



LIFELINK

NEWSLETTER

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Leading by Example: Small ACTs can Make a Difference in *Your* Life, too

While September—Suicide Prevention Month—may be over, our work to promote healthy stress navigation and proactive support continues 365 days a year. We introduced the “1 Small ACT” message to encourage simple ways to make a difference to every Sailor, every day. That commitment starts at the individual level through leading by example and taking care of your own physical and psychological health. Here are a few Small ACTs to help you build a journey toward personal wellness:

- **Personalize Your Stress Navigation Plan.** Just as you would program a sober buddy’s number in your phone to avoid getting behind the wheel after consuming alcohol, you should take a moment to proactively identify who you’d reach out to and what you will do when you encounter stress and adversity. Take a moment to fill out your Stress Navigation Plan (available [here](#)) to help you list your practices for safely navigating stress, and store it in an easily accessible place so that you can be more prepared during life’s inevitable stressful moments. Encourage your shipmates and family to develop their plan as well.
- **Build up to a regular fitness regimen to combat stress.** Not getting in your recommended two hours and 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per week? Stop creating excuses and take small steps to build healthy habits. To help you **get fit from the inside out**, try breaking up your physical activity on busy days. Even a 20 minute run around your building or the deck, or a few sets of lunges each hour in your workspace, can increase endorphins, the brain’s feel-good neurotransmitters that play a vital role in navigating stress.
- **Swap one “junk food” item with one healthy choice each day.** It’s not just about your waistline. Without proper nutrition, your brain cannot adequately communicate with the rest of your body, which can lead to changes in mood. Choosing one **healthy swap** per day gives you an opportunity to discover whole foods that still satisfy your craving, and may progress to bigger long-term changes. If you’re a burger lover, try using salmon instead of ground

beef. The omega-3 fatty acids in salmon can help keep cortisol and adrenaline levels in check, helping to keep you calm after a stressful event.

- **Give thanks. Expressions of gratitude** have been linked to greater goal achievement, improved physical health and even an improved ability to navigate memories of traumatic events. Try giving three sincere compliments or reminders of appreciation each day. We feel our best when we help others feel their best as well. After a few days, you may notice that others seem more motivated and connected, and you may feel the same.

The simple possibilities are endless. Whether you decide to make a conscious effort to get more sleep, communicate better with your family, be a more approachable leader or speak with a chaplain to help work through challenges, your actions can motivate your shipmates. When it comes to breaking down the barriers that may prevent others from taking steps toward better health, the Small ACTs we take can have a ripple effect. Check out more creative ways Sailors and members of the Navy community are choosing to support themselves and others in the **1 Small ACT Photo Gallery**. Post your 1 Small ACT today—submissions will be accepted through Aug. 31, 2016!



Lifelink Spotlight

This month's *Lifelink Spotlight* is shared between all of the individual Sailors, families, commands, and civilians who led and participated in 2015 Suicide Prevention Month efforts. As we embark on a new fiscal year with a renewed sense of commitment to suicide prevention, take a look at just a few of the many events held around the fleet:

- USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) Team led a **series of events**, including a walk/run around the ship's flight deck and a "just because" card-making event. The cards were created to be delivered to those in need of encouragement. Efforts continued throughout the month, including a suicide prevention trivia night and sunrise yoga.
- Training Support Center (TSC) and CSADD Great Lakes conducted a **Suicide Prevention and Awareness Fall Fest**. The event included a cooking contest, inflatable obstacle course, flag contest and more. "Events like this encourage people to be able to step outside of themselves and allow them to have positive interactions with life in general," said Lt. Adrienne Townsend, TSC deputy chaplain and suicide prevention coordinator.
- Marine Corps Security Force Battalion Bangor's Coalition for Sailors Against Destructive Decisions (CSADD) organized a suicide prevention walk at Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor. Before the event, participants received information on suicide prevention resources and were given the opportunity to take photos for the 1 Small ACT Photo Gallery.
- Fleet and Family Support Center Kings Bay worked with local Morale, Welfare and Recreation to lead a "**Gearing Up for Good Times**" event, encouraging Sailors to get active together. The event included pool and Madden football tournaments, food, entertainment, and information tables on physical and psychological health.

Throughout the month, Sailors and civilians displayed their commitment to one another by participating in the **1 Small ACT Photo Gallery**, with some commands setting up stations locally and posting photos daily. Aviation Support Equipment Technician 2nd Class Doland Miller took her commitment—and courage—to the next level by successfully asking Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Mike Stevens to participate!

Keep up the great work! The 1 Small ACT Photo Gallery is open for submission through August 31, 2016 (download the sign [here](#)) Thank you for your commitment to every Sailor, every day.



Resilience Corner

Therapy Dogs: Sniffing Out Stress, Reducing Barriers and Strengthening Connections

In the movies when someone needs to talk about emotional stress, they're often seen stretched out on a couch in a mental health provider's office. But for patients at Belvoir Community Hospital, it's a little different. If Cmdr. Joe smells emotional distress in a patient—whether or not that person is there for psychological or physical health reasons—he lies down in front of him or her. Cmdr. Joe isn't your everyday O5; he's a Labrador retriever trained in identifying emotional stress through his sense of smell and patients' body language cues.



