATING STRESS + ACTIVATION WITH BREATHING

**BOX BREATHING:** To practice, move your finger in a box like shape in front of you



- 1 Breathe in for 4 seconds while moving your finger up.
- 2 Hold that breath in for 4 seconds as you move your finger across.
- 3 Release that same breath for 4 seconds.
- 4 Hold at the bottom for 4 seconds.

**Repeat as necessary to lower heart rate and promote a relaxed state.**



# GOAL SETTING



Setting goals that are sustainable is important in helping you achieve them. Consider using this 3 step process to help you set objective goals that are challenging and allow you to focus on the process.



## PROCESS GOALS

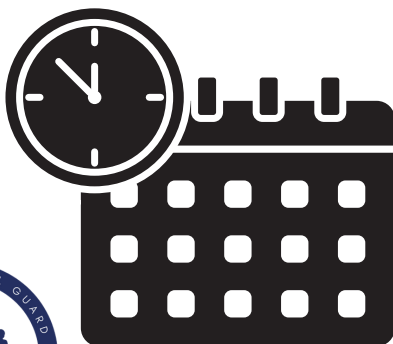
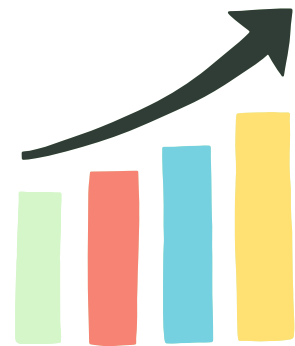
### DAILY HABITS

Everyday actions, within your control, that bring you closer to your performance and outcome goals.

## PERFORMANCE GOALS

### MILESTONES

Forms of progress and achievements that move you closer toward your outcome goals.



## OUTCOME GOALS

### THE BIG PICTURE

The final step, the goal your processes and performance have been working toward.



# SLEEP



**We need sleep just like we need food and water. Not getting enough sleep at night impacts your health and wellness.**

*Try out this relaxation strategy for improved sleep quality!*

## **Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)**



Progressive muscle relaxation includes the purposeful and intense tightening of ones muscles, followed by release. The repeated tightening and relaxation can reduce anxiety and stress in the body and improve your physiological state, resulting in better sleep.

### **To Practice:**

Tighten the desired muscle group for a maximum of 10 seconds and then relax for 10 seconds. Notice the difference between tension and relaxation. Repeat for all desired muscle groups.

*Suggestion: Start at the head and work down to the toes.*





# PRE-PERFORMANCE ROUTINES



**Performance is the ability to carry out or accomplish an action or task (can include participating in a(n): sport, exam, interview, mission, etc.). Developing a pre-performance routine can help you stay focused before and during your performance.**

*When preparing for an important performance, consistency is key.*

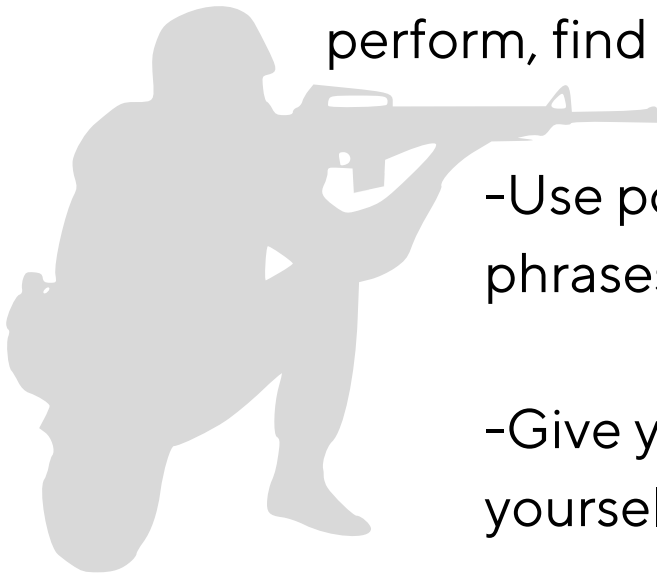
## Tips:

-Listen to the same music before you perform, find something that you enjoy

-Use positive self-talk and power phrases that work for you consistently

-Give yourself a focus cue to center yourself before you begin

-Keep your routine consistent in what you eat, how you sleep, train, etc.



# IMAGERY



**Imagery combines all 5 senses to mentally practice a particular performance or skill and is particularly useful in pre-performance routines.**



Your brain is so strong, it can mimic your physical performances mentally! Imagery can be used if you don't have a ton of time, or are getting ready for a big performance.

## HOW IT WORKS

*Imagine your ideal performance and go over the steps to achieve it using all your senses.*

### **Consider:**

What does the space **smell** like?

What do you **hear**?

What does the environment **look** like?

Any particular **tastes**?

What do you **feel** in or on your body?



# SELF-TALK



## BECOME AWARE OF YOUR INNER MONOLOGUE

Self-talk is helpful in maintaining motivation towards goals and can be extremely beneficial in improving performance. Whether you have a health goal to achieve or a test to pass, the way you talk to yourself can impact that performance.

