



Brigade Medical Unit

Naval Health Clinic Annapolis

“We Cannot Control the Wind, but We Can Direct the Sail”

The Staff at Brigade Medical and Brigade Dental are working tirelessly with the Commandant’s and Superintendent’s staff to look for ways to bring you back to the Yard safely. We look forward to the day when that becomes a reality. Until then, know that we are here to support you from afar! Getting through a crisis isn’t a sprint, its a marathon. Be realistic about the situation, pace yourself, and recognize and accept what you can and cannot control. Find the good. Instead of dwelling on the negative, take note of the rewarding aspects of your life. Take breaks, give yourself some time and space to process what you’re feeling, get some exercise, eat well (but don’t stress eat), get enough sleep, get some sunshine, stay hydrated, and limit your intake of caffeinated beverages and alcohol. Direct your personal sail into more favorable winds!

1/C MIDN Commissioning Medical Approval

Your commissioning medical officers and BMO are continuing to work the last 86 MIDN medical packages through the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED) and the Naval Aerospace Medical Institute (NAMI). Those of you that have pending medical issues should be well aware that we do not yet have approval for your commission. If you have been requested to get labs or consults at your current location, please do not delay in your response to LCDR Lewis, LT Emerling, or Ms Jackie Trout, (your care coordinator). A delay in getting your requirements done is one more day that we cannot submit your package for approval. Without BUMED approval or waiver you cannot graduate or commission. Please call or email if you are uncertain of your status.

Secure Messaging / Relay Health

We are certainly grateful for your use of secure messaging to communicate with BMU nurses and providers! In order to better assist in completing your requests, we ask that you also provide your state and zip code in your message to assist our staff in submitting your consults or fill your medication refills. Once you return to USNA you can continue to use this service to schedule BMU appointments too!

**NON-URGENT
QUESTIONS**

&

REFERRALS

&

MED REFILLS

BMU Front Desk

Monday - Friday

0730-1600

410-293-1758

410-293-1760

OR USE

SECURE

MESSAGING

24 / 7 !!

(see page 2)

**DUTY HEALTHCARE
PROVIDER**

ANSWERING SERVICE

Monday - Friday

1600 - 0730

AND

Weekends

Holidays

410-293-2273

Option 1

More on Refractive Surgery

There have been so many questions about this so I thought I would just “lay it all-out there for you” if it were, the good and the bad, and the constraints that we work under in Navy Medicine (not BMU controlled). **Elective refractive surgeries and pre-operative exams have been postponed for the rest of the Academic year. This is a DoD policy, and it is unknown at this time how long it will be in effect.** For members of the Class of 2021 who still desire surgery, we are aware that your choice of service assignments may be impacted if you are unable to have surgery. While we hope that everyone who desires surgery can be accommodated by Walter Reed when they are able to add additional appointments, please understand that refractive surgery is an **elective procedure** that is not a requirement for service, nor a MIDN right for commissioning. We will inform you if surgery dates become available during the summer or fall, but we cannot make any projections now due to the fluidity of the situation. **Unfortunately refractive surgery is not a TriCare benefit outside of the military medical treatment facility**, so we cannot offer to refer you to a local refractive surgeon near your current domicile for the surgery itself, even if they reopen before you return to USNA. For those applying for SNA (student naval aviator), the procedure **MUST** be completed at an approved MTF (military medical treatment facility) per the Aeromedical waiver guide used for aviation commissioning. MTF utilize a research-based, military aviation studied and approved wave-front guided PRK or LASIK refractive surgery procedure that has been proven over the years to provide the best outcomes for military aviators in the military environments they will operate in. **Lastly, upon return to USNA you may have to make the difficult decision between refractive surgery during one of the the limited appointments offered to you by Walter Reed in lieu to sports participation. The immediate post-operative period requires at least 30 days of limited to no sports participation. Unfortunately the limited appointments being created for you are appointments that will be taken from fleet active duty members and operators, so we must be mindful and respect the fleet’s operational requirements and appreciate the Active Duty sacrifices that would be needed to open appointments to MIDN in lieu of them.**

For those who have already had surgery, the post-operative 1 and 3 month exams should be completed as instructed in the email that you received from Walter Reed. Below are exam location options for the 1 and 3 month post-ops. The 6 month exams will be completed at the Academy in the next Academic year.

Laser Vision Center at Walter Reed: email Sharon Thomas if 150 miles away from surgery center at: sharon.d.thomas50.civ@mail.mil

Optometry clinic at Naval Health Clinic, Annapolis at North Severn: email Ashley Dawson or call if 150 miles away from the Academy at: ashley.m.dawson17.civ@mail.mil / 410-293-3617.

Other MTF or civilian provider (ophthalmologist) FOR POST-OP FOLLOW-UP (not refractive surgery): must obtain referral from care coordinator/case manager. Email or call Deborah Hood a deborah.a.hood2.civ@mail.mil / 410-293-7527

For 1, 3 month post-ops exams that are being evaluated at another MTF or by a civilian provider, you must complete the post-op exam form that was emailed to you from Sharon Thomas. Once completed by the provider **you must obtain copies and email that post-op exam to** Ashley Dawson at ashley.m.dawson17.civ@mail.mil; cc: thu-ha.d.easter.civ@mail.mil with **subject: “MIDN post op”.**

*If you cannot be seen anywhere, please continue with the medication regimen as instructed and **reach out to Walter Reed or NHCA for any questions/concerns***

Build Your Resilience in the Face of a Crisis

By Rasmus Hougaard , Jacqueline Carter and Moses Mohan

Harvard Business Review, March 19, 2020

As the spread and far-reaching impacts of Covid-19 dominate the world news, we have all been witnessing and experiencing the parallel spread of worry, anxiety, and instability. Indeed, in a crisis, our mental state often seems only to exacerbate an already extremely challenging situation, becoming a major obstacle in itself. Why is this and how can we change it? As the CEO of a firm that brings mindfulness to companies to unlock new ways of thinking and working, let me share a bit about how the mind responds to crises, like the threat of a pandemic.

