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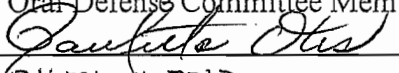
The transformation from civilian to United States Marine: A conscious, organized and systematic process.

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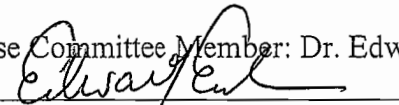
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: The transformation from civilian to United States Marine: A conscious, organized and systematic process.

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Thesis: The Marine Corps' methodology of instilling its core values through values based training to its recruits establishes a solid foundation which greatly enhances the individual Marines' ability to make sound moral and ethical decisions on and off the battlefield.

Discussion: The purpose of this paper is to show how the transformation from civilian to United States Marine is a conscious, organized and systematic process. The transformation from civilian to United States Marine is not a random process, it is not magic, nor is it a coercive method to meet a specific quota. Transformation is a place, time, situation, a test and trial characterized by the confluence of powerful individuals who are determined to create the future leaders of the Marine Corps. Transformation is a comprehensive method that integrates and trains individuals of every race, religion, color, creed or national origin producing a synergistic effect that creates members of a team who embrace the Marine Corps Core Values of Honor, Courage and Commitment.

Conclusion: Marine Corps recruits are trained, led, mentored, and transformed from civilian to Marine by their Drill Instructors who will be with the recruits until the recruits become Marines and graduate from recruit training. Drill Instructors learn their profession at Drill Instructor School. One of the most important courses taught at Drill Instructor School is the Values Based Training class. Through Values Based Training at Drill Instructor School, Drill Instructor students solidify their understanding of the Marine Corps' Core Values, they further develop the skills required to effectively and convincingly deliver core values discussions, and they also accept personal ownership of the core values that they will work around the clock to instill into their recruits. Drill Instructors are known for having great time-management skills and take every opportunity to conduct Values Based Training through teaching, remediating, modeling, mentoring and relating nearly every situation and class that is taught through a core values discussion with their recruits. Through the Values Based Training methodology DI's instill the Marine Corps' Core Values to their recruits. This methodology establishes a solid foundation which greatly enhances the individual Marines' ability to make sound moral and ethical decisions on and off the battlefield.

The purpose of this paper is to show how the transformation from civilian to United States Marine is a conscious, organized and systematic process. The transformation from civilian to United States Marine is not a random process, it is not magic, nor is it a coercive method to meet a specific quota. Transformation is a place, time, situation, a test and trial characterized by the confluence of powerful individuals who are determined to create the future leaders of the Marine Corps. Transformation is a comprehensive method that integrates and trains individuals of every race, religion, color, creed or national origin producing a synergistic effect that creates members of a team who embrace the Marine Corps Core Values of Honor, Courage and Commitment.

United States Marine Corps recruits who accept the challenge of Marine Corps recruit training are trained at either Marine Corps Recruit Depot's Parris Island, SC (MCRD PISC) or San Diego, CA (MCRD SD). Although segregated by gender during recruit training, both male and female recruits are trained at MCRD PISC, while only male recruits are trained at MCRD SD. Male and female recruits receive nearly identical training. Although training is nearly identical on both east and west coasts, this paper focuses on training and making Marines at MCRD PISC.

Marine Corps recruits are trained, led, mentored, and transformed from civilian to Marine by an assigned team of professionals known as Drill Instructors (DIs) who will be with the recruits until the recruits become Marines and graduate from recruit training. Each DI team consists of 3 DI's: Senior Drill Instructor (SDI), Experienced Drill Instructor (EDI), and Junior Drill Instructor (JDI). At times, there may be an additional JDI.

The role of the SDI is to lead and supervise his/her team of DIs and to serve as the primary mentor for his/her recruits. The SDI is the most influential DI in a recruit's training and is the catalyst for transformation from civilian to Marine.

The DI's role is to lead by example as a teacher, scholar, and mentor, and to be totally immersed in the process of making basically trained Marines. A DI's conduct must be above reproach. They must professionally lead, foregoing use of fear and intimidation techniques, in order to foster trust and confidence by subordinates.¹ DI's learn the profession of making Marines at one of the most professional schools in the Marine Corps, Drill Instructor School (DI SCH).

