



# HOLISTIC WELLNESS CHALLENGE

**MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY**

**FIT TO FIGHT**

**CHALLENGE** your Service members and yourself to use at least one of the recommended resources to enhance mental and physical readiness.

## FACTS & FIGURES: DID YOU KNOW?

- An estimated 23% of U.S. adults experienced mental illness, such as depression or anxiety disorder, in 2021.<sup>1</sup>
- People with depression have a 40% higher risk of developing cardiovascular and other diseases.<sup>1</sup>

## THE MIND-BODY CONNECTION

Mental and physical health are interconnected. A change in one can result in a change in the other.<sup>2,3</sup>

### Good mental health can improve:



Sleep



Blood Pressure



Immune System



Recovery Time

### Good physical health can improve:



Mood



Memory



Stress Levels



Cognitive Ability

## CNGB & SEA Corner

*Always Ready, Always There*

As Guardsmen, our mission requires both physical strength and mental resilience. Applying a holistic approach that integrates mental and physical fitness ensures that we are always ready to answer the call of duty.

Asking for help is a sign of strength and demonstrates the sound judgment needed to maintain mission readiness. Read more for tips and resources to stay healthy in body and mind.

Stronger Together. Stronger Tomorrow.

*Steven S. Nordhaus     John T. Raines III*

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## A WIN-WIN SCENARIO

The connection between mind and body creates a win-win scenario. The more you invest in your mental health, the more you enhance your physical well-being. Likewise, the more you move your body, the more you sharpen your mind. Check out these tips to improve overall health and remain fit to fight.<sup>2,3</sup>

- Join a cycling class instead of riding solo. Connecting with others provides a sense of belonging that can help you find purpose and meaning in life.
- Take your workout outside. Being surrounded by nature can ground you and put challenges into perspective.
- Learn a new sport. Engaging your mind can improve critical thinking and help with problem-solving.
- Try a restorative exercise like yoga. Enhancing your physical flexibility can help you mentally adapt to change.

## CONTACT US

For more information on mental health or other wellness topics, email us at: [ng.ncr.ngb.mbx.integrated-prevention-branch@army.mil](mailto:ng.ncr.ngb.mbx.integrated-prevention-branch@army.mil)



## READY AND RESILIENT

### What does it mean?

- Fit to fight is about mental **and** physical health; it is not about one or the other.

### Why does it matter?

- The ability to withstand stress, overcome adversity, and keep going requires mental and physical strength.

### What can you do?

- Give equal priority to your mental and physical health.
- Work out with a battle buddy or wingman to stay motivated and connected.
- Educate yourself about the signs and symptoms of mental distress so you can recognize them in Service members and yourself.
- Create a safe environment that encourages open dialogue about the importance of seeking support.
- Reach out for help early. Don't let a manageable problem become unmanageable.
- Be there for friends and family who are experiencing mental or physical health challenges and let them know they are not alone.



## RESOURCES TO RECOMMEND



NG's Psychological Health Program provides Service members and their families with mental health support. <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/resources/millife-guides/psychological-health-program/>



DoD's Mental Health Podcast aims to raise awareness about mental health and reduce the stigma of seeking help. <https://www.dspo.mil/Home/Tools/Podcasts/>



Cohen Veterans Network offers comprehensive, evidence-based, holistic care through in-person and virtual mental health counseling and life skills support. <https://www.cohenveteransnetwork.org/>



Give an Hour delivers personalized, responsive, and informed assistance in-person and virtually through mental health counseling and peer support. <https://giveanhour.org/>



Military OneSource has a variety of tips and resources to manage stress and improve physical well-being. <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/resources/millife-guides/off-duty-health-fitness/>



## SPOTLIGHT: MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

- The Rhode Island National Guard offers an evidence-based training that teaches people to identify and respond to the signs, symptoms, and risk factors of mental health issues.
- Participants learn strategies for managing their mental health, which helps to reduce stigma and foster a culture of awareness, empathy, and support.
- For more information, contact [ng.ncr.ngb-arng.mbx.j1-programs@army.mil](mailto:ng.ncr.ngb-arng.mbx.j1-programs@army.mil).



## REFERENCES:

1. National Alliance on Mental Illness. <https://www.nami.org/about-mental-illness/mental-health-by-the-numbers/>
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/mental-health/about/index.html>
3. Military Health System. <https://health.mil/News/Dvids-Articles/2024/05/28/news472355>