

SurviveInPlace

Lesson 12

Psychology for Survival Situations

By

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What is the biggest single factor between success and failure in a survival situation?

It is not going to be the number of guns you have, how much ammo, food, or water you've amassed. It's not even going to be the courses you've taken, skills you've mastered, or the logistics that you've nailed down. It's going to be your mind.

The mind is truly the cornerstone of survival. We talked a little bit about it early on in the course and now we're going to cover it more in depth. I waited until later in the course to cover this important topic for a few reasons, the main one being that the skills are harder to measure and progress is harder to evaluate.

I will be giving you some concrete exercises that you can do to make your mind more resilient in this lesson, but they are much harder to measure than checking off a box when you've got your 72 hour kit ready. I'm going to be mentioning and recommending some additional books that will help you prepare your mind, not only for TEOTWAWKI (the end of the world as we know it) scenarios, but also for many of the problems that are coming on the horizon.

With the \$700 billion TARP program putting us on the line for \$24 TRILLION in debt, \$600 TRILLION in derivatives and credit default swaps spiraling towards implosion, not to mention our money supply doubling in the last 12 months, GDP dropping and unemployment rising, we are looking at UGLY economic times ahead.

A confession...

Although you probably signed up for this course to prepare for a post-Katrina or post-terrorist type events, you may not have known that it would help you prepare for the economic freight train of hurt and pain that is currently coming toward us at full speed.

I don't have a crystal ball and I would be speculating to tell you exactly what will happen, but I am not speculating when I tell you that we have some very rough times ahead of us. I have written every lesson with the understanding that while natural and manmade disasters are POSSIBLE, the economic disaster that we're facing is PROBABLE.

With that in mind, this lesson may be the most important one of all.

Burning Ants With A Magnifying Glass

Do you remember playing with a magnifying glass? Do you remember burning ants, blades of grass, paper, and match heads with the focused beam? Do you also remember looking through the magnifying glass and seeing objects go from very small to very large as you moved it?

I want you to think about that for a second. When you look at an object through a magnifying glass, the object does not change size, but your perception of the object DOES change. In some cases, the object is clear, at other times it's fuzzy, and still at other times it is completely inverted.

Take a mental leap with me for a second and think about how you deal with problems and situations. In a very real way, problems and situations are like objects that you're viewing through a magnifying glass. In this case, the magnifying glass is your mind. You have the power, with your mind, to make problems larger than they really are, smaller than they really are, clear and understandable, blurry and confusing, or completely irrationally (inverted).

The reality does not change. I'm not proposing that you can stop bleeding with your mind or change who's in control of the country with a wiggle of your nose.

But you can control your response to them. And the more control you have over your mind, the better your response will be.

This applies to shoot/don't shoot situations, determining whether or not someone at your door is a friend or foe, situational awareness, your ability to lead/follow, your tendency to avoid injury, your ability to avoid delusional thoughts, and basically every other thought process you have when you're under stress.

To Do: Think about something that made you very upset recently. Analyze the incident and your response to it. Did you magnify the severity of the situation? Did you give it too little importance? Did you stay level headed? Was this a conscious process or was it automatic?

How important is psychology in stressful situations?

As Lt. Col. Dave Grossman points out in his incredible book, "On Combat" in WWI, WWII and Korea, there were more psychiatric casualties than there were soldiers killed, and the numbers were about equal in Vietnam. Psychiatric casualties were cases where soldiers were unable to continue fighting. This was due to "shell shock," post traumatic stress syndrome, "battle weariness," or any of a dozen other fancy titles for burnout.

This wasn't because they were weak, pansies, or of "poor stock." In many cases, it was exactly the opposite. They were gung-ho and willing to give 110% without recharging until they had nothing left to give. By that point, they were like a car

battery that had been drained too low...they needed a complete overhaul in order to function properly again.

In a survival situation, you may not have the option to leave the "front lines" for a few days of R&R to recharge your mind & body.

In other words, mental resiliency is very important. Developing a strong mind will help you during calm times, but is essential to your survival if/when we have an economic collapse, after disasters, and during extended breakdowns in civil order.

So, how can you make yourself more mentally resilient?

The first answer is so simple on the surface that it is often overlooked in search of "sexier" answers. It's sleep. As Patton said, "Fatigue makes cowards of us all."

