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Discipline and Responsibility

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Abstract

The current American way of life supports the fact that many people currently in the Army show a lack of responsibility and discipline. The Drill Sergeants have to begin the process after the recruit enters the military and upon arriving at a unit further instilling discipline in addition, responsibility left to the Squad Leaders, Platoon Sergeants, First Sergeants, Sergeant's Major. The military builds tomorrow's leaders, whether military or civilian, today. After all the military forces one to learn discipline and responsibility it is up to the individual what he does with this indoctrination. One can argue the point the person entering the military has a sense of responsibility and discipline; after all, they entered the military. This however, is not always true.

Discipline and Responsibility

In today's society, kids have less and less discipline and responsibility. This is both parents and societies fault. Parents today want society to discipline children and society wants parents to be the disciplinary force. However, when parents attempt to discipline their children child advocacy called, and parents brought up on child abuse charges. The American way of life currently supports the fact that many people in the Army show a lack of responsibility and discipline. The Drill Sergeants have to begin the process after the raw recruit enters the military and then upon arriving at a unit further instilling discipline and responsibility left to the Squad Leaders, Platoon Sergeants, First Sergeants, and, Sergeant Major. However, more and more Drill Sergeants, Squad Leaders, Platoon Sergeants, and, First Sergeants hands are tied. Some needed disciplinary changes made over the past twenty years occurred. Once again, the army might have gone too far. The military builds tomorrows' leaders, either military or civilian, today. After all, while in the military it forces one to learn discipline and responsibility it is up to the individual what he does with this forced indoctrination. One can argue a point the personal entering the military have a sense of responsibility and discipline; after all, they entered the military.

People join the military for various reasons. To leave a bad area, patriotic duty, money, economic conditions, school, learn a trade, learn discipline and responsibility, learn how to be functioning member of society, to lead and be led.

Responsibility is the difference between right and wrong, being able to fulfill an obligation, being liable for actions and decisions. Responsibility makes an individual reliable and trustworthy. Discipline are rules that govern conduct, it allows for control through obedience, having self-control so orders can be imposed and followed, and discipline includes

training that corrects.

Discipline builds responsibility while more responsibility builds more discipline this is a continuous cycle. Like it or not, as soldiers we must do as we are told, this is discipline. Without discipline, there is a breakdown in the capability to follow orders and possibly one's life. Currently with the War on Terror it is discipline and responsibility that soldiers need while they are patrolling, riding in a convoy, conducting guard duty, prisoner escort etc.

In something that seems basic as walking with a loaded weapon. A Soldier currently entering basic training has a weapon with them 24 hours a day. Upon completion of basic trainees have the responsibility through discipline to handle and carry a weapon. Currently following orders from Senior Non-Commissioned Officers and Officers' at most Forward Operational Bases in Iraqi soldiers have to walk around with an unloaded weapon. Do the Senior Non-Commissioned Officers and Officers' not realize or forget that some of the Iraqi workers, who observe this, maybe affiliated with the insurgency. This lack of discipline and responsibility is one of the reasons for attacks on Forward Operational Bases.

As a Sergeant Major, it is our responsibility to instill and inspire enlisted, non-commissioned officers and officers by leading by example. Growing up through the ranks you had Sergeant's Major like this. First, they would never ask a soldier to do something they have not previously done or were not getting ready to do. Second, when it possible they would participate in training being conducted. In doing this, a Sergeant Major was ensuring training standards were being met, ensuring health, morale, and discipline of the troops along with instilling confidence and trust within the ranks.

Discipline is enforcing standards and as a Sergeant Major you would rather spend the time telling a soldier of a job well done and mentoring him. However, as a Sergeant Major you also have to discipline the soldier. Soldiers are going to make mistakes. They are only human.

Being human eventually, they are going to learn from their mistakes. A disciplinary action reinforces the learning from mistake principle, along with developing a better soldier and eventually a better citizen for society.

For a period in the military, we went through a “Zero Defect Army” in which it was frowned upon of making for making a soldier responsible for their actions, and thus instilling discipline; this lead to a highly micromanagement period. Our military has paid for this dearly; this highly micromanagement period made some very ineffective leaders. For these leaders were afraid to make a decision and still are. Some of these leaders are currently in charge. These leaders must not be confused with Non-Commissioned Officers or Officers consulting or seeking advice of seniors or peers. Indecision is a lack of discipline and responsibility on any soldier whether enlisted, non-commissioned officer or officer. Right or wrong make a decision.

One does not instill discipline by barking out orders. However, there is a time and place for barking out orders. An example is a Troop’s in Contact Immediate Action Drill. You have just entered a life or death situation and this is when a soldiers discipline and self-discipline in an absence of orders becomes extremely important. This is we, as a Sergeant Major owe it to tomorrow’s leaders and more importantly the American Public (the American Public, because they entrusted the lives of their sons and daughters to us along with their way of life) to enforce strict discipline standards through demanding training.

Discipline and Responsibility for the Non-Commissioned Officer means not just reciting words in a deceleration, address, or creed. It means soldiers, being able to understand the meaning of these words in a deceleration, address, or creed, being able to live them and eventually pass them on to junior enlisted soldiers.

Discipline and Responsibility for the Non-Commissioned Officer means being able to make the hard right and unpopular decisions that are needed, enforced, and, followed through.

Any were from giving an individual extra-duty to spending long hours ensuring soldiers are properly fed, clothed, trained, paid, receiving mail, ensuring medical needs are taken care of.

As Non-Commissioned Officers we have to instill the above mentioned into our men and women (soldiers). The sooner the better, the hard right and unpopular decisions make the younger enlisted, and junior non-commissioned officers more disciplined and willing to accept additional responsibilities. How well we discipline, train, and, enforce responsibilities and standards onto enlisted soldiers and non-commissioned officers will show within ten years. These soldiers are our military's future squad leaders, platoon sergeants, first sergeants, and, sergeant major.

We, the military, take an undisciplined raw recruit, which many parents and society do not want to handle or know how to handle. Within a few months and a little tender loving care, mold them into a well-disciplined responsible soldier. Sergeants' Major must allow the enlisted and junior non-commissioned officers to grow. This growth comes from making mistakes and learning from their mistakes. It is part of the learning cycle.

We as Sergeants' Major have the responsibility to ensure discipline is instilled in our soldiers. We Sergeants' Major must push these lower enlisted and non-commissioned officers into accepting increased responsibilities. The United States way of life depends on it.

Upon properly instilling discipline and responsibilities into soldiers, eventually they return to civilian life. With discipline and responsibilities instilled, they become better citizens, workers, and individuals. Originally, they just want to get their feet on the ground and may not want the additional responsibilities. Eventually what the military has instilled (discipline and responsibilities) shows through. These men and women are our future leaders.