



U.S. AIR FORCE RESERVE Psychological Health Advocacy Program

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www.afrc.phap.net

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Asking for help shows real strength

Resilience is the foundation to a service member's overall health condition. Being resilient doesn't mean going through life without experiencing difficulty and distress. Spouses, family members and loved ones may experience unique challenges, especially in the midst of deployment period. Some of these challenges are complex, and even the most resilient person can use help. "The best way to let people know that seeking help is not a sign of weakness is when you talk one-on-one, and give them examples of people that they would consider strong, who have sought help. After receiving it, they become stronger and more resilient," said Chief Master Sgt. Mark Kloepfel, 349th Medical Group Superintendent. When reservists and family members find themselves in this situation, free help is just a phone call away with Psychological Health Advocacy Program. "Having social support and seeking help when you need it, talking about a situation with loved ones, and staying connected with friends, helps build resiliency," said Kloepfel. "I think the Air Force does a great job of communicating where to get help when needed." The Air Force Reserve Command has put together a program to support service members and their families, by using creative initiative to effectively address the needs of the Reserve members, and help build resilience in them. The AFRC Psychological Health Advocacy Program's mission is to build a culture of support for psychological health, where prevention and resilience are part of military life. "The Air Force Four Pillars of wellness: spiritual, emotional, physical and social, are all tied in with mental health. If you pay attention and feed these areas of your life you will be healthy."



West Region staff members left to right: Marie Walker, Administrative Specialist, Maria Roselyn Lacsamana - Leyva, Kathleen Moran, both outreach specialists, and Karen Orcutt, R.N., Case Facilitator.

iRest-Relax Your Way to a Healthier You

Yoga Nidra is an ancient meditation practice originating in India about 3000 years ago. iRest Yoga Nidra is a 10-stage meditation practice, adapted by Dr. Richard Miller, a clinical psychologist. iRest provides simple, easy to follow guided instructions and is usually done in a comfortable reclining position. It is well suited for people with PTSD or stress symptoms because of the continuous verbal instructions which keep attention focused and re-focused on specific body sensations, breathing, emotions, beliefs and images.

Due to its ease of use, and safety and effectiveness with a wide range of people, iRest is being utilized by a growing number of healthcare organizations, including the Veterans Administration, US Department of Defense, and other hospitals, homeless centers, and addiction treatment facilities. Research has shown that iRest effectively reduces PTSD, depression, anxiety, insomnia, chronic pain, and chemical dependency, as well as increases overall well-being. The US Army Surgeon General and Defense Centers of Excellence now recommend iRest as a complementary alternative medical (CAM) program for managing chronic pain and PTSD.

Continuing studies are being conducted with the use of the iRest Yoga Nidra protocol as a treatment for PTSD and related symptoms. The iRest protocol was used with soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. Based on this work, Eric Schoomaker, Surgeon General of the United States Army endorsed Yoga Nidra as a complimentary alternative medicine for chronic pain in 2010. As a result of the increased demand for acute care for Service Members who have sustained injuries in Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom, the level of perceived stress and other associated variables among military healthcare providers is even more pronounced.

Effective techniques are needed for caregivers to promote healthy work environments, increase productive sleep, and relieve individual stress.

Research has shown that iRest Yoga Nidra effectively reduces:

- **PTSD**
- **Depression**
- **Anxiety**
- **Insomnia**
- **Chronic pain**
- **Chemical dependency**

Many physical and psychological benefits of iRest practice, including:

- Enhances ability to act effectively under high degrees of stress
- Increases concentration
- Alleviates symptoms of many psychological & physical conditions including anxiety, panic, depression, and chronic pain

- Decreases negative mood and perceived stress
- Improves social functioning
- Decreases chronic care visits to health care centers
- Enhances self-efficacy, including recognition of the value of self-care to improve health and well-being

Physical

- Improves the quality of your sleep and the amount of your sleep
- Reduces your chronic pain suffering
- Soothes your autonomic nervous system

