

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
FIELD MEDICAL TRAINING BATTALION-EAST
PSC BOX 20042
CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH CAROLINA 28542-0042

MCECST

2401-LDR-1004/05/06/07 Combat Leadership

TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Without the aid of references, describe the elements of combat, without omitting key components.
(2401-LDR-1004)
2. Without the aid of references, describe the stresses of combat, without omitting key components.
(2401-LDR-1005)
3. Given an individual suffering from potential combat-related stress, report combat stress-related reactions, without omitting key components.
(2401-LDR-1006)
4. Without the aid of references, describe the Marine Corps principles for overcoming fear, without omitting key components.
(2401-LDR-1007)

ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Without the aid of reference, identify the elements of combat, in accordance with references
www.cdc.gov/traumaticbraininjury/symptoms.html Traumatic Brain Injury Symptoms and MCTP 3-30E Combat and Operational Stress Control.
(2401-LDR-1004a)
2. Without the aid of reference, identify the risks of combat, in accordance with references
www.cdc.gov/traumaticbraininjury/symptoms.html Traumatic Brain Injury Symptoms and MCTP 3-30E Combat and Operational Stress Control.
(2401-LDR-1004b)

3. Without the aid of reference, identify the mental effects of combat, in accordance with reference MCTP 6-10B Marine Corps Values: A User's Guide for Discussion Leaders.
(2401-LDR-1005a)

4. Without the aid of reference, identify the physical effects of combat, in accordance with reference MCTP 6-10B Marine Corps Values: A User's Guide for Discussion Leaders.
(2401-LDR-1005b)

5. Without the aid of reference, identify the stress symptoms of combat, in accordance with reference MCTP 3-30E Combat and Operational Stress Control.
(2401-LDR-1006a)

6. Without the aid of reference, identify the stress responses, in accordance with MCTP 3-30E Combat and Operational Stress Control.
(2401-LDR-1006b)

7. Without the aid of reference, identify the definitions for overcoming fear, in accordance with reference MCTP 6-10B Marine Corps Values: A User's Guide for Discussion Leaders.
(2401-LDR-1007a)

8. Without the aid of reference, identify the assisting methods for overcoming fear, in accordance with reference MCTP 6-10B Marine Corps Values: A User's Guide for Discussion Leaders.
(2401-LDR-1007b)

1. **COMBAT DEFINED and THE ELEMENTS OF COMBAT**

a. **The Marine Corps defines combat as;**

(1) "Engaging the enemy with individual or crew served weapons; being exposed to direct or indirect enemy fire; and otherwise undergoing a high probability of direct contact with enemy personnel and firepower, to include the risk of capture."

(a) Direct Fire - fire that takes a straight path to a target that is within line of sight.

(b) Indirect Fire - fire that takes an arching path to a target that is not necessarily within line of sight.

b. **Nine Elements Encountered in a Combat Environment**

(1) Violent Sights & Sounds. The noise and sights of combat can have a traumatic, shocking effect on the senses, causing confusion and extraordinary tension.

(2) Casualties. Every Marine/Sailor must be accounted for. At every opportunity, identify casualties. Remove the dead and wounded from the combat area as soon as possible. Proper care for your wounded has a great effect upon morale.

(3) Confusion & Lack of Information. Combat requires constant and exhausting anticipation of the unexpected. This may be compounded by a sense of confusion and lack of information. Trying to interact with foreign peoples who speak a different language can also be very confusing and frustrating.

(4) Feelings of Isolation. Lulls in combat can produce strong emotional feelings. Being deployed thousands of miles from one's friends and loved ones for long periods of time can be very difficult. Despite the presence of fellow Marines/Sailors, inactivity can produce a sense of isolation or loneliness. Action is the key to preventing feelings of isolation from taking hold.

(5) Communications Breakdowns. The awesome violence and confusion of combat will inevitably hinder and degrade the ability to communicate, both personally and through our equipment. The inability to communicate with your fellow Marines/Sailors in a combat environment can leave you feeling isolated and result in disastrous consequences. When it comes to means of communication in an operational environment, it is

extremely important to devote considerable emphasis on planning and proficiency.

(6) Discomfort & Fatigue. Discomfort and fatigue can have tremendous negative effects on your morale. You can be adversely affected by moisture, cold, heat, hunger, thirst, weariness, or a number of other factors, any of which can result in a decreased ability for you to perform your duties. Leaders are not immune to fatigue, either. As they become increasingly tired, the ability to make sound and timely decisions becomes degraded. Leaders must understand the effects of fatigue and know when to provide rest.