Even without a constant barrage of bad or worrisome news, your mind's natural tendency is to get distracted. Our most recent study found that 58% of employees reported an inability to regulate their attention at work. As the mind wanders, research has shown that it easily gets trapped into patterns and negative thinking. During times of crisis – such as those we are living through now – this tendency is exacerbated, and the mind can become even more hooked by obsessive thinking, as well as feelings of fear and helplessness. It's why we find ourselves reading story after horrible story of quarantined passengers on a cruise ship, even though we've never stepped foot on a cruise ship, nor do we plan to.

When your mind gets stuck in this state, a chain reaction begins. Fear begins to narrow your field of vision, and it becomes harder to see the bigger picture and the positive, creative possibilities in front of you. As perspective shrinks, so too does our tendency to connect with others. Right now, the realities of how the coronavirus spreads can play into our worst fears about others and increase our feelings of isolation, which only adds fuel to our worries.

Watching the past month's turmoil unfold, I have been reminded of the old Buddhist parable of the second arrow. The Buddha once asked a student: "If a person is struck by an arrow, is it painful? If the person is struck by a second arrow, is it even more painful?" He then went on to explain, "In life, we cannot always control the first arrow. However, the second arrow is our reaction to the first. And with this second arrow comes the possibility of choice."

We are all experiencing the first arrow of the coronavirus these days. We are impacted by travel restrictions, plummeting stock prices, supply shortages etc. But the second arrow – anxiety about getting the virus ourselves, worry that our loved ones will get it, worries about financial implications and all the other dark scenarios flooding the news and social media – is to a large extent of our own making. In short, the first arrow causes unavoidable pain, and our resistance to it creates fertile ground for all the second arrows.

It's important to remember that these second arrows – our emotional and psychological response to crises – are natural and very human. But the truth is they often bring us more suffering by narrowing and cluttering our mind and keeping us from seeing clearly the best course of action.

The way to overcome this natural tendency is to build our mental resilience through mindfulness. Mental resilience, especially in challenging times like the present, means managing our minds in a way that increases our ability to face the first arrow and to break the second before it strikes us. Resilience is the skill of noticing our own thoughts, unhooking from the non-constructive ones, and rebalancing quickly. This skill can be nurtured and trained. Here are three effective strategies:

First, calm the mind.

When you focus on calming and clearing your mind, you can pay attention to what is really going on around you and what is coming up within you. You can observe and manage your thoughts and catch them when they start to run away towards doomsday scenarios. You can hold your focus on what you choose (e.g. "Isn't it a gift to be able to work from home!") versus what pulls at you with each ping of a breaking news notification (e.g. "Oh no...the stock market has dropped again.>").

This calm and present state is crucial. Right away, it helps keep the mind from wandering and getting hooked, and it reduces the pits of stress and worry that we can easily get stuck in. Even more importantly, the continued practice of unhooking and focusing our minds builds a muscle of resilience that will serve us time and time again. When we practice bringing ourselves back to the present moment, we deepen our capacity to cope and weather all sorts of crises, whether global or personal. (Fortunately, there are a number of free apps available to help calm your mind and increase your own mindfulness.)

Look out the window.

Despair and fear can lead to overreactions. Often, it feels better to be doing something ... anything ... rather than sitting with uncomfortable emotions. In the past few weeks, I have felt disappointment and frustration with important business initiatives that have been adversely impacted by Covid-19. But I have been trying to meet this frustration with reflection versus immediate reaction. I know my mind has needed space to unhook from the swirl of bad news and to settle into a more stable position from which good planning and leadership can emerge. So, I have been trying to work less and to spend more time looking out my window and reflecting. In doing so, I have been able to find clearer answers about how best to move forward, both personally and as a leader.

Connect with others through compassion.

Unfortunately, many of the circles of community that provide support in times of stress are now closed off to us as cities and governments work to contain the spread of the virus. Schools are shut down, events are cancelled, and businesses have enacted work-from-home policies and travel bans. The natural byproduct of this is a growing sense of isolation and separation from the people and groups who can best quell our fears and anxieties.

The present climate of fear can also create stigmas and judgments about who is to blame and who is to be avoided, along with a dark, survivalist "every person for him/herself" mindset and behaviors. We can easily forget our shared vulnerability and interdependence.

But meaningful connection can occur even from the recommended six feet of social distance between you and your neighbor – and it begins with compassion. Compassion is the intention to be of benefit to others and it starts in the mind. Practically speaking, compassion starts by asking yourself one question as you go about your day and connect – virtually and in person – with others: How can I help this person to have a better day?

With that simple question, amazing things begin to happen. The mind expands, the eyes open to who and what is really in front of us, and we see possibilities for ourselves and others that are rich with hope and ripe with opportunity



WHAT DO I DO IF I RECEIVE A MEDICAL BILL??

Call the BMU Front Desk, ask for the MIDN Case Manager RN Deborah Hood
or your BMU care coordinator

410-293- 1758 / -1760

or NHCA TriCare Health Benefits Advisor, Mr. Ray Wiles

410-293-2276

NHCA-CustomerRelations@med.navy.mil



**KEEP
CALM
AND
GO
NAVY!**
FEAR THE GOAT!