Mental

- Enhances your mental focus and attention span
- Improves your creativity and whole brain functioning

Emotional

- Gives you more ease and peace of mind in daily life
- Helps create new neural pathways in your brain leading to healthy habits & routines.

iRest is also being integrated into the classroom with kindergarten kids. In iRest the senses are the doorways into the universe through which children can learn skills that they can use for the rest of their lives. iRest is very popular in California and several locations offer classes. There are several different versions of iRest available to purchase on the internet. Amazon has the one below plus several other topics. Resting in Stillness: Integrative Restoration iRest Yoga Nidra, Richard presents the actual practice of iRest Yoga Nidra Meditation in two formats; as a 35-minute extended meditation and as a 20-minute short form of iRest. IRelax Forest is a smart phone app that and has an audio sound generation system that creates the natural sounds of the forest to create peaceful ambiance, and aid relaxation and stress relief. It's simple to load, just do a search under apps for iRelax on your smart phone.



North Region staff members left to right: Pam Boyd, Missy McMann, both Outreach Specialists, Samarra Appling, Administrative Specialist and Jennifer Wedel, R.N., Case Facilitator.

National Alcohol Screening Day April 11, 2013

Screening for Mental Health offers alcohol screening programs for the military, colleges, and universities, community-based organizations and businesses.

Held annually on Thursday of the first full week of April, National Alcohol Screening Day is an outreach, education, and screening program that raises awareness about alcohol misuse and refers individuals with alcohol problems for further treatment. Thousands of colleges, community-based organizations, and military installations provide the program to the public each year.

South Staff Members:

**David Rodberg, RN., Case Facilitator,
Ernest Farmer, Outreach Specialist, Rolando Edwards, Outreach Specialist and
Arlean Timmons, Administrative Specialist**

Yellow Ribbon 2013

March 15-17 Norfolk
March 22-24 San Diego
April 26-28 Phoenix
April 26-28 Orlando, FL
May 17-20 Orlando/Phoenix

June 21-23 New Orleans/St Louis
July 19-21 Orlando/Charleston
July 26-28 San Diego/Anaheim
Aug 16-18 Washington DC/Denver
Aug 23-25 Denver/Washington DC
September 20-22 Orlando



PHAP personnel shall accept all requests for PHAP services, coordinate referral resources, document services provided, evaluate customer satisfaction and report their activities to the AFRC PHAP program manager.

Referral services shall include, but are not limited to,

Services for children

Financial management

Anger management

Domestic violence

Awareness & prevention

Mental health awareness

Employment assistance

Suicide prevention

Substance abuse awareness

PHAP Program Services

My name is Maj Laura Kirby and I am the new Psychological Health Advocacy Program (PHAP) Chief stationed at Robins AFB, GA. I am a nurse and have been a member of the 349th ASTS at Travis AFB, CA since Nov 2008. Prior to being a reservist, I was active duty in the Air Force stationed at Lackland AFB, TX. While there, I deployed to Balad, Iraq in 2004 and Bagram, Afghanistan in 2007-both times working in the hospitals. My third deployment was back to Bagram in 2010. During that deployment, I worked in the CASF (Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility) preparing our Wounded Warriors for flights to Germany as well as caring for those in our facility.

My three deployments were by far the most rewarding experiences of my nursing career. I am so blessed to be in this position. I believe providing AFRC reserve members and their families access to mental health referral services and other resources such as financial help, relocation and employment assistance is extremely valuable. The staff for PHAP are just a phone call away and they have many resources available at their fingertips. It goes without saying that there is a stigma attached to mental health but if you aren't psychologically fit this will impact the rest of your life-physically, spiritually and socially. I encourage everyone to take advantage of what PHAP has to offer.



Family & Friends

PHAP services are also available to family members of AFRC reservists. Spouses, parents, and children are encouraged to call for services.

Your Bridge to Appropriate Care Free Referrals. 24/7 Call Center 888.536.0626