

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

MARTIAL ARTS CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
THE BASIC SCHOOL
24191 GILBERT ROAD
QUANTICO, VIRGINIA 22134

STUDENT OUTLINE

HUMAN DIMENSIONS OF COMBAT

MAIB1055

MARTIAL ARTS INSTRUCTOR COURSE

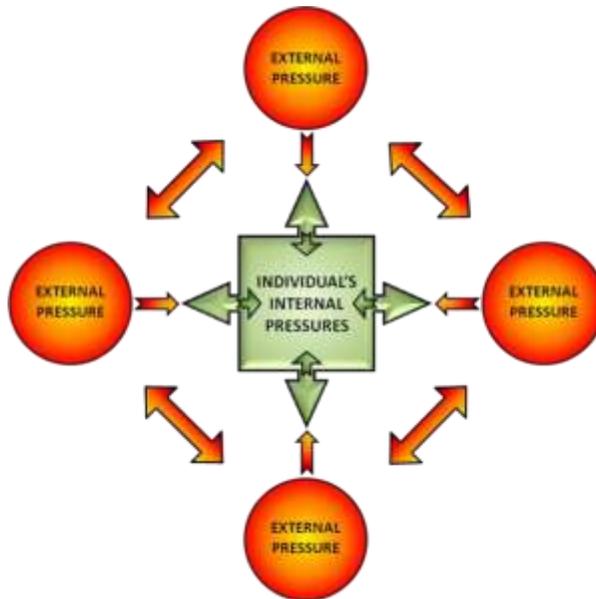
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APPROVED BY: Maj. Carter, C.T. DATE: 1 January 2020

LEARNING OBJECTIVESa. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S)

(1) Given student handouts, identify components of human dimensions of combat in accordance with MCRP 6-11B. (0916-INST-2054c)

1. **PRESSURES**. Pressures are a human dimension of combat that heavily affect us. These factors are often grouped by the type of factor or the circumstance in which they affect us. In most cases external pressures lead to the development of internal pressures. However, this is not a straight forward concept. An internal pressure can lead to another internal pressure or create a new external pressure. These pressures are constantly changing in a dynamic system that interacts much like the chain reaction in a nuclear explosion. The diagram below shows this interaction.



a. **Internal Pressures**. These can include various human emotions and the physiological and psychological responses to external pressures.

(1) Emotional. The list shows what are considered primary emotions with their secondary and tertiary sub-categories.

(a) Fear. Anxiety, apprehension, distress, dread, tenseness, worry, uneasiness, alarm, horror, hysteria, phobia, mortification, panic, shock, and terror.

(b) Anger. Fury, wrath, bitterness, loathing, resentment, hate, agitation, aggravation, grouchiness, revulsion, contempt, jealousy and torment.

(c) Joy. Amusement, ecstasy, euphoria, bliss, elation, delight, happiness, enthusiasm, excitement, thrill, exhilaration, contentment, relief, optimism, pride, and enthrallment.

(d) Love. Affection, longing, fondness, attraction, adoration, sentimentality, caring, arousal, desire, and passion.

(e) Sadness. Depression, unhappiness, misery, melancholy, gloom, despair, suffering, agony, hurt, anguish, disappointment, shame, guilt, remorse, regret, neglect, insecurity, alienation, homesickness, embarrassment, humiliation, sympathy, and pity.

(f) Surprise. Astonishment, amazement, bewilderment, shock, wonder, and stupefied.

(2) Physiological. This is the body's reaction to stress brought on by the release of a chemical cocktail of hormones such as adrenaline, norepinephrine, and dopamine. The following physical effects commonly occur:

(a) Increased heart and respiratory rate to include dilation of the bronchial airways.

(b) Dilation of blood vessels to muscles in order to transport energy. Constriction of other blood vessels in many parts of the body in case of injury to prevent blood loss.

(c) Inhibition of stomach and upper-intestinal action to the point where digestion slows down or stops.

(d) Release of glucose from the liver into the blood stream for muscular action.

(e) Inhibition of the lachrymal gland responsible for tear production and salivation (cotton mouth).

(f) Dilation of pupil (mydriasis) to aid sight.

(g) Relaxation of bladder that results in voiding.

(h) Tunnel vision (loss of peripheral vision).

(i) Disinhibition of spinal reflexes, uncontrolled physical movement. One form of this is the Startle Reflex.

(j) Uncontrolled shaking.

(3) Psychological. Under severe stress, the normal mental process becomes extremely difficult and the mind reverts to its most basic process. The following are psychological effects.

