



Prevention Connection: Building a Healthy Community

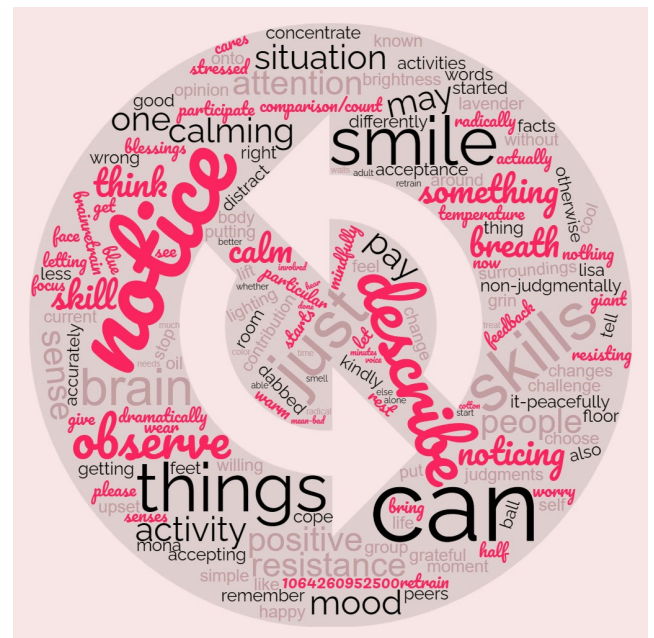
Inside: What Are You Thankful For?, Embrace the Changing Mind of a Young Teen, and Improve Resilience Through Tobacco Cessation

Retrain Your Brain and Other Helpful Skills:

Did you know you can change your thought patterns to help you get through a stressful time? Anyone can learn these simple changes to help improve our lives. For the next several months, we will include a simple skill to help overcome stressors while putting your mind at ease.

This month's skill is called **Radical Acceptance**.

This skill is about being willing to see things differently. Radically accepting a situation does not mean bad things are good. It is just noticing resistance to what is, and letting this resistance go. When we stop resisting what is, we feel better. Then we can see what needs to be done and do it—peacefully.



Special points of interest:

For more information on changing your mindset (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) go to:

<https://www.apa.org/ptsd-guideline/patients-and-families/cognitive-behavioral>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-cognitive-behavior-therapy-2795747>

What Are You Thankful For?

It's almost that time of year where we get to give thanks and enjoy good food with good company! Thanksgiving is a great reminder to spend some time focusing on what we are grateful for. It is well-known that having gratitude can boost our moods, foster hope for the future, and reduce stress. Let's see what some of our leaders here at the 934th are thankful for this year:

Col Christopher Lay, USAF AFRC 934 AW/CC: "I'm so very thankful for so many things. First and foremost, I'm thankful for the support and love of my Family: they're the reason why I want—and, the reason I am able—to do the things I wish and to serve in our Air Force and for our Nation. I'm thankful for my freedoms—the freedom to not live in fear, to pursue my hopes and dreams, to think, to question, to learn, to travel, to explore. I'm thankful for our skies, our lands and our waters and for all the bounties and wonders they provide. I'm thankful for my beliefs and the ability to freely pray and reflect. I'm thankful for our Nation and what it strives to represent and be—while imperfect, it still desires to always be a beacon of Liberty and Justice for All.

And, I'm eternally grateful for the sacrifices of all those who've been a part of securing and protecting all these things for which I'm so thankful for—our ancestors, our families, our communities, our veterans..."

CMSgt Kimberly Lord, CMSgt USAF AFRC 934 AW/CCC: "I am thankful for my kids being so flexible, resilient, generous, loving, funny, respectful, and patient with their very imperfect mother."

Maj. Monica Lombardo, USAF AFRC 934 AMXS/CC: "Thankful for a lot, because there's a lot I should be thankful for. Top 3 though: 1) Family (includes my dogs), 2) Great people to work with, 3) Indoor plumbing."

Lt Col. Patrick McDonald, USAF AFRC 934 CS/CC: "I am thankful for my family and the tremendous support they provide me in all aspects of life."