Often referred to as the Operational Center of Gravity for MCRD PISC, DI SCH is where making Marines begins. The DI SCH earned the title Operational Center of Gravity in June 2007 from the Commanding General, Major General Paul Lefebvre, who frequently emphasized the importance of producing DI's. Lefebvre considered the DI to be the central figure for recruits and the leadership bedrock upon which recruit training is based.² According to the DI SCH web page, the mission of DI SCH is to "further develop the leadership, command presence, instructional ability, knowledge, and physical condition of selected staff non-commissioned and non-commissioned officers to successfully perform the duties of a Drill Instructor."³ DI SCH teaches in accordance with its approved program of instruction.

One of the most important courses taught at DI SCH is its Values Based Training (VBT) class. Through VBT at DI SCH, DI students solidify their understanding of the Marine Corps' Core Values, they further develop the skills required to effectively and convincingly deliver core values discussions, and they also accept personal ownership of the core values.

Once they earn the title, Drill Instructor, these individuals will work around the clock to instill these values into their recruits.⁴ DI's seize every moment available to conduct VBT through teaching, remediating, modeling, mentoring and relating nearly every situation and class that is taught through a core values discussion with their recruits. Whether it is an individual recruit, a fire-team of four, a squad of thirteen, or a platoon of eighty recruits waiting for an event to begin, there is always a DI present to take advantage of the time available to teach and share his/her knowledge to the future leaders of the Marine Corps. In short, not a moment is wasted at MCRD PISC.

An example is: Marines are known for singing cadences while hiking or running. A cadence that affirms the presence of the individual known as the DI includes this verse:

"Everywhere we go, there's a Drill Instructor there. When we go to sleep, there's a Drill Instructor there. When we go to class, there's a Drill Instructor there. Drill Instructor, Drill Instructor, why don't you leave me alone? Don't you ever go home?"

Marines who graduate from DI SCH understand the importance of making Marines. They understand that in order to "get it" right on the battlefield and in the streets of society, DI's must "get it" right while making Marines. The DI students are taught the importance of leading by example at all times. Leading by example involves modeling behavior consistent with the Marine Corps' Core Values. By the time a DI student graduates from DI SCH he/she is very familiar with the VBT process and is ready to begin instilling the Marine Corps' Core Values into his/her recruits. The Marine Corps' methodology of instilling its core values through VBT to its recruits establishes a solid foundation which greatly enhances the individual Marines' ability to make sound moral and ethical decisions on and off the battlefield.

DI School conducts 4 classes per year; each class is 11.2 weeks in length, consists of 56 training days (TDs) and, includes both classroom instruction and practical application.⁵

Practical application is conducted on the parade grounds where future DI's master and learn to teach close order drill (COD) to recruits. Practical application is also conducted in a squad bay where the students learn the Basic Daily Routine (BDR) for recruit training.

The BDR for recruit training is the process that begins at reveille which is normally conducted between the hours of 0400 and 0500, following eight hours of uninterrupted sleep for recruits. Reveille involves waking up approximately eighty recruits whose average age is nineteen, accounting for all recruits, having them get dressed in the uniform of the day, make their racks (bunk-beds), conduct "hygiene time" (brush teeth and shave), conduct morning clean-up, which, includes sweeping, mopping, taking out the trash, and then marching to the mess hall for morning chow (breakfast). The morning routine is normally conducted within a 50-minute period including the required 20 minutes for recruits to consume chow. Following chow, the DI(s) take the recruits to the first training evolution of the day. The first event of the day varies from classroom instruction, close order drill, physical fitness, uniform issue or fitting, to core values discussions. Following the training evolutions of that particular day the DI is responsible for carrying out the evening BDR which includes accountability, weapons maintenance, training or test review, showers, counseling, and devotions, handing out mail, dirty laundry collection, and taps. DI students rehearse the BDR by using fellow students who act as recruits.⁶