When you think about it, it makes sense. Everyone accepts that if you don't consume enough calories for an extended period of time, your performance will drop. When told, most people accept the fact that you can survive without food for longer than you can survive without sleep. Even so, few put as much importance on getting enough sleep as they put on getting enough food. Don't believe me? Look at the number of tired, overweight people you see every day.

| How Long Can You Survive Without The Following? | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Calm Mind | Heart attack in as fast as 4 minutes |
| Air | 4 minutes |
| Water | 4 days |
| Sleep | Worthless after 4 days |
| Food | 4 weeks |

I've heard sleep called the "great equalizer," but I haven't always believed in sleep. I've tried every strategy I could find to sleep less, including buying books and using supplements, lights, or habits to "add 1-3 hours of productive time to my days." What I found is that if you want to maintain a high level of performance, you can't overcome your body's need for sleep for any appreciable length of time.

Modern militaries of the world have invested millions of dollars over the last several decades into trying to figure out ways to let troops stay awake for longer periods without a drop in performance and they haven't been able to do it. Drugs work for

a short time, but in order for soldiers to stay sane and coherent, they just plain need to sleep.

As Col. Gregory Belenky, lead sleep researcher at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research said, "Warfighters will encounter a lot of information and need to be able to process it at their level to make decisions. You can have a brilliant plan, but unless you have intelligent execution at the lowest level, it won't work." "Sleep-deprived warfighters, because their higher order thinking is impaired, can cause accidents and 'not so clever decisions.'"

There are heroic stories of soldiers fighting for several days with little to no sleep, but they all experience a drop in performance and will burn out for an extended period or permanently if they aren't given a chance to recuperate.

As Army Field Manual 22-51, The Leaders' Manual For Combat Stress, states: "The sleep-deprived soldier or leader has difficulty thinking and reasoning and becomes easily confused and overly suggestible with poor judgment. Pessimistic thinking takes hold and everything seems too difficult. Sleep loss alone can cause the tired brain to see things which are not there (visual hallucinations) or to perceive things which are there as something totally different. When anxiety and vigilance (staying awake on watch) are added, the soldier may be temporarily unable to distinguish between reality and what he fears. Normal physical symptoms of stress can become magnified into disabling illnesses."

The US Army did a study that is particularly applicable to our study of urban survival. They had four mortar crews conduct drills with varying amounts of sleep for 20 days straight. The study is applicable because it showed the impact of sleep deprivation on soldiers who were performing both mental and physical tasks.

Some of the lessons from these tests are in Appendix G of US Army FM 7-90. I have a link to it on the resource page so you can read it in it's entirety, if you are interested. Here is a chart of the hours of sleep that they received and their effectiveness at the end of 20 days:

| Group | Hours of sleep per 24 hours | Effectiveness after 20 days |
|-------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| I | 7 | 98% |
| II | 6 | 50% |
| III | 5 | 28% |
| IV | 4 | 15% |

To Do: After looking at the chart above, make a conscious decision about what level of effectiveness you want to operate at and make a note of the number of hours of sleep needed to achieve that effectiveness.

When you think about the fact that these are highly-trained soldiers doing an activity that they are experts in, it really shows how important sleep is for urban survival. You probably do not train for urban survival extensively every day. The stresses will be new. The skills that you'll be using every day are skills that you've only used occasionally in the past. As a result, your need for sleep will be as much or more than these highly-trained soldiers.

Near the end of the exercise, group IV was given the coordinates of a hospital that was marked on their map. They completely skipped the step of checking the coordinates on their map and "shelled" the hospital. (It was on a training range and there wasn't really a hospital there.) They had been given the same coordinates earlier in the exercise and did not fire, but in their exhausted state, they couldn't remember a simple step in a sequence that they'd done hundreds of times.

In addition to a drop in mental and physical performance, a lack of sleep causes you to be more irritable, heal slower, gain weight, learn slower, and it causes you to age faster.

Note: I'm very excited about this lesson and it's potential to impact your life IMMEDIATELY. If you're currently getting six or fewer hours of quality sleep every night, you can double your mental & physical effectiveness over the next 20 days for FREE by simply getting 7 hours of sleep per night.

If you think that you don't have time, think again. The one hour difference between sleeping 6 hours and 7 hours per night DOUBLED productivity in the remaining 17 hours of the day.