Col. Roger Stoeckman, USAF AFRC 934 MSG/CC: "I GET to.....When we change our way of looking at some of the daily challenges we are presented with, I find I'm much more thankful for everything I am doing and even some of the tougher things aren't so bad. Instead of I have to do "XXX" change your language to say I GET to do "XXX"."

(Continued on next page)

What Are You Thankful For? *(continued from previous page)*

Lt Col Jennifer Aasland, USAF AFRC 934 AES/DO: “I’m grateful for my son, who was born via IVF so I will never take for granted the miracle of babies! I’m grateful to have a secure job in the midst of these difficult health and economic times.”

Ms. Hannah Mercer, USAF AFRC 934 MXG/CCE: “Hot Potable Water – While at first this may seem an odd thing to be thankful for but it is something that I am utterly grateful for every day. Travelling the world (or even to Michigan) you see the effects of not having potable water as well as the struggles it brings to your life when it’s not available.”

Lt Col Karen Rowe, Lt Col USAF AFRC 934 FSS/FSO: “I’m thankful to be alive. Thankful I can continue seeing my spouse and children I live with, friends and family I hang out with and last but not least, the people I get to work with.”

Col Amy Swets, USAF AFRC 934 ASTS/CC: “I am thankful for the professionalism of the ASTS personnel, who stepped up and performed their important role of educating on, and, administering of, the COVID vaccination.

I am thankful that COVID has not impacted any of my family members and we continue to remain healthy.”

Mr. Thomas Garcia, USAF AFRC 934 AW/Historian: “I’m thankful for the support I have received from the Global Viking leadership!”

Col Kenneth Rose, USAF AFRC 934 MXG/CC: “Do you remember the last two minutes of “Field of Dreams”? You know the part where Ray and his dad John are playing catch, and the music begins to soar? The audience sees Annie, who gives a knowing look. Then the camera pulls back: from a distance we now see Ray and John—not as themselves, but as every father and every son who have found healing. Well, I am grateful for that scene. It’s a masterpiece, and it has become a part of me.”

“Acknowledging the good that you already have in your life is the foundation for all abundance.”

~ Eckhart Tolle



Embrace the Changing Mind of a Young Teen

by Ch. Brokenshire

During this Military Family Month, I recognize that many of us wear the parenting hat in addition to our cap or beret. Mark Twain famously wrote, “When a child turns 12 you should put him in a barrel, nail the lid down and feed him through a knot hole. When he turns 16, plug the hole!” Obviously, Twain was not a fan of the adolescent years. While these years can be frustrating for parents and youth alike, there is great value in focusing on these critical years of development.

One of my favorite courses to teach is titled, “Understanding Your Young Teen.” I am fascinated by this topic for a couple of reasons. As a parent of three teenagers, I want to make sure that I am guiding them and setting them up to make great decisions for their lives. Secondly, I have always loved mentoring this age. Teaching confirmation has always been a highlight of ministry for me. I began in ministry almost 27 years ago as a junior high camp counselor and spent nine years as a youth director prior to being ordained as a pastor.

What I have always loved about the junior high age is the discovery and transition. Their minds are changing and they are developing new ways to think and reason. This opens up a new understandings about faith and the world. It also opens up questions about society and traditions and God’s purpose and plan for their lives. It is a privilege to invest in them in this critical time. Much has changed in our world. Social media and technology have taken struggles to a whole new level. Adolescence (the time between childhood and adulthood) wasn’t even a recognized concept 120 years ago. It has since transitioned from a 2-year process to a 15-year transition. Likewise, the age of puberty has shifted and now begins almost 4 years earlier in today’s youth. Throughout all of these changes, there is one constant that we can remind them of: “God’s steadfast love endures forever.” The greatest thing that we can express to youth is the assurance that we are with them and for them and love them. For in this we reflect their God who is with them and for them and loves them.

Proverbs tells us, “Train a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.” This is our hope as parents, grandparents and people who love youth. Let us cherish this special season of their lives and make the most of every opportunity. With deployments, juggling multiple careers and the ever-changing world we live in, parenting is tough. If you find yourself struggling at parenting and need somewhere to vent, stop by the chapel. God bless you as you fulfill this crucially important job.