(a) Overwhelming Fear or Stress. Loss of concentration and effectiveness due to overwhelming human factors. It is at this point an individual can freeze.

(b) Tunnel Vision. Tunnel vision is the singular focus on the threat at the exclusion of peripheral information and overall situational awareness. In tunnel vision the focus becomes so restrictive or narrow that an indication of other targets is overlooked.

(c) Tachypsychia. When under stress the mind processes information at a rate faster than normal. This can cause the perception of "slow motion" events.

(d) Auditory Exclusion. Auditory exclusion is the shutting down of extraneous auditory information by the mind in order to focus on the threat.

(e) Precognition. Precognition is hyper-sensory perception or a false "sixth sense". It manifests itself by the mind predicting an outcome based on sensory input so that when the outcome happens, you say "I knew that was going to happen." Therefore it is critical to have a plan of action for likely scenarios.

(f) Cognitive Dissonance. The mind stores information based on relevance, importance, or sensory strength and not necessarily the sequence of time. Under normal conditions it requires effort to recall any information in the actual sequence of events. However, a cognitive dissonance exists when the mind recalls conflicting information due to the automatic and self-preserving economy of the mind. Confusing recollections and remembering events out of sequence are both common results for events that happened during a heightened state of Body Alarm Reaction.

b. External Pressures. These are all the things that affect us in a positive or negative way and produce a response from us. External pressures are what create the internal pressures in us. External pressures are a variety of things that affect us all the time to include during combat. Many are associated with the conflicts or clashes we experience in garrison. The list is extensive but the following are primary examples:

(1) Family or personal issues, medical conditions, financial problems, legal issues, or professional problems.

(2) Political, religious, cultural, ethnic, racial, or philosophical differences.

(3) Climatic conditions, geography, and resource availability.

(4) The five stresses of combat are external pressures that can produce internal pressures.

(a) Extreme risk and fear.

(b) The "fog of war".

(c) Discomfort and fatigue.

(d) Casualties.

(e) Boredom.

(5) The nine elements of combat are also external pressures that can produce internal pressures.

(a) Confusion and lack of information.

(b) Casualties.

(c) Violent, unnerving sights and sounds.

(d) Feelings of isolation.

(e) Communication breakdowns.

(f) Individual discomfort and fatigue.

- (g) Fear, stress, and mental fatigue.
- (h) Continuous operations.
- (i) Homesickness.

2. RESPONSE CYCLE. We use a model with six stages to describe the stages we progress through when confronted with a life-threatening situation. The faster we recognize and progress through these stages the faster we will be able to deal with a life threatening situation and increase the chances of survivability. Understanding these stages and training to get through them faster increases the chances of survivability. If you are not aware of how you respond in a deadly situation your situation becomes more deadly.

a. Alarm. This is the "here comes trouble" stage where one is startled or initially confronted with the situation.

b. Vulnerability Awareness. This is where you confront your thoughts and either realizes how weak and helpless you are or begin to react with some controlled and/or rehearsed response. This is a very small window of time. If you get stuck in this stage, like a deer stuck in the headlights, you will die.

c. Refocus. This is the "I have got to do something" stage where you need to activate your skill sets (this is where that gross familiarity with your weapon systems begins to kick in).

d. Survival. Here you gain control of the situation.

e. Here Goes. You commit to action and continue the initiated actions.

f. Response. Despite your fear, tactics and actions have been deployed.

3. RESPONSE MECHANISMS. In order to conduct the mental training and preparation necessary to overcome the psychological and physical stresses of combat it is important to understand the natural mechanisms that drive the response. These responses are based upon well studied mechanisms that characterize human behavior under extreme stress.

a. Fight or Flight. Many feel the natural response to a life threatening situation is to flee. This may be most

people's initial response; however, if someone threatens your child or loved ones you are more likely to remove that threat by whatever means necessary. A protective element comes into play when there is somebody other than ourselves at risk. By understanding this we can incorporate two points into our training. The first is we can train the fight response with immediate action drills. We must also use this understanding as part of our unit cohesion, team training. Tough realistic training and team building exercises are the key to developing the fight response. The worst case scenario is to become so overcome with fear that you do not flee or fight; you freeze and become the victim.

b. Predatory vs. Affective Behavior

(1) Predatory. Predatory behavior is usually associated with stalking behavior. The predator experiences very little autonomic arousal and is usually extremely focused on his prey making little to no noise waiting to exploit the best opportunity. This is favorable yet hard to achieve for combatants. The manifest adaptive traits are associated with predatory behavior. They are the ability to overcome the natural arousal brought on by the innate traits. They are what we train for; to focus with deadly intent in order to be better at the combat duty of killing.