As the Department of Defense's only "stress-sniffing" dog, Cmdr. Joe has identified nearly 50 people showing signs of distress, seven of which experienced suicidal ideation. None of the patients were at the hospital for psychological health treatment, but each was connected with support resources because of Joe's expertise and comforting nature. When he lays on the floor, it gives providers an opportunity to engage patients comfortably about their stress and identify solutions. Cmdr. Joe's handler says that when he explains his training to patients—and how he can identify those that need help—they open up. "It's hard to lie to a dog,"



Dogs are being used in a variety of settings to provide occupational and emotional therapy across the military and veteran community. In September, Navy Surgeon General, Vice. Adm. Matthew Nathan promoted Laura Lee, a therapy dog at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center Bethesda (WRNMMC), to the rank of vice admiral. Vice Adm. Lee, part of a Facility Dogs Program at WRNMMC, assists therapy care in pediatrics, resilience, warrior care, breast care and more.

To read more about Cmdr. Joe, visit **All Hands Magazine**. For more on Vice. Adm. Lee, check out **Seabee Online** or check out her **Facebook page**.

I Am Navy Medicine: Religious Program Specialist Kaleib Rew Taylor

News and Resources

1 Small ACT Photo Gallery Sign
[Navy Suicide Prevention](#)

TSC, CSADD Great Lakes Hosts
First-Every Suicide Prevention,
Awareness Fall Fest
[Navy.mil](#)

Small ACTs Can Promote
Financial Security
[NavyNavStress](#)

Things aren't Always what they
Appear—Reach out to your
Friend Today [DCoE Blog](#)

21st Century Sailor Office: 1
Small ACT Can Save a Life
[All Hands Magazine](#)

Control What You Own
[Navy.mil Video Gallery](#)

Breathing, Meditation and
Relaxation Techniques
[NavyNavStress](#)

Transitioning to a Civilian Job
[HPRC Online](#)

The Power of 1: A Single Person
Can Save a Live [DoD News](#)

Pearl Harbor CSADD Sailors
Bring Suicide Awareness
Through "1 Small ACT" [DVIDS](#)

Homefront: Will School Changes
Hurt Kids in the Long Run?
[Seabee Online](#)

Upcoming Events

U.S. Navy 240th Birthday
October 18

**Domestic Violence
Awareness Month**
October

SPC Training Webinars
October 6, 1000 CT
October 15, 1400 CT
[Register Here](#)

Heads Up! Check out the [Holiday Season Mailing Deadlines](#) to help you get a jumpstart on planning. Stay tuned for more tips to navigate holiday stress, coming soon!

Suicide Prevention Coordinator is a collateral duty that is held by Sailors and civilians of myriad backgrounds and experiences—but are all united in their commitment toward facilitating engaging local Suicide Prevention Programs. The following article was contributed by Navy Medicine and was authored by a Religious Program Specialist attached to Naval Hospital Bremerton. To view in its original form on Navy Medicine Live, click [here](#).

As a Religious Program Specialist working in Navy Medicine at Naval Hospital Bremerton (NHB), I do my best providing military personnel, their families, staff, and patients with the religious support and care they need. Providing care for each individual and supporting their needs are top priorities.

Whether it's stopping to say hello, offering a quick prayer before surgery or welcoming a new life being brought into this world, myself and the chaplains are always here for all in their time of need.

As the assistant Suicide Prevention Coordinator (SPC) I assist with the command's Suicide Prevention Month by teaching at monthly general military training and command orientations, along with ensuring suicide prevention posters, handouts, and other types of information are displayed and available throughout our hospital. It's super important to get this information out to every person here whether military or civilian, new accession or senior leader. Suicide is among the leading preventable deaths in the military. If we can continue to show everyone that they can make a difference to save lives, maybe, just maybe, we can stop someone from taking their own.

I have never had to deal with an actual case where a person has died by suicide, and if I never do, hopefully that means all the hours and work that we have put into teaching suicide prevention is being used, and there are people out there who remembered to ACT. **Ask - Care - Treat.** Be willing to listen; Take all suicide threats and attempts seriously; and in a crisis, seek professional help. There is very real hope.

Pastoral Care has an important part in Navy Medicine in regards to providing support for suicide prevention. When it comes to caring for the Sailors and family members who come and see us, I have to give the credit all to our chaplains, Cmdr. Bruce Crouterfield and Lt. Shawn Redmon. They are the ones providing counseling every day and listening to an individual's story or problem or anything that might be going on in their life. People come to them in their time of need and they are always there for them, helping them through whatever is going on and guiding them back from whatever darkness they might be in, getting them help they need—especially when it comes to suicide.

The best part about working in Navy Medicine so far has to be about all the people. I have met some of the most amazing people since I've started working here, such as meeting Medal of Honor recipient, Maj. Bruce P. Crandall, who was portrayed in the movie 'We Were Soldiers.' The people I get to meet and/or help on a daily basis are truly incredible and make working here in Pastoral Care truly amazing. The incredible staff take patient care seriously and strive to further Navy Medicine and make NHB one of the best facilities that there is. If I had to sum up my experience being part of Navy Medicine in one sentence, I would say that "no matter the situation, we will be here to help. All you have to do is ask."

I'm RP3 Kaleib Rew Taylor. I am Navy Medicine.