Improve Resilience Through Tobacco Cessation by Eric Neal

Did you know smoking is the leading cause of preventable death? On average smokers die 10 years earlier than non smokers (1). Smoking not only causes people to die earlier, but also affects a person's quality of life making them less physically resilient. Smoking harms nearly every organ of the body leading to disease and disabilities (1). Smoking causes cancer, heart disease, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, emphysema, bronchitis, diabetes, and lung disease (1). It increases risk for tuberculosis, certain eye diseases, and problems to immune system, including rheumatoid arthritis. (1) Smoking is also known to cause erectile dysfunction. (1)

In addition to all of the undesirable health effects from smoking, it can be a very costly habit. A pack of cigarettes costs between \$5.25 to \$12.85, an average of \$6.96 per pack (2). According to American Lung Association, the average smoker has 15 cigarettes per day, averaging \$5.25 per day or \$1916.25 per year (2). In addition, the total economic cost of smoking is more than \$300 billion a year (1).

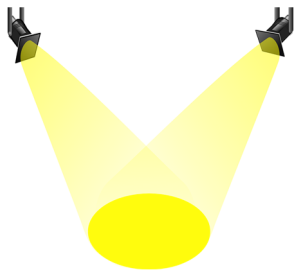
Many of you may have already known the health risks and expenses associated with smoking, but did you know it also affects people's mental health? Nicotine creates an immediate sense of relaxation, so people smoke in belief it reduces stress and anxiety (3). This feeling is temporary and soon gives way to withdrawal symptoms and cravings (3). Smoking reduces the withdrawal, but doesn't reduce anxiety (3). Smoking also encourages the brain to switch off its own mechanism for making dopamine, which is a neurotransmitter for triggering positive feelings (3).

Kicking the habit of smoking can make you more resilient physically, mentally, and socially. Physically you will be able to breathe and perform better while reducing many health risks. The physical benefits also play a reciprocal role improving mental health by no longer having a dependence on a substance that over the long term inhibits brain's ability to make dopamine. Money saved from kicking the habit could play a role enhancing social resilience as more money could be available to spend socializing or could also play a role improving physical resilience increasing funds available for healthy lifestyle such as gym membership or healthy foods.

Sources: https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/fast_facts/index.htm

<https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/cigarette-prices-by-state>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/s/smoking-and-mental-health>



Resource Spotlight

SCORE—Do you have a small business and need guidance? Or maybe you have thoughts of starting a business but don't know where to begin? SCORE is a non-profit organization and resource partner with the US Small Business Administration. They have a large network of business experts and volunteers willing to assist you at no cost to you. They also have a number of live and recorded webinars, and courses on demand to assist you in your business adventures. To schedule an appointment with a mentor or to get more info go to: <https://www.score.org/>

Prevention Partners/Response:

Violence Prevention: 713-1159

Sexual Assault Response Coordinator:
713-1315

Director of Psychological Health:
713-1224

Airman & Family Readiness: 713-1516

Personal Financial Counselor:
612-297-2826

Chaplain Corp: 713-1226

Equal Opportunity: 713-1221

Exercise Physiologist: 713-1472

Security Forces (BDOC): 713-1101

Military One Source: 1-800-342-9647

DoD Safe Helpline: 1-877-995-5247

Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
1-800-273-8255

National Domestic Violence Hotline:
1-800-799-7233

National Human Trafficking Resource
Center: 1-888-373-7888

Self Care Strategy—Add this to your Tool Box!

Balance Your Thinking—will:

- Help you see situations accurately and take action based on evidence
- Help you respond in ways that align with your values
- Improve your performance

How to use the skill:

1. Determine if you have all the evidence you need to understand the situation. Are you stuck in a cognitive trap, like all or nothing, or confirmation bias?
2. Use three strategies: a) examine the evidence—is it factual, b) check for a double-standard, and c) phone a friend or ask someone who is non-biased.

For more information on this or other resilience skills ask one of our MRTs.



RESILIENCE