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THESIS

**RESILIENCE AMONG NAVAL RECRUITS: A
QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF
INTERVENTIONS AT RECRUIT TRAINING
COMMAND AND IMPLICATIONS ON FLEET
READINESS**

by

Maribel Challburg
Caroline C. Brown

March 2016

Thesis Advisor:
Co-Advisor:

Edward H. Powley
Frank Barrett

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COMMAND AND IMPLICATIONS ON FLEET READINESS**

Maribel Challburg
Lieutenant, United States Navy
B.S., University of San Diego, 2010

Caroline C. Brown
Lieutenant Junior Grade, United States Navy
B.A., University of Florida, 2013

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March 2016**

Approved by: Dr. Edward H. Powley
Thesis Advisor

Dr. Frank Barrett
Co-Advisor

Dr. William Hatch
Academic Associate,
Graduate School of Business and Public Policy

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ABSTRACT

This study is designed to quantitatively and qualitatively measure recruit resilience at Naval Recruit Training Command (RTC) and to develop interventions that will increase recruit resilience. This study administered three resilience-building interventions to 713 recruits across eight divisions and collected surveys at four time intervals to measure changes in self-reported resilience. We conducted interviews with recruits and Recruit Division Commanders (RDCs) to gather qualitative data on significant factors that affect the resilience-building process. Our quantitative analysis methods included difference mean tests, regression analysis, and correlation analysis to determine the most effective interventions. Qualitative analysis methods are used to provide insight on recruit behavior, mental state, and internal resilience. Our quantitative results suggest that Appreciative Guided Conversations using positive, meaningful experience-based questions yield significant increases in recruit resilience. Our qualitative analysis revealed numerous enablers, disablers, and facilitators (RDCs) that impact the recruit resilience process. The influence of family and religion cannot be overstated as sources that have a positive effect in a recruit's resilience process. We recommend that RTC implement a long-term resilience intervention program of Appreciative Guided Conversations for all recruits. By improving recruit resilience, RTC can graduate stronger, healthier recruits who will positively contribute to fleet readiness.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
A.	BACKGROUND	1
B.	U.S. NAVY BOOT CAMP AND RECRUIT TRAINING COMMAND	2
C.	OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE.....	3
D.	DEFINITION OF RESILIENCE	4
E.	BENEFITS OF THE STUDY	5
F.	ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY.....	5
II.	LITERATURE REVIEW	7
A.	DIFFERING VIEWS ON THE NATURE OF RESILIENCE	8
B.	PROBLEMS WITH STANDARDIZATION AND MEASUREMENT.....	9
C.	FACTORS AFFECTING RESILIENCE	10
	1. Protective Factors	11
	2. Source of Strength.....	11
	3. Proactive and Reactive Responses.....	12
	4. Psychological Capital.....	12
	5. Positivity.....	13
D.	LEVELS OF RESILIENCE.....	14
	1. Individual Resilience.....	14
	2. Familial Resilience	15
	3. Communal Resilience	16
	4. Organizational Resilience.....	17
E.	RESILIENCE IN THE MILITARY	18
	1. Leader-Driven Military Resilience.....	19
	2. Engineered Military Resilience.....	20
	3. Review of U.S. Military Resilience Programs	20
	4. BattleSMART	21
	5. Battlemind / Resiliency Training.....	22
	6. Recruit Resilience in the Chinese Army	23
F.	RESILIENCE INTERVENTIONS AND PROGRAMS	23
	1. Resilience in Undergraduate Students.....	23
	2. Resilience in Medical Professionals.....	24
	3. Appreciative Inquiry and Resilience.....	25
G.	NEWCOMER IDENTIFICATION AND SOCIALIZATION	25
	1. Newcomer Relational Identities.....	26

2.	Supervisors	27
3.	Proximal and Distal Outcomes	27
H.	POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF RESILIENCE INTERVENTIONS	28
1.	Managing Stress	28
2.	Posttraumatic Growth	29
I.	FURTHER CONTRIBUTIONS TO AREA OF STUDY	29
III.	METHODOLOGY	31
A.	SURVEY DESCRIPTION	31
1.	Survey Participants	32
a.	Gender Distribution of Recruits	33
b.	Age Distribution of Recruits	34
c.	Ethnicity Distribution of Recruits	35
B.	SURVEY MEASURES	36
C.	INTERVENTIONS	41
1.	Intervention 1: Positive Self-Talk Exercises	41
2.	Intervention 2: Division Discussions	43
3.	Intervention 3: Appreciative Guided Conversations	43
D.	QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS AND INTERVIEWS	44
E.	QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS	46
1.	Baseline Tests Based on Demographic Information	46
2.	Difference Means Tests	46
3.	Regression Analysis	47
4.	Correlations between Resilience and the PFA	48
5.	Non-monetary Cost Analysis	48
F.	LIMITATIONS OF STUDY AND SAMPLE SIZE	49
IV.	QUALITATIVE RESULTS	51
A.	CHAPTER OVERVIEW	51
B.	RTC OVERVIEW	52
1.	RTC Structure	52
C.	DIVISION STRUCTURE	54
1.	Regular Division Structure	54
2.	FIT Division Structure	55
D.	RESILIENCE ENABLERS	58
1.	Adaptation	58
a.	Theme	58
b.	Justification	58
2.	Confidence	60

	a.	<i>Theme</i>	60
	b.	<i>Justification</i>	60
3.		Family Support and Acceptance.....	61
	a.	<i>Theme</i>	61
	b.	<i>Justification</i>	61
4.		Motivation and Perseverance.....	63
	a.	<i>Theme</i>	63
	b.	<i>Justification</i>	63
5.		Positive Framework	65
	a.	<i>Theme</i>	65
	b.	<i>Justification</i>	65
6.		Religion	66
	a.	<i>Theme</i>	66
	b.	<i>Justification</i>	66
7.		Self-talk	67
	a.	<i>Theme</i>	67
	b.	<i>Justification</i>	67
8.		Social Network/Support	68
	a.	<i>Theme</i>	68
	b.	<i>Justification</i>	68
E.		CATEGORY II: RESILIENCE DISABLERS.....	70
1.		Lack or Loss of a Social Network/support	70
	a.	<i>Theme</i>	70
	b.	<i>Justification</i>	70
2.		Loss of Motivation.....	71
	a.	<i>Theme</i>	71
	b.	<i>Justification</i>	71
3.		Mental Blocks	72
	a.	<i>Theme</i>	72
	b.	<i>Justification</i>	72
4.		Negative Cues	73
	a.	<i>Theme</i>	73
	b.	<i>Justification</i>	73
5.		Negative Framework	75
	a.	<i>Theme</i>	75
	b.	<i>Justification</i>	75
F.		CATEGORY III: RESILIENCE FACILITATORS	76
1.		Dynamic Training	76
	a.	<i>Theme</i>	76
	b.	<i>Justification</i>	76

2.	RDC Roles.....	79
a.	Theme	79
b.	Justification.....	79
G.	SUMMARY OF RESULTS	81
V.	QUANTITATIVE RESULTS.....	83
A.	TREND ANALYSIS OF GENDER-SPECIFIC RESILIENCE LEVELS.....	83
B.	CHANGES IN RESILIENCE BETWEEN INTERVENTION AND CONTROL GROUPS	85
C.	CHANGES IN RESILIENCE WITHIN GROUPS	86
1.	Control Group Resilience Changes	86
2.	Intervention 1 Group Resilience Changes	88
3.	Intervention 3 Group Resilience Changes	89
4.	Comparison of Intervention Groups' and Control Group's Resilience	90
D.	REGRESSION ANALYSIS RESULTS.....	92
E.	CORRELATION ANALYSIS BETWEEN RESILIENCE AND PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE	94
F.	COST ANALYSIS OF INTERVENTION PROGRAMS	95
1.	Intervention 1: Positive Self-Talk Statements.....	96
2.	Intervention 2: Division Discussions	96
3.	Intervention 3: Appreciative Guided Conversations.....	96
G.	SUMMARY OF RESULTS	97
VI.	CONCLUSION	99
A.	IMPACT OF RESILIENCE STUDY.....	99
1.	Summary of Quantitative Results	100
2.	Summary of Qualitative Results.....	100
B.	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	101
C.	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....	101
	APPENDIX A. INTERVENTION TWO QUESTIONS	103
	INTERVENTION DESCRIPTION	103
	INTERVENTION QUESTIONS.....	103
	APPENDIX B. INTERVENTION THREE QUESTIONS	105
	INTERVENTION DESCRIPTION	105
	APPRECIATIVE QUESTION.....	105
	CHALLENGE-SETBACK QUESTION	105

MEANING-RELATIONSHIP QUESTION.....	106
SELF-LEARNING QUESTION.....	106
APPENDIX C. RTC AND FIT STRUCTURE.....	107
APPENDIX D. INTERVIEW QUOTATION EXAMPLES OF RESILIENCE	
ENABLERS	111
ADAPTATION.....	111
APPENDIX E. INTERVIEW QUOTATION EXAMPLES OF RESILIENCE	
DISABLERS.....	125
APPENDIX F. INTERVIEW QUOTATION EXAMPLES OF RESILIENCE	
FACILITATORS	133
LIST OF REFERENCES	139
INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST	145

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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Gender Distribution by Division.....	34
Figure 2.	Age Distribution of Recruits.....	34
Figure 3.	Ethnicity Distribution of Recruits.....	35
Figure 4.	Resilience Changes of Gender Groups from Time 1 to Time 4	84
Figure 5.	Control Group Resilience Changes from Time 1 to Time 4.....	87
Figure 6.	I1 Group Resilience Changes from Time 1 to Time 4.....	88
Figure 7.	I3 Group Resilience Changes from Time 1 to Time 4.....	90
Figure 8.	Resilience Changes of All Groups from Time 1 to Time 4	91

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LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	Control Group Schedule	31
Table 2.	Intervention Group 1 (IG1) Schedule	32
Table 3.	Intervention Group 3 (IG3) Schedule	32
Table 4.	Gender Distribution by Division.....	33
Table 5.	Structure of Themes and Sub-themes	52
Table 6.	Regression Analysis Results	93
Table 7.	Correlation between Brief Resilience Time 1 and PFA Pass Rates.....	94
Table 8.	Correlation between Brief Resilience Time 1 and PFA Pass Rates.....	95
Table 9.	Estimated Costs of Each Intervention.....	97

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADF	Australian Defence Force
AI	Appreciative Inquiry
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BattleSMART	Battle Self-Management and Resilience Training
BPN	Basic Personal Needs
CD-RISC	Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale
CG	Control Group
CSF	Comprehensive Soldier Fitness
DOD	Department of Defense
DOT	Day of Training
HRO	High Reliability Organization
IG1	Intervention Group 1
IG3	Intervention Group 3
NCCOSC	Naval Center for Combat and Operational Stress Control
NSTC	Naval Service Training Command
PATH	Program for Accelerated Thriving and Health
PFA	Physical Fitness Assessment
PG	Posttraumatic Growth
PTSD	Posttraumatic stress disorder
RDC	Recruit Division Commander
RSES	Response to Stressful Experience Scale
RTC	Recruit Training Command
SWLS	Satisfaction with Life Scale
T1	Survey Time 1
T2	Survey Time 2
T3	Survey Time 3
T4	Survey Time 4
WDQ	Work Design Questionnaire

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

Resilience, both personal and organizational, plays a central role in how service members successfully manage the stressors inherent to military service. From the first day of boot camp, to the last day of a deployment, service members face intense work-life demands and numerous risks specific to the military profession, many of which may be considered life or death dangers. Due to these intense and near constant stressors, it is critical that individuals and entire units or divisions be resilient to challenges and traumatic events. Greater resilience cannot only help an individual deal with stress, but can also lead to greater well-being and personal growth. The central aim of this thesis is to identify factors that contribute to resilience in the context of the U.S. Navy's boot camp in order to create mechanisms that will increase recruit resilience and ultimately contribute to more successful, resilient sailors operating in the naval fleet.

In recent years, the Navy has become increasingly concerned with personnel issues in light of tightening budgets and increased operations around the world. Former Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Jonathan Greenert states that "people are our asymmetric advantage. We ask them to do so much and we need to take care of them in the here and now" (Metzger, 2015). Important Navy personnel issues that affect fleet readiness include sailor productivity, attrition rates, and sailors' mental health and well-being (About, n.d.; NCCOSC Strategic Plan, 2015). All of these issues are affected by the presence and levels of resilience found in both recruits and sailors. Resilient employees in most workplaces are better prepared to handle stress and crises, therefore leading to greater worker productivity and lower attrition rates due to workplace stress (Bono et al., 2011). Similarly, many studies have linked personal resilience to improved mental health and well-being in individuals, along with lower levels of anxiety, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Yu et al., 2015; Adler, Bliese, McGurk, Hoge, & Castro, 2009). Therefore, if the Navy can successfully pinpoint factors and intervention training methods that increase sailors' resilience, the Navy will create a more productive,

stable, and healthy personnel force. These improvements may subsequently reduce personnel turnover and increase fleet readiness in the Navy overall.

B. U.S. NAVY BOOT CAMP AND RECRUIT TRAINING COMMAND

Since July 1, 1911, all incoming naval recruits attend the Navy's boot camp at Recruit Training Command (RTC), in Great Lakes, IL. For eight weeks, recruits live and work in divisions to learn about the Navy, receive training on basic naval skills, complete physical fitness training, and ultimately earn the title of sailor in the U.S. Navy. Approximately 39,000 new enlisted sailors graduate from RTC and join the fleet every year (Burt & Barr, 2015). After boot camp, graduated sailors advance to specialized schools to receive more advanced training for their perspective rates and jobs before fully entering the fleet.

Recruit Division Commanders (RDCs) are responsible for administering the bulk of the training to recruits and leading them through the boot camp process. RDCs are typically mid-level enlisted sailors with exemplary service records. They operate under the guidance of the Recruit Division Commander's Creed:

These recruits are entrusted to my care. I will train them to the best of my ability. I will develop them into smartly disciplined, physically fit, basically trained sailors. I will instill in them, and demonstrate by my own example, the highest standard of Honor, Courage, and Commitment" (U.S. Navy Recruit Training Command Mission, n.d., para. 1)

This creed illuminates the seriousness with which RDCs train recruits and how critical an effective boot camp process is to the future success of the U.S. Navy.

Every recruit receives a pamphlet titled "Refueling in Rough Seas" before arriving at boot camp. This document, provided by RTC's parent command Naval Service Training Command (NSTC), includes information to both recruits and their families on what mental health and resilience resources are available to them throughout their time at boot camp and in the Navy (Refueling in Rough Seas, n.d.). Refueling in Rough Seas defines resilience as the ability to withstand and bounce back from adversity (Refueling in Rough Seas, n.d.). It outlines the Naval Center for Combat and Operational Stress Control's Response to Stressful Experience Scale (RSES) as a measurement for

identifying resilience. The RSES names six specific factors that make up resilience: positive outlook, spirituality, active coping, self-confidence, learning and meaning making, and acceptance of limits (Refueling in Rough Seas, n.d.; Resilience: What Is It?, n.d.). An increase in these factors, which are further described in a list of potential introspective questions for recruits, can positively impact recruit resilience and increase the likelihood of a recruit's graduation from boot camp.

C. OBJECTIVE / PURPOSE

This thesis aims to identify the factors that affect individual and unit resilience in the military, and more specifically, in the context of the Navy's boot camp. Our research will refer to established resilience theories and scales, along with newcomer identification and socialization theories, when identifying these factors. We also hope to identify intervention and training methods that will effectively increase resilience in recruits, yielding higher recruit accession rates out of boot camp and eventually lower sailor turnover rates in the fleet.

This thesis uses quantitative methods to measure the effects of three different resilience interventions. Quantitative data was gathered from recruits through the use of surveys that included multiple academically validated resilience and cognitive thinking and behavior scales. Qualitatively, we used semi-structured interviews to solicit input from both recruits and RDCs, gathering information on recruit attitudes, cognitive coping skills and strategies, and the effects of the Navy's boot camp process on resilience in individual recruits and in recruit divisions overall. These interviews will be supplemented by commentary from one of the thesis author's, LT Maribel Challburg, who attended the Navy's boot camp at RTC in 1999.

In total, eight divisions of recruits participated in our study, with each division comprised of about 90 recruits. Of these divisions, two served as control divisions, and six received various resilience interventions in an effort to improve both individual and unit (division) resilience.

The primary research questions addressed by our study include:

1. How successful are different resilience interventions at improving recruit resilience?
2. What are the enablers and disablers in the recruit resilience process?

Secondary research questions include:

1. How do RDCs seek to support recruits in danger of failure?
2. What resources do recruits at risk of failure draw upon to recover?
3. Is a specific intervention was particularly well-received by recruits?
4. What are the potential costs associated with implementing a permanent intervention program at RTC?

We will answer these questions by first analyzing the interview data to identify factors and themes affecting resilience from the perspective of recruits and RDCs. We will then use the quantitative survey data to determine how resilience in the control group and the treatment groups changed throughout training and to identify which factors may have contributed to these changes.

D. DEFINITION OF RESILIENCE

Existing resilience literature offers many possible definitions for resilience and its implications on individuals and organizations. While most definitions share common themes, there is no universal description of resilience. In an opening statement for *Refueling in Rough Seas* (n.d.), NSTC Commander RADM Dee L. Mewbourne encourages recruits and their families to “see the challenges you and your sailor may face as means of growing stronger as individuals, in your relationship, and as an extended family” (p. 2).

Expanding upon the definition of resilience offered in *Refueling in Rough Seas*, a compiled definition of resilience involves the capacity to recover from setbacks and disruptions to work or personal trials (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1995; Tennen & Affleck, 1999; Caza & Milton, 2012), the capacity to learn from and during challenging times and experiences (Janoff-Bulman, 1985, 1992; Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004), the capacity to

draw on and build social support (Fazio & Fazio, 2005; Christianson, Farkas, Sutcliffe, & Weick, 2009) and the capacity of leadership to foster vision, perspective, and understanding for those organization members (Powley & Taylor, 2006). Similar to this definition, we view resilience as an ongoing process used by individuals to address adversity, as opposed to simply a stationary personality trait. Additionally, we consider the successful use of resilience to result in an individual gaining personal strength and self-efficacy after enduring a stressful event. Meaning, an individual will not return to his or her pre-crisis condition, but will instead experience growth due to the crisis. In this way, resilience is a dynamic personal resource that individuals can build upon by experiencing adversity and by participating in resilience interventions and training.

E. BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to identify factors or themes that contribute to resilience and to evaluate the effects of specific resilience interventions on recruit resilience throughout RTC training. As part of its recommendations, this thesis will identify resilience interventions that can be incorporated into all recruit training at RTC, and possibly into the Navy's broader fleet training programs. These interventions will improve recruit and sailor resilience, as well as division and unit resilience. By identifying and incorporating effective resilience interventions into the recruit training process, the Navy can produce more competent and resilient sailors for future service. An increase in sailor resilience will directly impact fleet readiness, and will have a positive impact on sailor morale, productivity, and retention. This study will also serve as a foundation for future studies on naval personnel resilience, both in advanced training contexts and in the fleet.

F. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter II provides a literature review of all relevant studies and research related to resilience and newcomer socialization. It discusses on-going debates regarding the nature and types of resilience, how resilience can be measured and engineered, and reviews existing resilience studies completed in both the private sector and in the military context. Chapter III describes the methodology

used in both the quantitative and qualitative portions of the study. It includes descriptions of the scales used in the quantitative surveys and outlines how the qualitative interviews were structured and conducted. Chapter IV examines the qualitative results gathered in interviews and offers personal narratives from LT Challburg. Chapter V then reviews the quantitative results compiled from the surveys. Chapter VI offers conclusions and recommendations based on the result from both methods. Finally, we include six appendices that consist of detailed descriptions of the interventions, interview quotes from recruits, and interview quotes from RDCs.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. DEFINING RESILIENCE

Sutcliffe and Vogus (2003) argue that understanding “the dynamics of resilience has assumed greater urgency and normative currency in the face of increasing terrorism, threat of war, recession, and a host of other recent sociopolitical, technological, and economic trends” (p. 98). However, defining resilience is often difficult. A common theme found throughout much of the existing literature is that resilience is inherently difficult to define measure, quantify, and identify. Each study maintains a slightly different definition of resilience.

Initial resilience research considers resilience to be a stationary personality trait, much like courage or self-confidence (Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003). Over time, the literature has evolved to now considering resilience as a flexible and rebuilding cycle. Luthar and Cicchetti (2000) define resilience as “a dynamic process wherein individuals display positive adaptation despite experiences of significant adversity or trauma” (p. 858). They add that “it is a two-dimensional construct that implies exposure to adversity and the manifestation of positive adjustment outcomes” (p. 858). Similarly, from a developmental perspective:

positively adjusting in the face of challenging conditions is thought to add both to the strength of the current entity and also to the strength of the future entity, in that resilience is the continuing ability to use internal and external resources successfully to resolve issues” (Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003, p. 96).

In comparison, resilience in a military context has been viewed “in relation to the cohesion of military personnel, their families, and the impacts of operational deployment upon both” (Walklate, McGarry, & Mythen, 2014, p. 410). The British Army’s doctrine further advances the definition of “soldier resilience” specifically as a combination of risk, resilience, and consequence. (Ministry of Defence, 2012). Its publication describes resilience as “the degree to which people and their equipment remain effective under arduous conditions or in the face of hostile action” (Ministry of Defence, 2012, para.

02A9). These varying definitions of resilience, especially in the military context, illuminate the interactive nature of resilience between individuals, larger groups of people, and material and intangible resources.

As noted by Boin and van Eeten (2013), resilience is often best identified and observed after a person or organization successfully survives a difficult event or crisis. Only after the mitigated crisis will an organization be praised in hindsight for its resilience in the face of mounting stressors. This phenomenon demonstrates the difficulty in studying and measuring resilience before and during stressful events. As such, many ongoing resilience studies aim to measure and observe resilience and its effects in the midst of adverse events, in hopes of advancing the literature's perspective beyond that of pure hindsight.

A. DIFFERING VIEWS ON THE NATURE OF RESILIENCE

To pinpoint the nature and presence of resilience further, it can be helpful to focus on what resilience is *not*, as opposed to what it is. Currently, resilience literature questions whether resilience is a personal trait, either inherent or teachable, or a process through which one experiences and makes sense of a difficult event. When discussing resilience, some literature cautioned against using the word *resiliency*, instead encouraging the use of the word *resilience* (Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003; Masten, 1994). Identifying resilience as a personal trait (i.e. *resiliency*) can unjustly segregate individuals as either “having” or not having the trait. Alternatively, identifying resilience as a process can facilitate intervention development and targeting to better prepare individuals for future challenges. In general, the majority of research agrees that resilience is a process rather than a specific personality trait or characteristic.

In their work on organizational resilience, Boin and van Eeten (2013) identified two specific types of organizational resilience: precursor and recovery. By using specific case studies of high reliability organizations (HROs), they found that some organizations demonstrate precursor resilience, allowing them to mitigate crises as they arise to minimize repercussions and damage. Meanwhile, other organizations exhibit recovery resilience, which enables them to return quickly to their pre-crisis state after a traumatic

event. Both types of resilience are important in a successful organization and could have applications in the study of personal resilience.

Another debate surrounding the nature of resilience is whether resilience signifies a person's ability to bounce back to the status quo successfully after a traumatic event, similarly to recovery resilience, or whether resilience leads to greater growth after an event. While it is important for any person to return to a comfortable state of normalcy after a stressful event, the ability to grow through stressors and emerge as a stronger, more capable person is desirable. Some literature suggests that resilience leads to posttraumatic growth, which will be discussed later in this chapter (McGarry, Walklate, & Mythen, 2015; Lepore & Revenson, 2006).

In these discussions on the nature and types of resilience, it is important for any study to first determine and enunciate early on which position the study will accept. In the case of this thesis, we consider resilience to be an ongoing personal and organizational process that can lead to posttraumatic growth after a person experiences significant life challenges such as boot camp. Furthermore, we view resilience as a continuous process of learning, based on experiences, that an individual can "reach back" to in order to overcome future crises or obstacles.

B. PROBLEMS WITH STANDARDIZATION AND MEASUREMENT

Without a universally accepted definition for resilience, the measurement of resilience levels can be inherently difficult to capture. Each definition of resilience is accompanied by its own desired outcomes and standard of "what is resilience." A resilience study's use of scales and measurement techniques will be entirely dependent on the definition version and desired outcomes chosen by the study. Therefore, studies are difficult to compare against one another and often produce mixed results. One common practice in resilience literature is to use case studies to identify resilience, especially organizational resilience, as demonstrated by Boin and van Eeten (2013) and Weick (2006). This method is useful when studying HROs after-the-fact to identify what processes and values allowed them to successfully handle emergencies or organizational crises.

Qualitative interviews and data are often used in resilience studies, in particular when reviewing resilience programs and interventions based on participants' experiences (Meredith et al., 2011). Some quantitative scales have been developed to measure resilience through surveys. The most common resilience scale cited in literature is the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC). The CD-RISC is comprised of 25 different factors measured on a 5 point scale, with higher points associated with higher levels of resilience (Connor & Davidson, 2003). The CD-RISC offers a validated quantitative scale to researchers, allowing for the measurement of resilience levels and changes in certain groups. The scale was validated in a number of tests in both the general population and in groups with different mental health conditions, including anxiety disorders and PTSD. Additional scales similar to the CD-RISC are used occasionally to determine resilience levels, but the CD-RISC remains the premier quantitative tool used by studies when measuring resilience.

C. FACTORS AFFECTING RESILIENCE

There are multiple strategies, factors, and mechanisms that can influence the development of resilience in a person or an organization. One important characteristic of effective resilience is that not all coping strategies are appropriate in all situations. At times, it is necessary for a person to use a variety of tools to handle different types of crises, thus requiring flexibility as a critical component of one's ability to employ resilience against stressors (Bun Lam & McBride-Chang, 2007). Therefore, it is important to develop multiple types of strategies in resilience training, so that individuals are properly equipped to handle a multitude of scenarios and provide flexible cognitive responses depending on the immediate threat or obstacle. The more strategies and factors that a resilience training addresses, the better prepared individuals will be to adapt their coping strategies to a unique crisis. The combination of different tools and strategies used in effective resilience intervention programs will be discussed later in this chapter. The primary factors and tools that contribute to resilience include protective factors, personal relationships as a source of strength, proactive and reactive responses, psychological capital, and positivity.

1. Protective Factors

Tusaie and Dyer (2004) define protective factors as “operating to protect those at risk from the effects of the risk factors” (p. 4). Protective factors can be thought of as those within an individual’s direct social circle that can have an influence on their development, such as parents, siblings, school teachers, friends, and social workers. Identifying the effects of social relationships on the development of children and young adults is necessary to understand how they may overcome a future crisis or setback. Sutcliffe and Vogus (2003) discuss the recent shift from protective factors to understanding the protective processes, providing a bigger focus on experience and efficiency. It is also important to understand that the protective process involves a dynamic reciprocal exchange between an individual and his environment (Tusaie & Dyer, 2004). These concepts demonstrate how a person’s social support network and surrounding environment interact to influence one’s personal development and subsequent resilience growth in preparation for future adversity.

2. Source of Strength

While protective factors address how available resources in the nearby environment, whether personal or institutional, provide a foundation for resilience, a person’s current intimate relationships and interactions with others can serve as a tool to maintain and build resilience in the midst of on-going adversity. This concept extends past the broader notion of protective factors to examine specifically how one-on-one relationships can provide close support during challenging times. According to Feeney and Collins (2014), positive relationships can provide a “source of strength” to individuals, allowing them to not just survive difficult times, but to thrive despite them. They suggest that relationships provide more than just a refuge from adversity, and can in fact contribute to the personal strength and growth of both parties in the relationship. Some relationships can prove detrimental to resilience in certain situations. For example, one person may be more invested in the relationship than the other, or someone could give discouraging advice to another person. However, if the relationship can help one or both parties reframe the situation into a positive opportunity for growth and learning,

relationships can yield greater post-crisis benefits. Ultimately, positive and healthy relationships can serve as a mechanism for increasing resilience and well-being for both the support receiver and provider.

3. Proactive and Reactive Responses

Luthans, Vogelgesang, and Lester (2006) suggest that people and organizations could benefit from adopting a more proactive approach to building resilience. They advise leaders to focus on “structuring the organization around the anticipation of the need for resilience” (p. 32). They also discuss three strategies to help leaders anticipate and facilitate resilience in employees: risk-focused strategy (“prevention and reduction of risk or stress”), asset-focused strategy (“enhancement of personal and available organizational resources”) and process-focused strategy (“cognitive ability of employees”) (Masten & Reed, 2002; Nelson, 1999; Youssef & Luthans, 2005). This approach anticipates and seeks to eliminate uncertainty and stress to minimize the need to react, thus proactively reinforcing preparedness and reducing risks factors that may hinder resilience in an organization's employees.

An alternative approach for organizations is to rely on reactive responses. This approach is based on the work by Fredrickson (2001) and focuses on positive emotions when faced with a crisis or adversity. Luthans, Vogelgesang, and Lester add that “this approach suggests that it is important to consistently remind people to think positively and to find meaning when negative events occur to individuals or organizations” (p. 32). As previously discussed, this approach relies more on the power of being positive regardless of the present situation in order to overcome and thrive.

