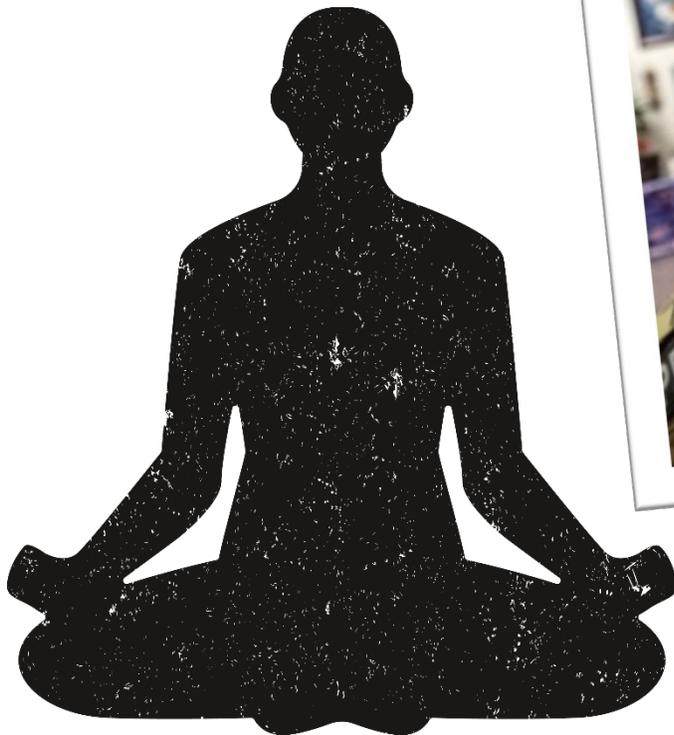
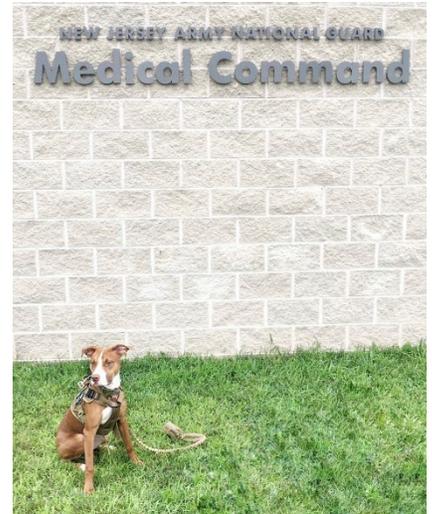




WELLNESS GUIDEBOOK FOR NJ ARNG SERVICE MEMBERS



New Jersey Army National Guard Psychological Health Program



Crisis Line (our team will *always* answer)

- 609-235-5959 everyday from 0700 to 1700 hours
- Access is available to soldiers & their families

Our Team:

- **MAJ Doris Ruiz** – Director of Psychological Health / Behavioral Health Officer / Licensed Clinical Social Worker / 609-864-9278
- **Shawna Hinkson** – North Jersey / Licensed Clinical Social Worker / 609-864-0143
- **1LT Kevin Ball** – Central Jersey / Behavioral Health Officer / Licensed Clinical Social Worker / 609-864-0126
- **CPT Melissa Parmenter** – South Jersey / Behavioral Health Officer / Licensed Clinical Social Worker / 609-864-9281

Mission: To provide immediate support &/or crisis intervention to Soldiers & their families within the NJARNG. To provide support & subject matter expertise to unit Comm& & their staff. Facilitate linkage to psychological & psychiatric services within the community. Provide educational training & resources to Soldiers & units in the NJARNG:

- Clinical case management
- Comprehensive mental health assessments
- Anxiety reduction skills
- Effective Communication skills
- Healthy relationships
- Self-Awareness (identifying triggers/symptoms)
- Safety/Crisis planning
- Effective/Healthy Coping
- Substance use education
- Educate units as to the importance of mental health needs & unit involvement

Positive Affirmations - positive affirmations are statements that are repeated to encourage & uplift the person speaking them.