FM 7-90 also talks about the effects of going days without any sleep: "A rule of thumb is to expect a 25 percent degradation (drop) in performance for every 24 hours without sleep. Under the extreme demands of combat, units historically have conducted sustained operations for a maximum of 120 hours. The result was a total

deterioration of combat." The drop-off is faster for someone who is hungry, thirsty, out of shape, or who has multiple adrenaline dumps (high stress incidents).

Two other Army field manuals have particularly good information on sleep deprivation. In particular, FM 22-51 talks about the fallacy of people who think that they can operate on little to no sleep. "It is commonly thought that adequate levels of performance can be maintained with only 4 hours of sleep per 24 hours. In fact, after obtaining 4 hours of sleep per night for 5 to 6 consecutive nights a Soldier will be as impaired as if he had stayed awake continuously for 24 hours."

How impaired is someone after staying awake for 24 hours? Fortunately, I've got that information for you. A research project was undertaken from 2001-2007 called "Fatigue and its Effect on Performance in Military Environments," which you can reach from the resource page. In summary, 24 hours without sleep is equivalent to a .09% blood alcohol content (BAC) and 48 hours without sleep is equivalent to a .15% BAC. As of 2005, all 50 states have BAC limits of .08% for driving.

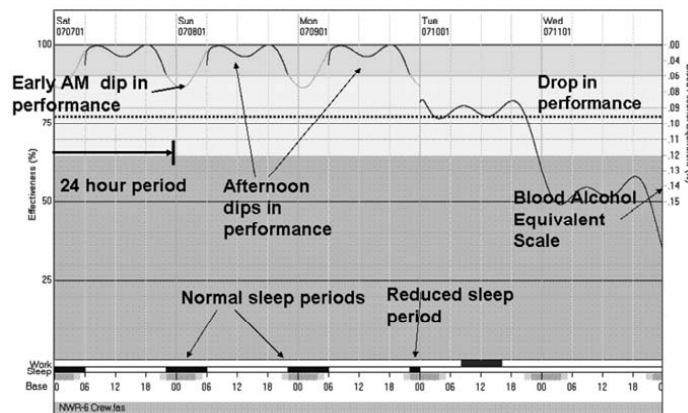


Figure 12.6 from "Fatigue and its Effect on Performance in Military Environments"

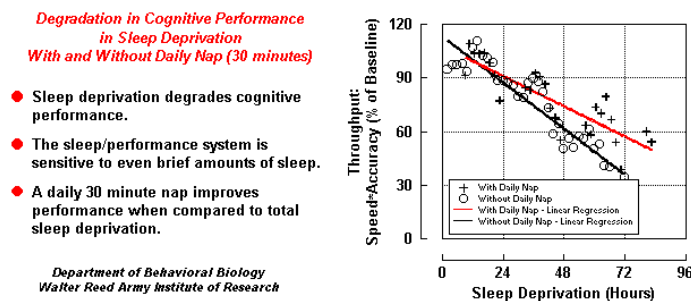
As an aside, I must say that there are people, including my sister-in-law, who have operated on 4-5 hours of sleep per night for decades. They are definitely outliers and this is a genetic anomaly rather than a goal to try to achieve.

In "On Combat," Lt. Grossman explains what happens to most people who think they can get by on 4-5 hours of sleep per night when they are put in the timeless environment of a sleep lab. With rare exception, they start out by sleeping 12 or more hours per day and once their sleep deficit is made up, they level out at 7-9 hours of sleep per night.

Naps

We're going to take a look at the "band-aid" (naps) before we look at the permanent solution (good sleep.) If history is any guide, the reality of survival is that it is an exercise in compensating and making due. You're not always going to be able to get the ideal amount of sleep, and so you need to know how to

compensate with napping. Naps do make a significant difference in how long you can go without sleeping. In the chart below, the red (top) line shows mental performance over time of people who took one 30 minute nap per day with no other sleep. The black (bottom) line shows mental performance over time of people who did not sleep or nap.



So, after 3 nights without sleep, the person who took three 30 minute naps is operating at almost twice the level of the non-napper.

Insider Powerful Napping Secrets

Here are some quick do's and don'ts for getting the most out of your naps:

1. Find a quiet place where you won't be interrupted. Wear earplugs or listen to white noise if necessary. Stay away from radios, TV, phones, and conversations. Give yourself the freedom to not respond to any stimuli.
2. Schedule your nap. Make sure that people around you know you are taking a nap and that you aren't to be bothered. Accept the fact that you're going to be napping, identify the benefits, and let yourself do it.
3. Go somewhere dark, wear eyeshades, or otherwise cover your eyes. I like to lie on my back and put my arm on my face so that my bicep covers one eye, and my forearm covers the other eye. I use my other hand to support my neck.
4. Get in a comfortable, stable position so you don't have to flex muscles to stay there.
5. If you're lying on your back, either put something under your lower back or lift your knees and put your feet on the ground so that you don't wake up with a sore back.
6. Avoid caffeine before napping.