4. Psychological Capital

Psychological capital “is a core construct of positive organizational behavior” and defined as “an individual’s positive psychological state of development composed of ‘the state-like psychological resource capacities of self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience’” (Luthans & Youssef, 2007, p. 328). Optimism refers to having a positive view on life and focusing on the positive instead of the negative aspects of a crisis or challenge. Self-efficacy, closely related to competence, describes an individual’s ability

or perceived ability to complete a task (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). Hope encompasses a positive mental state based upon one's "willpower" and "waypower" (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). Finally, resilience is defined in the context of psychological capital as "the capacity to... bounce back from adversity, conflict, failure, or even positive events, progress, and increased responsibility" (Luthans & Youssef, 2007, p. 328). These four components interact to create psychological capital and are reinforced by an individual's autonomy, competence, and relatedness, as noted by Verleysen, Lambrechts, and Van Acker (2014).

Psychological capital is often associated with Appreciative Inquiry (AI), which refers to the appreciation and sharing of past experiences of all members of an organization as they move towards change (Barrett & Fry, 2005). In essence, AI refers to an organization adapting a positive and trusting environment, where each individual is valued and each member's contribution acknowledged. The successful application of AI can lead to greater organizational resilience and productivity. Additional challenges and benefits associated with AI will be discussed later in this chapter.

5. Positivity

Research suggests that positivity creates the potential for greater achievement at a significantly higher rate than negativity. This area of study is similar to psychological capital, in that they both report the mental, physical, and emotional benefits of hope and optimism. Barbara Fredrickson's (2009) controversial research on positivity and the positivity ratio suggests that positive emotion increases achievement and well-being at a 3 to 1 ratio versus negative emotions. Her broaden-and-build theory argues that positivity increases an individual's problem-solving and adaptive abilities while simultaneously building mental, physical, and psychological resources, such as resilience, that can provide a buffer during hardship (Fredrickson, 2001). These improvements then contribute to greater performance, adaptability, and wellbeing (Yousef & Luthans, 2007; Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002).

D. LEVELS OF RESILIENCE

A notable framework of resilience advanced by Walklate, McGarry, and Mythen (2014) suggest that resilience exists in layers at the individual, familial, communal, institutional, national, regional and global level. Each additional level of resilience builds upon the last, yet they all exist distinctly in separate layers. For example, communal resilience is separate from individual resilience, yet still likely correlated with individual resilience to a certain degree. Additionally, the nature and type of resilience required at each level to address potential adversity changes.

For the purpose of this thesis, we will focus on individual resilience, familial and communal resilience as indicators for unit resilience, and institutional resilience as a component of the broader concept of organizational resilience. We use individual resilience to describe the resilience of a single recruit. RTC is an unusual training process in that each division lives and works together all hours of the day, so that the division functions as both a small work unit and as a type of family. Due to this unique environment, we incorporated familial and communal resilience into a single layer to represent unit or division resilience. Finally, a discussion of organizational and institutional resilience will demonstrate the types and nature of resilience that can exist in the formal processes, structure, and culture of a military organization like RTC.

1. Individual Resilience

Some literature has focused on an individual's life experiences and social interactions as the basis for their level of resilience. Two seemingly identical individuals can face the same crisis but can react completely different from one another. Tusaie and Dyer (2004) suggest that individual resilience is environment-dependent, because "although each individual possesses the potential for resilience, an interplay between the individual and the broader environment is responsible for the level of resilience" (p. 3). Sutcliffe and Vogus (2003) discuss a developmental perspective view of individual resilience, explaining that as an individual learns and collects knowledge, he becomes more adaptable to his environment increasing his resilience.

As previously discussed, resilience has also been defined as the ability to “bounce” back to a previous state. Walklate, McGarry and Mythen (2014) suggest the alternative view that “bouncebackability may not see the individual returning to a ‘previously existing order,’ but can instead positively affect change in the individual for the future in the face of their individual capabilities for resilience” (p. 413). This perspective suggests that after a crisis, individuals experience personal growth, gain psychological capital, and emerge as stronger people than when they first encountered the crisis. While not all experiences will elicit the same response from everyone, it is important to understand that experiences will undoubtedly have some type of effect on the individual, preventing an immediate return to a “previously existing order” (Walklate et al., 2014, p. 413).

Sutcliffe and Vogus (2003) offer two building blocks for individual resilience. First, “resilience is more likely when individuals have access to a sufficient amount of quality resources (i.e., human social, emotional, and material capital) so that they can develop competence” (p. 100). Having the right resources and access to them can have a significant effect on an individual’s resilience. Second, by virtue of having experiences, individuals can stay motivated for subsequent challenges. According to Sutcliffe and Vogus (2003), “as a sense of competence increases, individuals are better able to respond effectively in unfamiliar or challenging situations and persevere in the face of challenges” (pp. 100-101). An individual’s successful, positive experiences help build personal self-efficacy, giving them greater confidence and ability to tackle other experiences in the future (Masten & Reed, 2002).

2. Familial Resilience

The next “layers” of resilience focus on external factors that can influence individual resilience. Walklate et al. (2014) explain how these layers build on the individual layer, as “individual resilience may be inherent, learned through experience, or socialized as an institutional process, but it is also critically shaped, mediated, sustained, and revived (when required) by family and community relations” (p. 419). Family in particular has a very strong influence on an individual’s development and resilience.

Walklate, McGarry and Mythen (2014) explain that “the family is an important social network in sustaining and/or undermining people’s ability to cope with life’s adversities” (p. 414). Social interactions and a sense of belonging have a significant effect on children and adults as they cope with stress or challenges. Family, norms, morals, and values help shape life experiences for individuals and can prepare them for future life events.

It is important to acknowledge that not all family relationships are beneficial to an individual. Regardless of whether the influence is good or bad, all relationship can potentially affect the psychological capital of an individual. Adler and Kwon (2002) and Aldrich and Meyer (2014) use the term “bonding social capital” to illustrate how connections are built between individuals. They describe bonding social capital as “the connections among individuals who are emotionally close, such as friends or family, and result in tight bonds to a particular group” (p. 5). Family is typically important to an individual, and in most cases, it is the first social interaction experienced by that person.

3. Communal Resilience

Building upon family-instilled resilience is another important layer called communal resilience. As an individual becomes an adult and enters the labor market, he chooses the geographical area where he will reside, and along with that decision, with whom he will have social interactions. Thus, as other individuals make the same decisions, they slowly form new bonds and shared values, becoming a community. At times of crises or setbacks, social support in these communities is very important. Aldrich (2012) defines community resilience and the importance of having that community support when faced with adversity: “community resilience describes the collective ability of a neighborhood or geographically defined area to deal with stressors and efficiently resume the rhythms of daily life through cooperation following shocks” (p. 2).

Bonding social capital, as discussed earlier, involves the creation of emotional bonds with those close to an individual and can be expanded to include emotional bonds with those that share the same regional space or interests. Aldrich and Meyer (2014) explain that “higher levels of bonding social capital can translate into greater levels of trust and more widely shared norms among residents” (p. 7). A close community strongly

founded on bonding social capital can provide the support necessary to overcome a time of crisis or disaster.

In conjunction with family and community resilience, group resilience provides a different layer of resilience that is particularly applicable to the military and our area of research. RTC by design restricts recruits' access to family and community during the span of the eight-week boot camp training. To compensate for this relational deficit, recruits build relationships within their divisions at boot camp, creating a layer of resilience described as unit or group resilience. Group resilience focuses on the combined capacity of the group to successfully learn new skills and tasks, building upon each other's knowledge to develop group efficacy. It emphasizes the effective adaptation of the division as a whole to new environments, changing conditions, and stressors that may affect the group over time (Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003).

4. Organizational Resilience

In comparison to group and unit resilience, organizational resilience encompasses the resilience found in the values, practices, and formal structure of an organization. Organizational resilience focuses on how an intentionally positive and encouraging environment can increase collaborative efforts by the members in that group. These organizations rely on all members for experience, diversity, and strengths, which they can add to their organizational resources. An organization's culture and norms can have a significant influence on how individuals within that organization thrive and react to conflict. Understanding how and why an organization thrives when faced with adversity is extremely important. As explained by Sutcliffe and Vogus (2003), "organizational resilience is an essential corollary for positive organizational scholarship because it begins to articulate how organizations behave efficaciously and thrive amid adverse conditions" (p. 98).

Many successful high-reliability organizations share core values that contribute to their ability to deal with emergencies and crises. According to Weick (2006) in his comprehensive review of HRO values and policies, these values primarily include reliability and alertness, a focus on sense-making rather than decision-making, and

mindfulness. Reliability and alertness impact how quickly an organization can respond and adapt to a crisis. An organization's ability to focus on sense-making allows leaders to accurately process the crisis as it occurs and prevents them from adhering to a specific decision too early. Finally, mindfulness prevents the creation of blind spots and the acceptance of misinformation that can contribute to emergencies in the first place (Weick, 2006). Successful HROs carefully form policies and standard operating procedures that reinforce these values and aid the organization in preventing and mitigating adverse conditions (Weick, 2006).

In his evaluation of HROs, Weick identified aircraft carriers as an example of a high-reliability organization that successfully avoids crises and emergencies every day thanks to the policies and procedures that reinforce its values, thus creating a resilient organization (Weick, 2006). The meticulous, well-rehearsed operations on an aircraft carrier are fine tuned to prevent catastrophic emergencies. Aircraft carriers facilitate an environment of zero-tolerance for inaccurate information and unsafe operations. By maintaining careful procedures and staying alert and mindful to any deviations, aircraft carriers are able to both embrace and mitigate the risks associated with flight operations at sea. Traits such as these can be found in other military organizations and commands, including RTC. The staff and structure of the Navy's boot camp are carefully designed and regulated to ensure recruit safety and a secure training environment. These characteristics reinforce the idea that resilient behavior can be built into the policies and design of an organization or institution to foster organizational resilience.

E. RESILIENCE IN THE MILITARY

Resilience can adopt very different characteristics and roles in the military environment. Due to the inherent danger associated with military operations, especially in a combat environment, possessing resilience can mean life or death for many service members. McGarry, Walklate, and Mythen (2015) argue that individual resilience in a military context exists as a combination of traditional individual resilience, interpersonal resilience, and resilience as a "learnable skill." They propose that resilience in the military takes on a distinctly masculine orientation due to the association of poor

resilience with weakness, and therefore low masculinity. By teaching service members to withstand the stress and pressures of combat, the military engineers both individual and social resilience within the service members and their units. McGarry, Walklate, and Mythen (2015) describe these two required types of resilience as inherent and structural resilience, which are similar to individual and institutional resilience. A foundational value in the military is that each service member must be physically and mentally tough in the face of adversity, and that simultaneously each service member is only as strong as the surrounding unit. This emphasis on unit resilience, structural resilience within the chain of command, and interdependence between service members on one another is a distinct characteristic of military resilience that is typically only found to a lesser degree in civilian organizations.

1. Leader-Driven Military Resilience

Due to the high levels of interdependence found in military organizations and culture, and therefore in military resilience, leaders in military units possess a unique opportunity to contribute to and grow the resilience of those whom they lead. Bartone (2006) suggests that if a hardy, transformational leader can demonstrate resilience and positive coping in the face of adversity, subordinate members of the unit will adopt similar behaviors and perspectives. Bartone (2006) defines hardy leaders as having:

high sense of life and work commitment, a greater feeling of control, and are more open to change and challenges in life. They tend to interpret stressful and painful experiences as a normal aspect of existence, part of life that is overall interesting and worthwhile” (p. S137).

These personality traits and positive sense-making behaviors make hardy people more resilient to adversity. By embodying a healthy example of resilience, military leaders, both formal and informal, can positively affect the unit resilience of their command or division (Bartone, 2006). Whether the leader is a commanding officer of a unit, or the leading recruit in an RTC division, military leaders at all levels can improve the resilience and hardiness of those around them thanks to the interdependent nature of military relationships.

2. Engineered Military Resilience

As mentioned above, a key component to military resilience identified by studies is the military's ability to successfully engineer and teach resilience and resilience-building strategies within the military (McGarry et al., 2015). To some extent, service members must not only accept, but also embrace, the risks of combat in order to accomplish missions. According to Bartone (2006), there are five primary "psychological stress dimensions in modern military operations: ... isolation, ambiguity, powerlessness, boredom, and danger" (p. S134). It is paramount that service members have the appropriate tools and skills required to build resilience, process and mitigate these different stress dimensions, and accomplish required missions. Due to the central role of resilience in how service members successfully deal with combat risks, the development of effective resilience-building programs and interventions should be a high priority to the military, in order to improve the mental well-being of service members and to increase overall military readiness.

3. Review of U.S. Military Resilience Programs

Resilience interventions and programs exist in different forms throughout many of the world's militaries and in the U.S. military branches. The RAND Corporation completed a comprehensive review of 23 existing U.S. military resilience programs, using criteria generated from a thorough literature review of existing resilience research (Meredith et al., 2011). Using a similar definition of resilience as found in this thesis, namely that resilience is an ongoing process involving an individual's interactions, experiences, and responses to those experiences, RAND evaluated the U.S. military's programs on their theoretical validity and effectiveness.

Similar to other program reviews, their report ultimately concluded that resilience is an inherently difficult concept to define, instill, and measure (Meredith et al., 2011). It found that many military programs use different definitions of resilience, with no common definition used across all Department of Defense (DOD) programs. In addition, each program sought different outcomes and used varying standards of measurement to gauge their effectiveness at achieving each outcome. Some programs focused on positive

outcomes, such as wellbeing, mindfulness, and positive cognitive thinking. Other programs aimed to avoid negative outcomes, including depression, anger, and PTSD. The RAND Corporation's report highlights the DOD's need to develop an evidence-based, comprehensive resilience strategy that applies a common definition, outcome, and standardized implementation and measurement processes to all of its programs.

RAND's report additionally reviewed obstacles within the military environment to the implementation of resilience and other mental health-focused programs. Program representatives claim that lack of support from leadership, funding constraints, logistical and training cycle constraints, and mental health stigmas all limited the implementation and effectiveness of their programs (Meredith et al., 2011). A lack of support from senior military leadership in particular can be detrimental to resilience programs. Without leadership support, a program's funding and logistical support will subsequently suffer, so that the resilience training appears as a superfluous add-on to an already stressful and busy pre-deployment training cycle.

4. BattleSMART

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) directs a variety of resilience-building programs as part of its ADF Mental Health Strategy. Their main resilience program, BattleSMART (Self-Management and Resilience Training), focuses on the testing and adaptation of responses to stressors across four domains: adaptive physiological response, adaptive ways of thinking about the stressful situation, adaptive behavior, emotion management (Cohn, Hodson, and Crane, 2010). The ADF developed BattleSMART on the theory that the more coping strategies and tools available to someone, the higher their resilience. The ultimate goals of the BattleSMART program are to reduce arousal caused by adversity and to focus on problem-solving strategies as opposed to avoidance behavior. Supporting research suggests that lower psychological arousal responses to stressors results in a lower PTSD risk and allows for enhanced cognitive problem-solving and sense-making responses that are more effective at dealing with adversity (Bryant, Creamer, O'Donnell, Silove, and McFarlane, 2008). The ADF is currently conducting research on the effectiveness of BattleSMART in conjunction with the U.S. Army, to

determine its usefulness both in general training and in pre- and post-deployment training (Meredith et al., 2011; Cohn et al., 2010). This program, as well as the ADF Mental Health Strategy in general, serves as an example to the U.S. DOD of how a cohesive strategy based on appropriate theoretical foundations can yield improved resilience in the military.

5. Battlemind / Resiliency Training

The most prominent resilience program implemented in the U.S. military thus far is the Army's Battlemind, now known as Resiliency Training. According to RAND's program review, Battlemind is one of the few military programs with peer-reviewed research compiled regarding its effectiveness, the majority of which has yielded positive results (Meredith et al., 2011). Battlemind began as pre-deployment training designed to prepare soldiers for the stressors and mental health dangers associated with combat. It also aims to remove the mental health stigma associated with posttraumatic stress disorder and to educate soldiers and their families on mental health illnesses and suicide. Due to its success, Battlemind is now incorporated into all standard training offered by the Army and is no longer limited to pre-deployment training (Williams, 2008). Core tools used by Battlemind to reduce participants' mental health risk include Battlemind debriefings, small and large group training, and stress education.

Randomized trials completed by the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research found that certain components of the Battlemind program, especially brief interventions immediately following a deployment, are effective at decreasing posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms, sleep problems, and depression in participants (Meredith et al., 2011). This research suggests that intervention programs such as Battlemind can successfully reduce mental health stigmas in a population and mitigate mental health problems suffered by both combat and noncombat soldiers (Adler, 2009). Battlemind shares many similarities with Australia's BattleSMART program, and a derivative of Battlemind is now being implemented in the British Army (Meredith et al., 2011). The current limitation of research on Battlemind is that studies solely focus on post-deployment interventions. There is little evidence yet of how an intervention program

like Battlemind might affect soldiers when implemented pre-deployment or even earlier on in the soldier's career, such as during recruit training.

6. Recruit Resilience in the Chinese Army

Some military studies illuminate mediating factors that can influence recruit resilience. A 2015 study measured resilience levels in Chinese Army recruits and the subsequent effects of resilience on recruit depression and anxiety (Yu et al., 2015). The study determined that resilience coupled with positive coping strategies leads to posttraumatic growth in recruits and lower levels of depression and anxiety. These results are in keeping with other research on posttraumatic growth (PG), and suggest that resilience can have positive impacts on growth and military readiness (Bensimon, 2012; Senol-Durak & Ayvasik, 2010; Yu et al., 2015).

F. RESILIENCE INTERVENTIONS AND PROGRAMS

As discussed previously, it can be notoriously difficult to measure the effectiveness of interventions at increasing resilience within people or organizations. Part of this difficulty stems from the lack of universally accepted standards of measurement for resilience. Existing studies each use different scales, definitions, and methodologies to quantitatively measure the usefulness of interventions and resilience programs. Unfortunately, due to the lack of a standardized methodology, many of the analyses produce mixed results on the effectiveness of resilience-building programs. Some researchers believe the lack of concrete evidence on resilience interventions means the programs could do more harm than good (McGarry et al., 2015; Stix, 2011). Many programs therefore work haphazardly to build resilience blindly, without the ability to measure the benefits or effectiveness of such programs.

1. Resilience in Undergraduate Students

For the purpose of establishing background, we looked at prior studies on resilience that targeted undergraduate students, medical care professionals and organizations that incorporate appreciative inquiry (AI) practices. Gerson and Fernandez

(2013), in a treatment called Program for Accelerated Thriving and Health (PATH), conducted two separate studies consisting of a group of 28 undergraduate students and a second group of 63 students, respectively. This study is a useful comparison for our thesis due to the similarities in age between recruits and college students. The first study group had 60 to 90 minute meetings over a period of three weeks. The purpose of their study was to expose students to elements of explanatory style, both optimistic and personal, in order to identify any effects on resilience from the training. Significant emphasis was placed on “positive mindset” and optimism. Resilience was measured as the absence of depression symptoms (Gerson & Fernandez, 2013).

The second study consisted of three 30 to 50 minute meetings in a condensed period of 5 to 6 days. This study had several differences from the first, as it included a larger sample size, a shorter time frame, and a three-step approach to the training. The results did not yield conclusive links between having an optimistic mindset and the correlation to improved resilience. Overall, the results concluded that an “optimistic explanatory style is neither necessary nor sufficient for resilience” (Gerson & Fernandez, 2013, p. 2176). The researchers concluded that the PATH program did show an increase in the undergraduates thriving and a decrease in depressive symptoms, but agreed that the sample size of the studies proved to not be large enough to capture a true effect of the intervention.

2. Resilience in Medical Professionals

Bono et al. (2011) conducted a resilience study focusing on the effects of positive reflection on resilience and stress reduction. The study sample included 61 caregiving professionals. The data was collected over a period of three weeks to include: ambulatory blood pressure monitor readings, personal digital assistant (PDA) surveys, and evening phone interviews (Bono et al., 2011). On study days 8 through 15, participants were asked to log three “good” things that had happened to them during the day, whether at work or home, and explain why those events happened to them (Bono et al., 2011). The study’s results did show a significant effect on reducing stress, but had no significant effect on reducing blood pressure. Overall, the study suggests some benefits associated

with a positive reflection intervention, but the results could only be applied to females in medical care professions. The true effect of the intervention could not be quantified with the study.

3. Appreciative Inquiry and Resilience

In 2009, Verleysen et al. compared organizations that have established AI practices against organizations that do not, in an effort to identify any correlation between AI practices and resilience. Their study consisted of 213 online questionnaires completed by respondents working in social profit organizations (Verleysen et al., 2014). Their results conclude that organizations with formal AI practices more deeply satisfy the basic needs of their members than non-AI practicing organizations. They suggest that “people’s behavior and experiences while doing AI might be better understood in terms of their striving to satisfy their BPN (basic personal needs) for competence, autonomy, and relatedness co-creating a new social context that is supportive of BPN satisfaction” (Verleysen et al., 2014, p. 19). In all, the study’s results conclude that an organization’s AI practices contribute to improved employee resilience and psychological capital. However, the study was not without limitations. They only surveyed individuals of the same working field with similar characteristics. A more robust study would have compared different professional fields against one another to determine if AI practices have an effect on resilience and psychological capital regardless of career field.

G. NEWCOMER IDENTIFICATION AND SOCIALIZATION

A “newcomer” is an individual that is new to an organization and has not yet assimilated to the norms and culture of that organization. This can be very a very stressful and challenging time for an individual. In the case of the U.S. Navy, recruits are newcomers in the process of learning about the Navy’s organization. Louis (1980) describes the newcomer experience as a “process of information gathering and sense making in order to assess their fit with the organizational environment and garner insight into expected attitudes and behaviors” (226). To complete this sense-making process, newcomers must rely on other members of the organization to understand their role and

place within the organization. A supervisor or mentor within the organization can be an important “gateway” to assist with this assimilation.

In the U.S. Navy, RTC boot camp serves as the primary socialization tool used to introduce new recruits to naval service and military life. While additional training occurs after boot camp, this initial socialization process is critical to recruits’ successful transition from newcomers into sailors. In this environment, RDCs serve as supervisors charged with assimilating the newcomers (recruits) into military life.

1. Newcomer Relational Identities

In the stressful atmosphere of boot camp, recruits may build relational identities as a way to make sense of their role in such a foreign environment. According to Sluss and Ashforth (2007), an individual’s identity is based off the “interplay of three ‘levels’ of identity: individual (or personal), interpersonal, and collective (or group, social)” (p. 9). Expanding upon this view of role identity, Sluss and Ashforth (2007) further describe relational identification as the “extent to which one defines oneself in terms of a given role-relationship” (p. 11). In this scenario, role-relationships can be considered both recruit-recruit and recruit-RDC. These role-relationships give context to newcomers of their position in a new organization and serve as sources of self-esteem and identity (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). Each recruit serves a unique role in their division, whether formal or informal. The interaction of these roles creates identity interdependence between recruits, helping to foster a team atmosphere and creating a sense of belongingness (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007).

Sluss and Thompson (2012) continue by discussing the benefits of supervisors and their teaching methods, describing “supervisory socialization tactics as the extent to which supervisors provide guidance, advice, and role modeling focused on the newcomer’s job and organizational role” (p. 3). They also add that, “supervisory socialization tactics provide tangible and intangible resources thus providing the beginning of a high quality and mutually beneficial relationship” (Sluss & Thompson, 2012, p. 3). Thus, the role between a newcomer and a supervisor becomes a dynamic

relationship where both members rely on and interact with each other, as is demonstrated in the relationships between recruits and RDCs.

2. Supervisors

An RDC can expose recruits to tangible and intangible resources to better prepare them for life in the fleet. Some tangible resources when applied to a military environment include marching procedures, uniform regulations, grooming standards, rank structures, and common military jargon. In comparison, intangible resources focus on the intellect and psychological capital of the individual. In the case of RDCs, all have attended and graduated boot camp and most have naval experience at sea. Sluss and Thompson (2012) relate the supervisors' know-how by saying that "a great majority of supervisors have traditionally occupied those same jobs as the newcomers, and, in some cases, in a very accomplished manner" (p. 4). By truly understanding the challenges and stressors faced during the indoctrination process by having been through the process themselves, RDCs can more effectively guide and mentor the recruits through the training environment.

3. Proximal and Distal Outcomes

Newcomer literature identifies two separate outcomes, proximal and distal, that emerge from the newcomer socialization process. Proximal outcomes include the building of newcomer resources such as self-efficacy and role clarity, while distal outcomes encompass long-term goals such as job performance, retention, and integration into an organizational culture (Ellis et al., 2014). In the context of boot camp, successful socialization should yield the proximal outcomes of increasing recruits' personal resources, while also contributing to long-term distal outcomes, such as high graduation rates from boot camp and low attrition rates from the fleet.

Research suggests that institutionalized socialization processes are more effective at achieving positive proximal outcomes. These institutionalized processes include formal socialization and collective experiences (Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, & Tucker, 2007; Jones, 1986). RTC meets these criteria for institutionalized socialization processes, as the command maintains a meticulous training structure with precise schedules and specific division socialization routines. The goal of proposed resilience interventions and

training at RTC is to improve the distal outcomes of recruits, as increased resilience can yield greater sailor performance and lower turnover.

H. POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF RESILIENCE INTERVENTIONS

The Navy can greatly benefit from a deeper understanding of resilience and methods that can increase resilience in military service members. Due to the rise of irregular warfare and non-conventional transnational actors, it is increasingly imperative that sailors, both active and new accessions, are prepared and skilled to confront adversity and stress in any scenario. A better grasp on the nature of resilience and how to improve sailors' resilience could generate significant benefits for the Navy and yield new recommendations for policies and training.

1. Managing Stress

Research has shown that work-related stress can affect the wellbeing of employees, reducing productivity and performance and leading to lower job attitudes and increased turnover (Griffin & Clarke, 2011). In contrast, resilience is considered an effective resource at managing stress in challenging situations (Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003). Therefore, an increase in resilience should mitigate the effects of work-related stress, in addition to its mental health and job performance consequences.

Some stress, known as “challenge stressors,” can actually lead to positive outcomes, such as goal realization and improved well-being, which can mitigate the mental strain caused by stress (LePine, Podsakoff, & LePine, 2005; Podsakoff, LePine & LePine, 2007). Personal resources, such as resilience, and socialization tactics serve a central role in whether newcomers perceive a stressor as a challenge (positive) stressor or a hindrance (negative) stressor (Ellis et al., 2014). Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model of stress considers that an individual's reaction to stress can be dependent on how the individual interprets and processes a specific stressor. This model suggests that a stress response depends on the stressor, the individual, and the interaction between the stressful experience and the individual. This description resonates with many of the resilience definitions previously discussed and emphasizes that resilience can play a critical role in an individual's perception of, and therefore reaction to, stress.

2. Posttraumatic Growth

One of the primary focuses of resilience literature is on the potential for resilience to both mitigate the development of PTSD and contribute to posttraumatic growth (PG). Tedeschi and McNally (2011), in their study on the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness training, define PG as “positive personal changes that result from [the] struggle to deal with trauma and its psychological consequences” (p. 19). PTSD and PG are not direct opposites of one another; an absence of PTSD does not guarantee resilience, nor PG (Almedom & Glandon, 2007). Levine, Hamama-Raz, and Solomon (2009) argue that the relationship between resilience and PG is not entirely clear or scientifically proven. However, multiple studies suggest that psychological resilience reduced the impacts of PTSD, and that high levels of resilience can contribute to PG (McGarry et al., 2015; Bensimon, 2012).

Military programs, such as the CSF training, view resilience as the ability to “bounce back” from stress and emphasize the importance of resilience in cultivating PG after traumatic experiences, particularly post-deployment (Comprehensive Soldier Fitness ‘Master Resilience Trainer Unit Implementation Guide,’ 2012; Seligman, 2011; Tedeschi & McNally, 2011). The potential to increase PG and reduce the risk of PTSD in recruits and sailors is just one benefit of resilience training within the military environment.

I. FURTHER CONTRIBUTIONS TO AREA OF STUDY

This thesis will contribute to the current literature on resilience by filling multiple gaps that are present in existing resilience studies. First, most studies only offer a quantitative or a qualitative analysis of resilience programs. Second, no study exists to date of resilience in naval recruits measured in the context of the U.S. Navy’s boot camp. Third, many studies focus on only one area of resilience, such as individual resilience or unit resilience. Finally, most research uses post-crisis data to determine resilience levels or to test the effectiveness of resilience interventions.