<i>I endeavor to be the best that I can be.</i> I know, accept & am true to myself. <i>I further my career with every action I take.</i> I radiate love & others reflect love back to me.	I crave new, healthy experiences. <i>My body is healthy & full of energy.</i> Every day of my life is filled with love. <i>I find opportunities to be kind & caring everywhere I look.</i>
--	---

Drawing - draw your breath

Place your pencil or chosen drawing medium on a piece of paper. Take a moment & notice & observe your breathing. Visualize your breath as a line & show this on your paper. Spend a few minutes playing with different types of lines as you notice your breath. Try altering your breathing a faster or slower, then notice how this changes your lines on the page.

Get a new sheet of paper & focus on deep, *slow* breathing for relaxation. Draw lines that represent calming breaths. Maybe try to pause as you inhale & draw on the exhale, leaving the pencil on the page to create a continuous line; you may also want to try to create a new line for each breath. Continue for a few minutes in order to let yourself relax into calming sensations of ***breath, motion, & lines.***



Journaling – Writing can be a way to help you get out of your mind & help you get to know yourself by using a tactile medium. As you do this activity, remember it doesn't matter what you write, the mere act of writing can be soothing.

1. Write down FIVE things that make you incredibly happy & describe why they make you feel this way.
2. What qualities about yourself do you love the most?
3. Write about your one of your happiest memories?
4. Write about the last time you laughed really hard. What was so funny?
5. Write a letter to the future YOU.
6. Write about a song that mean the most to you. Why do the lyrics speak to you? How do you relate to this song? How does it make you feel when you hear it?

Meditation – the basic tenets of meditation – relaxing & breathing – can be difficult to master, especially during hectic times...set aside just a few minutes a day to do the following:

1. Be comfortable in a quiet place. Find a quiet space where you won't be disturbed. To get started, you can sit or lay down. You can sit cross-legged, on the floor, or on a chair if sitting. Sitting in a stable position, open & relax your palms, facing towards the sky.
2. Become "present" – what do you hear? How does it feel to sit? Do you feel tension? Are thoughts flowing through your mind?
3. Focus on your breath. As you take long & deep breaths, feel your breath move from your lungs & out through your nostrils or your throat. In through your nose, out through your nose. Your mind may wonder...notice it, & bring yourself back to peace.
4. Once focused, take notice of your body & how it feels. Start with the toes & work your way up to your head. If your mind continues to wonder, bring your thoughts back to your breath. Breathe 5-10 times with full concentration on each breath.
5. Keep practicing 😊 Start with exercises where your inhalations might be counts of four (1-2-3-4) & exhalation for the same (1-2-3-4). Once your breaths start to deepen, add a second on to each breath. You may also begin to build in a pause at the top & bottom of each of your breaths.

Body Awareness – progressive muscle relaxation

1. **Start out with a few relaxing breaths.** Use the diaphragmatic breath (fill up your lungs from the pit of your belly to the top of your throat), & as you exhale feel the tension begin to ebb away.
2. **Clench your fists.** Move your awareness to your h&s. Clench both of your fists for up to 5 seconds. Release for 15-20 seconds, imagining the tension ebbing out of your h&s.
3. **Tighten your biceps.** Move your attention to your arms. Draw your forearms toward your shoulders, creating a bicep. Hold for up to 5 seconds & then release for 15-20 seconds. As you release & imagine the tension flowing out of your biceps.
4. **Forehead & scalp.** Move your attention to your forehead. As you inhale lift your eyebrows & wrinkle your forehead. Hold for up to 5 seconds & then release for 15-20 seconds. As you release, feel the relaxation of the muscles of the forehead.