7. Naps will be most productive when your body is at it's natural low points throughout the day. These occur in the morning, just after lunch, and at night.
8. Set an alarm or ask to be woken up somewhere between 5 and 20 minutes.
9. Take a few deep breaths as you're settling down for your nap.

Three personal tricks that I have found to help my naps have more impact:

1. I have found that simulating rapid eye movement while napping seems to help me wake up more refreshed. This is purely anecdotal and I have not read of any studies being done, but it works well for me. I simply shut my eyes and dart them back and forth, up and down, in geometric shapes, and randomly. If someone looks at me while I'm doing it, it looks like I'm in REM (rapid eye movement) sleep.
2. Many times, I get a significant benefit during napping from simply letting my mind digest all that I have been throwing at it so far that day. Other times, as thoughts (troubling, to-do's, etc.) enter my mind, I imagine that they come in the left side of my head, I put them in a box, and put them on a conveyor belt that goes out the right side of my head.
3. Sometimes, when life is particularly hectic, I find that praying and turning everything over to God is the only way that I'm able to calm my mind enough to nap.

If you're very tired, you will probably experience "sleep/nap inertia" when you wake up from your nap. Simply put, it means that you wake up groggy. This effect takes longer to overcome when you take naps that are longer than 20 minutes. Two quick ways to help get through this phase is to have some caffeine upon waking from your nap or exercise briefly.

Strategies for Effective Sleeping

Keep in mind that everyone is different and you may require more or less sleep. The scientific way to figure this out is to go to a sleep lab and sleep until you don't need sleep anymore. That's not practical for most people, so start off by recording the following:

| Date | Time to sleep | Wake Time | How Long? | # times awake | Refreshed next day? |
|------|---------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|---------------------|
| | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|-----|------|------|-------|---|------------|
| 1/1 | 2300 | 0600 | 7 hrs | 2 | Yes! Very. |
|-----|------|------|-------|---|------------|

Try to go to sleep and wake up at near the same time every day for a couple of weeks and see if you feel better.

If, after a week and a half, you find that you can't sleep until 0600 anymore and that you're consistently waking up at 0530, it probably means that you need about 6 ½ hours of sleep per night. More likely, you'll find that you still need an alarm clock to wake up at 0600 and that your sleep requirements are more than 7 hours.

If this is the case, go to bed an hour earlier for a week or two and see how you feel.

I have found through trial and error that I can get by on 7-8 hours of quality sleep per night, but that my body performs best on 8 ½-9 hours. I've also found that I need an additional hour of sleep (for a total of 10 hours) during allergy seasons to keep going at full speed. Now that you know my sleep requirements, you can probably better understand why I've spent so much time and money trying to figure out a way to sleep less.

To Do: Take the next two weeks and schedule 8 hours per night to sleep. Keep a sleep log with columns like the ones above.

If you don't think you have time for 8 hours of sleep, realize that it's likely that you can DOUBLE the effectiveness of your waking hours by getting the amount of sleep your body requires.

Testing among Olympic athletes has shown that they must have 7 ½ to 8 hours of sleep per night for optimal results.

How to get more sleep with fewer hours in bed

Just because you allow for 7 hours of sleep doesn't mean that you'll get 7 hours of high-quality sleep. There's a huge difference between high-quality sleep and low-quality sleep. Most people can think back to a night when they drank too much, had coffee too close to bed time, took cold medicine and woke up repeatedly, slept in an uncomfortable bed, or spent the night in a hotel room next to a loud party.