This thesis will address these gaps by offering both a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the effects of individual and unit resilience on naval recruits during boot camp. By continuously measuring resilience across a relatively large sample size of

recruits and divisions throughout the entire eight-week boot camp process, and with the use of multiple evidence-based scales, we will be able to identify exactly how resilience levels change throughout the highly-controlled “crisis” that is boot camp. Additionally, by implementing and testing multiple resilience interventions in this controlled environment, our results will show exactly which types of interventions yield positive gains in resilience over time, and to what extent each type of intervention builds both individual and unit resilience and contributes to newcomer identification. The qualitative analysis will offer insight into the views and thoughts of recruits and the staff at RTC. The aim of this analysis is to identify common attitudes and perceptions that influence recruits’ decisions to join the Navy and their subsequent performance throughout boot camp. LT Maribel Challburg’s firsthand account of boot camp will add to the analysis on recruit attitudes, challenges and obstacles faced at RTC. Ultimately, our research will provide the basis for new training and recruit development plans for RTC, in an effort to increase retention and readiness in the Navy.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. SURVEY DESCRIPTION

Recruits participated in four surveys throughout their boot camp experience, at Weeks 2, 4, 6, and 7 of training. The surveys administered to the recruits include 12 different scales measuring a wide spectrum of factors related to resilience and personal growth. The combination of scales used in each survey varies across Time 1, 2, 3, and 4, hereafter referred to as T1, T2, T3, and T4. The surveys at T2 and T4 also include a social network analysis, which will not be addressed in this thesis. Below is a schedule of the surveys and interventions administered to each group. Interventions were always conducted after that session's surveys, so survey results from a particular time period will not include intervention effects from that day. The recruit divisions have been separated into three different groups: the control group (CG), the group of divisions that received Interventions 1 and 2 (IG1), and the group that received Intervention 3 (IG3). Tables 1, 2, and 3 present intervention schedules for the CG, IG1, and IG3, respectively.

Table 1. Control Group Schedule

	Time 1 (T1)	Time 2 (T2)	Time 3 (T3)	Time 4 (T4)
Divisions	Division 7 Division 8	Division 7 Division 8	Division 7 Division 8	Division 7 Division 8
Interventions	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Day of Training	Week 2, Day 3	Week 4, Day 4	Week 6, Day 2	Week 7, Day 3

Table 2. Intervention Group 1 (IG1) Schedule

	Time 1 (T1)	Time 2 (T2)	Time 3 (T3)	Time 4 (T4)
Divisions	Division 1 Division 2 Division 3 Division 4	Division 1 Division 2 Division 3 Division 4	Division 1 Division 2 Division 3 Division 4	Division 1 Division 2 Division 3 Division 4
Interventions	1, 2	1, 2	1, 2	N/A
Day of Training	Week 2, Day 3	Week 4, Day 4	Week 6, Day 2	Week 7, Day 3

Table 3. Intervention Group 3 (IG3) Schedule

	Time 1 (T1)	Time 2 (T2)	Time 3 (T3)	Time 4 (T4)
Divisions	Division 5 Division 6	Division 5 Division 6	Division 5 Division 6	Division 5 Division 6
Interventions	N/A	3	3	N/A
Day of Training	Week 2, Day 3	Week 4, Day 4	Week 6, Day 2	Week 7, Day 3

1. Survey Participants

Due to the rigorous training schedule at RTC, not all recruits were available to participate in every survey, and some recruits in surveyed divisions missed one or more surveys. Fourteen recruits *only* participated in the T4 survey; these recruits' results are not included in the analysis, as we have no initial data against which we may compare their final resilience levels. In addition, one recruit in a surveyed division did not complete any surveys and was omitted from our quantitative analysis. Overall, more than 400 recruits did not complete all the surveys. For the sake of consistency across the panel data and to prevent the inclusion of data from recruits who did not actually participate in the interventions, we decided to remove any recruits from our sample who did not complete at least one of the four surveys. This decision decreases our sample size from 713 recruits to 297 recruits.

a. Gender Distribution of Recruits

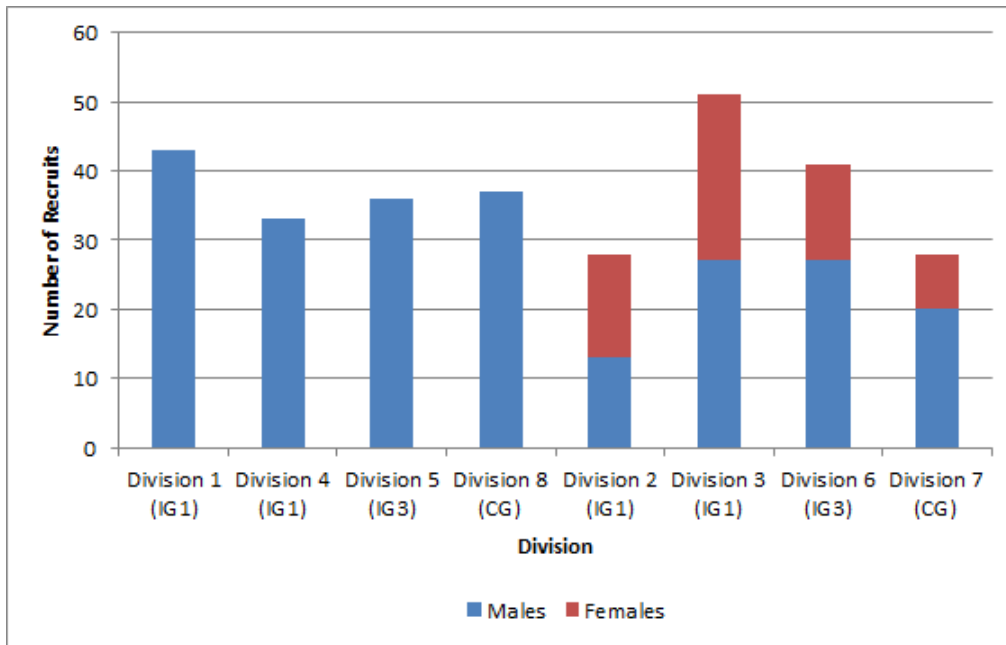
Four of the divisions used in the study were integrated co-ed divisions with males and females, while the other four divisions were all-male divisions. CG and IG3 each contain one all-male division and one integrated division. IG1 contains two all-male divisions and two integrated divisions. Table 4 presents the distribution of gender across recruits retained in the study in each division.

Table 4. Gender Distribution by Division

	Males	Females	Total
Division 1 (IG1)	43	0	43
Division 4 (IG1)	33	0	33
Division 5 (IG3)	36	0	36
Division 8 (CG)	37	0	37
Division 2 (IG1)	13	15	28
Division 3 (IG1)	27	24	51
Division 6 (IG3)	27	14	41
Division 7 (CG)	20	8	28

In total, 14 recruits did not report their gender on the initial survey. Due to the significantly larger population of males than females present at RTC, these missing gender data have been replaced as male. Therefore, of the 297 recruits retained in the study, there are 61 females and 236 males. Figure 1 presents a graphical representation of the gender distribution in each division.

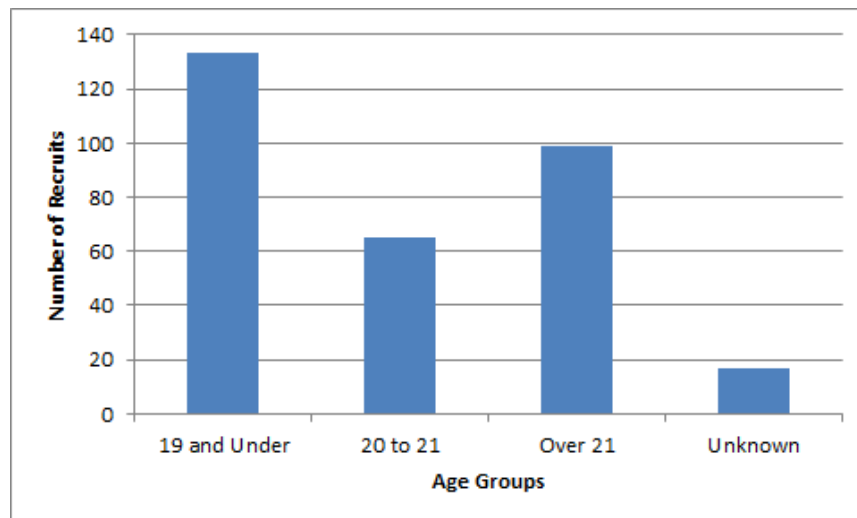
Figure 1. Gender Distribution by Division



b. Age Distribution of Recruits

The age distribution of recruits maintained in the study includes 133 recruits age 19 or younger, 65 recruits from the ages of 20 to 21, and 99 recruits over the age of 21. Seventeen recruits failed to report their age. Figure 2 presents a graphical representation of the age distribution of recruits in this study.

Figure 2. Age Distribution of Recruits



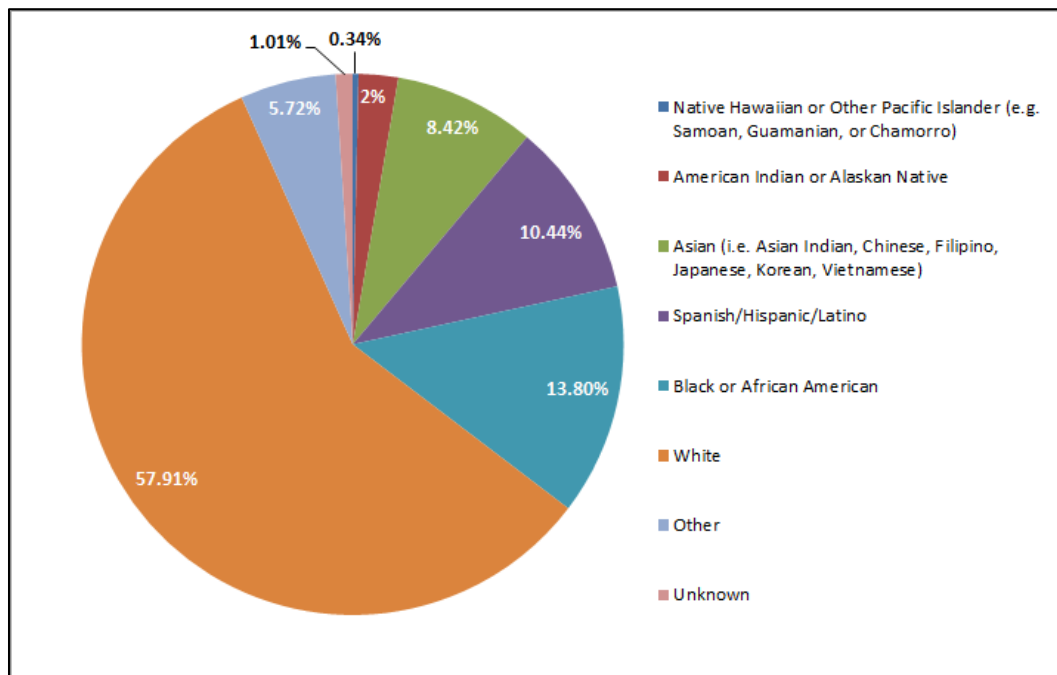
c. Ethnicity Distribution of Recruits

The ethnicity distribution of the 297 recruits is as follows:

- 57.91 % White
- 13.80 % Black or African American
- 10.44 % Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
- 8.42 % Asian (i.e. Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese)
- 5.72 % Other
- 2.36 % American Indian or Alaskan Native
- 1.01 % Unknown (missing)
- 0.34 % Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (e.g. Samoan, Guamanian, or Chamorro)

Figure 3 presents a graphical representation of the ethnicity distribution of recruits participating in this study.

Figure 3. Ethnicity Distribution of Recruits



B. SURVEY MEASURES

The first scale used in the surveys is the Brief Resilience Scale. This scale, originally validated in four samples of both students and medical patients, measures an individual's ability to bounce back and recover from challenging events and is particularly useful when dealing with health-related or physical stressors, many of which can be found in the boot camp environment (Smith et al., 2008). The scale includes 10 questions assessing an individual's ability to manage and bounce back from stressful events.

The second scale used is the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), which was previously mentioned in Chapter 2. This scale is a pivotal measure used in many resilience studies due to its consistency and validity. The CD-RISC is a self-reported scale that measures the subject's ability to "tolerate experiences such as change, personal problems, illness, pressure, failure, and painful feelings" (Campbell-Sills & Stein, 2007). The CD-RISC includes six different questions regarding a recruit's perceived ability to adapt to the conditions listed above.

The third scale is designed to capture identity theory concepts through a series of 13 questions. This section measures the degree that recruits identify (1) with the Navy, (2) as a sailor, (3) with their recruit division, and (4) relationally with their RDCs. These questions are based off of newcomer identification and identity theory literature. Researchers suggest that relational identification and organizational identification are closely related for newcomers through a series of "affective, cognitive, and behavioral mediating mechanisms" and that multiple identifications are not mutually exclusive, but rather interact together through relationships to form a broader organizational identity (Sluss, Ployhart, Cobb, & Ashforth, 2012, p. 949). This process is particularly effective when a supervisor or leader is prototypical or "seen as promoting core organizational values" (Sluss, Ployhart, Cobb, & Ashforth, 2012, p. 949). In the case of boot camp, prototypical RDCs will promote Navy core values to recruits, causing recruits' relational identities to positively contribute to their organizational identities within their divisions and the Navy. According to Frone, Russell, and Cooper (1995), identity theory suggests that the stronger an individual's identity within a job role, the greater an impact job

stressors will have on that individual's well-being and health. Job stressors, such as role ambiguity and workplace pressure, can negatively impact employee health and behavior depending on the employee possessing a high level of job involvement and job identity (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1995). For recruits, a high degree of identification with the Navy, their division, and as a sailor may lead to magnified negative effects from boot camp stressors

The following survey section measures organizational justice, with a particular focus on procedural justice and informational justice. The questions in this section are based off Colquitt's validation of organizational justice measurements (2001). The measures used in this construct of organizational justice were designed using important works in the justice literature and were later validated in two separate studies. Of the four components of this justice construct, procedural justice and informational justice are the two aspects of organizational justice most relevant to the experiences of recruits at boot camp. Procedural justice is associated with decision-making processes and is affected by consistency, biases, fair criteria, accuracy, and ethics. In comparison, informational justice determines how the fairness and transparency of interactions and communications between employees and supervisors, or between recruits and RDCs in this context (Colquitt, 2001). The first seven questions in this survey section address procedural justice, while the following five questions measure information justice. In order to limit the scope of this thesis, our analysis will not consider the broader role of organizational justice in increasing recruit resilience.

The next scale section is designed to measure subjective well-being and life satisfaction amongst recruits. The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) measures global life satisfaction by soliciting an overall judgment of life from the actual survey subjects, so as not to impose an external set of life satisfaction standards across many unique individuals. This scale thus treats life satisfaction as a "cognitive-judgmental process," meaning that each individual decides for themselves what level of life satisfaction they possess (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). This scale uses five questions to determine recruits' perceived life conditions and satisfaction.

The following section measures recruit psychological safety and social support. Team psychological safety is the “shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking” and is associated with learning behavior and team performance (Edmondson, 1999, p. 354). High psychological safety and learning behavior allow a team to adapt, learn, and improve after experiences, thus making them more successful and resilient in the long run (Edmondson, 1999). Social support is measured using portions of the Work Design Questionnaire (WDQ), a validated scale that predicts satisfaction based on task and knowledge work characteristics. Studies using the WDQ propose that social support predicts satisfaction without increasing other work-related costs and requirements. These results suggest that increasing social support can improve employee motivation, job satisfaction, and performance, with no added cost to the organization (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). In this section, six questions address psychological safety, followed by six questions on social support tailored to the unique dynamics of a RTC division.

Next, the surveys measure the degree of division cohesion experienced by each division. This measurement is a compilation of three different factors: coordination, task cohesion, and social cohesion. Meta-analyses on group cohesion suggest that team cohesion and performance behaviors are highly correlated, especially with regard to the three cohesion components of “interpersonal attraction, group pride, and task commitment” (Beal, Cohen, Burke, & McLendon, 2003, p. 990). This correlation suggests that cohesive teams are more efficient with better performance behavior, although not necessarily performance outcomes, than non-cohesive teams (Beal, Cohen, Burke, & McLendon, 2003; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Ahearne, 1997; Seashore, 1954; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999). This scale thus includes questions regarding the three main components of cohesion, including seven questions on division coordination, five questions on task cohesion, and five questions on social cohesion.

The next section uses a learning goal orientation scale and a performance goal orientation scale to determine how recruits approach new challenges and tasks. Learning goal oriented individuals enjoy developing new skills by engaging in challenging tasks and believe that ability can be developed with persistent effort. In comparison,

performance goal (or proving goal) oriented people prefer to demonstrate already mastered skills developed with innate ability and hope to gain positive judgments and feedback (VandeWalle, Cron, & Slocum, 2001). This scale illuminates how a recruit approaches new tasks and responds to both positive and negative feedback, two behaviors that can have an impact on performance outcomes. In this survey, four questions are used to measure learning goal orientation, followed by four questions measuring performance goal orientation.

The survey then uses the “Mini Marker” collection of 40 adjectives to measure the Big-Five Personality factors in recruits. The Big-Five refers to the five primary domains of personality characteristics commonly measured in psychology studies: neuroticism, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and extraversion. While many Big-Five analyses include upwards of 100 questions addressing personal adjectives, the Mini Marker only uses 40 adjectives. This version of the test is better suited to brief surveys such as ours, yet produces equally robust results as the lengthier version (Saucier, 1994).

Next, three questions address positive framing. Literature suggests that newcomers proactively work in new organizations to gain personal control by seeking information and feedback, building relationships, and positively framing their situation, in hopes of improving performance and job satisfaction. In particular, positive framing is believed to increase self-confidence and personal efficacy during times of uncertainty and change (Ashford & Black, 1996). This section measures the extent to which recruits approach boot camp challenges with positive framing, which is correlated with their desire for control in the new organization.

Then, the survey includes a 10-question ego resilience scale. This scale construct measures an individual’s ability to be flexible and respond to stressors. Ego-resilience is viewed as trait resilience, meaning that individuals with high ego-resilience possess a constant capacity to handle stress, as opposed to simply demonstrating temporary resilient behavior in the midst of a specific stressor. The ego resilience scale consistently demonstrates a correlation between high levels of ego-resilience and the positive poles of the Big Five scale, as well as with psychological well-being (Alessandri, Vecchione,

Caprara, & Letzring, 2011). In this measure, recruits indicate how strongly a statement applies to their personality and interactions with others using a five point scale.

Next, the survey evaluates the leadership style and effectiveness of RDCs in their respective divisions using a seven-point Likert scale. The inclusion of this measurement is based upon the military study conducted by Shamir et al. They found that leader behaviors, including an emphasis collective identity and shared values, in addition to inclusive behaviors, contribute to both leader and member identification within the group. Leader behaviors also have an effect on unit or group culture and can affect multiple levels of subordinates and their social identification (Shamir, Zakay, Breinin, & Popper, 2000; Sluss et al., 2012). In this context, RDC behavior can have a significant impact on recruit identification. Leader prototypically also plays a role in this identification process, as previously discussed in this chapter. This measurement contains three questions on collective identity, three questions on shared values, three questions on inclusive behaviors, and seven questions about leader prototypically and high performance expectations.

Finally, the survey measures division resilience through 14 questions that are specifically addressed to how recruits perceive the ability of their division to work as a team and support each other through difficult tasks. The theoretical foundation for this measure stems from research into team and small unit resilience. Lopes (2010) identifies five dimensions of small unit resilience: concerted leadership, adequate resources, organizational learning, flexibility and adaptability, and goal orientation. He argues that by focusing on these dimensions, leaders can help build and improve the resiliency of a small unit or team. Thus, this survey measure is designed to record how well recruits perceive their divisions as being able to meet these dimensions.

The first survey given to the recruits at T1 also includes demographic questions to collect background information on the recruits. These questions address personal information, including: age, gender, anticipated rate in the Navy after RTC, ethnicity, education level, marital status, family history with the military, auxiliary military experience, and previous military experience. This background information on recruits

allows us to tailor our analysis to compare recruit resilience across specific demographic groups, such as between males and females.

C. INTERVENTIONS

Based on prior studies and research, three interventions were designed and implemented for this thesis. The first intervention focuses on individual resilience and introduced Positive Affirmation Statements. The second intervention focuses on group resilience through the use of RDC feedback and guided division discussions. Lastly, the third intervention also addresses group resilience, but places greater emphasis on group cohesion via structured recruit conversations.

1. Intervention 1: Positive Self-Talk Exercises

Individual level resilience, as discussed previously, combines both the individual's initial resilience and their current experiences. At RTC, recruits build resilience as they face challenges, acquire new skills, and experience identity transformation into Navy Sailors. To assist recruits with processing these changes, the first intervention exposes the recruits to "positive self-talk." The methodology of this intervention was developed using "Identify Work Tactic 4: Experimenting with Possible Selves," originally proposed by Kreiner and Sheep (2009) in their research on creating "identity work toward growth" (p. 25). They define identity growth as "progressive increases in the competence, resilience, authenticity, transcendence, and holistic integration of one's self-concept" (Kreiner & Sheep, 2009, p. 25). Their experimental tactic encourages individuals to focus on a desired future identity as a means of orientating their current behaviors and motivations in order to experience identity growth (Kreiner & Sheep, 2009). Future identities are usually defined using role models and realized by imitating these role models (Ibarra, 1999). In this study, we hypothesize that recruits view their RDCs as role models of what a successful sailor looks like. By creating positive self-talk statements and modeling the behavior of RDCs, recruits can experience positive identity growth as they become competent, resilient sailors in the U.S. Navy

The purpose of this intervention training is to familiarize the recruits with the concept of positive thinking and identity growth, and to suggest ways for recruits to mentally prepare themselves to face obstacles. The training includes a 45-minute brief. This intervention was administered immediately following the T1 survey. Recruits were introduced to the concept of resilience, and given advice on how to be more resilient. Resilience was defined as “the ability to adapt and cope in the face of adversity or a significant source of stress.” Positive statements covered three areas: “I am,” “I can,” or “I will.” The following examples and definitions were given:

1. “I am” statements focus on desired qualities, talents, and/or abilities. (e.g., “I am brave”).
2. “I can” statements focus on your desired ability to accomplish goals.(e.g., “I can run long and fast”).
3. “I will” statements focus on a change you want to happen.(e.g., “I will always produce top quality work”).

Notecards were given to each recruit to brainstorm and develop their own positive statements. The recruits were asked to come up with three to five positive statements and write them down in the card. The card was then allowed to be taped to the first page of their Recruit Training Guide. The recruits were introduced to “mindfulness practices” that help them focus on areas that they can control and help them develop dynamic ways to overcome stressful or challenging situations. The recruits were asked to read and review the positive statements at least twice a day, such as after Taps, while in line, or prior to an event or exercise. The goal of the intervention was to highlight positive thinking, and provide an empowering mental tool for recruits draw on in times of stress or difficulty. The training was reinforced after the T2 survey. During the second training, the recruits were asked for feedback and given an opportunity to revise or add to their positive statements. All recruits sat through the training, but writing down the positive statements was completely voluntary; even if the recruit did not want to fully participate, they still received the training. The effects of the intervention were later measured in the surveys and during the follow-up intervention training.

2. Intervention 2: Division Discussions

In boot camp, RDCs are selected amongst the best leaders in the fleet and trusted with the mentoring and training of new recruits. They serve as “role” models to the recruits and are living examples of leadership and military success. Leadership conceptually can be learned through observation and education, but leadership in practice is an intangible asset that can only be obtained through experience. Wanberg and Kammeyer-Mueller (2000) explain the newcomers innate need for information seeking and refer to it as the “newcomer’s search for an acquisition of job and organizational information” (p. 374). As discussed previously, the relationship between a newcomer and the supervisor or leader is a dynamic process that must be refueled with constant feedback and guidance. Wanberg and Kammeyer-Mueller (2000) comment on the dynamic process by stating that, “feedback seeking refers to an employee’s solicitation of information about how he or she is performing” (p. 374). Thus, feedback mechanisms built into the boot camp training process are instrumental to the successful socialization of recruits into the Navy.

Given the importance of feedback and performance evaluations, for the second intervention, RDCs were asked to incorporate a set of questions (listed in Appendix B) into their after-action debriefs for the following training exercises: Line Handling Lab (DOT 3-2), Basic Damage Control (DOT 5-5), and Fire Fighting Event (DOT 6.1). This intervention exposed recruits to social resilience and fostered social interactions. Recruits were given a chance to review and analyze their individual and group performance. RDCs encouraged all recruits to share and voice their opinions. The effectiveness of this intervention was mainly left at the discretion of the RDCs, since we were not present for the end of event debriefs.

3. Intervention 3: Appreciative Guided Conversations

Intervention 3 strives to increase the social and organizational resilience of recruits and their divisions by allowing for “guided conversations” between recruits regarding their experiences thus far at boot camp. Typically, recruits are not allowed to speak to each other while at boot camp unless for training or safety purposes. By creating

a space for semi-structured recruit conversations, this intervention significantly deviates from RTC protocol.

The methodological foundation for this intervention is derived from current research on the benefits of Appreciative Inquiry (AI), a method previously discussed in Chapter II. AI invites people to openly question an organization, its systems, and their experiences within those systems in order to build relationships, improve performance, and gain psychological capital (Verleysen et al., 2014). Through AI, individuals can develop autonomy, relatedness, and competence, which then contribute to greater self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience (Verleysen et al., 2014). We attempt to use AI practices in this intervention to develop recruit resilience through conversations based on personal inquiry. In addition, these conversations will help to build social capital between recruits. Social capital provides psychological support to individuals and affects community resilience, which we refer to as division resilience in the RTC context (Aldrich & Meyer, 2014). By improving social capital between recruits, we hope to strength division resilience overall.

Researchers facilitated “guided conversations” with recruits after the T2 and T3 surveys. The conversations, which lasted about 45 minutes, precluded with a brief on resilience and the power of positive relationships. The recruits were seated randomly and then paired with the person across the aisle from them for the discussion. The interviews focused on why each recruit decided to join the Navy and how the boot camp process has helped them learn to “be Navy.” Questions were provided, and recruits were asked to refer back to their positive personal statements and discuss them with each other. The questions were broken down into four categories: appreciative, challenge set-back, meaning relationship, and self-learning. A complete list of questions from each category can be found in Appendix B.

D. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS AND INTERVIEWS

For this study, a total of 35 recruits and 12 RDCs were interviewed. Four focus groups and 30 personal interviews were conducted. The interviews included recruits and RDCs from traditional divisions and those in the FIT division, which will explained

below. Interviews were conducted with FIT recruits and RDCs to capture their experiences and views of resilience in this unique environment. Interviews were voluntary, semi-structured, and confidential and lasted between 45 to 60 minutes. The sessions were voice-recorded for accuracy and to facilitate future analysis. All participants signed consent forms and verbally agreed to be recorded. All participants were randomly selected by the command.

All recruits must pass a physical fitness assessment (PFA) in order to graduate from RTC. For the purpose of our research on resilience and the individual's ability to recover after a setback, we closely examine the impact of the PFA on recruit resilience. Those individuals that cannot successfully pass their PFA after several attempts are transferred to a separate division called FIT. The majority of the recruits in FIT failed either the run or the swim events in their initial PFA tests. More detailed description of the FIT division structure will be offered in chapter IV under the qualitative results.

Focus groups were comprised of two to four individuals. The interviews and focus groups were semi-structured. A set of questions were identified prior to the interviews as a baseline, but the majority of the questions resulted from the feedback and exchanges with the participants. The questions for the RDCs focused on their decision to work at RTC, their naval career, their time and experiences at RTC, and their views on resilience and recruits. The recruit questions were similar in nature to the RDCs but focused more on their personal resilience and factors that they identified as helping them bounce-back from stress. The FIT division has a more dynamic structure compared to regular RTC division, as it is comprised of recruits that join and exit the division almost daily. Due to uncertainty in the duration of a recruit's attachment to the FIT division, the recruits that participated in the FIT interviews did not complete any of this study's surveys or participate in the interventions. The interviews were transcribed using voice recordings and analyzed for trends and common themes. The themes and trends were then used to identify various practices and attitudes that help individuals recover and build resilience.

E. QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

This thesis includes a preliminary analysis of recruits' baseline resilience at the beginning of boot camp, followed by four additional analyses to determine the effects of resilience interventions on recruits, their resilience levels, and their subsequent performance throughout boot camp. Preliminary analyses were conducted using a compiled overall resilience score at each time period, which is the average of recruits' reported Brief Resilience Scale score and CD-RISC score. For example, a recruit's resilience score at T1 was equal to the mean of their T1 Brief Resilience Scale score and their T1 CD-RISC score. This compiled score was compared to the Brief Resilience Scale scores and the CD-RISC scores individually to determine a best fit between the measurements. Ultimately, the 10-item Brief Resilience Scale yielded more robust results than the CD-RISC. Therefore, all of our published analyses use recruits' Brief Resilience Scale scores at each time period as the dependent variable. All of our tests are calculated using a significance level of 0.05.

1. Baseline Tests Based on Demographic Information

First, we conduct a preliminary analysis of recruits and divisions to assess their pre-intervention variance based on resilience and demographic information collected at T1 using the Brief Resilience Scale, Ego-Resilience scale, and demographic questions. This analysis compares recruits that will eventually receive interventions to those in the control group in order to establish baseline resilience differences. This study hypothesizes that there is unequal variance in resilience between recruits before interventions are implemented. Despite the rigorous selection process that recruits must complete before being accepted into the Navy that may lead to recruits sharing many similar traits, we assume that our sample is relatively diverse in many aspects, leading to unequal variance in their pre-intervention resilience levels. We use this preliminary analysis to validate our assumption.