### **Positive:**

*Favorable Emotions*

**"You're  
Amazing!"**

**"You're going  
too slow!"**

### **Negative:**

*Unfavorable Emotions*

**"You got this,  
keep going!"**

### **Motivational:**

*Self-Esteem Focused*



"Breathe,  
trigger  
squeeze"

**Instructional:**  
*Task specific*



**Associative:**

*Tuning into your body*

"My legs are  
tired, but they  
are strong!"

"What am I  
doing after  
this?"

**Disassociation:**

*Finding Distractions*

**Everyone responds and benefits differently from the various forms of self-talk. Figuring out what works best for you will help improve your performance!**



# CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES



**In life, factors or circumstances will arise that are OUT OF YOUR CONTROL. It is important to focus on the things that YOU CAN CONTROL.**



**Controlling the controllable is a key part of being mentally strong!**

If you find yourself struggling to gain control or have difficulty focusing on productive thoughts, consider using the R.E.M. strategy found on the next page.



# CONTROLLING YOUR R.E.M.



## Responses

We CAN control...

- Our reactions, emotions, awareness
- Our thoughts
- Perceptions of the situation



## Ethics

We CAN control...

Personal standards, decision making  
Values, beliefs, spirituality  
Who we are in the moment

## Mindfulness

We CAN control...

- Being mindful of others
- Remaining present in the moment
- Being non-judgmental



# MINDFULNESS



Practicing mindfulness involves being fully present in the current moment. Maintaining a non-judgmental and accepting perception of yourself and your surroundings.

**Daily mindfulness practice helps improve concentration and sense of personal control. With a greater sense of control, comes improved performance!**

## Mindfulness Meditation Practice:

*When feeling overwhelmed or exhausted, consider using a mindful meditation practice.*

Take time to notice how you are feeling physically (tightness, clenching, increased heart rate, etc.) and mentally (anxious, frustrated, embarrassed, etc.).

Take note of your emotions. Avoid judgement and work towards being accepting of the sensations present.

Notice if your mind begins to wander and gently bring your thoughts back to the present.

Consider taking a few centering, deep breathes, and find empowerment in what is within your control.



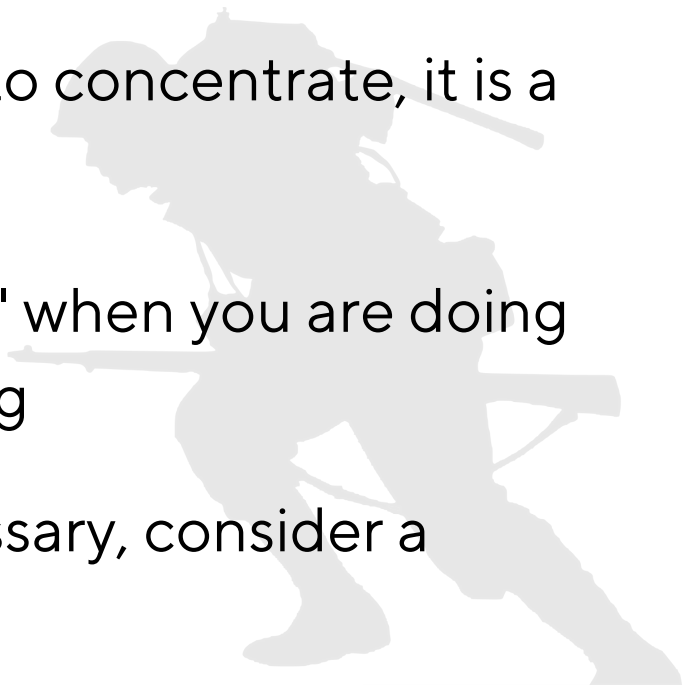
# CONCENTRATION



**Being able to concentrate effectively is essential to performing well in many aspects of life.**

## Tips:

- You can only focus on one thing at a time, make sure it is something within your control
- You have to decide to concentrate, it is a deliberate action
- The mind is 'focused' when you are doing what you are thinking
- Refocus when necessary, consider a mindfulness break





# RESOURCES

For more strategies and information to optimize your health visit:

**\*Human Performance Resource Center:**

[hprc-online.org](http://hprc-online.org), @hprconline

**Office of Financial Readiness:** [finred.usalearning.gov](http://finred.usalearning.gov)

**SLEEP - Walter Reed Army Institute of Research:** @wrairsrc

**ODPHP:** [health.gov/myhealthfinder/healthy-living](http://health.gov/myhealthfinder/healthy-living)

**Operation Supplement Safety:** [www.opss.org](http://www.opss.org), @opssorg

**Army Fit:** [armyfit.army.mil](http://armyfit.army.mil)

**Performance Triad:** [p3.amedd.army.mil](http://p3.amedd.army.mil)

*\*Variety of resources, tools, and assessments available for social, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, environmental, and physical health*

## References

***Beyond GRIT*** by Dr. Cindra Kamphoff

***The Mindful Athlete*** by George Mumford

***The Champion's Mind*** by Dr. Jim Afremow

***Routledge Handbook of Applied Psychology***  
by Stephanie J. Hanrahan & Mark B. Anderson





## **SERVICE MEMBER & FAMILY SUPPORT**

1-800-479-7006

<https://imd.idaho.gov/family-programs/>

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**M.A. SPORT & PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY**

**2022**