

# Resiliency

## The Main Ingredient in a Military Household

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Marines moves across sand dune during training exercise to support maritime security operations and theater security

**W**e have the most technologically advanced, versatile, and diverse force in the history of warfare.

The American fighting man and woman serve in a profession that is constantly engaged in defending freedom in virtually every time zone on the planet. As operational tempo declines, our force will readjust to a more garrison-oriented environment. As we reshape this battle-tested force, it must remain ready, relevant, trained, and educated on a tighter budget than enjoyed in previous years. Moreover, to maintain our fighting edge, we must

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be holistic in our approaches. Thus, *resiliency* is one of those lifeline ingredients that must be intertwined in every aspect of the military profession.

I have the privilege to serve as one of the senior enlisted point men for a new doctrinal effort. As defined, *Total Force Fitness* (TFF, pronounced *tough*) is a state in which the individual, family, and organization can sustain optimal well-being and performance under any condition. For additional clarification, let us address some of the core principles. TFF:

- is a common doctrinal framework that supports Service-specific fitness programs
- implores leaders to take a holistic approach to accommodate Servicemembers, their families, organizations, and communities
- spans a complete lifecycle of Servicemembers starting before enlistment and beyond retirement or honorable separation

- recognizes the military family as the cornerstone of warfighter success
- places an emphasis on leadership, parenting, and mentoring
- depends upon valid and reliable metrics for ongoing program evaluation and improvement.

One of the most important core principles that I must stress is that this effort does not replace or duplicate existing Service programs, such as Semper Fit, Comprehensive Soldier Fitness, Airman Fitness, and so forth. In fact, it was built by the leaders of the individual Service fitness programs to serve as a common framework where best practices could be exchanged, augmented, or enhanced.

The methodology is simple: as an individual, family, or command dives into the various domains of Total Force Fitness (see figure), it takes a concerted and focused

toughness to get there and remain. That does not mean we hold things in. If a tank develops a crack in the armor, we do not simply slap a coat of paint over it. We pull that system in for maintenance, and likewise we maintain the fitness of the force. Regularly checking on people and taking the steps to prevent little problems from becoming big problems is the key to maintaining TFF.

TFF is not a medical manual. Think of it in a broader way that encompasses both art and science. There are required medical (science) inputs as to the best methods to overcome an adverse condition, but, as described in the core principles, we place major emphasis on the leader (art) and on active leadership engagement.

From the battlefield to the classroom to the hospital ward to transitioning out of the military into veteran status, overcoming adversity and change requires discipline, determination, and toughness. Once resources or avenues to recovery are identified, they must be applied in concert with warfighters, their families, and their Services. Ideally, we would all like to have the ability to predict adversity or misfortune so as to remain on the left side of the incident (prevention). Sometimes that is possible, but other times misfortune arrives unannounced. Strong organizations build on the mutual support of every member of the unit. This is the essence of leadership. Managing during times of ease is straightforward. Leading is something practiced by those who are constantly working against challenges and adversity by bringing out the best in all their people.

I have found it quite easy to advocate for something that works as it has for my family and me. Like most, we are the average garden-variety American military family, so I am confident that the various domains offered in Total Force Fitness can be active ingredients to the daily menu of all Servicemembers, their families, and organizations.

From the surgeon to the sergeant and from the commander to the case worker, each plays an important role in maintaining health and readiness of the Total Force. It is truly a team effort.

You can learn more about Total Force Fitness by visiting [www.facebook.com/TotalForceFitness](http://www.facebook.com/TotalForceFitness), visiting <http://humanperformancecenter.org/total-force-fitness>, and viewing the Chairman's Instruction 3405.01. JFQ

Figure. Shield of Health



U.S. Army (Felicia Adams)

Wounded U.S. warrior boarding C-130 departing Iraq during Operation *Proper Exit*