2. Difference Means Tests

Second, we conduct both two-tailed paired and unpaired difference tests across each of the four time periods, also known as t-tests. In our unpaired analysis across all

recruits, recruits' mean resilience scores at T1 are compared to those at T2, T2 is compared to T3, and so on. This analysis will reveal resilience changes independent of other variables in order to demonstrate the overall changes in recruit resilience throughout the boot camp process. Difference tests (t-tests) are appropriate when the sample meets the following criteria: "the sampling method for each sample is simple random sampling, the samples are independent, each population is at least 20 times larger than its respective sample, and the sampling distribution is approximately normal" (Stat Trek, 2016). All of these conditions for unpaired tests are met in our study, as our sample of recruits is independent and was randomly collected from a much larger, normal population of recruits. For the paired test, our sample is not independent, as recruits are sampled multiple times and each response is compared to previous responses.

The paired difference test compares a post-intervention resilience mean to a pre-intervention mean within recruits, so that the pre-intervention mean serves as the control value. This type of analysis is used to determine how interventions affect recruits' resilience over time. *The null hypothesis is that for a single recruit, their mean resilience before an intervention will be equal to their mean resilience after an intervention.* Following the paired difference test, an additional unpaired difference test compares resilience means between divisions in the same group. This analysis reveals differences in how divisions responded to interventions and provides a more nuanced analysis of the intervention effects on recruits over time. It essentially takes the paired t-test group results and breaks them down into division-specific results to show changes in division means over time. *The null hypothesis is that the mean resilience of one division will be equal to that of another division who received the same set of interventions.*

3. Regression Analysis

Fourth, we complete a regression analysis on recruit resilience that includes mediating factors. Mediating factors are intervening variables that alter the effect of the independent variable, interventions, on the dependent variable, recruit resilience. In this study, mediating factors will influence the impact that an intervention has on a recruit's overall resilience. Our preliminary analysis examines the following dimensions as being

possible mediating factors: positive framing, newcomer identification, Big-Five personality traits, goal orientation, subjective well-being, psychological safety, and RDC leadership. The strong presence of one or more of these variables in a recruit's boot camp experience may impact how a recruit processes a resilience intervention. For example, if a recruit claims to use positive framing techniques, he or she may report higher resilience levels than a recruit who does not use positive framing strategies. This analysis will show how coping strategies can mediate the effects of resilience interventions on recruits and have a direct impact on resilience. The final regression model used in our analyses is as follows, using recruits' Brief Resilience Scale scores from the T4 survey as the dependent variable:

$$\text{Brief Resilience Scale}_{T4} = \text{Intervention}_{1,2} + \text{Intervention}_3 + \text{Learning Goal Orientation} + \text{Brief Resilience Scale}_{T1} + \text{Positive Framing}_{T3} + \text{Identification with the Navy}_{T4}$$

4. Correlations between Resilience and the PFA

Sixth, we quantify the relationship between recruit fitness scores and resilience. A correlation analysis of individual recruits' PFA passing rates and their resilience levels is conducted, for both the initial PFA using T1 resilience data and the final PFA using T4 resilience data. Then, we complete a correlation analysis between a division's collective PFA passing rate and its division resilience score, measured at both T1 and T4. We hypothesize a strong degree of correlation between recruits and divisions with high passing rates and high levels of resilience.

5. Non-monetary Cost Analysis

Finally, following our resilience analysis, we offer an overview of potential costs and resources required to permanently implement a resilience intervention program of this magnitude at RTC. This cost analysis will quantify the program cost in terms of man hours, equipment, and personnel requirements, as opposed to solely monetary costs. This analysis will then be furthered discussed in our recommendation chapter, as a stepping stone for further evaluation and testing.

F. LIMITATIONS OF STUDY AND SAMPLE SIZE

Our quantitative analysis encountered numerous limitations due to the size of our study. We hoped to identify gender and age differences in resilience between the intervention and control groups. However, the sample sizes of these subgroups proved too small for a reliable analysis. For example, the control group contained only eight females, making a female intervention analysis infeasible. Ideally, we would have completed a regression analysis for these groups using the following equations:

$$\text{Brief Resilience Scale}_{T_4} = \text{Intervention}_{1,2} + \text{Intervention}_3 + \text{Female} + \text{Learning Goal Orientation} + \text{Brief Resilience Scale}_{T_1} + \text{Positive Framing}_{T_3} + \text{Identification with the Navy}_{T_4}$$

$$\text{Brief Resilience Scale}_{T_4} = \text{Intervention}_{1,2} + \text{Intervention}_3 + 18-19 + 20-21 + >21 + \text{Learning Goal Orientation} + \text{Brief Resilience Scale}_{T_1} + \text{Positive Framing}_{T_3} + \text{Identification with the Navy}_{T_4}$$

In these regressions, female is a binary variable where 1 signifies that a recruit is female and 0 if the recruit is male. Age groups are divided into the following dummy variables: 18-19, 20-21, >21.

Additionally, gender analysis could have benefited from the previously mentioned t-tests, using smaller sample sizes based on gender as opposed to using the entire data set of all recruits. With these tests, differences in overall male and female resilience, as well as differences between all-male divisions and integrated coed divisions, may have been observed. Resilience differences between males in all-male divisions and males in coed divisions may also have been examined. Ultimately, these gender and age specific tests may be useful for future research in a larger study of recruit resilience with greater sample size populations.

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IV. QUALITATIVE RESULTS

A. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Given the unique environment of the Recruit Training Command the first section of the interview data analysis will briefly describe the structure of the following; boot camp, regular divisions, FIT divisions, and RTC resources. The experiences and opinions of the recruits will be incorporated in each description to get an insider's view of the boot camp experience.

The last three sections will cover the interview data results that surfaced regarding resilience as perceived by recruits and RDCs. The in-depth analysis of the interview data resulted in 15 prominent themes that were grouped into three categories to better illustrate them: resilience enablers, resilience disablers, and resilience facilitators. The first two primary categories contain sub-themes that were identified by naval recruits as factors that had a positive or negative effect on their level of resilience while at boot camp. The first category, resilience enablers, contains the following eight sub-themes: adaptation, confidence, family influence, motivation, positive framework, religion, self-talk, and social network. The second category, resilience disablers, contains the following five sub-themes: lack of social network/support, loss of motivation, mental blocks, negative cues, and negative framework. The third category resulted from the interview data on the RDCs and their interactions with recruits highlighting their approach to help recruits during the training process.

In order to correctly present the findings from the RDC interviews, the last category is divided even further into two primary sub-themes, each with their own supporting themes. The resilience facilitators' primary sub-themes are dynamic training and RDC roles. The first primary sub-theme dynamic training will focus on the training techniques not directly outlined in the RTC training plan, but rather developed by each RDC as a tool to train their recruits. Dynamic training is made up of the following two supporting themes: character evaluation/new generation, and recruit empowerment. The second sub-theme of RDC roles refers to the character roles that RDCs view as

predominant and necessary to train the recruits. The RDC roles sub-theme yields the following three supporting themes: enforcer, hugger, and teacher. The categories and their themes are offered along with supporting justifications obtained from the interviews and furthered strengthened with interview quotations. The interview quotations serve as a tool to better represent the views and opinions of the recruits and RDCs during boot camp. Throughout the analysis, LT Challburg will offer further insight based on personal experiences and observations. Table 5 presents an overview of the themes and sub-themes that will be covered in this chapter.

Table 5. Structure of Themes and Sub-themes

RTC Structure	Resilience Enablers	Resilience Disablers	Resilience Facilitators
• Regular Division • FIT Division	• Adaptation • Confidence • Family Influence • Motivation • Positive Framework • Religion • Self-talk • Social Network	• Lack of Social Network/Support • Loss of Motivation • Mental Blocks • Negative Cues • Negative Framework	• Dynamic Training • Character Evaluation • Recruit Empowerment • RDC Roles • Enforcer • Hugger • Teacher

B. RTC OVERVIEW

1. RTC Structure

The military is a challenging and demanding career path that requires constant commitment and flexibility. Recruit Training Command serves as a way to identify the best possible candidates to enlist and serve in the Navy. Thus, boot camp exposes civilian applicants to military regulations, expectations and guidelines. Boot camp is made up of eight weeks of military instruction and training. When taken into perspective, eight weeks is a relatively short time to turn a “civilian” individual into a Sailor. The eight weeks are packed with training, drills, marching practice, physical fitness and inspections. The fast paced and demanding environment can best be described by the following recruits’ interview quotations:

What's it like? It's a total culture shock from civilian life to the structure of military life. I don't know. From the first day it was like you are not used to that outside the military. People, you know, looking at you constantly, but you get accustomed to it and realize it's necessary to break us down from being a civilian into adjusting to military life, I guess. Definitely necessary.

Whenever we first got off the bus back in the very first day, like when we just got off[f] the bus, I mean I just took to things really fast, but what I saw like most people in my like who got off the bus with me, they like you could just see it in their eyes that they were scared because going from the civilian who parties a lot to like just military like that. Just people yelling at them and everything. You could definitely see that they were shell-shocked a bit just by that.

Everything is basically programmed. Programmed. Designed for you to fit into the program.

RDCs are in charge of the recruits' success during the eight week program. The following are their views and opinions about the boot camp process that surfaced in the interviews. The first two outline differences in the recruit training process from a RDC perspective and a recruit's perspective:

RDC: My boot camp was totally different than this now. Now I call it like military college. They think it's the worst thing in the world, but I am like you guys are so lucky. You have computer labs, going to classes, you know just all this extra time and attention we give to you – I didn't have that when I went to boot camp. It was totally different. I was just like do as I say, not as I do. If you can't do it, eight count body builders begin so I get tired, you came into the compartment, all of your stuff is thrown out the window. It was like just totally, totally different. We definitely don't do it anymore, and that's a good thing.

Recruit: I have seen a lot of different things change over the course that I had been here. Like things that they prevent recruits- like they change some of the type of footwear to prevent stress fractures. Or, the way they will drop you to prevent you from getting injured. They want to prove a point, but they don't want hurt you. I can't say that was all bad, but I can't say that it was all good.

Boot camp, as I remember it from over 10 years ago, has seen some significant training modifications. My experience was similar to that of the RDC described above. However, as time changes and generations change, so must RTC. This is a technological

driven age; in order to remain a competitive career option, it is necessary for the Navy to modify the RTC's training process to attract the most capable individuals and not lose them to the civilian sector.

After eight weeks of training and once successfully meeting all requirements, a recruit graduates and is given a new cover that says "Navy," replacing the "recruit" cover. The recruit has now earned the right to call himself/herself a United States Sailor.

LT Challburg: I remember all my division in tears as we were told to remove the "recruit" cover and were given the "Navy" cover, the sense of accomplishment and pride cannot be justly described.

This transition between covers is a very meaningful and poignant moment to recruits, as it is the culmination of all their hard work over the past few weeks and symbolizes their initiation into the U.S. Navy.

C. DIVISION STRUCTURE

The following sections provide more detailed information about the structure and dynamics of a regular division and a FIT division.

1. Regular Division Structure

Upon arrival at RTC, recruits are greeted by RDCs and separated into their respective divisions. If the recruits pass all required tests for the next eight weeks, they will train and remain in their assigned division. There are two types of divisions: all-male and integrated. The all-male divisions train and sleep in the same compartment, ultimately spending the majority of the time together. Integrated divisions are composed of males and females that share their berthing compartments with another integrated division referred to as "brother or sister" division. For example, a berthing of 80 females would be composed of 40 of one division and 40 of another; their interaction with each other would be restricted to the berthing. During the day, the 40 females would be joined by the 40 males assigned to their division, making a full division. So, unlike the all-male divisions, integrated divisions do not spend the majority of the time together but rather only see each other during training, drills, and evolutions. Social support and bonding are important to building social resilience. Thus, it can be argued that integrated divisions

face more difficulties developing a social bond compared to the all-male divisions purely based on their decreased amount of interaction time during the boot camp process. The following recruit quotations offer observations from a female recruit and a male recruit and their opinions about the levels of social bonding between an integrated division and an all-male division:

All male division: “Well, I noticed like just from walking around my division that all male divisions were more you know, put together and had better teamwork than integrated divisions.”

Integrated division: I feel like the males actually have an—the all-male division actually has more time to bond. They are living all together. Whereas the integrated division they are fighting—the females are fighting on one side and the males are fighting on another. When you try to get together and do group activities, we don’t know the male side and the male side doesn’t know the female side.

As highlighted above, integrated divisions have a harder time establishing teamwork and a social bond, but ultimately the divisions come together and graduate.

2. FIT Division Structure

The next section discusses the distinctive structure of the FIT division. A vast majority of the recruits graduate from RTC, but some members suffer injuries and are transferred to a medical holding unit for treatment and recovery, or depending on the severity of the injury, are processed for separation. In some cases, other recruits are diagnosed with a military disqualifying illness or disorder not previously known but discovered during RTC training, and are also processed for separation. Other recruits fail to meet the physical standards required to pass the final physical fitness assessment (PFA) test or the swimming assessment tests in order to graduate and are instead transferred to a division called FIT.

At the beginning of boot camp the level of physical fitness varies between each recruit. The eight week process aims at increasing, and in some cases, correcting the physical activity of the recruits to prepare them for the physical demands of the Navy. However, some recruits even after the eight weeks are not able to meet the required standards and are transferred to FIT. The PFA consists of a 1.5 mile run, 2 minute sit-ups,

2 minute push-ups, and passing a second-class swimming qualification; failure to do so results in separation. Consequently, FIT provides additional time to work on the PFA and is the last resource for recruits that have met all other boot camp requirements but are still struggling to pass the PFA or swim tests. While in FIT, the RDCs shift their focus from indoctrinating the recruits to helping the recruits pass the PFA or swim event that they failed. If recruits pass their previously failed event within a week, they return to their parent division and graduate on time. The parent division is the original division the recruits were attached to upon arriving at RTC. If recruits in the FIT division do not pass their failed event(s) after multiple attempts (10 for PFA, 32 for swim tests), they are processed for separation. The following interview quotations discuss FIT and the mental effects on the recruits as perceived by the RDCs:

So basically what happens is if a recruit struggles with either the run or the swim, they get ASMO'd to us the day before battle stations. So basically in essence they are not meeting the standards to graduate on time, basically. So as you can imagine, they are probably going to be really depressed when they first get here. They don't want to come to FIT at all, they know what FIT is, they don't want to be here. We really see the tumble when their graduation date comes and goes. That right there is completely devastating for them, for the most part.

As the time goes and they realize that they can't complete their PFA or they can't complete their swim and they won't be graduating with their division, that's when the downhill slide starts happening. You start seeing them go from being excited, just being focused on the mission at hand, to I don't want to be here anymore, I can't do it. I don't know why I am here, this is not for me. As RDCs, we are constantly trying to keep their head above water.

The new environment and isolation can be extremely hard to overcome; RDCs must modify their RTC training efforts to assist the recruits to pass their test(s) so they may graduate and continue their military careers. After not passing the PFA or swim tests, recruits are quickly transferred to the FIT division and are forced to leave the group of individuals they have known for almost eight weeks. The sudden change of environment and loss of social bonds can best be described with the following recruit interview quotes:

I just walked in there and I was just like, oh no. I had to get out of here. Just seeing it, that was my mental thing. Just like it wasn't even about graduating with the division anymore. It was about graduating here and graduating in a timely manner. I just knew that wasn't somewhere that I wanted to be.

We used to have a joke for it. We used to—it's was FIT, that was what it stood—we called it Failures In Training. Because that is what you felt like when you first come in. You feel like a failure because basically you failed and everybody in there failed and so everybody is real sad most of the time.

I thought it was the worst place ever. I literally got really depressed. I had like three panic attacks when I got there. It's so plain.

Since the FIT recruits have already completed and passed all other training events, except for the PFA or swim, they go from a minute to minute training plan to a less demanding schedule. The shift in structure and routine can have a positive or negative effect on recruits as evident by the next interview quotations:

Negative effect: Yes, every hour we had something to do [regular division]. They were just sitting down, talking. Talking, talking, talking. If you don't talk, you can get on the treadmill and stuff, but who's going to get on the treadmill when you are all sad? Then there were girls there that they gave up already, so they are bringing you down. There's nothing to do except for sit down and talk, maybe read a book if you can find a book, and just wait for the next chow.

Positive effect: I was a little discomfited at first because I was so used to being with my division, so I was in a different environment and kind of threw me off a little bit, but it helped me a little bit focus on what I needed to do on like to realize that this stuff is real and I really need to get my stuff straight so I need to focus on what I need to do so I could pass my PFA. That's what I did.

The majority of recruits during their allotted tries meet the standards and graduate boot camp, and go on to serve in the Navy. Possible factors that led to the successful passing will be discussed under the resilience enablers section below. However, some recruits are not able to pass and are separated. Possible reasons for this failure will be outlined and discussed under the resilience disabler section. Further examples of interview quotations about RTC structure, and FIT structure and recruit experiences can be found in Appendix C.

D. RESILIENCE ENABLERS

Resilience enablers, for the purpose of our thesis, are defined as factors or “tools” that help recruits overcome a setback or obstacle. Given the conflicting definitions and understanding of resilience, during this analysis it is important to re-state our view of resilience as a learned ability that can be increased based on experiences and not merely an innate ability that a recruit has or does not have. Thus, their experiences and coping mechanism can shed light into the recruit resilience building process. The following section will discuss the resilience enablers sub-themes identified in the interview data with supporting justifications, as discussed earlier.

1. Adaptation

a. Theme

Introduction to a foreign environment can create stress and confusion. Adaptation assists an individual in assimilating and understanding the dynamics of their current situation. After adapting, an individual is able to make observations and connections between different aspects of the new environment or process that initially did not appear to be connected. As an individual becomes aware of his surroundings and the reasons behind certain actions or processes, he/she is able to look past the initial shock and thrive.

b. Justification

The mere nature of boot camp, as previously discussed, can pose a dramatic experience to young adults. The RTC structure section provided an overview of how the change in environment and military exposure can be shocking to recruits. The environmental effects can be lessened by accepting the situation and adapting to the new requirements/expectations.

The majority of the recruits interviewed did not have military experience or exposure. Upon arriving to RTC they were immediately introduced to military rank structures, rules and behavioral expectations. Some of the recruits confessed that before joining the military, they had never held a job or had ever been yelled at. Order and discipline are deeply embedded in military culture and can be extremely overwhelming to

a civilian. One recruit offered the following example of how boot camp can negatively affect an individual:

Well, the beginning it was really, really tough, but it wasn't—it was mentally tough on yourself, I would say. Because they don't yell at you a bunch, but you are just like on your toes because you expect them to and it can play with like your anxiety a lot. And, like the first night we came here, my very, very first night this kid was so nervous he threw up on like a petty officer's face.

It could be argued that the example above is an extreme case of an individual that lost the ability to control his nerves, but none the less, it offers a great insight of how dramatic the experience can be.

LT Challburg: I remember my hesitation and fear as the bus entered boot camp, I felt a sense of anxiety and confusion unlike any I had never felt before. But, thinking back once I realized that a lot of things were repetitive and built upon each other, I paid attention, did as I was told and quickly adapted.

The following recruit interview quotations illustrate the positive benefits of adaptation on a recruit's resilience process:

So it was to show like the importance of like going to bed on time because like at home we have our bad sleeping habits. So they showed us everything you may do in a day. They kept us up so that when it was time to go to sleep we went to sleep instantly. Every day after that, every time it was taps I went to sleep on time because I got to see day one what my days would be like.

A little bit at first, but then I just accepted the fact that there is nothing I could do about it, so I just kind of went along with everything. Since I observe a lot, I just kind of just stayed under the radar and it's all like the trainers and instructors putting out stuff that other recruits had been doing wrong, so I just kind of learned from that. So, it made my boot camp experience easier, just learning like that.

There were a lot of inspections we had to do and you have got to be sharp. If you miss one thing you can fail that inspection. I have gotten used to it. I know checkpoints now, so not as stressful.

Being open to the RTC training process can empower a recruit and allow him/her to absorb the training and perform all the required tasks. Adaptation lessens the environmental shock and reduces the recruits' stress, so they can focus on the information

and training at hand. Ultimately, adaptation during the RTC training process can lead to identification with the military and builds social and individual resilience.

2. Confidence

a. Theme

When faced with a challenge, an individual that has confidence in his/her own abilities can typically overcome the difficulty and succeed. Confidence can be described as an individual's faith in their own strengths. When faced with a new challenge, confidence helps an individual overcome that obstacle and prepares that individual to defeat any similar difficulties. Boot camp is a great environment to further understand how confidence can have a positive effect on an individual's resilience.

b. Justification

Several of the recruits discussed how they were able to reach back to previous experiences to build their confidence when faced with a new challenge. Other recruits also mentioned how after finally overcoming one obstacle, their confidence then grew and they were able to successfully pass other obstacles. Experiencing success in one area, even if not directly related to another area of difficulty, allows the recruits to increase their confidence and reduce their stress and anxiety. A few recruit examples of confidence are listed below:

I think it was just after I passed inspection. That was like okay, I guess I can do this. That pretty much got me through.

I am also older than the average recruit here. So I have dealt with a little tougher situations than they have. It's just common sense things. Learning to breathe. If you can collect your bearings, you are good to go.

The following quote illustrates how a recruit was able to incorporate past experiences with his friends and use them to build up his confidence level, assuring himself that he would be able to complete boot camp:

I also had thought during throughout boot camp that I have friends who went to boot camp before I did and some of my friends were not the strongest, so I knew if they could do it, I could do it. I kind of cocky and I was like I am better than they are, so if they can do it I can definitely do it.

In an environment such as RTC, confidence is extremely vital for the resilience building process of a recruit and helps recruits to not be overwhelmed by a challenge.

3. Family Support and Acceptance

a. Theme

It is well-known that babies learn cognitive skills by observing and mimicking those around them. Thus, family relationships and interactions can shape an individual's character, morals, and beliefs. Family support and acceptance can be extremely important for an individual's ability to recover from a set-back and can provide the necessary drive to continue. As discussed in Chapter II, resilience can be seen as layers that surround an individual; one of the most important layers is the familial resilience layer (Walklate et al., 2013). Thus, family and the nature of family relationships can have a great direct influence on an individual's resilience.

b. Justification

Every recruit interviewed discussed at least once how much they missed their families and how they could not wait to see them again. Stories of family struggle, whether financial or illness-related, were shared. One particular recruit even shed tears just thinking about his nephews. The reliance on family support and approval was evident throughout the interview data. Several of the recruits shared instances where focusing on their family helped them overcome a struggle:

So she's like "Don't go, don't go." Before I got here. Then I have to call her and tell her, "Hey, I failed." I thought she was going to be really upset and be like, "I knew you shouldn't have done this." Blah, blah, blah. She's like, "Oh, it's okay. We still love you. We know you are going to get passed. You can pass anything." That felt great. I think that's what kept me going. Hearing my mom tell me I can do it because I was about ready to give up on myself at this point.

I didn't talk to her again and that was my motivation when I would run. I was like I get to call my mother after this. I get to call my mother after this if I run as fast as I can, I can call my mom.

But, family ties can also have a negative effect on recruits' ability to be successful at RTC. Missing family can create an emotional mind block on a recruit's adaptation process and make it impossible to adjust to their new environment. One of the RDCs shared a story about a recruit and how family separation negatively affected him. She talked about how he would cry and break down in front of the division, how he was not eating or talking, and was constantly depressed. The RDC mentioned how he would regularly request to go to medical because he could "not be in boot camp anymore." Shortly after a medical evaluation, the RDC asked him what the doctor had said. The recruit replied:

Well, they told me there was nothing I could do, they are not sending me home, I am fine, so I think I am just going to go ahead and stick it out for my wife and my kids.

This particular recruit was able to shift the negative effect of family separation and instead used it to ignite his determination to be successful and graduate. The RDC further added that once the recruit was able to use his family as a source of resilience, he was able to adapt and ultimately became her best recruit. Another recruit shared how his family had thrown him out, and how he was homeless when he was recruited. When the interview took place, he had already passed his PFA, had graduated and was awaiting orders to leave boot camp. Surprisingly, even after his family had abandoned him, they still served as a source of resilience for him. When asked if he would ever reach out to his family, he responded:

Yes, I do plan on eventually finding my parents again, because they did move a little bit after I was thrown out—a few months. So I don't know where they are and they don't know where I am. I want to find them. You know? Tell them that their son is a Sailor.

The importance of family acceptance and support cannot be understated, as evident in the example presented above.

LT Challburg: As I reflect back to my boot camp experience, the most challenging aspect of the training process was the inability to reach out to my mother for support when something was stressful or difficult. Wanting to see my mother again kept me motivated.

For a lot of recruits just the thought of seeing their love ones at graduation is enough to make them push their limits and be successful.

4. Motivation and Perseverance

a. Theme

While confidence focuses on an individual's own view of their ability to overcome an obstacle, motivation primarily shifts the focus to an "external" source as a driver to keep pushing forward. In essence, motivation persuades an individual to continue a task even when faced with failure. Sources of motivation can be generated by social support and encouragement or by focusing on future goals or outcomes. While other external factors can influence motivation, this section explores the individuals' acceptance of these external factors and their individual use of them to build their own resilience. Thus, this section explores from an individual perspective the dynamic power of motivation as a resilience enabler.

b. Justification

The interview data offered numerous sources of motivation for FIT recruits. Sources of motivation varied greatly from recruit to recruit. Many recruits constantly relied on the RDCs and each other to keep themselves motivated. Family also tended to be a great source of motivation. Some recruits even mentioned how they were inspired to push themselves by witnessing other recruits succeed or by helping others succeed. Other recruits found motivation to overcome an obstacle by remembering a previous experience that resulted in a negative consequence; their focus on the negative memory and desire not to repeat it empowered them to keep trying. The following RDC quote describes how he would seek to instill motivation for recruits facing difficulties:

Just trying to talk to them and let them know that we all struggle. It's not just here in boot camp. When you get out in the Navy, it's going to be times where you are struggling in the Navy also, but just realize how far you have come and think about those who are at home that you probably went to high school with or college with that will probably never have this opportunity.

As described earlier, the FIT division environment can negatively affect an individual's level of motivation and can be a source of depression. Some recruits are not able to overcome the stress and demands of FIT and instead shift their focus to returning to their previous civilian life and environment. Their loss of motivation becomes a cautionary example and a kind of “wake-up” call for other FIT recruits. The following female recruit explains how seeing others quit helped her maintain motivation and solidified her goal to graduate and become a United States Sailor:

While you have some people who just quit after like their first time and like, “I just want to leave. I just want to go home. I don’t want to sit here no more.” Yeah, it gets discouraging, but like [inaudible] said, I’m not going to leave here. Yeah, I had a couple of failures, but I’m not going to leave. I’m not going leave until I pass because I want to leave at an [8-point cover]. I don’t want to leave out here with an old [recruit] cap. I want to leave with an 8-point cover and I want to go to the fleet.

Additionally, the interview data identified RDCs as extremely important sources of motivation for the recruits. In FIT, the RDCs take on even more of the responsibility to motivate the recruits to pass their failed event(s). The following quotes from recruits illustrate the RDCs direct influence on recruits’ motivation:

I can’t run at your pace. You got to run at mine. I would be like, “Yes, chief.” Because you don’t want to disappoint them, you know? That’s a big thing. You don’t ever want to disappoint—well, for me anyways I didn’t want to disappoint my RDC.

Some of the RDCs encourage you. They give you really good speeches. Like one RDC gave us a speech and then the next day 32 people passed.

An individual’s motivation needs to be persistently re-fueled and strong enough to beat adversity. In FIT, recruits depend on motivation to remain focus and avoid falling into depression or giving up. Motivation enables resilience, making it is a necessary element in the recruits’ resilience building process.

5. Positive Framework

a. Theme

Positive framework allows an individual facing adversity to focus on the potential positive outcomes of their current situation, and denies them the chance to dwell on failures. Being able to “see” the light at the end of the tunnel has positive effects on the person facing a difficulty and facilitates recovery. This tool empowers and lifts an individual’s motivation and drive to continue impacting their level of resilience.

b. Justification

The nature of FIT serves as a good example of how recruits are able to shape or alter their perception about the challenges that they are currently facing. Most of the recruits interviewed were able to “step-back” from a given failure and instead analyze the whole situation. The reasons that made them join the military were often at the center of their positive framework process. The following recruit interview quote is an example of how one recruit, even while facing a possible medical disqualification that would prevent him from working on nuclear power, was able to evaluate his situation and remain positive:

I realized that my situation and the options were inevitable no matter what happened. If I become a nuke, great. That’s what I want. But, if I didn’t I am still better off than I was when I first came here. I am still in a better position. I have a job and if I do well that that job, I will have a job for a long time. The Navy is a good gig.