These are all examples of times when just spending time in bed doesn't translate into feeling refreshed the next morning. If you want to get the most benefit from your time in bed, it's important to focus on the details of sleep. Here's how:

1. Get your sleep in one uninterrupted period, if possible. The peak regenerative period of sleep happens between hour 6 and hour 7 for most people. You could call it the grand finale of sleep...the rest of the show may be good, but the tail end is amazing. There are obvious problems with this if you are in a survival situation and you need to set up multiple watches. Until then, try to follow this guideline.
2. Get as much of your sleep between 2200 and 0600 as possible. Again looking to a survival situation and multiple shifts, one solution would be to have one shift sleep from 1900-0200 and the second shift sleep from 0200-0900.
3. Get your sleep at the same time every night.
4. Control the conditions where you're sleeping. Pick a place that is dark, quiet, temperate, and safe. Wear earplugs, eye shades, and adjust clothing if necessary.
5. Exercise will help you sleep better in two major ways. First, it will help your body "burn up" stress hormones that would otherwise keep you from getting deep sleep. Second, it will allow your mind to deal with stresses easier. In a post-disaster situation, 20-30 minutes of calisthenics (Especially turbulence training and/or kettle bells) every day will help calm your mind and allow you to start napping and sleeping quicker, and stay asleep longer.
6. Self-permission to sleep. Don't sleep with one eye open. Trust the people you are with, trust your dog, or trust your intrusion devices.
7. No alcohol, big meals, or excessive sweets 1-2 hours before bed. All of these will cause insulin/adrenaline cycles that will impair sleep. Alcohol may make you drowsy, but when it's converted to sugar, it will hurt the quality of your sleep.
8. No caffeine for 5 hours before bed. It will inhibit the effectiveness of melatonin, keep most people from getting to sleep as quickly as they would otherwise, and will make your sleep less recuperative than it should be.
9. Make up sleep deficits as soon as possible. US Army guidelines state that soldiers should go no longer than 2 weeks on 4 hours of sleep per night.
10. Calm your mind. Many people drink or take pills to "calm the demons" so that they can sleep. The problem with these approaches is that they hurt the quality of sleep. Instead, I suggest prayer, tapping (link to info on the resource page), exercise, and the strategy I mentioned about "putting stuff

in a box” and letting it pass through your head. Another good way to do this is to practice making a baby 😊

11. Stay hydrated. If your urine is yellow in the evening before going to bed, you need to drink more water. Without getting too involved, when you sleep, your blood vessels dilate and your blood takes oxygen and nutrients to your muscles and carries off waste. When you are dehydrated, this process is impaired and your muscles won't be as effective the next day. You may have to wake up in the middle of the night to urinate, but most people who experience this problem will find that their sleep is so improved by being hydrated that it is worth it.
12. Eat smart. Try not to go to bed hungry, but also avoid eating more than a snack within two hours of going to sleep. You particularly want to avoid large quantities of foods high in saturated fat, sugar, and simple carbohydrates.
13. Avoid TV, surfing the internet, video games, or other forms of escapism when you're trying to sleep. They don't regenerate the mind or body, and in many cases keep the mind from dealing with the situations that are at hand. There is a big fear among the Killogy Group (Grossman, De Becker, Watt, & more) that our soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq are going to have worse PTSD than in past wars because they are spending their off-time “escaping” rather than sleeping. As a result, their mind never has a chance to properly process what it's seen and done.

Quoting Lt. Col Grossman from “On Combat” again, “Many law enforcement agencies have told me that they have a serious stress problem and want me to teach them how to deal with it. When I tell them they must first ensure that everyone gets enough sleep, they argue that it is impossible. ‘Okay,’ I say, ‘Then die.’ I am kidding, of course, but I say it to make the point that if they want to draw overtime, enjoy a full career and watch their grandbabies grow, then one of the most important things they can do is manage their sleep.”

In other words, take this seriously. Sleep provides a solid foundation for a solid mind, dealing with stress, and making good decisions.

Exercise

I've been fortunate enough to become friends with one of the advisors for Killogy, Lt. Col. Randy Watt. Randy is one of the top firearms, edged weapons, leadership, and situational awareness instructors in the country and I'm going to be putting together some training packages for students of Survive In Place that are truly top

notch. Randy wrote a creed that I have adopted as my own called, "One Warrior's Creed," and I have included it in the resource section for this lesson.

Randy was one of the key influences for this course and one of the things that he stresses in all of his classes and that he stressed in every interview with me was the importance of exercise. It affects EVERY aspect of your life. Sleep, energy level, your ability to deal with stress, firearms accuracy, martial skills, and clear thinking to name a few.

I have to add a disclaimer...make sure to check with your health care professional before starting any exercise program. You could injure yourself or die.

