

Commentary: Soldier finds success with resiliency training

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HEIDELBERG, Germany -- As an Army journalist, I wrote a story about the Master Resiliency Training course in September.

After the course, I curiously wondered when resilience training would be scheduled for Soldiers here and what the training would be like.

My mind was put at ease Dec. 3, the day I attended Staff Sgt. Jemel Phynon's first session of resilience training at the Patton Barracks Chapel here. Phynon, the United States Army in Europe motor pool noncommissioned officer in charge, graduated from the MRT course in September.

Resilience is the most important concept of the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program, Phynon said. He also said resilience comes from within, so being self-aware of strengths and weaknesses is vital to understanding when to regulate emotions and what needs improvement.

Resilience is being able to endure and learn from situations that you've experienced, said Phynon. It's the ability to appreciate positive life experiences, and learn from negative life experiences.

Phynon's training session focused on understanding resilience and the MRT competencies.

Self-awareness, self-regulation, optimism, mental agility, strengths of character and connecting with people are the MRT competencies.

During the connection competency discussion, Phynon said strong relationships build resilience.

After the training and lunch, I returned to work and noticed an email from Master Sgt. Mark Jordan, the USAREUR equal opportunity senior enlisted advisor. He wanted me to help him out with a video project. This was a chance to build a strong relationship and resilience.

Jordan is my go-to guy on all things diversity. He has helped me with articles multiple times in the past, and I know his help will be needed many more times in the future.

Only a few weeks ago, Jordan provided me with a list Soldiers, who were potential interview subjects for an article on Native American Heritage Month. Meeting the deadline for the Native American article was challenging and stressful, and may not have been possible without Jordan's help.

I began to think about the video project. How would I make a video? I'm not a broadcaster. How would I find the time between team meetings and story deadlines? I also thought about the resilience training session, and what Phynon said.

He said that strong relationships build resilience, and resilience is a proactive approach to problem solving.

I will have to create diversity projects in the future, and I will need Jordan's help with those projects. His help will save me from the stress of staying at work till 7:30 p.m. or later to meet a deadline on a Friday night.

I factored in all the variables and decided to make the video. I spent a few hours learning the video software, and I spent a couple more hours tweaking the final product. Finally, I called Jordan and told him the project was completed.

He was pleased and thankful for my help. I continued building the foundation for a strong relationship with Jordan, and I continued building my resilience.

Phynon said his goal for the training was to inform everyone about resilience training, why resilience is important to the Army, and how resilience can help improve everyone's daily life.

I began to see the impact resilience can make on my life in less than two hours after the training session.

For more information about the Army's CSF program, go to www.Army.mil/csf.