Another recruit facing challenges completing the run event of the PFA reduced his frustration and feelings of failure by instead focusing on the physical improvements he was making by saying:

I was frustrated I hadn’t passed yet, but I was always getting better. So I knew it was an issue, but it was something I was working on, so I wasn’t stressed about it. Like I knew I was going to pass it, it would just take me going hard at it.

A female recruit in the FIT division positively framed her transfer to FIT by looking at it as an act of fate and even necessary for her to experience. She said:

From then, I have just kind of accepted it and realized it is what it is, there is a reason why I am here, I guess. Maybe I wasn't meant to go to San Antonio quite yet. Maybe there was a lesson that I needed to learn by the RDCs in FIT.

Framing an adversity or challenge as something that was “meant to be” reduces stress, feelings of failure, and guilt. Therefore, the ability to reframe a negative set of events in an effort to look past them has a positive impact on a recruit's resilience building process.

6. Religion

a. Theme

Religion has great effect on individual decisions, actions and attitudes. Religious affiliations help create social bonds and shape an individual's life perspective. Throughout history, religious beliefs have been used to justify aggression or used to persecute certain groups. Thus, religion is very significant and its influence cannot be understated.

b. Justification

The FIT recruit interview data surfaced overwhelming evidence of the use of religion as a source for motivation and mental health. Recruits in FIT, as discussed previously, face added pressure to pass their failed event(s). Religion lets them reach out to something greater than themselves. Not all recruits are religious, but for those that are, religion served as a social bonding platform. A lot of the recruits talked about coming together and forming Bible study groups. Some recruits discussed their dependence on these Bible study groups to keep their spirits lifted and remain positive:

We prayed. A lot of prayer. Just I am talking 24—well, not 24 hours, but we just stayed prayed up. That's why I had to do—I was raised in church and my momma always told me prayer works and that is the one thing that I can testify of that. Prayer just brought me there.

Several recruits talked about a specific Bible passage presented below as a direct source of inspiration when facing an obstacle:

Pray about it. Read the Bible. Philippians 4:13. That one. “I can do anything through Christ, who centers me.” Actually when I passed, because they tell you five minutes, off the wall, go. You just got to go like off the wall, right when he said that I like said that scripture to myself in my head.

Another recruit described a conversation she had with her mother and how her mother was able to use religion to keep her focused and inspired:

She just told me basically to believe in myself a little bit more than I was and she said that she knew that I had it in me. She’s like, “I know that you have it in you.” And she’s like, “I know that you always find a way to make a way.” She’s like, “Just pray and trust in God.” Then she started to talk about Peter, about how he asked God to step out on the water and when he started to doubt him, he started to sink. That is what my mom was talking about on the phone. Like I just passed it onto my friends and we talked about that and it uplifted me. That was actually what we talked about right before I ran the 12 laps.

The quotes listed above clearly support the notion that during the boot camp process, religion can have a significant influence on an individual’s personal motivation and perseverance. An individual’s faith in a higher supernatural spiritual power can help them overcome a struggle and remain positive. The interview data illustrated how even negative situations or outcomes can be seen as part of an individual’s predestined “path” and not a result of individual actions. Focusing on religion in a setting such as FIT has a positive and direct effect on the recruit’s resilience.

7. Self-talk

a. Theme

While positive framework is more of a process to lessen the effects of negative outcomes, self-talk can be seen as having a conversation with oneself that can influence how one feels or behaves. Self-talk can positively or negatively influence an individual.

b. Justification

The FIT recruit interview data provided several examples of self-talk and its effects on recruit resilience. The result of having a conversation with their own selves whether internal or external allowed recruits to better focus on their present challenge and

clear their mind of any added pressures. The following are examples from recruits in FIT about self-talk and its power to overcome an obstacle:

When I went to FIT, one of the PFA attempts that I had—they give us ten—one of the attempts I was like okay, you know what? Today I am not worried about passing, I am just worried about seeing if I can run the entire PFA and not stop. I did that and I did it in like 13 minutes.

We got to the tower, we finally got a chance at the tower. At this point, I told myself if I can jump off the tower, I can do it.

Another recruit used self-talk to help him adapt to his transfer to FIT, as he faced separation from his division:

Me not being able to do that, I was depressed the day I was leaving, you know, because I was leaving behind my division, so it was surreal that I was leaving them. I was coming back here to meet other people, so it was depressing a little bit. But I said, “Man, stand up to it.” You know, [inaudible]. It’s what I have to do.

Recruits described how they were able to relieve some of their stress and instill confidence by practicing self-talk. Consequently, self-talk empowered some recruits to pass a previously failed event. Self-talk can serve as a “in the moment” last source of self-motivation or “push” to continue in the face of struggle, and is often used by recruits to help them be successful.

8. Social Network/Support

a. Theme

Social network/support includes family, friends, organizations or groups that an individual relies on either on a daily basis or when faced with a problem. During boot camp, recruits are denied constant access to their social networks and instead are forced to develop new ones.

b. Justification

The structure of RTC limits and restricts the recruit’s access to their civilian social network/support. Recruits must then, look for other sources of social support to fill in the gaps left by friends, spouses or family. Given the short duration of boot camp,

recruits must learn to create social bonds at a much faster pace than they would normally have in the past. In eight weeks, the recruits must transition from strangers to a form of “family” in order to develop trust and teamwork necessary to be successful. Teamwork becomes a crucial part of the training process as recruits learn new skills and have their performance constantly evaluated. Often, recruits relied on each other for support and motivation. A FIT recruit after failing a swim event recalls the support he received another one of the FIT recruits:

That was the most amazing thing about it was I can come back and I can just say, “You know what? I am tired. This pool is stupid. This is stupid. I want to go home.” The guy will come up to me and say, “You are close. You got three minutes. It don’t take long. After you do that—.” And he will just have a short five minute conversation and then you are pumped up and say, “You know what? You are right. It’s not really that bad here.”

The following interview quote describes the experience of one recruit in his initial division before his transfer to FIT and the incredible social bonds that were created:

My division, it was—I would like to say it was a group of brothers. We were really tight, so when four of us got separated from the division, it was real nice to have them send us off, say goodbye and that kind of stuff, and get here knowing that we had the full support of every other person in our division. That was part of it, just knowing that no matter what happened, my old brothers would still be there. They would still be waiting for me to join them out in the fleet.

Another recruit recalls his experience in FIT and illustrates how social network/support can have a positive influence on resilience:

So they—it’s like you become more of a family with these people that you are around. You know, they know the struggle, they have been with you when you are mad, they have been with you when you are sad. So they kind of know you and you are able to—and I have been able to uplift their spirits just like they have been able to uplift mine.

Not surprisingly, RDCs are also a critical social network/support for the recruits during the entire boot camp training process and are often relied upon for motivation. The last section of this chapter will discuss more in depth the influence RDCs have and their views about the role they play in the boot camp training process. Additional interview quotations examples illustrating recruit resilience enablers are listed in Appendix D.

E. CATEGORY II: RESILIENCE DISABLERS

The following category examines resilience disablers that surfaced from the FIT recruit interview data. Resilience disablers, for the purpose of the interview data analysis, refer to mental or socially constructed factors that prevent an individual to recover from a set-back, and have potentially negative implications on their resilience developing process. The previous section identified and discussed resilience enabling themes that surfaced from the interview data; this section will now briefly discuss and explore the negative effects of not having access to those enabling factors. Quotations will provide supporting examples of mental or social factors that affected recruit resilience during their time in FIT.

1. Lack or Loss of a Social Network/support

a. Theme

As already discussed above, having access to a social network/support can have a great influence on an individual's ability to face and surpass a difficulty. Consequently, not having access has negative implications to an individual's drive and ability to recover from adversity. If an individual's major source of inspiration and drive depend on their social relationships, not having access to those social resources can create anxiety and stress. In this situation, a person is left to fully depend on his/her own drive and willingness to persevere and must assume full responsibility to continue or quit when confronting a challenge or set-back.

b. Justification

During a focus group interview of FIT recruits, several shared their experiences about their perceived loss of social support from their RDCs after constant failures:

Because it felt like the RDCs, because they were telling me since 1-2, "Come on [interviewee name], you got to swim." You got to go to swim and do this, this, and that. Then after a while it was like someone told me just like, "Okay, we are sending you to swim. We will see you later." Like they didn't really care if you passed or not after a while.

I remember the day—it was Friday of the first final PFA. I failed and my RDC's

already had me signing the [inaudible] paperwork and stuff even before I even took the makeup final, so that kind of sucked. And then they had me pack Sunday night because they were like, “Look, we don’t know if you’re going to pass or fail, but we just want to be prepared so it’s easy for us to drop you off.”

It is important to note that the two quotes provided above did not reflect the overwhelming positive examples of RDCs’ social support to recruits. However, these quotes do offer important examples of the negative effects RDCs can have on a recruit’s sense of social support. Some recruits recalled how an individual’s personality or comfort level prevented them from seeking social relationships.

2. Loss of Motivation

a. Theme

When an individual loses focus of his/her source of motivation and is not able to regain focus, he/she will evaluate a situation as already over and beyond their control. Ultimately, this phenomenon results in a self-determined sense of defeat even before the obstacle is present.

b. Justification

The structure of FIT can have a negative effect on a recruit’s ability to remain committed. Some recruits used FIT as a source of encouragement and motivation to pass and graduate. But others were consumed by the pressure and stress and sunk into a depression. Instead of reaching back to sources of motivation, these recruits give up and become fixated on going home. When a situation is so overwhelming, it can overshadow any other sources of motivation and reduce their previous importance. An RDC offered an example of a recruit that has lost all motivation and drive:

When she is running, she is doing a lot of walking and she came to me—I want to say this is the same female that came to me a while ago and said she can’t do it no more. She doesn’t want to be here. Her motivation, her heart is just not in it.

FIT recruits must overcome not just their failed PFA or swim events, but also the lack of structure in FIT and the negative environment within it. One recruit in FIT described how he tried to help restore motivation to another recruit but was not able to:

I have seen people in FIT, because they don't do anything—there was a guy who has been separated from the Navy. He told me FIT took away his life. Like drained everything out of him. He is like I don't want to be here anymore, I want to go home. I tried to motivate him, but he was unmotivational.

Self-motivation is gone, and is replaced with a barrier that hinders the ability for others to motivate them. After losing motivation, other recruits simply became comfortable and lose commitment to the boot camp training process. One female FIT recruit explains her observation of other female recruits that have lost motivation:

Yes, I mean people are still messing up here, still talking too loud, still don't know how to do the racks or anything like that, which we have been practicing for eight weeks. So people—I guess when people get here they just get lazy and get too comfortable, that the RDCs still don't care, which they still do. They just—I don't know. Some people here just seem like they don't care anymore.

Motivation can be fueled by social support, but must be accepted by the individual or its efforts are hopeless.

3. Mental Blocks

a. Theme

Mental blocks are barriers that an individual must first overcome in order to surpass a challenge or difficulty. Consequently, mental blocks can have a devastating effect on a person's motivation and can cloud their ability to face an obstacle. Negative experiences or outcomes can result in self-created mental blocks that can hinder an individual's resilience process.

b. Justification

Boot camp can expose individuals to situations that are not familiar to them or that remind them of past dramatic life experiences. The FIT interview data shed light into the challenges that recruits face overcoming their self-imposed mental blocks. One recruit

in particular talked about the overpowering fear he felt anytime he would enter the pool water:

So they came and picked me out and they were all like, no, I can't do this. I just did it by myself right away and I was like, "I can't." Because when I was in the water, I felt like I was going to die like my friend. That was the first thing that came into my mind, "Oh, I'm going to die like he did."

This particular recruit had witness the drowning of a close family member, and vividly recalled the experience anytime he would be in the water. The fear of "drowning," even if not probable given the lifeguards and instructors present, successfully prevented the recruit from correctly evaluating the risk. Another recruit recalls his struggle with swimming and provides a great example of how mental blocks affected him:

I would just visualize swim. Like swim literally consumed my mind. It got worse when I got to FIT. My RTC actually took master of arms away from me at the end because he says that I can just tell like you are not here. I could just tell that this swim is weighing down so much on you that he made someone else master of arms and just make you a section leader because you need to focus on getting yourself out.

Mental blocks have a negative effect on a recruit's ability to build upon their current resilience level. For some recruits, each failed attempt strengthened their mental blocks' negative effects, making it harder to defeat.

4. Negative Cues

a. Theme

Negative cues address an individual's instant feeling or reaction brought by seeing or thinking about a place or thing. These negative cues can trigger feelings of fear or despair that may be unfounded.

b. Justification

One particular building in boot camp was often talked about among the FIT recruits that had failed to meet the time standards to pass their run. Freedom Hall is the building where recruits run and where they are assessed for their PFAs. In Freedom Hall,

a large clock hangs in one of the walls and is used to keep track of time during the PFA. Recruits mentioned how they constantly refer to the clock to assess if they were running at the right speed in order to finish the run within their allotted time. As a recruit is running, the clock becomes a source of pressure that can undermine their efforts to pass and instead induce self-doubt. The following interview quote describes how quickly this recruit was filled with negativity after seeing the clock:

I was running and I believe I was on my sixth going on my seventh lap and it was about eight minutes in. I looked at the clock and I was like wow, I am not going to make it and then I am not going to graduate with my division and all of this. It kind of snowballed myself and I was like oh, I am not going to make it and then this is going to happen and I am not going to graduate with my division and I am not going to see the family. It was just the clock. Like I looked at the clock and I said I am not going to make it. I could make it, but I didn't. I felt like a failure. Honestly, I felt like a failure.

Instead of using the clock as a motivation to run faster, the recruit allowed the clock to remind him of his previous failures. Freedom Hall serves as a negative cue to many of the runners (recruits that failed the run part of the PFA), while the walk to the pool was the negative cue to the swimmers (recruits that did not pass all swim events). One recruit explained how she was affected by Freedom Hall, even if she had been motivated prior to entering the building:

Well, I was at least really—I was calm. I was calm and like when I actually got into the building I started getting a little nervous and it just because I was afraid I was going to fail again.

For the swimmers, the almost two-mile walk to and from the pool gave the recruits plenty of “silent” time to dwell on their failures, almost preparing them to expect failure again. Thus, negative cues established repeating cycles of failure that some recruits could not break. Self-doubt and loss of confidence were often referred to as results of negative cues.

5. Negative Framework

a. Theme

Positive framework as previously discussed shapes a situation or set of events with a focus on positive outcomes. Negative framework does exactly the opposite and places emphasis on the negative possible outcomes or situations. Negative framework over emphasizes the importance of a negative outcome, creating a perceived domino effect that can lead to depression or a sense of failure.

b. Justification

The interview data provided several examples of recruit's constant battle with failure and its negative effect on motivation and drive. Looking at a situation with a negative light prevented the following recruit from accepting the social motivation she was given:

And when we see the rest of our division, it was like, "Oh, you all are going get out. We know what happened. It's going to be okay. We're going to see you in the fleet." And we were just like it's so hard, it's so discouraging, because you take the test and you fail and you're like I've got to get up and do it again. And you take it again and you fail and it's like, well, I've got to get up and do it again. It's repetitive and it's kind of like you don't even want to do it no more.

Negative framework can prevent a recruit from accepting social encouragement and blocks their own willingness to continue. Failure becomes the center of their current situation forcing them to reject the possibility of been successful. A recruit in FIT, struggling with one of the swim tests that requires him to float on his stomach for five minutes, discusses how negative framework prevented him from been enthusiastic about his time improvements:

Well, the main one is I am a failure. Like man, I am a failure. I can't [inaudible] again. Even when like I went from 30 seconds to two minutes and 30 seconds. That's a big jump. That's a lot of improvement. I should have been excited about it. I could have been excited, but I still said, "Man, it's not five minutes." I am a failure. Like if I can't get to five minutes, my ultimate goal, then two minutes and 30 seconds—like I had no proof of that. You don't get half of a swim [inaudible] for two minutes and 30 seconds. So I really have nothing to show for it.

Always focusing on his shortcomings increased this recruits' stress and sense of failure. Some of the recruits interviewed in FIT would dwell on their failure to pass an event, negatively affecting their ability to increase their resilience. Additional interview quotation examples illustrating recruit resilience disablers are listed in Appendix E.

F. CATEGORY III: RESILIENCE FACILITATORS

The previous two sections analyzed and discussed which factors enable or disable the recruit resilience building process during boot camp from the recruits' perspective. The following category examines the role of RDCs as resilience facilitators that developed from the interview data. This section will briefly discuss resilience building themes and practices that surfaced from the RDC interview data from both regular divisions and the FIT division.

1. Dynamic Training

a. Theme

Dynamic training refers to an RDC's ability to appropriately tailor their approach to training based on their observations of recruits needs. Most of the "tailoring" is influenced by the RDCs assessment of an individual and their ability to overcome certain stressors. Thus, character evaluation and empowerment are vital to implementing a dynamic training process.

b. Justification

A few of the techniques discussed by the RDCs are presented below, with supporting quotes.

(1) Character evaluation is necessary

RDCs have a constant and direct influence on recruits. During the eight week boot camp process, RDCs spend most of their days at RTC with the recruits. The recruits' success during the training process becomes a priority. The RDCs interviewed discussed the stressful environment and the need to be able to evaluate a recruit's ability to undergo the training process. In particular, RDCs observe character changes between generations

and their implications on the recruits' adaptation to the military. One RDC describes one of the changes between older generations and the new millennial generation:

Yes, because when I came through boot camp there was no thought process to boot camp. You came, you did exactly what you were told, when you were told, how it was told. I mean there was no questions. Like I was a robot. You know? Now you know sailors are smart. You are getting into like the new technical era of recruits. They are a lot smarter and they ask why.

A female RDC commented on possible character changes that female recruits face during the training process:

So having a young female recruit here at boot camp, I am quite sure she is going through a lot as far as just her changing physically, mentally, spiritually and stuff like that. So it's just those are the ones that—you know, either male or female, they both need mentoring, but the females I say they go through like sometimes this is a life changing experience for them. They never been around a group of other females before or they may have never had an older female talk to them.

(2) Recruit life balance is vital for the mental health of recruits

Another RDC discussed how a lot of the time when a recruit's performance or attitude suddenly change, most of the time they are struggling due to an external source and not because of the boot camp environment. It is important to understand that life is still happening for that recruit. Maintaining balance between life and RTC can in part be a shared responsibility between the recruits and RDCs. The following RDC interview quotations support this need:

Listen. Sit. Listen. Because it's not always about the Navy. It's not. A lot of people don't realize that. It's very rarely, very seldom is it about the Navy. The majority of the time it's about life in general.

I mean you can really tell who's struggling with everything. You can tell who's having a bad day, who just got some bad news. Normally if you are paying attention to your recruits, you can pinpoint it pretty well. You can say, "Hey, I need to talk to you."

(3) Positive reinforcement can instill motivation and pride

The majority of the RDCs interactions with the recruits involve the use of yelling as a learning mechanism. Therefore, recruits are used to the constant pressure to perform and at times become accustomed to being yelled at. The following RDC commented how he is able to shift his training technique by using the recruits believed expectation to be corrected and yelled at, and instead use the opportunity to provide positive reinforcement:

The other recruits, 80 of them, for three days straight, four or five days straight, constantly yell at them about fold and stow. Then come in one morning, walk into compartment, walk up to a rack, and be like, “[inaudible] recruit Timothy, get over here.” “Moving, chief.” “What is this?” “Uh?” “It’s correct. Good job.” And walk away and you just changed the whole entire dynamics of the 80 recruits for that whole entire day because you actually told one recruit that they did a good job and they see it.

In a stressful environment like RTC, receiving positive feedback from RDCs can have a lasting effect on a recruit’s perception and motivation.

(4) Social motivation to overcome mental blocks

Other RDCs described how they use competition to help recruits overcome an obstacle and move past the fear of failure:

You just got to stay on them mentally and physically. So when they are down there doing pushups sometimes you make a little competition out of it. You know, like who can do more pushups than petty officer? You know, stuff like that just to get them in like, oh I can do more than you petty officer. You know, like alright, let’s go. Let’s see. Let’s see how you are doing. You know, it becomes a game or it becomes fun to them so they are like okay, we are doing more pushups than petty officer. But, deep down inside, they are really doing this for themselves.

Another RDC discussed the technique she uses to help recruits overcome the run and eliminate the pressure and mental block that time can have on recruits:

Because if you tell the recruits they’re going to run a mile and a half, they’re just going to run that mile and a half and be done. So I just make them run 15 minutes flat and see how many laps they did after that.

RDCs are able to modify and create new incentives for recruits to continue pushing forward. Other RDC techniques and practices to help recruits overcome their obstacles are listed in Appendix F. However, not all recruits are able to or willing to accept the RDCs efforts and ultimately are transferred to FIT or separated from the military. Recruit and RDCs comments and observations about recruits that fail to adapt can also be found in Appendix F.

2. RDC Roles

a. Theme

Each division is assigned three RDCs to oversee the recruits training process. The interview data analysis identified three defined roles as; enforcer (yeller), hugger (listener), and teacher (mentor). The three RDCs must reflect on each other's personality and strengths to better determine what role each will play.

b. Justification

Recruitment practices can aim to enlist a certain type of recruit to increase and maintain diversity, but given the voluntary nature of RTC, recruits still primarily self-select into enlistment. Thus, recruits come from all different demographics and their life experiences can vary greatly depending on when they made the decision to join the military. The RDCs overall role to take a group full of strangers and turn them into Sailors can be best described by the following RDC comment:

You have to kind of culture shock them in a way. I mean just kind of like what [chief] was trying to say just now. As soon as you get them, not right off the bus, but you know like the next morning you have got to be in their face. If you are not in their face constantly, because you are trying to break 18 to 30 years of bad habits in eight weeks.

The following are examples of the primary three roles played by RDCs listed above.

(1) Enforcer (yeller)

The enforcer continuously serves as the authoritative figure and “bad” guy. His/her responsibility is to uphold military bearing, order and discipline:

Your enforcer who keeps them in line. They know they don't mess with because they are going to jump on them right away when they get out of line.

(2) Hugger (listener)

The hugger role was described as more of the passive role used to instill confidence and trust in the recruits. When a recruit is facing a challenge, this role allows him/her to seek help. The following RDC quote discusses view about the importance of the hugger role:

I am a hugger, they call it. I am really calm. I don't yell. I yell when it's time to yell. But you know, you actually get more emotion from a recruit—once they are used to the guy yelling at them all the time and a girl yelling at them all the time, they person like me comes in and leans over and asks them, "Why did you fail this?" They are going to say, "I don't know chief." They are a teenager. They don't know. "I don't know, chief." The only thing you say is, "I am so disappointed in you." Then walk off. That recruit will probably be just crushed because they disappointed the chief or the RDC. I mean it kind of devastates them so then you got to remember to probably go talk to them later and tell them to expect more. You get more production out of a recruit like that. Not really in the beginning of boot camp, but about half way. In the beginning every one of them should know that you are not their friend.

(3) Teacher (mentor)

The teacher (or mentor) RDC role focuses more on the training and development of the recruit training process. The teacher role takes a more goal and task oriented approach to help recruits adapt and become United States Sailors. This RDC offered his view and experience playing the teacher role:

Someone who is more of a teacher. Someone who they respect, but they know they can sit there and be calm and learn. Because you can't learn when someone is barking down your throat, but you—they have more of a demeanor of a teacher, where you respect them and you don't talk in their class, but yet they are not yelling at you at the same time.

Ultimately, even though the data surfaced three major roles, most of the RDCs interviewed agreed that a lot of times they have to be able to "switch-out" their current role, thus role playing becomes more of a dynamic process. Additional RDCs comments and examples of their roles can be found in Appendix F.

G. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The interview data surfaced multiple sources of resilience for recruits struggling with their PFA or second-class swim qualification. Most recruits were able to focus on the reasons why they joined the military in the first place and used them as sources of motivation. These, sources of motivation were constantly defined and more often than not, derived from social input and support. Been able to count on the support of a social network was critical during the recruit's resilience building process. Other recruits talked about how their family was even more important to them in the boot camp setting and heavily relied on as a source of resilience. The power of religious inspiration was also constantly discussed and used by a lot of the recruits to help them "get" back up during their time at RTC. Reframing a situation through a positive lens by practicing positive framework, allowed recruits to look past their negative situation, and instead focus on future goals. Self-talk was often used to empower recruits right before facing a challenge or right after a failure to remain focused on passing. Being confident about their physical or intellectual abilities had a positive effect on a recruits performance and ability to overcome adversity, even if they had not previously faced that particular situation. The recruits that were able to adapt quickly to the boot camp training process reduced their stress and viewed boot camp as a necessary but easy military indoctrination method.

The resilience disablers that were identified were almost a direct result of not having access to one or more of the resilience enablers discussed above. Not been able to reach out to family members or social networks had a negative effect on the recruit's ability to continue the training process. In some cases, the separation had such a drastic negative effect that caused the recruits to quit in order to be reunited with their family. Recruits constant exposure to failure resulted in some losing focus and motivation. Lack of social support or perceived loss of social support increased anxiety and stress. Emphasis on the negative aspects of their current situation instead of any positives decreased a recruit's ability to push through and overcome. Mental blocks were often described and referred to by recruits, as direct sources of nervousness, and self-doubt. Another resilience disabler often discussed involved negative cues and their ability to deter a recruit's resilience building process.

The RDCs and recruits interview data shed light to the different training techniques and approaches that RDCs practice in order to help recruits be more resilient during RTC. RDCs identified three predominant roles that are played by each one of them, and explained how they must be able to “switch” off roles depending on the needs of each recruit. Their dynamic and tailoring training process is extremely important, and can have dramatic positive effects on a recruit’s resilience building process and subsequently affect recruit performance and military success.

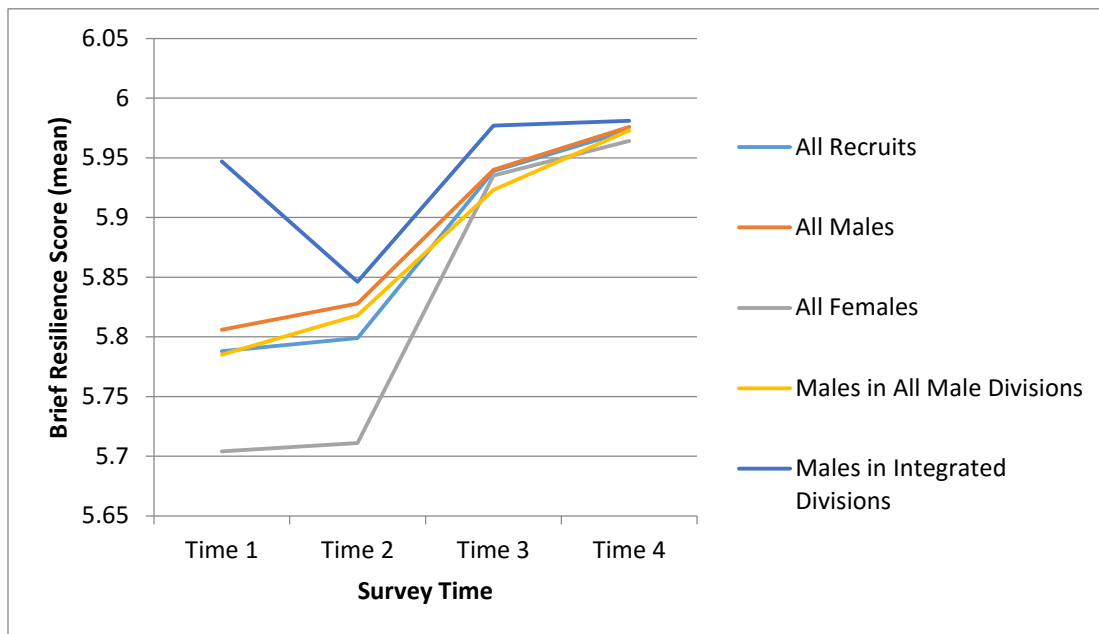
V. QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

This chapter presents the quantitative results of our study and the effect of resilience-building interventions on recruit resilience. Section A provides a trend analysis of resilience changes over the eight-week training distributed by gender and division composition. Section B provides an overview of how each group's resilience changed throughout training. It highlights differences in recruit resilience trends between groups and makes comparisons between the control group and previous studies of non-intervention recruit resilience. Section C includes paired difference mean tests results from each group to track the significance and magnitude of changes within groups of recruit resilience. Section D presents the regression analysis results, completed with resilience measured at Time 4 as the dependent variable. Section E provides results from the correlation analysis of self-reported resilience levels and physical performance on the PFA. Section F presents an estimated non-monetary cost of a permanent intervention program at RTC. Finally, Section G discusses the overall implications of the quantitative results and provides a summary of the chapter.

A. TREND ANALYSIS OF GENDER-SPECIFIC RESILIENCE LEVELS

While our study sample sizes were too small to complete intervention analysis of gender groups, we can still calculate a general trend analysis of changes in male and female self-reported resilience throughout boot camp. This analysis broke recruits into the following groups: all recruits, all male recruits, all female recruits, male recruits in all-male divisions, and male recruits in integrated (coed) divisions. Figure 4 graphically compares the average resilience score for each group at each time period against one another.