That being said, no matter what your age (I know of at least one 80-year-old taking this course) or your physical ailment, find out what physical exercises you can do and start doing them. If you're confined to a wheelchair and can't use your legs, then see if you can start doing arm exercises to get your heart rate up for 20-30 minutes a day. If your hands are inoperable, or if you have spinal issues, ask your doctor or a therapist what you CAN do to exercise and get your heart rate up, but whatever you do, figure out a way to get exercise.

For those of you without physical ailments, I've included links to two of my favorite exercises on the resource page that will work even if you're a desk jockey. They are Pistol One-Legged Squats and One Armed Pushups. I like these exercises because they help you build up your supporting muscles and you can easily vary the intensity. Both of the links show Craig Ballantyne from TurbulanceTraining.com doing the exercises.

The pistol one-legged squats can be modified by squatting your butt all the way to the floor (hardest), squatting your butt down to a chair (as shown in the video) or by squatting your butt down to the arm of a couch, a window sill, or a desk (easiest). Whichever intensity you choose, I suggest only doing 5 at a time with perfect form multiple times a day. As a fine point, as you do them, make sure that your lower leg stays perpendicular to the ground and that you can see your toes over your knee the entire time.

The one-armed pushups can be modified by doing them with your knees on the floor to make them easier, by pushing against a chair or desk, rather than against the floor to make them easier or by raising your feet to make them more difficult. Again, I suggest doing multiple sets of 5 with perfect form throughout the day. Perfect form is KEY with one-armed pushups, just as it is with the pistol squats.

I find that by doing these exercises (and pull-ups, using a hang-board in my office) throughout the day, I stay fresher and more awake than if I do nothing or use caffeine.

I'm also a BIG fan of kettle bell workouts, trail running, and mountain biking. If you have any questions on these exercises, feel free to contact me by email or through the forum.

Other strategies for keeping your mind under control

- Pray and read your Bible. There are few things more comforting than knowing that God is in control. If you don't believe in God, that's fine. All of us who do will enjoy our delusional stupor. ☺

- Accept the fact that fear is OK. Only delusional people will operate without fear in a survival situation. It's much more healthy to identify fear, accept it, and use it as a high-performance fuel. The more you can learn to identify and LOVE the feel of fear-induced adrenaline coursing through your veins and use it to improve your performance, the more you will become the master of it.

The best way to do this is to put yourself in controlled situations where you get adrenaline rushes. Not everyone can stack up and raid a house, serve high-risk warrants, or set up and execute an ambush, but there are other activities that you can do to help you get used to adrenaline. Some of the "safe" activities I enjoy that most people can easily do are sparring, shooting competitions, rock climbing, rappelling, high-consequence negotiating, and public speaking. Other things like skydiving, crawling through a tight tunnel, getting a hood thrown over your head, handcuffed, and thrown in a trunk, or something as simple as climbing on a roof may give you a rush.

One of the stress inoculation drills that I have done in Krav Maga is one where 6 people gang up on me while I'm lying on my back spread eagle. One person grabs each foot, presses pressure points, lightly applies ankle locks, and rakes their forearm across my shins. Two more people grab each arm, and alternate between kamoras and key locks, and hitting pressure points. A fifth person alternates between doing pushups and digging their elbows into my stomach. And the sixth guy works my head, rubbing my eyes, plugging my nose, covering my mouth, choking me, and hitting pressure points.

It is a GREAT drill to go through. The point isn't to escape, although I try. The point is to stay calm, not panic, and to get used to the adrenaline dump.

The important thing is to identify the rush, accept it as your body's high-quality survival fuel, and learn how to deal with it. Famed firearms trainer Massad Ayoob talks about a time he was competing at the Bianchi Cup and all of the competitors had a case of the butterflies. While other people were bouncing around, he calmly did deep breathing and isometric exercises. In particular, he brought his foot up and held it, stretching his quads. As he did this, he pushed outwards with his foot

and inwards with his hand. He did this with both legs and effectively stopped his leg shakes before shooting his stage. He didn't try to suppress or get rid of the fear/anxiety/stress/adrenaline. Rather, he calmed his mind and heart and harnessed the adrenaline to shoot a great stage.

To Do: Plan an activity that will give you an adrenaline rush. (You must consult with your healthcare professional to make sure that you can handle it).

Things to remember

- Give yourself time to mourn. In a survival situation, you WILL lose things. It could be your comfortable life, possessions, friends, or a family member. You don't want to make your life about focusing on what you lost, but your mind will need to work through various emotions as you are moving forward with your life.