5. **Facial muscles.** Move your attention to your facial muscles. Furrow your eyebrows & purse your lips. Try to pull all of your facial muscles towards your nose. Hold for up to 5 seconds & then release for 15-20 seconds. As you release feel the relaxation of the facial muscles.
6. **Jaw.** Bring your attention to your jaw. Clench your jaw tightly, feeling the tension in the surrounding muscles. Hold for up to 5 seconds & then release for 15-20 seconds. Relax the muscles & allow the tension to disappear. You may feel your mouth begin to open a little.
7. **Neck & shoulders.** Now bring your awareness this region. Shrug your shoulders towards your ears. Feel the tension in the surrounding muscles. Hold for up to 5 seconds & then release for 15-20 seconds. Feel the tension in the muscles ebb away.
8. **Upper back/shoulders.** Now bring your awareness between the shoulder blades. Push your shoulder blades back as if you were trying to get them to touch. Feel the tension in the surrounding muscles. Hold for up to 5 seconds & then release for 15-20 seconds. Feel the tension in between the shoulder blades ebb away.
9. **Upper chest.** Now bring your awareness to your upper chest. Tighten the chest muscles & hold. Feel the tension in the upper chest muscles. Hold for up to 5 seconds & then release for 15-20 seconds. Feel the tension in the chest muscles flow away.
10. **Stomach.** Now bring your awareness to your navel area. Try to draw your navel in to your backbone. Feel your stomach muscles tighten. Hold for up to 5 seconds & then release for 15-20 seconds. Feel the tension in the abdominal muscles dissipate.
11. **Thighs.** Now bring your awareness to your thigh muscles. Try not to contract your stomach muscles as you consciously tighten your upper thigh muscles. Hold, hold hold...& now release for 15-20 seconds. Feel the tension in the thigh muscles dissipate.
12. **Calves.** Now bring your focus to your calf muscles. Consciously tighten your calf muscles by pointing your toes. Hold, hold hold...& now release for 15-20 seconds. Feel the tension in the calf muscles flow away.
13. **Feet.** Now bring your focus of attention to your feet. Tighten your feet by curling your toes toward the ground. Hold, hold & hold some more...& now release for 15-20 seconds. Feel the tension in the feet flow away.
14. **Mentally scan your body for any residual tension.** If you find a muscle group with residual tension then tense & relax this area again.
15. ***Feel a wave of relaxation, from the top of your head to the tip of your toes. When you are ready bring your awareness back to your breath & slowly open your eyes.***

Self-Guided Imagery - 10 Meditation Steps for Achieving Your Goals

1. Begin with an area of your life in mind. Choose an area where you have been struggling or would like to experience some transformation.
2. Now begin to imagine the highest possible outcome that you would like to be living in this area of your life 6 to 12 months from now. Imagine living your life the way you would envision if all your hopes & dreams were to come true. What is your ultimate reality?
3. Next, connect with one goal you would like to achieve in the next three months. Make it a good one.

4. Imagine what your life will be like once you have completed your goal. Create a picture or movie in your mind & step inside the visual representation as if you are inside it & looking through your own eyes. Adjust all of the qualities of sensory perception (taste, touch, sight, sound, smell) to create the most positive & most real feelings. Who is there with you? Where are you? What is happening around you?
5. Next, step out of the image you've created & imagine floating up in the air above where you are now, taking the mental image with you. Take a deep inhale & as you exhale, use your breath to energize the image, filling it with positive energy & intention. Do this five times.
6. Now it's time to imagine floating out into the future & visualize dropping the internal representation of your goal down into your life below you at the date & time you've set for this goal to reach completion.
7. Notice how all the events between then & now re-evaluate themselves to support you in accomplishing your goal. Visualize this process to make it feel real.
8. Once you feel complete, come back to now &, with your eyes still closed, consider what action steps you will take in the next week to move you closer to your goal.
9. Take a few deep breaths to ground yourself before opening your eyes. Write down your list of action steps & do any journaling about your experience.
10. Last, take action & maintain your focus. Every single day, do something that moves you closer to realizing your goal & living your dream.

Two things
you are in total
control of in life
are your attitude
& your effort.