Figure 4. Resilience Changes of Gender Groups from Time 1 to Time 4



As demonstrated in this graph, males and females report drastically different resilience levels at the beginning of training. Yet, by the end of boot camp, both genders appear to report relatively equal levels of resilience. Interestingly, male recruits in integrated divisions report higher resilience than male recruits in all-male divisions, although their resilience level does dip at Time 2.

These differences in gender resilience levels may be caused by multiple factors. First, the surveys are self-reported, and females may simply self-report lower resilience scores without actually possessing lower resilience than males. Alternatively, men and women may approach the upcoming challenges and stress of boot camp differently, with women becoming more negatively impacted by the tasks ahead. While we cannot speculate the true reason behind men and women's differences in self-reported resilience, it is interesting to note that women's self-reported scores do recover by the end of boot camp to a level relatively equal to that of the male recruits.

These results are somewhat opposite to those found by Burt and Barr (2015) in their preceding control study of naval recruits. Their analysis suggests that women either possess higher resilience or self-report higher resilience than men, and that male recruits

in integrated divisions report lower resilience scores than those of male recruits in all-male divisions. The contrast of our results against this previous study is intriguing and suggests the need for further research into gender resilience and how men and women experience (or simply report) resilience differently.

B. CHANGES IN RESILIENCE BETWEEN INTERVENTION AND CONTROL GROUPS

The three groups in our study (Control, I1, and I3) all began training with relatively equal self-reported Brief Resilience scores at Time 1. Difference means tests show no statistically significant difference between the groups' initial resilience scores at the 95% confidence interval. This relatively uniform initial reporting across all recruits provides a stable baseline against which we can observe later changes in resilience between groups.

At Time 2, CG reports higher resilience scores than both I1 and I3. CG reports a mean of 5.987 (± 0.575) units versus I1's reported 5.747 (± 0.805) units, $p = 0.0068$. This is also higher than I3's reported mean of 5.609 (± 1.494) units, $p = 0.0217$. The difference between I1 and I3 means is not statistically significant at T2. A higher CG resilience score than the intervention groups' scores is not surprising at this time interval, as neither intervention was fully implemented by Time 2.

At Time 3, CG mean resilience (6.112 ± 0.529 units) remains higher than I1 mean resilience (5.905 ± 0.843 units), statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval, $p = 0.0144$. In comparison, the difference between CG mean resilience and I3 mean resilience is no longer statistically significant at T3. This change may be attributed to the effects of Intervention 3, which was implemented between T2 and T3. Finally, I3 mean resilience (6.042 ± 0.657 units) begins to surpass I1 mean resilience (5.905 ± 0.843 units), statistically significant at the 90% confidence interval, $p = 0.0881$.

At Time 4, CG mean resilience (5.974 ± 0.802 units) and I1 mean resilience (5.943 ± 0.836 units) are no longer statistically significantly different, as CG mean resilience decreases and I1 mean resilience increases from T3 to T4. However, CG mean resilience drops below I3 mean resilience (6.171 ± 0.705 units) at T3, statistically

significant at the 90% confidence interval, $p = 0.0630$. I1 continues to report lower mean resilience than I3 at T3, although this difference has now grown to be statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval, $p = 0.0153$.

These changes in each group's mean resilience scores against each other over time are evidence to the possible effects of interventions on increasing resilience. The three groups each began the study with relatively equal mean resilience scores; any differences in means were not statistically significant. The Control Group's mean resilience increased from T1 to T2, while I1 and I3 experienced drops in mean resilience during this same time interval. However, this interval is relatively free from intervention effects, for reasons that will be discussed later in this chapter. The most important takeaway from the unpaired difference means test analysis is that once the interventions did take effect, both intervention groups reported increases in mean resilience. Although I3 experienced greater increases in resilience than I1, both groups appeared to benefit overall from their respective interventions. By the end of the study, I3 reports greater mean resilience than CG, while I1 mean resilience has increased to become relatively equal to CG mean resilience. This significant improvement in resilience by I1 and I3 is evidence of the positive effects that interventions can have on recruit resilience.

C. CHANGES IN RESILIENCE WITHIN GROUPS

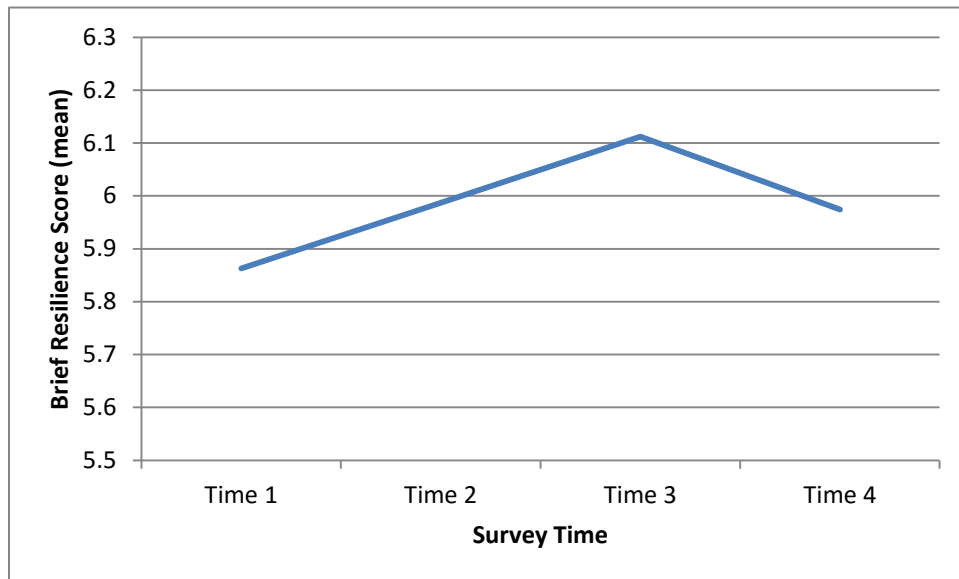
While it is important to compare differences in means between the intervention groups and the control group, it is just as important, if not more so, to track changes in resilience within each group. Paired t-tests allow each group to serve as its own pre- and post-test observation, in order to identify significant increases or decreases in resilience scores within a particular group.

1. Control Group Resilience Changes

The Control Group experienced similar changes in resilience as were observed in a previous non-intervention study of naval recruits at RTC. The CG reports significant increases in resilience from Time 1 (5.863 ± 0.643 units) to Time 2 (5.987 ± 0.575 units), an increase of 0.125 units (95% CI, 0.017 to 0.232), $t(65) = 2.3037$, $p = 0.0245$. The CG also reports a significant increase from Time 2 (5.987 ± 0.575 units) to Time 3 ($6.112 \pm$

0.529 units), an increase of 0.125 units (95% CI, 0.021 to 0.23), $t(65) = 2.3933$, $p = 0.0196$. However, they then report a significant decrease in resilience from Time 3 (6.112 ± 0.529 units) to Time 4 (5.974 ± 0.802 units), a decrease of 0.138 units (95% CI, -0.292 to 0.016), $t(65) = -1.7852$, $p = 0.0395$. Overall, CG resilience increases from T1 (5.863 ± 0.643 units) to T4 (5.974 ± 0.802 units), although this increase is only significant at the 90% confidence interval, $p = 0.096$. A graphical representation of these changes is shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Control Group Resilience Changes from Time 1 to Time 4



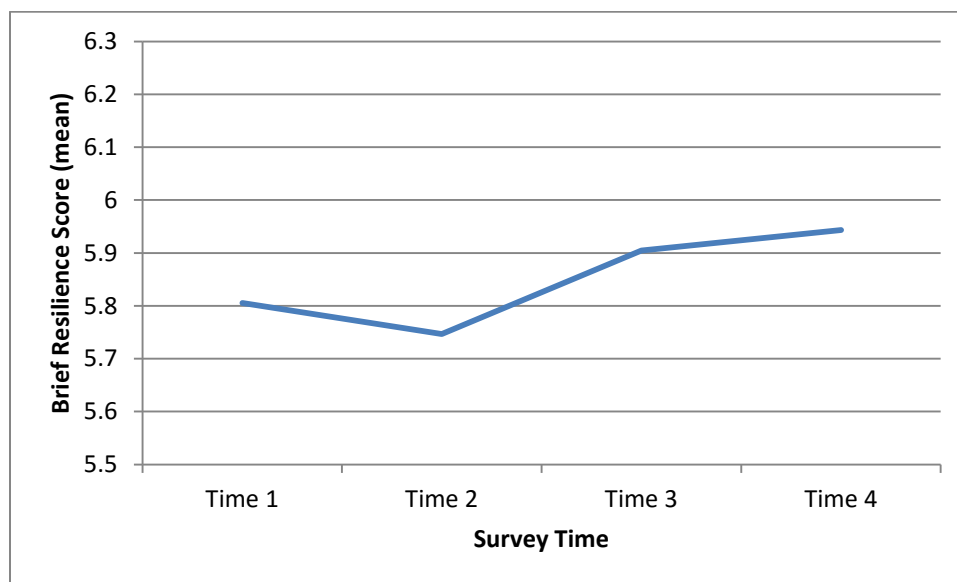
The steady rise and then last-minute drop in resilience in this non-intervention group is almost identical to resilience trends previously observed in naval recruits. In a similar study of 299 recruits asked to complete four surveys with no interventions, Burt and Barr observed a significant decrease in recruit resilience from Time 3 to Time 4 (Burt & Barr, 2015). They hypothesize that this widespread decrease could be attributed to mental and physical exhaustion from completing recent milestone events, such as the Final PFA or the 24-hour capstone event called “Battle Stations.” Alternatively, they suggest that as boot camp draws to a close, recruits may begin anticipating entering the

fleet and experience a decrease in self-efficacy, which can impact individual resilience (Burt & Barr, 2015). The fact that our control group behaved in a similar manner is encouraging, as it suggests a cohesive pattern of natural resiliency changes amongst recruits and implies that our control group behaved normally when compared to previous non-intervention recruits.

2. Intervention 1 Group Resilience Changes

I1 received Interventions 1 and 2 throughout their training. I1 first reports a significant decrease in resilience from Time 1 (5.805 ± 0.741 units) to Time 2 (5.747 ± 0.805 units), a decrease of 0.058 units (95% CI, -0.1245 to 0.008), $t(155) = -1.745$, $p = 0.0415$. The group then reports a significant increase in resilience from Time 2 (5.747 ± 0.805 units) to Time 3 (5.905 ± 0.843 units), an increase of 0.158 units (95% CI, 0.074 to 0.242), $t(155) = 3.7026$, $p = 0.0001$. They then report a statistically insignificant increase in resilience from Time 3 (5.905 ± 0.843 units) to Time 4 (5.943 ± 0.835 units), an increase of 0.039 units (95% CI, -0.043 to 0.1202), $t(155) = 0.9334$, $p = 0.176$. Overall, I1 experiences a significant increase in resilience from Time 1 (5.805 ± 0.741 units) to Time 4 (5.943 ± 0.835 units) at a 95% confidence interval, $p = 0.0026$. A graph of I1's resilience changes can be found in Figure 6.

Figure 6. I1 Group Resilience Changes from Time 1 to Time 4



The unusual changes in I1 resilience scores may be attributed to the nature of the interventions that the group received. Intervention 1 was self-enforced by recruits, while Intervention 2 was enforced by the RDCs without our direct supervision. Therefore, we have no ability to verify how accurately and often the interventions were employed. Furthermore, some RDCs in I1 appeared to have some confusion on the application and need for the interventions. During our survey period at Time 2, we discovered that some recruits were instructed by the RDCs to remove and discard their positive self-talk statements for Intervention 1 from their training manuals. We were able to reconcile the confusion and provide the recruits with new self-talk insets, but the miscommunication between RTC leadership and RDCs hindered the early effectiveness of this intervention. The overall increase in I1 resilience from Time 2 to Time 4 suggests that once Intervention 1 was properly implemented and supported, it had a positive effect on recruit resilience.

3. Intervention 3 Group Resilience Changes

I3 received Intervention 3 after their second and third survey sessions during training. From Time 1 to Time 2, I3 reports a small decrease in resilience of 0.2378 units from 5.847 (± 0.705) units to 5.609 (± 1.494) units, at a 90% CI (-0.578 to 0.103), $t(77) = -1.3915$, $p = 0.0841$. However, since I3 recruits did not receive Intervention 3 until after Survey 2, this decrease does not reflect intervention effects and is instead a natural drop in resilience, perhaps as recruits adjust to their new boot camp environment.

I3 then reports a large increase in resilience from Time 2 (5.609 ± 0.170 units) to Time 3 (6.042 ± 0.657 units), an increase of 0.432 units (95% CI, 0.117 to 0.748), $t(77) = 2.7296$, $p = 0.0039$. They also report a large increase from Time 3 (6.042 ± 0.657 units) to Time 4 (6.171 ± 0.705 units), an increase of 0.13 units (95% CI, 0.031 to 0.229), $t(77) = 2.6028$, $p = 0.0056$. Overall, recruit resilience in I3 drastically increases from Time 1 (5.847 ± 0.705 units) to Time 4 (6.171 ± 0.705 units), an increase of 0.324 units (95% CI, 0.19 to 0.459), $t(77) = 4.8101$, $p = 0.000$. The graph in Figure 7 shows I3 resilience changes.

Figure 7. I3 Group Resilience Changes from Time 1 to Time 4

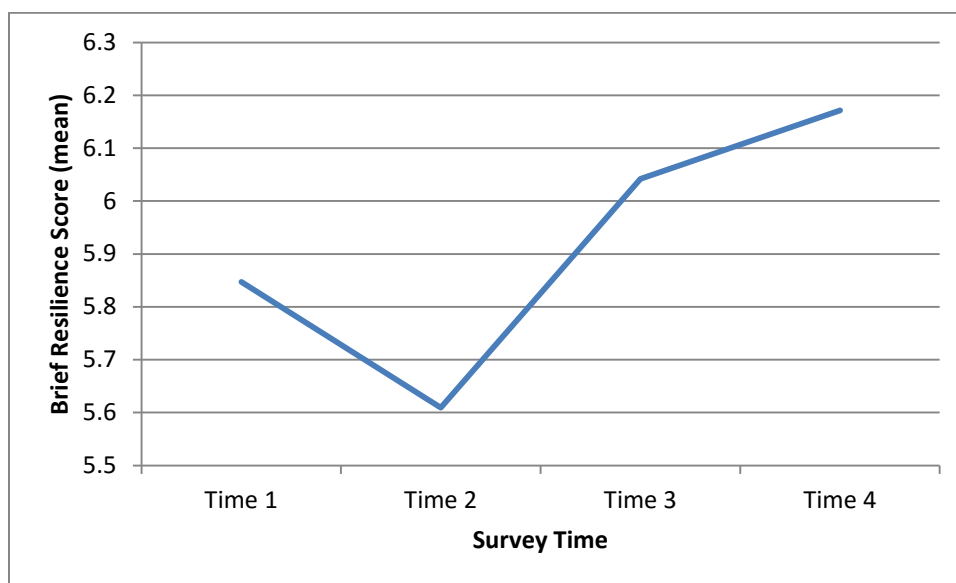
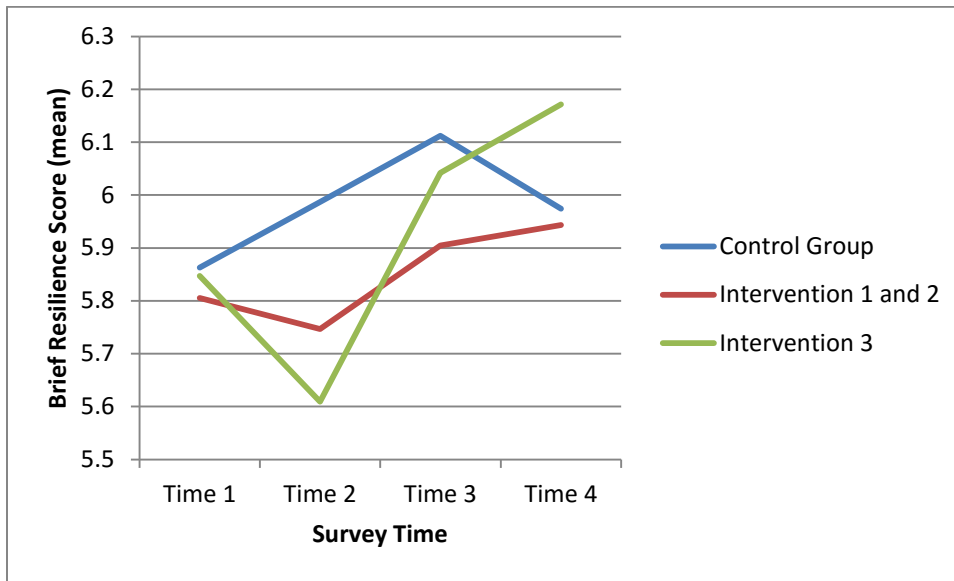


Figure 6 illustrates the large increase in resilience that I3 experienced once Intervention 3 was implemented. This significant jump in resilience validates the statistically significant effectiveness of Intervention 3 at improving recruit resilience. We find the paired difference means results from I3 extremely encouraging regarding the usefulness of resilience-building interventions and their potential to create a lasting impact at RTC.

4. Comparison of Intervention Groups' and Control Group's Resilience

An overlaid comparison of each group's changes in resilience over time is useful to fully capture the drastic effect created by Intervention 3. Figure 8 shows this comparison of each group's changes in resilience over time.

Figure 8. Resilience Changes of All Groups from Time 1 to Time 4



As shown in this graph, Intervention 3 yields significant gains in resilience once it is implemented between Time 2 and Time 3. Over time, the changes in resilience created by Intervention 3 demonstrate both an absolute and a relative increase in resilience. Ultimately, the divisions that received Intervention 3 completed boot camp with higher self-reported resilience levels than any other group. This graph serves to visually demonstrate the significant power of Intervention 3, Appreciative Guided Conversations, at improving recruit resilience.

These results are in keeping with the current body of literature regarding positivity, psychological capital, Appreciative Inquiry, and social resilience. Intervention 3 was based on Appreciative Inquiry practices, as recruits were asked to discuss positive, meaningful experiences in pairs in order to reflect on their boot camp journey thus far and to build social capital and resilience together. By simply holding conversations about their experiences, challenges, and personal growth thus far, recruits improved their social resilience and ultimately their individual resilience. These results suggest that resilience, particularly individual resilience, is far more dependent on social interactions and relationships than was previously believed. By sharing appreciative stories and

experiences together in a safe forum, recruits can increase their positivity and resilience, while simultaneously contributing to the resilience of their peers.

D. REGRESSION ANALYSIS RESULTS

The ordinary least squares regression used in this analysis is as follows:

$$\text{Brief Resilience Scale}_{T4} = \text{Intervention}_{1,2} + \text{Intervention}_3 + \text{Learning Goal Orientation} + \text{Positive Framing}_{T3} + \text{Identification with the Navy}_{T4} + \text{Brief Resilience Scale}_{T1}$$

Table 5 includes the results of this regression analysis. Intervention 3 increases recruit resilience by 0.238 units (p-value of 0.005), holding all else constant. In comparison, Intervention 1 and 2 are insignificant with a p-value of 0.945. These results suggest similar findings as the paired difference means tests in that Intervention 3 appears to be more effective than Interventions 1 and 2 combined.

The regression also reveals interesting findings regarding non-intervention attitudes and behaviors that can increase resilience. Learning goal orientated behaviors increase resilience by 0.082 units (p-value of 0.019), holding all else constant, while demonstrating positive framing techniques at Time 3 can increase resilience by 0.225 units (p-value of 0.000), holding all else constant. A strong sense of identification with the Navy at Time 4 can increase resilience by 0.124 units (p-value of 0.000), holding all else constant. Finally, higher levels of self-reported resilience at Time 1 predict higher levels of self-reported resilience at Time 4. For every additional point (1.0 unit) of resilience reported at Time 1, a recruit will report 0.474 more units of resilience at Time 4 (p-value of 0.000), holding all else constant. Table 6 presents the results of this regression analysis.

Table 6. Regression Analysis Results

VARIABLES	Brief Resilience T4
Intervention 1 and 2	0.005 (0.074)
Intervention 3	0.238*** (0.085)
Learning Goal Orientation 1	0.082** (0.035)
Positive Framing 3	0.225*** (0.036)
ID Navy 4	0.123*** (0.029)
Brief Resilience T1	0.474*** (0.051)
Constant	0.680** (0.270)
Observations	297
R-squared	0.616

Standard errors in parentheses: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

This regression analysis suggests that recruit behaviors, attitudes, and identification beliefs can have a significant impact on recruit resilience. In addition, high levels of personal resilience at the beginning of boot camp tend to yield high levels of resilience at the end of the ten-week training. Finally, this analysis supports the notion that Intervention 3 is more effective and produces greater increases in recruit resilience than Interventions 1 and 2.

E. CORRELATION ANALYSIS BETWEEN RESILIENCE AND PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE

The previous study of naval recruit resilience completed by Burt and Barr suggested further research into possible connections between resilience and recruit performance, particularly physical performance (Burt & Barr, 2015). To explore this area of research, we completed a rudimentary correlation analysis between self-reported resilience scores and PFA passing rates.

The results of this correlation analysis for can be found in Tables 7 and 8. Table 7 includes results from Time 1 resilience scores and Initial PFA passing rates, while Table 8 presents the results from Time 4 resilience scores and Final PFA passing rates. Unfortunately, there appears to be no connection between recruit resilience and recruit physical performance. These results suggest that resilience has a limited effect on physical performance; however, these results do not carry implications regarding the effects of resilience on cognitive performance.

Table 7. Correlation between Brief Resilience Time 1 and PFA Pass Rates

VARIABLES	Brief Resilience T1
Passed Initial PFA	0.092 (0.084)
Passed Final PFA	-0.024 (0.163)
Constant	5.800*** (0.157)
Observations	297
R-squared	0.004

Standard errors in parentheses: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 8. Correlation between Brief Resilience Time 1 and PFA Pass Rates

VARIABLES	Brief Resilience T4
Passed Initial PFA	0.077 (0.094)
Passed Final PFA	0.174 (0.183)
Constant	5.805*** (0.177)
Observations	297
R-squared	0.006

Standard errors in parentheses: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

This correlation analysis is limited in its usefulness due to the binary nature of the variables “Passed Initial PFA” and “Passed Final PFA.” These variables do not account for small improvements in physical performance. A recruit may barely pass the Initial PFA but may later receive top scores on the Final PFA; this great improvement in performance is lost in this analysis, though, as both scores would simply be reported as “pass.” Additional research would benefit from using more detailed fitness scores to determine improvements in physical performance, with a particular focus on recruits performing at the margins of PFA standards.

F. COST ANALYSIS OF INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

This section provides a broad estimate of potential resources required to implement a resilience intervention program on a regular basis for all recruits at boot camp. This cost analysis only provides costs in terms of time and resources. It does not quantify these costs into monetary amounts.

1. Intervention 1: Positive Self-Talk Statements

In order to generate stronger benefits from Interventions 1 and 2, these interventions should be implemented earlier in training and reinforced more often. Intervention 1 requires a 30 to 45-minute brief during the first week of training to describe resilience, positive self-talk statements, and instructions for recruits on how to write and mindfully review their statements. This presentation can be completed in a classroom environment using standard briefing programs (e.g. PowerPoint) by a RTC instructor. It is important to note that an RDC should not give this training to their own division, as their authority role may unduly influence recruits' interpretation of the training. Intervention 1 also requires cards for each recruit that can be inserted into their training manuals. Two 15-minute trainings should be conducted at later times during the ten-week training, potentially during Weeks 3 and 6, to reinforce this intervention and remind recruits of the benefits of positive self-talk statements.

2. Intervention 2: Division Discussions

Intervention 2 requires extra briefing time following major events and may be conducted by RDCs. Four 30-minute debriefs should be held after important exercises, such as Line Handling Lab, Basic Damage Control, and Fire Fighting Event. These special debriefs should be held in addition to, not as a substitute for, the routine debriefs conducted by RDCs after training events. There is no added material resource requirement. It is imperative that RDCs complete the debriefings for the allocated amount of time and solicit inputs from all recruits in order to capitalize on the intervention's effects. This requirement may be difficult in the boot camp environment, where many divisions run behind schedule and RDCs are constantly pressured to save time.

3. Intervention 3: Appreciative Guided Conversations

Intervention 3 may be implemented as three 45-minute guided conversations or potentially four 30-minute guided conversations. This flexibility is left to the discretion of the RTC schedule. However, multiple conversations are required in order to reap the full benefits of this intervention. The guided conversations should be explained and led by an RTC instructor unknown to the division of recruits to create a welcoming

atmosphere of self-expression and honesty, versus by that division's RDCs. This intervention can be completed in a classroom environment and does not include any material resource requirements.

An overview of these costs is provided below in Table 9.

Table 9. Estimated Costs of Each Intervention

	Location	Instructor	Materials	Time
Intervention 1	Classroom	RTC Instructor	Positive self-talk cards	Approx. One Hour, 15 Minutes (One 45-minute session, two 15-minute session)
Intervention 2	Berthing Spaces	RDCs	N/A	Approx. Two Hours (Four 30-minute sessions)
Intervention 3	Classroom	RTC Instructor	N/A	Approx. Two Hours (Three 45-minute sessions, or four 30-minute sessions)

G. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Overall, all the interventions employed by this study produced positive results and seem to have some effect on increasing recruit resilience. However, the most promising intervention identified by this analysis is Intervention 3, Appreciative Guided Conversations. This intervention had the most immediate and drastic effects than the other interventions or the control group. The combined effects observed from Intervention 1 (Positive Affirmation Statements) and Intervention 2 (Division Discussions) are more gradual and modest than those observed from Appreciative Guided Conversations. This difference in effects suggests that while Positive Affirmation Statements and Division Discussions demonstrate significant potential to increasing recruit resilience, they require earlier implementation and additional reinforcement to yield the same benefits as Appreciative Guided Conversations.

The lack of correlation evidence between self-reported resilience and physical performance suggests that while resilience interventions may aid with recruit attitudes

and cognitive performance, they may not have a significant effect on the recruits' physical performance outcomes. However, this correlation was unable to account for subtle improvements in recruit physical performance, as it solely included a binary "pass/fail" measurement. Additional research would benefit from studying more detailed physical fitness scores and determining the connection, if any, between resilience and small improvements in recruit fitness.

Overall, our analysis suggests that recruit resilience naturally increases throughout boot camp, although it may experience drops at some points. The observed natural changes in resilience in the Control Group are encouraging due to their consistency with a previous study on recruit resilience. We support the hypotheses of Burt and Barr that this delayed drop in recruit resilience may stem from exhaustion after strenuous capstone events or from nervousness about graduating boot camp and entering the fleet (Burt & Barr, 2015). Regardless of the reasons for the last-minute decrease in individual resilience, the control group's performance provides a useful example against which we can compare I1 and I3 resilience. This comparison demonstrates that while recruit resilience typically increases throughout training, interventions can yield even greater increases in resilience and allow recruits to build levels of resilience previously unattainable.

A regular intervention program's potential costs are relatively low and flexible depending on how many interventions are implemented and to what extent they are reinforced. The greatest resource required by the interventions is time, which is also RTC's greatest resource constraint. Recruits already endure a full schedule of trainings and events throughout boot camp, and it may be difficult for RTC to insert additional resilience trainings into the curriculum. However, it is imperative that the time allocated for interventions be respected as a required "time out" from regular training by RTC leadership and RDCs in order to make the interventions as effective as possible. The greatest benefits of a resilience-building program will only be realized if its interventions are meticulously implemented and diligently reinforced.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. IMPACT OF RESILIENCE STUDY

Companies and organizations have become increasingly interested in resilience and its impact on employee attitudes and performance in recent years. The DOD, and its military branches in particular, have implemented multiple resilience-focused initiatives to improve service member health and productivity. A target audience for these resilience programs is first term sailors, who often struggle to adapt to and thrive in the military environment. According to recent DOD data, 13.6% of all enlisted sailors attrite within their first term of service, the highest attrition rate of any of the military services (Seker & Ibis, 2014). This attrition creates many direct and indirect costs for the Navy in terms of training costs, wasted resources, and decreased personnel readiness. While this attrition can be caused by many different factors, a sailor's resilience and mental resolve undoubtedly plays a role in his or her ability to serve successfully in the Navy. In addition, many studies suggest a connection between resilience and mental health. Individuals with low personal resilience are more likely to suffer from mental health disorders, which can lead to harmful behaviors and even suicide. According to Naval Personnel Command in 2014, 53 sailors committed suicide, which is 16.3 out of every 100,000 sailors (Naval Personnel Command, 2016). By implementing programs that teach resilience, the Navy can hopefully improve sailors' mental health and decrease sailor attrition in the first term of service.

Due to the vulnerability of first term sailors to negative stressors when they first enter the Navy, we decided to focus on naval recruits at RTC as a target audience for resilience-building interventions. By providing this resilience training to recruits during their boot camp training, we hope to better prepare them mentally and emotionally for the stressors and challenges of life in the fleet. More resilient recruits at RTC will graduate as more resilient sailors into the Navy, an improvement that will benefit sailor productivity, turnover, and overall fleet readiness.