The staff at DI SCH includes the Director (Major), Assistant Director (Captain), First Sergeant (1stSgt), and nine instructors (SSgt-GySgt). Prior to their assignment at DI SCH every staff member would have worked with or around recruits and would be very familiar with the recruit training schedule and process. Each of the nine instructors at DI SCH is the best of their

kind. The primary instructors are enlisted Marines and includes Staff Sergeants and Gunnery Sergeants who are all proven leaders selected from throughout the Recruit Training Regiment (RTR). Once recommended for this duty the Marine is put before a board which is headed by the Regimental Sergeant Major (SgtMaj). The individuals selected by the board are then interviewed by the Regimental Commanding Officer for final approval to begin making DI's. By the time an instructor begins working at DI SCH he/she will have completed at least 1 year of their tour as a DI and would be very familiar with the recruit training process. The standard tour for all DIs is 3-years. One of the most visible assets of the DI SCH staff is modeling of behavior consistent with the Marine Corps' core values. Modeling of appropriate behavior means that a DI SCH staff member must be "squared away" 24 hours per day and 7 days per week. Their conduct, talk, and appearance must be professional at all times.

Prior to the arrival at DI School each student is screened by their command via the Special Duty Assignment (SDA) Checklist. The SDA checklist is a requirement for all students to ensure they are mentally, medically, physically, morally, and financially prepared to begin training. According to the checklist, all students who attend DI SCH must be volunteers who are at least the rank of Sergeant (Sgt) and no higher than the rank of Gunnery Sergeant (GySgt), at least 21 years old, must not have any drug related incidents, must not have had more than two non-judicial punishment proceedings in the last 5-years, must have never been convicted at a courts-martial, and must have had no alcohol related incidents in the past three years.⁷ This checklist is clear evidence that DI's are held to a higher standard than the average Marine. The SDA checklist was also put in place to ensure there are minimal distractions present to interfere with the students' successful completion of DI SCH and also to ensure minimal interference while making Marines. The parent command must also verify that the DI SCH candidate does

not have an explosive temper and that the Marine embraces the Marine Corps' Core Values in his/her daily duties.⁸ The method for verifying compliance in this area involves the Marines' immediate Officer and Staff non-commissioned officer in charge who make the appropriate recommendation to the Commanding Officer who has final approval authority.

According to the program of instruction at DI SCH, the following courses are taught: the Recruit Training Order (RTO), Combat Conditioning (CC), Close Order Drill (COD), Values Based Training/Core Values (CVs), Basic Warrior Training (BWT), Testing and Evaluation, History, Leadership, and the conduct of the crucible.⁹ This paper will address two instructional areas: RTO training and VBT.

Recruit Training Order – RTO training is where DI SCH focuses the majority of its training. RTO training involves very detailed instruction, explanation and interpretation of the RTO. The training consists of classroom instruction, practical application, squad bay procedures, and ethical decision games. Before graduating from DI School each student must pass a 100 question test on the RTO. RTO training covers nearly everything pertaining to recruit training from the basic daily routine, clothing and gear issue, hair cut and exchange procedures, sick-call and emergency procedures, emergency leave, consumption of water and food, amount of time allotted to eat, sleep, and conduct hygiene, and authorized techniques for correcting minor deficiencies of recruits. The RTO is the governing document for training and making Marines. It sets forth the policy for the conduct of all Marines, Sailors, and government employees when dealing with recruits.¹⁰ It is the "Bible" for recruit training and normally sits near the bed in the DI office.

The DI office is usually small, approximately 12' x 12'. This is where the DI conducts administrative tasks associated with his/her duties. DI's conduct the majority of their administrative tasks following "taps" for the recruits. Each evening, one member of the team of DI's is required to sleep in this office. DI's are required to be awake and in uniform 15 minutes prior to reveille and 15 minutes after taps. Most DI's sleep from approximately 2300 to 0330. DI's are also required to tour the squad bay while the recruits are sleeping in order to ensure that good order and discipline is maintained. Also, to ensure good order and discipline in the squad bays there are three recruits who perform the duties of fire-watch. Two recruits continuously roam the squad bay area and one recruit is posted in the head (bathroom). In event of disturbance the fire-watch will immediately wake the duty DI. DI's are not permitted to interrupt recruits while they are sleeping. In the DI office there is a desk, three wall-lockers where each DI stores their uniforms, a small refrigerator, microwave oven, coffee pot and one rack where the duty DI sleeps. The RTO is the first thing the DI sees when he/she awakens and the last thing the DI reads before going to sleep.