- Keep looking forward, keep moving forward, and don't dwell on the past. Many people were paralyzed after Katrina with anguish over what they lost or fear of what they were going to lose. From the interviews that I did, it appears that these people were useless to themselves and useless to their friends and families. The people who thrived after Katrina and who are doing the best mentally years later are the ones who made a conscious effort to refuse to be a victim.

- Set SMART goals (Specific Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely) for every individual and for the group. It could be as simple as making sure everyone gets 7 hours of sleep, that you get to spend 15 minutes reading your Bible, and that you talk with 3 of your neighbors every day for the next week. In a survival situation, you might have a map of the area and set a goal to explore 10 new blocks every day until you have covered every street within a mile of your house. If you have 100 gallons of water, 6 people and 2 dogs and you're figuring 2 gallons per person per day and ½ gallon per dog, you will want to have a goal to secure additional water for your group within a week if you don't have a way to recycle it.

One of the big benefits of SMART goals is that they give your mind something to focus on. Your mind WILL focus on something. It can focus on poor-little-'ol-me, or it can focus on something productive. Give it productive things to focus on and it will serve you well.

To Do: Practice setting SMART goals. As an example, you could say, "When I pay off my Visa, I will take an Urban Escape and Evasion class from OnPointTactical.com." You may have to modify the reward to something like, "...we will take a trip to a city where I can take an Urban Escape and Evasion class and my wife can

spend 3 days at the spa/pool.”

In a survival situation, it could be, “Today, I need to find a source of water, transfer 20 gallons to our location, and make it potable. When I am done, I will read a fiction book for 20 minutes.”

Write down five SMART goals right now. They can be for your survival plans, work, relationships, relocating, or anything else. Adding a reward will help you achieve the goal, but is not necessary.

- Only allow yourself to think about things that you have control over. Worrying about what the weather is going to do will not help you. Creating a hasty plan for what you will do if various weather events happen WILL help you. Worrying about which of your rights the government might eviscerate next will not help you. Getting active politically by volunteering, helping a candidate or elected official with research, or by donating can help. As worries or concerns enter your mind, evaluate whether or not you can do anything about them. If not, think about something else. If it is something that you can do something about, come up with a hasty plan, write it down if necessary, and expand on it later if it makes sense to do so.

As a personal example, when my brother and my friends are deployed, I find myself worrying about them frequently. My worrying doesn't do me or them any good, and it actually harms me. Instead of worrying, I've developed the discipline of praying for them, writing them letters, or sending packages. These actions all make me feel better and they help my brother & friends.

-Smile, joke, laugh, and play games when possible. Laughter refreshes the soul, and in a survival situation, you're likely to need lots of refreshing. Besides light hearted laughter, know that you'll probably find yourself laughing at inappropriate things. Medical professionals, firemen, and soldiers often laugh at disgusting, sad, and gut wrenching situations.

There are many stressful situations where the line between crying and laughing is blurred. Someone watching from the outside might think that you are being irreverent, but in reality it is a simple coping mechanism that our brain uses to give us an emotional outlet. Just accept it, go with it, and know that most people will not understand the humor, but hopefully the people that you're with will.

-Have confidence. In God, in yourself, your team, your equipment, your training, the future, and your ability to improvise, adapt, and overcome.

-If you have a choice between being positive and being negative, be positive. It doesn't cost any more, and it will improve your performance and the performance of everyone around you. That doesn't mean that you shouldn't anticipate problems. You should. When you do, figure out a solution, move on, and improve on it as time allows.

**Never waste time focusing on problems
when you can use that time to come up with solutions.**

It is subtle, but the difference in results is dramatic. Focusing on problems is degenerative in nature. It eats away at your mind, your sleep, and your relationships. When you identify a problem, immediately focusing on solutions trains your mind to look forward, to anticipate a better future, and to spend time on thoughts that can actually help you.

To Do: The next time you "consume" news or talk radio, consciously monitor your emotions, breathing rate, and heart rate. It doesn't have to be exact...just know whether you are breathing faster or slower than normal.

Analyze your reaction to each story and then decide whether or not there is anything you can do about it. If there is nothing you can do about it, tell yourself, "That's unfortunate. I wish I could do something about that, but I know that worrying about it won't help anyone. Fortunately, I can do a set of 5/10/30/50 pushups right now so that I'm in better shape and better to handle stress in the future."