(7) Fear, Stress, & Mental Exhaustion. These mental factors can all have profound effects on the morale and efficacy of warfighters. Leaders must be attuned to the mental state of their people in order to maintain an operationally effective force.

(8) Continuous Operations. Defeating the enemy often requires continuous operations. Marines/Sailors must be able to endure long periods of stressful and oftentimes dangerous activity, in order to accomplish their various missions.

(9) Homesickness. Homesickness is a common occurrence in a deployed environment. Fatigue, continual stress, and the ever-present potential for injury or death amplify this sense of longing for the peace and comforts of home and family.

2. FIVE STRESSES OF COMBAT

a. Extreme Risk & Fear

(1) Risk. Possibility of suffering harm or loss.

(2) Fear. Alarm and agitation caused by the expectation or realization of danger.

b. The "Fog of War"

(1) Literally, the fog created by the dust, smoke, and debris of the battlefield.

(2) Mentally, the fog of confusion and uncertainty created in Marines/Sailors by their lack of knowledge about the enemy and the battlefield, the chaotic noise, the mental and physical fatigue, and the fear.

c. **Discomfort & Fatigue**

(1) Discomfort. The annoyance and displeasure Marines/Sailors suffer when wet, cold, hungry, thirsty, and/or weary.

(2) Fatigue. Physical and mental weariness due to exertion.

d. **Casualties**

(1) Physical casualties of combat are Marines/Sailors injured or killed in battle.

(2) Less obvious are the psychological casualties and losses of strength that occur in combat when a Marine/Sailor observes death and destruction, or becomes apprehensive that he/she might not "measure up" as a Marine/Sailor under fire, or otherwise might let his buddies down.

(3) Casualties have a significant impact on individual and unit morale. The loss of fellow Marines directly impacts all of those in a unit. Being prepared in casualty handling is essential for a unit's success in battle.

e. **Boredom**. Long periods of inactivity can lead to careless behavior or degraded preparation for combat. Complacency kills.

3. **COMBAT STRESS-RELATED REACTIONS:**

a. **There are four zones of the stress continuum model:**

(1) Ready.

(2) Reacting.

(3) Injured.

(4) Ill.

b. **The four main causes of stress injuries:**

(1) Life Threats.

(2) Wear and Tear.

(3) Loss.

(4) Inner Conflict.

c. **The four common categories of stressors:**

(1) Physical.

(2) Environmental.

(3) Emotional.

(4) Cognitive.

4. **OVERCOMING THE FIVE COMBAT STRESSES**

a. **The Keys for Overcoming Stress in Combat**

(1) **Morale & Motivation**. Always be aware of the morale of your fellow Marines/Sailors. Be aware that your own attitude is likely to influence the attitudes of the Marines/Sailors around you as well. Maintain a positive attitude for the sake of your mission and your Marines/Sailors!

(2) **Discipline & Esprit de Corps**. Be proud of your job with the Marine Corps & what you represent. By having the discipline to do things the Marine Corps way, you will ensure your greatest chance of success and survival.

(3) **Proficiency**. Work to be good at whatever your job is. Confidence in your abilities will give you confidence in battle. Your fellow Marines/Sailors will depend on you to be able to perform your duties competently.

(4) **Training**. Training will ensure your proficiency. Train your Marines/Sailors to ensure *their* proficiency. In the chaos of war, it is your training that you and your Marines/Sailors will fall back on to accomplish the mission.

b. **Training's Impact on Overcoming Fear** - Proper training allows you to prepare for combat and situations that occur in battle. A diverse and realistic set of training exercises should be used by units to prepare Marines/Sailors for the elements they may encounter in combat. When you face a situation in combat that is similar to a situation that you've faced in training, your fear will be less and your confidence will be heightened.

5. **REPORTING STRESS-RELATED PROBLEMS**

a. **MARINE CORPS COMBAT AND OPERATIONAL STRESS CONTROL PROGRAM** objectives are:

- (1) Force Preservation.
- (2) Readiness.
- (3) Long-term health and well-being.

b. **For Stress Assistance and Treatment:**

- (1) Use your Chain of Command.
- (2) Use your Medical Department.
- (3) Use your Chaplain.

REFERENCES:

MCRP 6-11B, Marine Corps Values: A User's Guide for Discussion Leaders
MCRP 6-11C, Combat Stress