Values Based Training – Through the process of instruction, modeling, scenarios, core values discussions, mentoring, and evaluations DI SCH develops instructors who have a clear understanding of VBT, are prepared to effectively and convincingly deliver core values discussions to recruits, and who have taken personal ownership of the Marine Corps' Core Values.¹¹ To ensure the students have a clear understanding of VBT, DI SCH begins by providing a VBT concept class. This class is considered so vital that it is taught by the senior leadership team at DI SCH, the Director and 1stSgt. The VBT concept class given to DI students is approximately 50 minutes in length and includes the definition of VBT, its purpose, the VBT

methodology, and roles of DI's throughout the VBT process. The information has two parts: it describes the VBT concept class while simultaneously explaining how Marines are made.

VALUES BASED TRAINING (VBT) CONCEPT CLASS

Definition of Values Based Training: It is the method of threading the Marine Corps' Core Values and fundamental principles of leadership and warrior ethos throughout recruit training.¹²

A great way to visualize the process of threading is to picture a group of individuals as they arrive at MCRD PISC to begin training. Upon arrival this group of 80+ recruits is comprised of individuals who have personal goals and their own set of values and beliefs. The DI then takes every training evolution, graduation requirement, and every moment he/she can find to thread the Marine Corps' core values, leadership traits and principles, its history and traditions, and its warrior ethos throughout each and every event in recruit training. The end state is to turn the aforementioned individuals in to a "rock solid team". The VBT process "encompasses the foundational aspects of the training continuum that prepares Marines to make ethical and moral decisions over their careers and during their lifetimes." VBT also serves as an adhesive that bonds the Marine Corps' Core Values to its organizational values. Organizational values such as "Every Marine a Rifleman," "First to Fight," tradition, fitness, teamwork, "take care of our own", and small unit leadership that defines the essence of Marine leadership."¹³

Purpose of Values Based Training: "The end state, from a Recruit Training perspective, is to develop a Marine with the fundamental character and warrior ethos, who is committed to the USMC core values in service to the country."¹⁴ In short, the Marine Corps transforms U.S. citizens into Marines who swear an oath to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic."

In an address before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Marine Corps Posture the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General James T. Conway, summed up his stance on the Marine Corps' Core Values as he stated, "The values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment – imprinted on their souls during recruit training and strengthened thereafter – mark a Marine's character for a lifetime".¹⁵

DI's at MCRD PISC took this statement to heart and interpreted this as their opportunity to have a positive impact on their recruits' character which would last a lifetime. Whether the Marines they make serve for four or forty years the DI understands the importance of the mission: Creating Marines creates better citizens who will return to society following their honorable tour of duty in the Marine Corps.

To be effective at delivering core value discussions to recruits DI's MUST have a personal ownership and clear understanding of the core values. The DI must internalize and demonstrate through his/her daily activities his/her commitment to the core values. He/she must truly believe in what they're teaching and demonstrate that the core values are not merely just the three words of Honor, Courage, and Commitment. The core values are a way of life for Marines.

When asked if he had internalized the core values, a Drill Instructor at MCRD PISC, stated: "My heart is shaped like an Eagle, Globe, and Anchor and topped off with the Marine Corps motto, Semper Fidelis. Surrounding my heart are the three words of Honor, Courage, and Commitment." He then stated: "I understand the importance of making Marines. My recruits are the future of the Corps who will find themselves in Iraq or Afghanistan very soon. They are smart and you can't fool them. My recruits watch my every move and they hear everything I say. They are beginning to walk and talk like me."¹⁶

Values Based Training Methodology: The VBT methodology at DI SCH has established a solid foundation from which each student learns to teach and instill the Marine Corps' Core Values to his/her recruits. This process develops DI's who conduct core values discussions with his/her recruits that strengthen the recruits' ability to make sound moral and ethical decisions while in or out of uniform. There are a total of 42 core value discussions that are in use at MCRD PISC. These discussions expose the recruits to different scenarios and make the recruit decide which course of action to take. Some of the discussions involve scenarios relating to combat, leave and liberty, integrity violations, sexual harassment issues, hazing, theft, substance abuse, and those involving both physical and moral courage that may need to be taken to solve a problem.