Our study led three different resilience interventions at RTC for eight divisions of recruits, including two divisions that served as a control group. We also conducted 32 semi-structured group interviews and collected four surveys of self-reported resilience scores. In total, 297 recruits participated throughout the entirety of the study. The self-reported resilience scores of these recruits serves as the foundation of our quantitative analysis, while the interviews conducted with recruits and RDCs provide the data for the qualitative analysis.

1. Summary of Quantitative Results

Our quantitative analysis identified Intervention 3, Appreciative Guided Conversations, as the most effective intervention at increasing recruit resilience. The other two interventions, Positive Affirmation Statements and Division Discussions, also yielded some modest increases in resilience, but require careful implementation and additional reinforcement. The success of the Appreciative Guided Conversations at drastically increasing recruit resilience suggests numerous potential applications for this intervention across all recruits at RTC, and possibly into the broader Navy as well.

2. Summary of Qualitative Results

Our qualitative analysis revealed numerous enablers and disablers than impact the recruit resilience process, as well as insight into the roles of RDCs as facilitators in that process. It is very important to understand the factors that have a positive impact on a recruit's resilience building process, and can be used to make them stronger. The influence of family and religion cannot be overstated as sources that have a positive effect in a recruit's resilience process. Motivation is a powerful tool that yields positive effects but must be first accepted by an individual in order to impact the recruit's ability to face adversity. The identified resilience disabler factors can be used to develop training resources aimed at diminishing their effects on recruits. RDCs dynamic training examples and role playing have a great effect on a recruits mental state and naval adaptation.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based off our quantitative results, we recommend implementing a schedule of Appreciative Guided Conversations on a strategic basis for all recruits at RTC. This intervention significantly improves recruit resilience and will have a positive impact on recruit training at RTC and sailor performance in the fleet. Once implemented on a regular basis, we suggest a follow-up study of all recruits participating in the intervention, in order to track improvements and ensure that the intervention is continuing to function properly. This study can be structured similarly to our study, with periodic surveys that allow for recruits to self-report their individual and division resilience.

If a more robust resilience program is desired, we recommend implementing both Appreciative Guided Conversations and Positive Affirmation Statements throughout all divisions at RTC. Our results suggest that Positive Affirmation Statements increase recruit resilience, but must be implemented with full support from RTC leadership and RDCs and with additional reinforcement to encourage recruits to routinely review their statements. As mentioned above, this recommendation would also benefit from a follow-up study of recruit resilience.

Finally, our qualitative analysis results suggest that the FIT Division could benefit from a more structured daily routine for the recruits assigned to that division. Applying a more rigorous training schedule to FIT's operations will remind recruits that they are still active participants in boot camp and will bolster their motivation and self-efficacy. Currently, FIT recruits only participate in physical exercise and basic tasks, such as cleaning. By adding more structure and training content to the FIT Division's schedule, recruits will stay engaged in their boot camp experience and continue to identify with the Navy, a cognitive behavior with proven influence on individual resilience.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Our correlation analysis of resilience and physical performance did not reveal any obvious connections between the two behaviors. However, our analysis was limited due to the already large scope of our thesis. Further research may benefit from a more

detailed analysis of these two areas, with a particular focus on small improvements in physical performance or of recruits who failed their Initial PFA but passed their Final PFA. We hypothesize that greater levels of resilience will allow recruits to perform better on their physical fitness tests and in their jobs as Navy sailors. Additional research into this area may support this hypothesis and reinforce the need for and usefulness of resilience training across all areas of the military.

Our attempt to analyze differences in resilience based on gender and age was limited by small sub-group sample sizes. Therefore, we recommend that any further research into recruit resilience include larger sample sizes of all demographics, particularly female recruits. We hypothesize that different genders and age groups apply unique approaches to resilience and resilience interventions. By pinpointing how each subgroup receives and processes interventions differently, RTC can create tailored resilience programs with a higher return on investment, in terms of recruit resilience.

In order to truly analyze the effect of the resilience interventions, we suggest a follow-on thesis to track, survey, and interview the recruits that received the interventions in this study after their graduation from RTC. To this end, every effort needs to be made to locate and study those recruits throughout their first term in the Navy. A study of this magnitude will undoubtedly require significant resources. However, we believe the potential benefits of this research will far outweigh the costs. Any findings may shed light on the long term effects of resilience interventions in the Navy.

APPENDIX A. INTERVENTION TWO QUESTIONS

INTERVENTION DESCRIPTION

After a training exercise, Recruits take time to review their task and how well they performed (what worked, what didn't work). As part of their debrief (within their section or the unit / group in which they are doing the particular exercise) we would have them discuss what ways they have learned to work together, how they have built internal strength by working together, and what they did to learn from and support each other.

INTERVENTION QUESTIONS

1. When you were doing this exercise, at what point did you experience a full team effort, where everyone was engaged and doing their very best? Describe in as much detail possible this moment.
2. In what aspects of the training evolution did you experience difficulty yet you felt as though your team came through despite the challenges you faced? What was the challenge? How did your team overcome the challenge? What made it possible to get through?
3. Who were the leaders? What did the leaders do in the exercise? Were there specific recruit leaders who stood out to you as particularly helpful when completing the exercise? What stood out to you about how they helped?
4. Take a minute to think about the way you learned your tasks. What was most helpful? What processes of learning made the biggest difference? What did you learn most about each other by working together? What did you learn that you would take with you into future training exercises or actual evolutions?

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APPENDIX B. INTERVENTION THREE QUESTIONS

INTERVENTION DESCRIPTION

Recruits will “interview” or have a conversation with two other recruits in their division. Recruits will pair with someone they don’t know or interact with very much, who are different from them, and who likely have different family or racial backgrounds. The interviews will focus on why each chose to join the Navy and how they are learning to “be Navy” (e.g. to live up to their “I choose to be a Navy Sailor” statements). These interviews strengthen social bonds as well as increase individual self-understanding. Recruits will develop a broader awareness of their division, they will increase understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses, and they will form bonds between recruits.

APPRECIATIVE QUESTION

1. Since you’ve come to the Recruit Training Command there have probably been highs and lows, peaks and valleys. Please think about and shared one of the peak experiences, a time for you that stands out as exceptionally meaningful, an experience in which you felt more fully alive and proud to be here.

CHALLENGE-SETBACK QUESTION

2. We know that boot camp is a new experience for recruits and that for many it is upsetting, confusing and challenging. Think for a moment about some of the roadblocks or challenges you have faced since coming here. Sometimes these challenges seem big and overwhelming; other times we can see, when looking back, that the challenge was an important and helpful and necessary and memorable experience.
3. What have been some of the challenges you faced since coming to boot camp? What experiences or tests have been particularly challenging for you? What challenge most surprised you, one you did not anticipate or expect? List a few.
4. Pick one of the challenges you listed and tell a story about what you experienced. What was going on? What made it challenging? What did you do about it? How did others respond to you?
5. As you look back on the experience now, what made a difference for you in overcoming the challenge? What helped you make sense of it? Were you able to talk to others about it?

6. In general how have others in your division helped you to cope with challenges? What do they say or do? If possible, share a concrete example that illustrates what others have done or said that you find helpful.

MEANING-RELATIONSHIP QUESTION

7. You may have struggled with different challenges or unpleasant experiences that you now see as meaningful and are able to see the purpose. Share a situation where you were able to overcome a challenge because you understood the value and purpose of the test or challenge.
8. We know that people form relationships and bonds at Boot Camp, sometimes these friendships last a long time, throughout one's career. How have the new relationships you formed here been fruitful, helpful, and generative?

SELF-LEARNING QUESTION

9. What have you learned about yourself since coming to Great Lakes? What do you realize now about how you overcome challenges, something you may not have known about yourself, since you joined the Navy? What from your past experience particularly influenced the way you have come through the challenges you have faced here?

APPENDIX C. RTC AND FIT STRUCTURE

RTC

RDC QUOTES:

1. Like you said earlier, boot camp is kind of in stages. The first two weeks, the middle portion, and the end. Each portion you train and do things differently in each portion. There is no way you are going to train someone the same week one and two that you would in week seven. There is no way. You won't—they have come to a point they respect you so much you don't have to yell anymore. You don't have to—you know, you don't have to go out there and have them to pushups and sit-ups because they are listening. **What you say is now valid and they will do.**
2. **It's like being in a football game all day.** Your adrenaline is pumping. You got stuff going on, you don't have time to be tired. You don't have time to worry about yourself. You put the recruits above your own health. If you don't eat, nobody cares. It's all about them. I am not saying that is how they—like that is how it is, that's how you have to look at it to be—I wouldn't say successful, but if **you want to give 100%, you have to make it all about them. Nothing about you matters.**
3. I honestly think that the best feeling in the world—I don't care what anybody else says—I my own personal opinion, the greatest feeling in the world is seeing your division walk across the drill deck and your mom and dad coming up to you, shaking your hand saying, "What you just did in eight weeks I have not been able to do in 18 years." That just gives me chills [inaudible]. I mean that is just my job satisfaction right there. **That is what I think draws most of us in this room. Job satisfaction.**
4. **I will say that it is a lot of hours.** So it is physically draining and then like you are there with the recruits early in the morning, sometimes as early as 4:00 in the morning, depending on what that day is. Then you are there until like 10:00 at night. So your day when you see them wake up and you are there when you see them go to sleep.
5. I would say be prepared. Be physically prepared and be mentally prepared to do this job. **This job is not for everybody.**
6. They are missing family, got lot of time to think, nights are killing them, they can't sleep because they are in this weird place with like 5,000 other people.

RECRUIT QUOTES:

1. Drink water because we had to provide our urine samples and we walked around forever it seemed like in that room. I was like, okay this is kind of different. Then right after that was when the yelling started and they just—like he said, it's necessary. At the time, **that was probably the scariest thing I had ever done.**
2. We still did get yelled at, but it wasn't like hardly at all, like he said. It was more that we got "talking to's. Like they—it wasn't yelling anymore, it was more like **mentoring like okay, you all did this wrong, but here is how you can fix this.**
3. **Throughout boot camp you do different inspections and you do different things and all of those scores add up.** You can also get like compartment hits, demerit hits, straight hits, those take away from your score. At the end, if your score is a 4.5 or above, you make a battle E and then if it's a certain score and above you CNO and then if you did really, really good you hall of fame.
4. **In public, in the streets, anywhere you cannot talk.** The only place you can talk is in the compartment if the RDC allows it at the time.

FIT STRUCTURE

RDC QUOTES:

1. While they are in FIT. They know that their division is literally seeing their families right now and, you know, it kind of kills them for a little bit, you know, because they have been here for two months at that point, you know, with no cellphones, you know. We're in the day and age **where they don't have emails, cellphones, Facebook, Twitter**, and all that good stuff, so it does face them for a while.
2. **It's like prison; that you are on lockdown a lot.** You don't want to come here. Do anything that you possibly can to not come here. They basically form what I have seen, beg and plead my recruits or the recruits that I currently have, to make sure that they don't come because it's not a pleasant place to do it.
3. So the only expectations that we have at FIT is basically, you know, keep your rack on spot the entire time, make sure you don't have any dirty laundry in your rack, you know, just the basic recruit stuff that we do for every single recruit. Besides that, you're just sitting around waiting for PT

the entire day. You know, **their either waiting for PT or they're waiting to swim, honestly.**

RECRUIT QUOTES:

1. The FIT division, when I go to FIT division, you know I mean maybe they (RDCs) just see us like—maybe some of them **see us like less than a human being** or something like that.
2. I think the hardest part about it, with us being in FIT it was a lot of placement. Like when you are in division your punishment is for a reason. In your division and under your rack, put your rack back together. It helps you for training because you might actually—that is the thing; that they may check for during an inspection. **When you are in FIT, you are no longer in training. So anytime they yell at you, it no longer has a purpose.**
3. It was terrible because it is sitting around and you do nothing and it **is literally just no discipline, there is no organization**, it is just you swim.
4. Because we went through something that no one else went through. Like you know, when you—yes, me and my division went through a lot of stuff, **but it wasn't really stressful as FIT.**
5. **It just makes you feel like you are not going anywhere.** It just makes you feel stuck when you get around like even the people there. It just makes you feel like you are just not going to get out. I am just like, oh no. Like I can't be here.
6. **So wake up, go to chow, go to swim, come back**, rush through chow for lunch, then go back to swim and then walk all the way back.
7. Everyone's just walking around just chilling out. We get to the fishbowl and wait. We have our [sea] bags, they are extremely heavy, and there's ice on the ground, we slipped on ice about six different times, almost hurt ourselves. We get in there and we just sat. We come to this place and it's just like a slap to the face. **It feels like a slap to the face.**

The following quotes describe recruits typical activities after Taps:

8. Everything happens after taps because throughout the day, no one is [inaudible] to like talk. You can't talk unless you are spoken to if you are

out in public. It's just so much is built up [inaudible] as soon as the RDCs leave and stuff, so then **you can talk and you just talk about your day.**

9. Someone—they will tell someone to like **do a beat and you do a beat and you just rap** and you go around. It's just really fun. It's fun. Like the worst of the worst. If you do it, it's fun. It's not embarrassing—that's the thing. Like to do something that is embarrassing, but it ends up not being embarrassing because it teaches you that you are not alone and everyone is going through the same thing you are going through.
10. **Like we'll make hand craft war games.** Like we have like a—we made a chess thing out of this old paper. We drew everything on it—well, kind of on other pieces of paper and make, you know, like a knight, so now we'll play chess.
11. You are not supposed to talk or anything. Like you are supposed to like get in your rack and just sleep, but my division there is just—it was chaotic. Like everyone used that time to talk just because there were very few chances we got to talk throughout the day, **so it was just very loud and annoying.**

APPENDIX D. INTERVIEW QUOTATION EXAMPLES OF RESILIENCE ENABLERS

ADAPTATION

RECRUIT QUOTES:

1. I don't necessarily like it or hate it, it's just something that **comes with boot camp pretty much.**
2. Like I want to be the best and have the best scores, but at the end of the day you know, quality matters. So our RDCs took to heart that we need to learn what the Navy is going to be like. **We need to understand that we need to be prepared for being separated and ready for a job.**
3. Technology—hey, you can go buy your cell phone when you graduate. Grow up. You know, hey you are going to have to learn to be in a team and not get your way. That's life. **That's not going to be just the military. That's going to be life.**
4. It was kind of hard that my fiancé was really hard to let go of Sunday and she got a little **taste of what it's going to be like.**
5. Yes, like our division won captain's cup, which is like this sporting thing that we get to do right before we graduate. So we got a special flag we got to tote around with that. It's kind of funny because at first you are like it's a flag. Who cares? **But then towards the end you are like oh, well they don't have their academic flag.** You start looking at other divisions like so it's kind of funny.
6. As opposed to at home when it was my job to clean the bathroom and I never did it right, my mom would go in and "Oh my God, why didn't you clean this right?" "It's fine. It's cool." If the toilet paper is not at 12:00, I am going to go crazy. **It has to be on spot all the time.** My rack stays neat as opposed to at home, pillows everywhere, papers from work, and—I am more organized.
7. That's really what kills you is the sleep. You don't get much at the beginning. **But then like once you start getting the hang of everything, you know when and when not to do stuff.** I mean of course they yell at you a lot during the beginning because that's just—I guess I mean yelling is what it takes [inaudible]. Or, you will get the habit of something a bit faster if like someone's being aggressive with you.
8. Yes, so it was just thinking to myself that this was the worst decision of my life. Like why did I choose? I could have gotten a job at like an airport

or something or McDonalds. Why did I have to join the military? You know, now that I have been here nearly three and a half months I kind of—**I can't imagine myself not in this environment.**

9. Yes. **I love being in the Navy.** I am really glad that I am not going home. I only had four attempts left and I was really worried.

CONFIDENCE

RDC QUOTES:

1. **You realize it gets easier and easier.** So I share that so try with them. They are like okay, man if she can do it, maybe I can do it too. That's all it takes is like one of those stories just to kind of get them back into that. There is some kind of hope for me. I can make it too.
2. You guys are still the best division we ever had and you guys deserve the hall of fame.

RECRUIT QUOTES:

1. I was having—I wouldn't say I was having a blast, but you know I knew—I **mean I knew I wasn't going to die in it, but I knew that I am not going to quit.** I am going to make sure that our team does good. I knew that I was on a team leader team.
2. Just think of me. I have been here for so long and I will not quit. **This is meant for me, I am going to do this.**
3. Then like whenever it's finally your turn to go to battle stations, waking up in the morning, putting your coveralls on. You are just like, yes the day is finally come. I mean battle stations is the final test. Then like all day you are in your coveralls and then **you see all of the younger divisions looking up at you** and you are like oh, that [inaudible]. That is how it was like for us.
4. For me, it really did nothing for me because I feel like I am mentally stronger than some or most that come here because it really doesn't faze me. Maybe **because like my parents raised me in a good way,** so I never really got that at all.
5. I was telling everyone, "You know what? Today's my day. I am going to do it." And I did it.

6. Sometimes I tell myself, “Yes, I come from a royal family. Sometimes I will go I came from a wealthy family. I have a degree. I have a Masters [inaudible] and all that. But when I came here, I realized that I’m nobody. I have to start off first to be [inaudible], because they don’t care for nobody. You’re nothing, you know. **You find yourself again. You start from scratch. Build you a man.**
7. We just came back from it so we all went together and actually since I went to the class, I need this class more than I thought. Like I really felt like going these three days would be very beneficial **and now I am confident that I will get the tools that I need to pass my prone.**

FAMILY INFLUENCE

RECRUIT QUOTES:

1. I asked my family to write me and my fiancé to write me. I wrote them every night, they wrote me every night. **But for some people they didn’t have anybody to write to and that was the biggest damage.** Like seeing—not even seeing, but knowing no one is going to come to your graduation and seeing everybody at reveille. Yes, my dad is coming. Yes, this guy is coming. **Seeing that kind of—it hurt me seeing that for people more than anything.**
2. Beginning—I miss my family. Middle—I really want to hear from somebody, I haven’t gotten a letter yet, I wonder if they got it. I haven’t had a phone call, I haven’t been able to do this. Graduation—I just found out that my mom does not want to come to my graduation. **Like I would be devastated if my parents didn’t want to come to my graduation.**
3. I talked to my family. **They were telling me to keep my head up,** keep praying, have faith.
4. We were big in church and so every now and then if I felt that I didn’t want to do this anymore or I would you know, grab my Bible and they let us—I think we had like two phone calls and so I would call my mom and tell her what was going on and **she was just praying, do this, do that, and I stuck with it.**
5. She was. That kind of relieved me in a way. I was really—I really wanted her to have that proud feeling of hey, that’s my son up there. But once I missed it, she was just like, **“I am still proud.”** Or whatever. “Just as long as you make it out of it.”

6. It still counted. I get out of here in a couple of days. **I can tell my parents and my god kids and all of that, that I passed.** Makes me a United States sailor.
7. My brother was actually watching the live stream on the internet and whenever they did the liberty call and everything, **he saw me hugging my mom and my dad, wiping his eyes and everything.**
8. I basically just like I want to see my family. **I was like I got to see my family.** My parents bought tickets, got a hotel, everything. They wanted to see me, it's been two months. I got to get out of here. **I am literally run the fastest I can.**
9. **Just thought of my nephews.** I've got six of them and I thought I can do something to help them, you know. My brother's kids are—his whole situation is messed up. He's not really the greatest of role models. My other three have a pretty good father and mother. I still want to be a good role model to them. **I thought that I can do something for them now.**
10. But this last one I took, I just didn't stop and kept telling myself that I was going to pass and also **I kept thinking of my parents** that were going to be coming to graduation. That's what gave me motivation to pass and I just pushed myself.
11. Then Sunday we got to go to the [inaudible] and call and I was talking to her about it and she was just giving me motivation saying that you know, everybody here like my grandparents, they all said that they have faith in me and stuff like that. Monday—because I told her I was like, I will call you tomorrow if I pass. **I called her yesterday and like I told her. She was so happy she was screaming and all whatnot.**

MOTIVATION

RDC QUOTES:

1. This last time, right before she went to go run, I talked to her. I was on watch and I talked to her and I said, "Look, this is what you need to do. Focus on why you got here. Focus on completing the PFA. Forget about the clock. Don't even look at the clock. Just when you are about to run past the clock, close your eyes. Just run. Just forget about all the [inaudible], everyone else is on the track and just focus on you. **Focus on your goals and the things you have.**"

2. He never lost motivation. He always said, “Petty officer, I am going to better. I am going to do better. **I am going to do better.**”
3. If you really want it, you will do whatever you have to, to make sure you will push yourself, get out of your comfort zone, **push yourself a little bit further and juts make it happen.**
4. So they always ask, “Okay, will you guys run with us today? Will you motivate me to pass this week?” I say, “No, you need to motivate yourself. I will be running a pace. I’m not going to stop for you. I’m not going to slow down for you. If you stay with me, you stay with me,” I said, “**but you need to motivate yourself.**”

RECRUIT QUOTES:

1. Our punishment for not paying attention or doing something bad, we just stand at attention. He was like, “You guys want to waste my time, I will waste your time.” **That kind of thing instead of making us sweat. More of a mental game.**
2. So it was just our chief just kind of laughed and was like, “Guys, calm down. It’s just an inspection. I mean if you guys don’t do well, we have got another one. We have like three. **Have faith in yourselves.**”
3. Because at one point one of the girls—I can’t remember what—she made a comment about she needed like a male’s help to like lift something. He was like, “I don’t ever want you guys to say that you guys—you guys can do just as much as they can. Don’t ever let somebody tell you, you can’t. You guys are just as good as them.” They are more like motivational talks. **Just telling us to not demote ourselves just because we were female.**
4. Like after I came back and I failed or like when it came to battle stations time and I couldn’t go with my division. You know, pulled me in the [inaudible] and told me like even though you can’t graduate with us, **you will eventually get out of here and you will be our shipmate one day.**
5. I passed the two biggest barriers there and who gives a shit if I pass out after I cross it the twelfth time? I passed. What are they going to do, make me sit down and give me a water? I ran. I ran so hard that I immediately went to the head and passed out on the toilet. **Didn’t hurt myself or anything, but I was happy.**
6. Got a whole bunch of letters from the local elementary school and like I—it was really cool because I remember writing those letters. It’s like thank you for your service and like drawing little pictures or something and then sending those off to like soldiers or whatever. Then getting those letters

and seeing like a kindergartner's handwriting. **I remember when we did that. Then I still have it, that letter.**

7. I was like you are going to be a Sailor; you are going to be somebody. You are going to be out in the fleet, you are going to be able to do your four years. You are going to be set with health insurance; you are going to be set with dental. You are going to get a good paycheck. **You are going to be able to—and I just started listing off reasons on why I joined and what could motivate me.**
8. It just ensures what I already know, because I know he believes in us and when I see him running—like he runs with everybody. If you think that you need help, just ask him and he will be there. Like it just makes me reassured in knowing that he wants us to pass. I believe him when he says it. It's just when other people say they really want you to pass, I don't know if I believe it. **When Chief says, "I want you to pass." I believe it. You can tell.**
9. But when you really want something and you know that this is the only thing that's stopping me from actually going. I have done everything but this 15 seconds is what's stopping me from going. **It's like you push yourself.**
10. **Mostly I wrote down that I do not want to go back to Miami.** That's one place that I don't want to go back to unless I am visiting my family. Also, like you didn't want to go back saying that you are a failure and all of your friends are like, "Oh, so I thought you were in the Navy." "Oh, I am sorry. I failed my run." That's literally pathetic to me. So stuff like that to bring myself up. **You don't want to fail.**
11. They say, "Oh, you're so girlie. I don't think you can do it." So I do really want to **prove a lot of people wrong and accomplish something in my life.**
12. Like I would take a nap and eat Chipotle after this. That would be my drive. **I really like naps and Chipotle.**
13. I always wanted to come to the Navy, so I just decided to do it. So I am probably not going to go back to that kind of job or I wouldn't come back, so I am going to get a crappy job. That's where it will be motivation like oh, I got to get out of here. **I have to go back.**

POSITIVE FRAMEWORK

RDC QUOTE:

1. **You go on a run, forget—think about your PFA as just another PT session.** Or think about whatever you are doing, whatever you are thinking you are trying to strive to do, just another day. Don't think about it as something that's hindering you from being where you want to be or something you are trying to accomplish.

RECRUIT QUOTES:

1. On the bus I was just thinking it's only eight weeks, I can get through this. **I mean it can't be the hardest thing in the world.** Like people do it every year. So it can't be too difficult.
2. You know, **I have family members that are in worse situations.** Like I have to sit back a lot of times and tell myself, "Hey, it could be worse. What's a couple more days?" Do I want it? No. I am trying to get married, I am trying to get my life going, I am trying to get paid for a job. I am not trying to sit here.
3. So I want to be just like my dad, so I am trying to do that, but the fact that I had to endure all of that and not get anything in return just kind of—it was a new thing for me, but it is a new experience, I learned from it. I am not—nothing I can do about it. Just say hey, it will get better. **That is the only thing getting me by is knowing at the end of the road it's still good stuff.**
4. You know, like you just have to think about it in positive ways instead of viewing like when we would get IT and get all those pushups and stuff instead of looking at it like oh my gosh, this is the worst thing that has ever happened to me. Like this sucks. I started viewing it as okay, well this will help me with my PFA and qual run. You know? Like this will help me get stronger so I can pass that. **When people would yell at us and stuff I just had to start looking at it like they are just helping us in the long run.**
5. So you look around and I had a couple of people in my division, we all used to walk down. Then you would see guys on the same level as you, you know maybe get two feet and start going under water. It is kind of like okay, we are going to learn together, **we are going to make it.**
6. I guess it just clicked in my head after battle station because before battle station I was so busy trying to get it on time, trying to get it on time, you

know once I couldn't like graduate with my division, it was kind of like what more do I have to lose? **So I just went there every time believing that I could pass every single time. Each and every time I got better.**

7. **Pain is temporary.** I would acknowledge that fact that pushups sucked and my arms start shaking and whatnot. What I realized that the pain was there, but I wasn't acknowledging it, my arms stopped shaking and I was able to do more pushups. It was then I realized I wasn't breathing properly. That there's more to just doing pushups like everybody taught me since I have gotten here than there was. There's breathing, there's keeping calm, there's keeping momentum, there's just practice to it.
8. You just have to like—I had to keep—I had to like—the people in my division got so negative I just stopped being around them because I was like **I am going to be a sailor at the end of the day**, I am going to have to be positive. Now most of them are going to get sent home for being so negative, for giving up on themselves, for not trying.
9. They are preparing me, sure, but I thought about scenarios in the future where I could get gassed and I am like no, I don't want to do that. Why am I here? But I kept thinking to myself I am here because it's going to be a good career. 20 years you get retirement. I was thinking about the brighter side of it, I wasn't thinking oh my gosh, I am not going to make it through this. **I was also thinking about my family back home that I would be a good example.**
10. **My family will still be able to see me as a sailor**, they won't get a cool graduation ceremony, but I will still be able to go and visit them as a sailor and I won't be able to disappoint them saying, "Hey, I couldn't make it."
11. And when we all passed our graduation date, I told them that even though they didn't graduate with them, **we're still—we're in the Navy**. It doesn't matter is we graduate with our division or not. It just matters that we make it through this and that we go to our A school.
12. I spent that next day just thinking, why? Why did I do that? I'm going to go. I'm going off to the fleet no matter what. **I'm passing this and I'm going to keep going.**
13. If you pass, you know, which is the goal for everyone, like you want everyone to pass, so we'll be motivated and we'll help them out, "You know, you got this. Don't think negatives. You've got this. **Stay positive. Be happy, you know, if you fall on your face.**"
14. well, when we start talking all together then it's like what you could do to do better for your swimming and then they'll tell us what we can do better for our run and then we start talking about our dreams and goals once we get out, like, "Oh, man, I can't wait to get my orders to go to Japan," or, "I

can't wait to start doing my A school," or, you know, "I can't wait to get real food or get my cellphone," and stuff like that. And then we'll talk about like our families, our girlfriends and wives, and, you know, all things like that. **Positive things trying to make sure we don't start thinking negative or want to go home because we haven't gotten it yet.**

RELIGION

RECRUIT QUOTES:

1. **I just kept my faith because I knew that God wouldn't let me fail.** Obviously I came here for a reason, so I just believed in myself and I passed my PFA the first time I came to FIT, so that Wednesday. Then that gave me motivation for my swim.
2. Yes, in the end, I am glad I had them because if it wasn't for them I wouldn't have pushed my run. I wouldn't have pushed through my sit ups. **So God has a way of putting things together, I guess.**
3. It's my favorite bible quote. It's what I live through my whole life, even before I joined the Navy in preparation of going in. Like I told my students—I still call them my students—I told them you can do anything you want. **God will be there with you.** If you work your hardest, you can achieve anything. It's just through the Lord. That's what I told them. Just remember to do everything for the Lord.
4. Boot camp—because boot camp is easy. So you know, I don't want to go back to be a failure and be called that person that couldn't pass a run. Anybody can run. So I was just thinking that while I am stretching. Then I got on the track and started **praying like, I hope I pass, I hope I pass.**
5. I called him last night and I told him "Listen, **if it's God's will**, you're going to be here. The Navy is not everybody. You know, you did your best. Go out with your head high now you've try your best."
6. So today is his last day. But we try to encourage each other all the time. In the morning we pray together and at night we still pray together and talk to each other.
7. So we'll do things like that or we—some people do like little bible groups to themselves, like two people will **read the bible together and kind of talk about it.**
8. Man, I mean, for me personally, I pray. I read the word. **That's something that kind of keeps me positive.**

9. Sometimes even ask God like why. Because here, one thing I notice, like here you tend to read the bible a lot more than you normally would do when you are not—because you just need something to help or **some motivation, some extra help.**
10. Sometimes we feel like we can find it in the bible, I guess. Like sometimes maybe it's a last resort, maybe the first resort. I don't know, **but I noticed a lot of people here just read the bible a lot more than they would just because we all need that extra help.**

SELF-TALK

RECRUIT QUOTES:

1. I think it was just after I passed inspection. That was like okay, **I guess I can do this.** That pretty much got me through.
2. I was just wondering, just saying—I **used to always tell myself**, “What is going on?” I would say, “I can't be the worst swimmer they have ever taught to know how to swim. I am pretty sure they have taught plenty of people far worse than me.”
3. My third attempt I passed my pushups after—I passed my sit ups my second attempt. My third attempt I passed my pushups too. So I go on the track and it was one of those deals where **I told myself I was going to pass.**
4. I had one of the RDCs told me that I was very motivating towards others, but I wouldn't self-motivate myself. Then I was like okay, **maybe I need to stop focusing on others and focus on myself. When I did that, I passed.**
5. **Like I was like no, I am going to prove them wrong.** I went to my PFA, I passed everything except for my sit ups. I even passed my run, which is a miracle. I passed my run. I am a Charlie female. I did it in alpha female time.
6. **Just telling myself** that I mean with there being instructors there that can be able to save you if anything goes wrong. When you are getting in the water, why are you allowing yourself to panic? Why are you not focusing on everything that they are teaching you?
7. Each chance I go out there like this is your last chance. No matter how many chances I have left, **like this is your last chance.** You only have one shot, because you don't have any more. So I just keep everything as like the last chance.