If there IS something you can do, do it immediately or schedule it immediately so that you can let it pass through your mind.

"That's unfortunate. I am going to write my representative an email RIGHT NOW to tell them what I think." When you're done writing, you can say "I've done what I can for now."

Or

"That's not good. That's too big for me to fix, but I can pray for God to fix it."

The point of the exercise is to practice controlling your reaction to the news so you can apply that control to other areas of your life. As a good friend pointed out to me, most things that cause the most extreme worry and "mental paralysis" are things that are out

of our control. By identifying that fact and letting them go, you'll be more able to change the things that you do have control over.

These skills will be easier for some and harder for others. Some people are predisposed to worry and be anxious while others could care less about what's going on around them. The important thing is to identify where you are, where you want to be, and start making consistent steps to get there.

I've found out the hard way that this discipline is different in men than it is in women. Sometimes women just need to talk about what has happened to them. I don't understand why, even though I've read more than a dozen books on marriage and communication. I just know that most of the arguments that my wife and I have are the result of me trying to fix problems that she's telling me about.

Usually, she's already figured out a solution, doesn't want to hear mine, and just wants to share her experience and emotions with me.

My wife is amazing and understands my need to "fix". One of our secrets is that when she is telling me about a problem and I'm chomping at the bit to help her "fix" it, I will ask her, "Is this something that you want me to help you fix, or do you just want to talk about it?"

Supplements that can help with your mood and sleep.

Not to beat a dead horse, but one of the strongest and most effective drugs that you can take to improve your mental state is the endorphins that are released during exercise.

There are also supplements that you can take that can help your mood and allow you to sleep better.

I am not a doctor and you should consult with a health care professional before taking any of these supplements. There could be horrible interactions with medications that you are currently taking. I'd appreciate the input of any medical professionals on this topic. We've had some great comments on the flu pandemic lesson and anticipate the same for this lesson. I've got a link on the resource page back to the resource page for lesson 5 so you can see the updates.

A few years ago, I did quite a bit of experimentation with ways to consistently achieve runners' high, how to predictably cause it to happen on command, and how to make it last as long as possible so that I could effortlessly run for hours.

There were three supplements that I used that I found to be helpful in my runners' high testing that I also found to make me more mentally resilient when I wasn't running. They were SAMe, St. John's Wort, and 5-HTP. (Do not take them together unless you are under the supervision of a healthcare professional.)

In addition to helping with mood regulation, SAMe is also very beneficial for joint pain. St. John's Wort has been used as an anti-depressant in Europe for decades. 5-HTP boosts serotonin levels, the natural release of melatonin, and increases the efficiency of your sleep by increasing the amount of time that you spend in REM sleep by up to 25%.

You REALLY need to consult with a healthcare professional before using these supplements. They are seriously powerful and have the ability to raise your serotonin to toxic (deadly) levels when taken alone, together, or with other drugs.

Melatonin is another supplement that my family takes occasionally. You can find it in evening teas, sprays, juices, and tablets, and chews. You can buy it in .3, 1, 3, and 6 mg doses, but I've found that by taking as little as .25mg and reading, I become unable to read in as soon as 10 minutes and fall asleep quickly. Your experience may be very different, but I've found that I wake up alert and well rested when I take .25mg.

Personally I use melatonin is when I travel East and want to go to sleep early and get a full night of sleep for an early morning.

I also sometimes use it when I have made the mistake of drinking coffee after 1700 in the afternoon. Without melatonin, I will toss and turn for up to 2-3 hours before finally falling asleep. With melatonin, I'm able to go to sleep in minutes.

Read, reread, and study further

I can't emphasize how important psychology is to survival and how vital your ability to positively influence the thought patterns of yourself and those around you will be. In a survival situation, you MAY need firearms skills. You MAY need martial arts skills. You MAY need negotiating skills, but you will definitely need the ability to calm your mind and calm the minds of those around you.

I want to encourage you to read this lesson at least one more time. Mark up the sections that resonate with you and study them further. I've included links to several online resources and wonderful books that you can read to understand your mind better and the minds of people around you.

Make sure to head over to the resource page for this lesson at <http://urbansurvivalplan.com/502/lesson12>, take a look at the resources for this lesson, and comment on what you thought about it.

See you in 7 days!

God Bless,

David Morris
Publisher, SurviveInPlace.com