(2) Affective. Affective behavior includes both overt physical and vocal displays. The subject partaking in affective behavior experiences an elevation in arousal levels. As adrenaline courses through his body he begins to sweat, his heart rate increases, and his breathing increases as his need for oxygen increases. Affective behavior is difficult to sustain and as you can imagine this is a very ineffective state to be in for a combative engagement. The innate adaptive traits are associated with affective behavior. They include, but are not limited to: adrenaline release, sweat, eyes fluttering, tunnel vision, increased heart rate, and increased breathing.

c. Inter-species, Intra-species. Inter-species behavior is between different species, such as a cat and a mouse. In almost all cases, there is a predator-prey or at least "food-chain-type" relationship. Intra-species behavior takes place between the same species. In most cases, the behavior is affective with the goal to establish dominance. Think of two cats that hiss and growl at each other, fur stands up, and backs arch to appear bigger.

d. **Pseudo-Predatory Behavior.** Pseudo-predatory behavior is between humans. Man is one of the few species that engages in predatory intra-species behavior. We have many coping mechanisms to facilitate us killing each other. We tend to depersonalize our foe. We have derogatory names for them and think of them as less than human. This makes it easier on our psyche because we are killing a "lower life form", a task we are more familiar with and one our conscience can resolve.

4. **SURVIVAL ATTRIBUTES.** It has been shown there are three key components or attributes to overcoming death at the hands of your enemies. By having these and ensuring we train our Marines to have them, we prepare a more combat ready and effective Corps. Training these attributes leads to the inoculation effect for the mental and physical components and provides confidence in the execution of the character component of the ethical warrior. Post action coping is the final element of survival.

a. **High Levels of Physical Fitness.** Without a high level of physical fitness we will not have the strength, power, or skill sets necessary to attack or break contact when appropriate. If we are too busy trying to catch our breath because we are out of shape we will not be focused enough on the engagement, and most likely will perish at the hands of our enemy.

b. **Gross Familiarity with your Weapons Systems.** Whether it is your rifle, sidearm, knife, or martial arts skills you must be intimately knowledgeable and almost reflexively capable of effectively employing those skill sets. For example, we all qualify with the rifle in boot camp but who has practiced enough to immediately recognize the three different types of malfunctions and to clear them in the middle of a firefight? Can you reload and return fire with your weak hand after being shot in the strong hand? For that matter, how much do you have to think about reloading? How much time is there to think about reloading in a firefight? Not a whole lot and the less time you spend thinking about it the more time you will have to execute offensive and defensive tactics. The same is true of your martial arts skills. If you have to spend any amount of time thinking about what to do it will allow your opponent more time to take action against you.

c. **Mental Preparation.** Your mental preparation will be the difference between you giving up after being shot or compromised versus fighting through in order to win after being wounded.

Different things motivate individuals to fight on, however one common denominator we see time and time again is a unit's cohesion, training, and esprit de corps giving them the strength to stand together and fight in a combative situation. The mental preparation is designed to develop specific attributes or traits a warrior must possess in order to not die at the hands of his enemy.

d. Post Action Coping. We have discussed your preparation before and during a deadly confrontation. How do you prepare yourself and others for the aftermath of a deadly encounter? Once the fighting is over the experience does not end there. Many carry emotional wounds from these engagements. Training and preparation to develop these coping attributes must be part of the mental preparation. There are six coping attributes to allow you to recover or assist others with the recovery process.

(1) Communication. If something affects you emotionally, communication helps make it better. Talking has a positive healing effect.

(2) Compassion. This is also a healing attribute. Having compassion for others allows you to deal with your own trauma.

(3) Control. Control your mind. Having control is a stabilizing force that can help you cope. For example, POWs often find small ways to establish control even in a prison environment. This enables them to cope and make it day to day.

(4) Conviction. This is the ability to take something horrific happening and turn it into something that has meaning. This can also be taken as spiritual faith in that it is something many draw strength from.

(5) Clear Conscience. The knowledge that you have done the right thing and followed your training will come together with the previous assets to contribute to your clear conscience.

(6) Hope. You must have something to make things worth doing, to make it worth going on.

REFERENCES:

Marine Corps Martial Arts Program, MCO 1500.59_

Combat Hunter Operations, MCIP 3-11.01