8. I need to get out. I need to pass. So I was constantly thinking that. That was in my head.
9. So I felt emptiness for a little bit, but, you know, after—they say—well, what we say in FIT is that after your division graduates if you don't get to make it, it's a little bit easier for you to pass, but only because most people like myself, you're in that division mindset of, "I need to pass my division. I need to pass my division," and if you do that and say that you failed, that's when you get that feeling and get sad. **So you try to remind yourself why you came to the Navy and you came by yourself.**

SOCIAL NETWORK/SUPPORT

RECRUIT QUOTES:

1. I was just disappointed of what had happened then. **When he gave the speech** I kind of realized like hey, we are still graduating, so there is nothing to be depressed about.
2. It was just the first couple of weeks. That was the first time I had been away from them that long. **After a while when I just met new people they just kind of helped me get through it.**
3. Some people were just like man, I'm scared I don't remember how to do this, I don't remember how to put my [inaudible] on. I don't know how to put my SPA on and all that stuff. **I am just like dude, relax. You did this how many times?** I was just like remember the steps.
4. He just sat us down and he just **talked to us like we were people, not recruits. Just talked to us.** He was honest with us about a lot of stuff. About his life, about things he failed at, etc., etc. The next day, 32 people passed together, the swim and run combined.
5. I remember from my final PFA, my chief he was an older guy, but he came out there and he ran with us the entire PFA until everybody was finished. He stayed there and he encouraged us as we were going. He would finish with one person and he would go to the next person. All my RDCs did that. It was like it's not—**when you first meet your RDC it starts off as fear, but by the end of it, it turns into respect.**
6. All of our petty officers, both the petty officers and our chief every single time they would not let anybody quit and we only had one PFA failure at the end of it because they wouldn't let any of us give up. They sat there and they ran with you, even if you were the last person on the track. **They all three would be right there with you.**

7. It's kind of hard because the environment, you have to surround yourself and bubble around people that's like minded and trying to get out. Saying hey, **we need to find a way to motivate ourselves and so we can all get out.**
8. Other things that would help when **my RTC would pull me to the side** and tell me that, "You got this." Even if like I don't graduate on time—which I didn't—like you will eventually get out of there. So that really helped.
9. Yes, **I would talk to my rack mate.** Usually me and him would talk about swim, actually. He was like, "Man, you can get it. It will come. Your day will come one day." He was very helpful.
10. Yes, **we kind of fed off each other** as far as—because you know, there was one guy who couldn't do—like when he first got to boot camp he couldn't do more than ten pushups. So—but he could swim. So we were kind of in the same as far as him failing the PFA and me failing my swim. So every basis or PT I was with him. Every time we had down time we would talk about swim tips for me as far as how to stay relaxed in the water or whatever.
11. He had been there almost a month before I even made it. I was still struggling to even make like the 90 second screen and he came to me, he was like, "You are doing better than what you think you are." **He was like, "I was in your shoes not too long ago."**
12. My bunkmate, he is 26 years old and I mean we became best friends, like no problem. He is my—like he is eight years older than me, so **just making friends like that, just talking.**
13. During PFAs I would just run by myself and then one day a petty officer came up to me and just started running with me and was like, **"Hey you got to run faster. I want to see you pass. I believe in you."** I was like, "Oh, okay. I didn't know that."
14. **A lot of people who were struggling with their run were able to pull together.** A lot of who were swimming were able to like build each other up and kind of encourage them. Hey, do this. Do that. Try that. Even some of the runners would encourage the swimmers because they passed their swim and they are struggling on their run. The swimmers who could run would encourage the runners.
15. All of the people were just as stressed out as I was and we worked together as a team. You know, it slowly grew on me. **People helped me. I mean I didn't see that kind of stuff in the civilian world.**

16. It's not like we are homeless people, just for people who have nobody. We don't have a family, we just met up through this site. It was really cool. I would get on this site occasionally and I would talk to them. I can't do that here. I tried doing that a lot and I would get yelled at for it, but that is what I would usually think of **that all of these people are rooting for me.**

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APPENDIX E. INTERVIEW QUOTATION EXAMPLES OF RESILIENCE DISABLERS

LACK OF SOCIAL NETWORK/SUPPORT:

RECRUIT QUOTES:

1. P days is kind of hard because you are still trying to get used to not talking to your family, **not being able to call your family whenever you are down**, so it's kind of hard. It was very stressful
2. I don't know how I did it, in all honesty. Being in my division, I always went for help, you know saying, "Hey, I don't know how to do pushups, I don't know how to do sit-ups, my run sucks, so help me." I listened to my petty officers, [inaudible] extra PT. **They always blew me off.**
3. The entire division that we have been with for the last two months and all of the friends we have made have just left and now we are still here without being able to really communicate with our families and **we are put into a group of completely new people**, instead like I said, the people that we already had spent all of that time with.
4. I don't think like honestly I didn't really care for my division because when it was time for me to pack up and go, I really saw everybody like how they truly were in the end and nobody like helped me to pack my stuff up. Even our RPOC was like, "Oh great. The weakest links are gone now. Now the division is going to be stronger." Yes, but like I said everybody—you know, everybody is going to try to be nice and buddy-buddy, but when it comes to the end, like the people that didn't graduate with the division and the people that did graduate, they felt like they were kind of better, I guess. Then I don't know, they just showed—like our RPOC, **she was really nice and then towards the end she became this total horrible person.**
5. Because there were some RDCs that they really like to push us, make sure we get everything right whether it is perfect or not perfect, just make sure we get it right the first time. There are other RDCs that will still push us, **but then after a while they just stop because if you tell someone what to do over and over and over and over again** and they just don't want to listen, eventually you just—waste of breath.
6. Like my RDCs they didn't say anything about me failing. They are just like, they knew I was going to fail, pretty much. They were probably hoping I would pass, **but I know they knew I was going to fail.**

7. You are supposed to want each other to do better and like they will just like they tell you in your face, “Yes, I want you to pass, you can do good.” Then like you will be at your rack and they don’t know you are sitting there and **they will just be having a full conversation about you. So it like threw me through some loops and I was like going through something emotional.**
8. Well, I started off the first week or the first few days I started off just being quiet to myself, just writing letters, a bunch of letters to my family, to my uncles and stuff. I didn’t talk to anyone for the first few days because **I thought there’s no point, I am going to get out of here soon. There’s no point in making friends in here.**
9. I just remember like sitting down and just like, wow. That was like when it really, really hit me that they’re gone. They’re leaving. They’ll leave today. They’ll go across [inaudible] or fly out that night to Pensacola or Mississippi, or whatever, **so I might not be able to see these guys again.** So I just sat there and then we hygiene and I was to myself that night just because I had lost that opportunity.
10. It was very frustrating because I didn’t talk to my mother the whole time I was here because I didn’t want to call her with a bad phone call and I talked to her Friday when I thought it was my last chance and she told me she was in a car wreck June 30th and I had no clue and she was hit by an 18 wheeler or something like that. It made me feel like I probably should have talked to her sooner because **I never knew what was going on outside.**

LOSS OF MOTIVATION

RDC QUOTES:

1. Don’t get caught up in the crowd, because of course there is going to be clicks and things—it happens because you are in a group of people and people break off and they find where they are comfortable and that’s where they are. **They sit there and they stay there** and they get to the point where they get comfortable so they don’t want to leave.
2. They just say, “Forget it. Let them go.” But, I don’t see it that way. Like sometimes you get that feeling it’s just like you know, I am just going to let you go ahead and do it, because you obviously just don’t have it. But, you do that and then you will see a dramatic drop in not just what they are doing, but their motivation. **It’s not just the motivation for like being here, it’s like they are not eating or not sleeping** and you will hear it from other recruits. Like, “This recruit is not sleeping anymore, petty officer.” “This recruit is not eating. They go to the galley and get an

orange and that's all they get." Or, they get a glass of water and they will sit there and sip on a glass of water with an empty tray.

3. When you get those that just stop, hand on hip, they are walking, **"I don't want to do this no more. I quit. I just quit."** No matter what you tell them, they are just like, "I am not doing it." The attitude is there, the old man shuffle—that's what I call it—is there, **they are just flat out quit.**

RECRUIT QUOTES:

1. So a lot of people are just focused on that one thing and you have got people there who are depressed. **You got people that were angry. You got people that don't care.**
2. Just think of me. I have been here for so long and I will not quit.
3. Yes, as soon as I put my feet on the track I just get scared. I did like seven laps. I was keeping up with the people in front of me. They passed, **but like at some point I am just like no, this is too much and I stopped.**
4. There are some times when I thought to myself **maybe I am better off going back home** because I still have my family there and they told me that they want me back.
5. And then like, like I said, I have to be that horse with the blinders, because sometimes when I see people slowing down I'm like, "Man, maybe I need to slow down too," and then I just stop completely and I start to walk. And when you stop and you start to walk and you try to pick it up, it's even harder, even harder. So each time I try to go out there, "I'm not going to stop. I'm not going to stop. I can slow down, but I'm not going to stop. I'm not going to stop to walk." **But once you get in that mindset like, "I'm going to walk," and you just walk,** it just takes so much—it just adds more time to your time.
6. Because a lot of them are like going around just messing around, not taking anything seriously. A lot of them are like just talking and talking and talking. But this past weekend, I didn't do nothing but read. I didn't talk to nobody. I just kept my focus, **I just felt like people were losing focus more and more they were here.**
7. Yes, I mean people are still messing up here, still talking too loud, still don't know how to do the racks or anything like that, which we have been practicing for eight weeks. So people—I guess when people get here they just get lazy and get too comfortable, that the RDCs still don't care, which they still do. They just—I don't know. **Some people here just seem like they don't care anymore.**

8. And he just wasn't trying anymore. So there are people that come in that are depressed or **sad or just lost all hope, kind of that motivation.**
9. I tried my best to make sure he stayed motivated and not get out, **but he just lost like his motivation and I couldn't do much.** So seeing him when he came in and told me that he was going home, it sucked because like I tried.
10. Like they were ready to go home. They were tired of being here. They were tired of running PFAs. **They just wanted to take a break.**

MENTAL BLOCKS

RECRUIT QUOTES:

1. I didn't want to drown. Every time I get in the water I think of drowning.
2. So the only thing I thought about was I need this many more pushups, I need this many more sit-ups, I need to cut this much off my run. **That was all I thought about, that's all I talked about.**
3. The whole division went and I got into the pool. They said, "Swim on your back." So, again no swim experience whatsoever, I got on my back and in the three foot pool and immediately stood back up. **I wasn't ready to swim yet. I didn't know what to do.**
4. Then like I got myself like I had everyone telling me I could do this and I knew somewhere I knew I can do it, I just didn't know how. **Because whatever I was doing, I was doing wrong. It was stressful.**
5. Not the whole thing. I ran, but I had to stop sometimes to catch my breath because I just didn't think I could do it. **It was all a mental thing.**
6. There was all this pressure, this was my last chance. Just kind of built and I was like I just lost everything. I don't know. **I just lost focus of everything else.**
7. Not necessarily fearful of water, I just never—like I would go in the pool, but just never knew how to swim. **It's just the fear of not being able to float that's just uncomfortable to me.**
8. I wanted my family to see me in my dress whites and I think I kept on putting more and more pressure on myself so I wasn't doing as well even through the PT and I kept **focusing too much on my family seeing me in my dress whites.**

9. The worry and the concern is helpful. Knowing they are concerned about me and they care and they want me to pass is helpful. **But the “relax” word, is what I hear all the time and I still sink, so it doesn’t matter.**
10. **I was so confused.** Like the first time I got here, they didn’t count four of my laps. I had never experienced it. In my division they would count all of my laps, I believe. So when I first got here I was so confused. Everybody else was on lap eight and I am still on lap four and I was like, what’s going on with the sensors? It’s not counting my laps. Turns out I was only 30 seconds off **and I had no clue because I was so confused what lap I was running.**
11. **Like around lap six, I don’t start thinking about nothing but I want to get off the track,** I want to run. That’s it. I forget all the techniques, all the breathing exercises, all of that. It goes out the window.

NEGATIVE CUES

RECRUIT QUOTES:

The “walk” to the pool

1. Because I was in Ship 3 and that walk there and back is probably three miles and it is kind of that walk there it is like a 30 minute walk. So the whole time you are just thinking you know, I just want to pass, I just want to pass. **Then you walk back and you failed** and it’s like you have got to make this long walk back and as soon as you get in there it is like my whole division, “Did you pass? Come on man, did you pass?” It’s like, “No, I didn’t pass.” It is like, “Oh, don’t worry about it. You will get it.” **It became almost like a routine. Like I get up, walk to swim.**
2. Yes, and if you didn’t pass, it was just like a walk of shame, it felt like. **A walk of shame.**

Freedom Hall (Physical Fitness Center for PT and PFA)

1. I was I can do this, but during the run, something about that run and going to **Freedom Hall** and 12 laps and being timed probably just the stress of taking the PFA itself.
2. Yesterday I kind of felt a knot in my calves, so I’ve just been trying to find new ways. I guess it’s just Freedom Hall. Like, **something about Freedom Hall is just—it takes over.**

3. It's really hot. It's really stuffy. Like if you were to go to any other type of gym, it's like really cool. You can breathe. **But as far as Freedom Hall, it is really hot, really stuffy.**
4. I'm an alpha female, so I have to make my run in 15 minutes. I got better when I got here at first, but about **Freedom Hall, it's intimidating.** Like you'll go—we'll go there for PT and stuff and I feel a lot better after that. But the day of the PFA is just like there's this—I don't know how to say it. There's just this feeling about everyone.
5. Because like I know I can do it. I know it's possible. But it's like **when I get on that track** it's like, man, I don't know if you're going to be able to make it today.
6. They kind of opened my eyes to like man, like I have basically been disqualifying myself from the moment I looked at the pool, **the moment I stepped into Freedom Hall I have been disqualifying myself.**

The clock in Freedom Hall

1. **But, when I saw that clock** hit 16 I was like, "Damn it. I am not going to be able to see them." But, I still didn't stop or slow down, I just kept on going, but you know that little depression comes and hits you once you stop running.
2. I think it's the pressure really, because it's kind of like I know I've got to beat this time and it doesn't help that in Freedom Hall we see those **big red numbers and you're like, "Oh, wow! I've got to get this these laps in this times."**
3. The very first time I took the final PFA and I was running and I was like coming on my 12th lap and **I looked at the clock** and it said 12:30 and I already knew it passed so I already gave up on myself. **I mean I already knew I failed, so I gave up on myself.**

Phone call to parents after being transferred to FIT

1. During my time in FIT, they made us—the first day we got there, they made us make a phone call to my family saying, "Hey, I did not pass my final PFA, I will not be graduating with my division." **That did not help anything.**

2. **It sucked. That hurt a lot.** Like, my mom is very understanding, very positive, very motivating, but it sucked calling and telling like, **“Hey, Mom, sorry, but I failed.”**

NEGATIVE FRAMEWORK

RECRUIT QUOTES:

1. Swimming is the most stressful. That’s the most stressful without a doubt. Having to worry about swimming whenever you go back to the compartment, having to tell your RTC that **you failed over and over and over again.**
2. So because I couldn’t swim, like that was the only thing—literally, the one thing I couldn’t do that was holding me back in boot camp. Because I couldn’t swim, I missed out on so many other leadership opportunities, like being the yeoman. The yeoman are more important because they have all the paperwork. I like to be important. I like the spotlight. Because I couldn’t swim, I missed out on that. **I had to miss our pictures, our divisional pictures—I wasn’t even in them because I had to learn how to swim.**
3. There’s fun, there is—it’s just limited to the things that you struggle with and constant reminders of how you do at those things. **It just makes it so much sad.**
4. Yes, we are kind of like underdogs because while everyone else is graduated and met certain criteria, we still have to go back and backtrack and work out and go through all of the training over and over again until we finally pass. Even then, it still feels bad because sometimes there are some of us that do make it through graduation and graduate with the division and others we don’t make it on time so that increases the stress even more.
5. I just kept thinking about stuff mentally that I kind of hindered on and was like if I don’t do this run, mom’s going to be sad and then this is going to happen. **I kind of started focusing on that and not the run.**
6. So, to myself, I say I have trouble because I’ve given myself so many reasons why I should quit, you know. So I thought that myself, because I’m a graduate. I’m a mechanical engineer and I have my MBA, I have my Masters. Sometimes I don’t sleep. I keep telling myself, **“What am I doing here? I don’t belong here,”**
7. Other times I just think like man, like this time I really thought I had it. Like so you just—I think just like I am just destined to not pass maybe this

week, **but if I am not destined to pass this week, then maybe I am destined to not pass the next week** and I will just still be here for way longer than I expected.

8. I mean even when I passed my—even when I passed, I passed with like 12:20-something. I was thinking like man, that's too close to 12:30 seconds. Like I might have passed, but what if I slowed down just a little bit and I probably would have failed? So I think like that's not even a good score. Like if I ever had a chance to take my PFA again I would, because I am not satisfied with what I got. **I passed, I should be satisfied, it is just—I don't know.** I just hold myself to a higher standard than I should and whenever I let myself settle for something good, I don't settle for progression.

APPENDIX F. INTERVIEW QUOTATION EXAMPLES OF RESILIENCE FACILITATORS

RDC DYNAMIC TRAINING:

CHARACTER EVALUATION:

1. When they do it over and over you kind of notice hm—well, **this one does not seem to catch on quite as much as the others.** We had one I remember there was one that just couldn't seem to get it and she seemed like she wanted to go home. Every time I would talk to her with such an authoritative voice, like the voice of the leader, the voice of authoritarian, she would cry. I mean just tears of whatever they were, just ran down her face. She would just sit there and cry.
2. So she was a little too mean. So it got a little out of control. She—and the recruits complained. She used the wrong choice of words one time and I don't know what she said exactly, but they were just so afraid of her it impeded training. **If you are too mean, recruits are scared to learn.**
3. The only thing that can fix an 18 year old if they are having behavioral problems is maturity not how many times you make them do pushups, not how loud you yell. It's maturity. **Some people don't mature until they are in their 30s.**
4. You get the recruits that want you to yell at them because they have never had that discipline before, which you know, you tend to know what the recruits want, but you don't give it to them because you know, you don't want to give people what they want, especially young people like this day and age. **You give them what you feel that they need to hear. Some mentoring, some leadership.**
5. Had I just said, "You know what? Fine, go home." You know? But, I kind of let you just mellow out a little bit because those first two to three weeks are the worst because everybody wants to go home during then because they haven't adjusted and we got you living with strangers for like eight weeks telling you to take a shower with seventy other people you don't know. That's like an invasion of your privacy and your life. So you know, these same people you probably you would never talk to walking down the street, **but now we like live together for eight weeks and we expect you all to get along.** That's a huge step for a lot of these kids.
6. Like I tell them all the time, you know, I'm running with you, you know, you need to stay with me because I haven't quit on you. You know, I tell them that, all of them that, even on their last attempt I'll tell them that, but

I do know if that recruits going to make it or not. So I can't say we actually give up on anybody, but **we notice when they give up on themselves or the ones that tell you, "I don't want your help," "Okay, well, good luck."**

7. It is, because you can tell the ones that are just sitting there and, you know, they're just here for the paycheck for right now and they gave up a while ago and they're just not trying anymore. And then there's the recruits that will stop after like two laps on the track and then they'll do that every single PFA. I'm like, "Alright, guess what? You're just going to continue to run and continue to fail, you know, waste your attempts and you're going to go away." I mean, **we can't physically push them across the track every day, because you know when they get out in the fleet they're going to fail anyways.**

RECRUIT LIFE BALANCE:

1. But, you know, if we talk to them, we always give them a phone call every weekend, you know, get them ready for the week. You know, **call whoever it is you are fighting for back home**, you know. Call them and get ready to go on Monday. Or like sometimes if they're having a really rough day, let them call on the quarterdeck.

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT:

1. You have to drag it out of you sometimes and you get to them because when they don't get it, the whole group will respond to that. Like I noticed that they were kind of doing things slow and they were kind of doing things differently because you weren't bringing your usual every day motivation. So they know. Like he says, **if you don't come in and you are not giving it, all your partners aren't giving it, they see it.**
2. You find your worst runner and you run right next to them and that is all you do is you are in their ear. **You are not going to fail, I am not going to let you fail.** The recruit that you just told two days ago you can't let this other recruit fail, they are going to see that and they are going to be like if chief is going to run with the recruit and never let them stop and not let them run. Or if petty officer is going to stand there and do 100 pushups because he told a recruit to do 100 pushups and the recruit got to 60 and the petty officer is still going to keep that recruit motivated, there is no way that I can't motivate a brother or a sister. They kind of just pick themselves up.

3. I had a partner once who said—he told them—and it is very true. It's not if you fail, but when you fail how you pick yourself back up. Boot camp is a never ending series of failure after failure. You are never going to meet my expectations. **But, when I beat you down, are you going to come back or are you going to stay down? I think that's what it is all about.**
4. Show that they can catch me. So it's funny. I get a lot more males to pass than females, because they don't want a female to beat them. I think that's really funny. So I do, I'm like, "Well, I'm running an alpha male pace today." And they're all going, **"We're going to catch you, Petty Officer."** And then when they don't, I like yell at them on the track.

SOCIAL SUPPORT/MOTIVATION

1. Then by week three the other ones bring them along and plus it helps when all of them are coming together and they start developing this team concept and we—that's one of the things that we implement is this team concept. **Then we assign the recruits mentors.** Like this one here, he can just—he knows how to fold all of this uniforms, he is squared away, never had issues with him stenciling, things like that. Alright, recruit you are assigned to this person.
2. "Hey, you are joining the military' and now you want to call them after four days of being here because someone told you to be in the right uniform, be where you were supposed to be, get up when you were supposed to get up and wear a clean pair of skivvies? **You want to quit? You want to call on the phone right now? What would they say? If I called mom right now, what is she going to say?"**
3. Well, it's a tool to help them like oh my gosh, I have a hard card documentation. If I get so many of those I could possibly get kicked out of the division, I could go to another place, I could get sent back in training. So it's a tool that we use to like alright, hey wake up. **Wake up, recruit and figure it out.** That kind of thing.
4. So I mean all you can do if talk to them and give them motivation and for the runners you can't push them around the track, you can't drive them around the track, all you do is give them motivation. So I sit them down and let them know that when you go on the track, forget about the fact that you are running. Forget about the fact that you are in a pool. **Just think about it as another day.**
5. So we have programs on the weekend, FIT runs on Saturdays. RDCs are allowed to—if you have kids that are struggling, bring them out to FIT with us and **let them run and work out with us on Saturday mornings.**

6. You just try to amp them up a little bit and try to keep them—“Hey, you know, you had a bad day. Stop thinking about it.” You try to get them to look forward instead of looking back, because confidence is the number one, you know, killer for them. They’ve been failing it every single time that they’ve been running it. You know, if they’re not a very strong runner, then their confidence is probably shot at that point. **So you go ahead and try to build up their confidence a little bit and them,** you know, “Hey, you can pass this thing. It’s not hard. I’ll go run with you. I’ll run next to you if you need me to,” and, you know, either they pass or fail.
7. “Hey, look. I’m going to run a single lap with you right now. I’m going to show you the exact pace you need to run the entire time that you’re doing a PFA. You need to sustain that for 13 minutes.” He was like, **“I’m never going to be able to do this.”** I was like, **“Yeah, you will. Calm down.”**
8. **I just have them stay busy the entire day** and I’ve noticed that it just makes boot camp just kind of fly by for them.
9. Or if you—normally we give them like a phone call over the weekend, being able to take them over to the Exchange and give them a phone call, if you take that phone call away from them, that kills them too. You know, it’s basically killing their insides. It’s killing their motivation at that point. So, you know, **we don’t try to destroy them too much or anything like that.**
10. I tell them like when we’re at PT on Tuesdays and Thursdays and Saturdays, like, “Hey, find a partner to run with. You know, **motivate each other while you’re running right here.** You know, you can’t do it at Freedom Hall, but you can help each other here and then you know how that person runs, stay with them. You don’t have to talk, just stay with them.”
11. Like I’ll go through different running tips for them because I run a lot. So I’ll go through different running tips, different ways that they can make it a little bit easier on their bodies, because some of them get there and they don’t know how to run or they get hurt or their shins hurt, so I’ll just walk them through that medical side of the house. **I don’t give them medical advice, but I’ll walk them through like different running styles. If it works for them, good. If it doesn’t, it doesn’t.**

RDC ROLES

ENFORCER

1. Enforcer. Okay. I always called it the pit bull. You know, the pit bull you keep them on a leash and they are always ready to go and everyone knows that the pit bull is dangerous. But there is usually one of three partners. **One of them is the pit bull.**
2. Our third RDC, every time he came into the compartment, the whole division would be demoralized because we felt like **we couldn't do anything right according to his standards.**
3. He himself was just intimidating. He was a big guy and he had a strong voice and he just made you want to like back up. **He was very intimidating.**

HUGGER

1. They know if they can go to that one RDC to **get their questions answered**, they will take that easy route every single time and that helps them to cope with the dynamic environment that we have here in boot camp.
2. Well, number one sometimes you have got to take the rope off. Not literally, because this comes as part of the uniform, but you have to talk to them in a manner where you have to explain. Look, I am not yelling at you. What's the problem? How can you fix it? Because these are the ultimatums. This is what happens if we do this because 18 year olds aren't really pros at figuring stuff out sometimes as far as—they don't know what a big problem is. They don't know what foreclosed house is and bankruptcy is. To them, a big deal is failing and not doing enough pushups and failing. Like that is the end of the world. **That is not the end of the world and we have to explain that to them.**
3. So I looked at myself as more like a mentor to them. Maybe some of them they looked at me **maybe as their big sister or their mom.** So I loved it.
4. Normally I am good at reading people's body language or just feeling like—if I see something is wrong with somebody I will just walk up to them and say, "What's wrong with you? What's going on in your head? It's all in your face. I can read it." A lot of times you will get them **and they will just break down because they have been holding it in for so long.**

5. And when we can't do our job and we see somebody failing that really wants it and they just can't get over the hump, we feel like that's a fail on us. You know, **we take that really personally at that point, at least I do.**

TEACHER

1. The motivation of the recruits. Knowing that I have anywhere from 85 to 90 recruits. That each and every morning they are looking to me or to the other people in the other RDCs for guidance, for leadership. That they are always—most of the time—I mean some of them just you know don't seem to get it, but the other ones are always trying to adapt and to learn and to adapt to the military ways as best they can. Just the part of that, that I can be part of their lives in that sense. **To help them, to mold them into—to get them from that civilian mentality into the military ways and the military customs and to be able to teach them different things.** I mean that's one of the major motivators.
2. They don't even have a career path yet. They are just basically being trained physically, mentally, and the culture of the Navy, the history. That's what you are training them on. **Just to get them in the door to be a sailor.**
3. I like training and I like mentoring. **Mentoring more than anything** and I just feel like me having 16 years in the Navy, I feel like I have a lot to mentor about and to train about.

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