Through the core value discussions DI students learn to guide recruits into making the right decision when faced with overwhelming adversity. The goal is to build upon the moral muscle memory of the Marine, to enable him/her to make the right decision for the right reasons at the right time. United States Marine Corps Recruit Training consists of seventy training days (TDs). The seventy TDs make up the 12-week training schedule which is broken down into 3 distinctive phases. Throughout the 3-phases, Marine Corps recruits experience VBT.

VBT is continuous throughout a recruit training cycle and is broken down into four phases: Foundation, Reinforcement, Evaluation, and Transition.

Foundation Phase: The foundation phase occurs during weeks 1 and 2. It is this phase that development of the mind, body, and spirit of the recruit begins.¹⁷ Establishment of a solid foundation based on the core values taught during this period is as important as the foundation when building a house. Any deviation from the plans or without ample solidification can cause the rest of the structure to crumble. Once the foundation is ready and cured, the remaining

phases can occur. If the foundation is solid, mistakes made in later phases can be corrected with little difficulty whereas mistakes made in the foundation cannot and these mistakes will jeopardize the entire structure. Faults in the foundation may not be revealed during recruit training but may surface later in places like Iraq or Afghanistan or in the streets of society when a Marine is faced with a moral or ethical dilemma. One of the goals during the foundation phase is to begin a lifelong learning process that enables a Marine to begin making sound moral and ethical decisions even when faced with overwhelming adversity. The Marine Corps places great emphasis on the solidification of its core values during recruit training. Beginning on training day 1, the company commander conducts the first classes to his/her entire company of recruits. The first class given is a class on values. This class explains what values are, where values are learned and helps recruits identify their personal values. Immediately following the class on values is a class on the Marine Corps' Core Values. The core values class explains and defines the Marine Corps' Core Values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment and identifies individuals in history who have demonstrated these values. The definition of the core values are:

HONOR. The bedrock of the Marine Corps' character. The quality that guides Marines to exemplify the ultimate in ethical and moral behavior; never to lie, cheat, or steal; to abide by an uncompromising code of integrity; to respect human dignity; to have respect and concern for each other. The quality of maturity, dedication, trust, and dependability that commits us to act responsibly; to be accountable for our actions.

COURAGE. The heart of our core values, courage is the mental, moral, and physical strength ingrained in Marines and Sailors to carry them through the challenges of combat and the mastery of fear; to do what is right; to adhere to a higher standard of personal conduct; to lead by example, and to make tough decisions under stress and pressure. It is the inner strength that enables us to take that extra step.

COMMITMENT. The spirit of determination and dedication within members of a force of arms that leads to professional mastery of the art of war. It leads to the highest order of discipline for unit and self; it is the ingredient that enables 24-hour-a-day dedication to Corps and Country; pride; concern for others; and an unrelenting determination to achieve a standard of excellence in every endeavor. Commitment is the value that establishes the Marine as the warrior and citizen others strive to emulate.¹⁸

The core values class is followed by an ethics class that is also given by the company commander. During this phase recruits also receive classes from their series commander on hazing, fraternization, and equal opportunity. The battalion chaplain also plays a key role in ethics and spiritual support for recruits. Recruits receive most of their formal classes in a large theater-like classroom via power point presentation and lecture from the instructor. In attendance and normally sitting in the rear of the classroom and out of sight of the recruits is the DI who will conduct the evening BDR.

The DI pays very close attention to the classes given throughout the day. During the evening BDR the DI will then review, reinforce and answer question pertaining to that particular days classes. During the core value discussions in this phase the recruits and DI discuss the values held by the recruits prior to reporting to recruit training. They also talk about how values are shaped.

During the core values discussions the DI puts the recruits in a more relaxed environment and permits them to respectfully share their thoughts and feelings with their peers. The DI also removes what is considered the most intimidating piece of headgear known to mankind, his/her campaign hat, also called the Smokey Bear Hat. "Physical strengthening of the body is conducted daily through a progressive building block approach to combat conditioning. When not in the classroom or on the PT field, recruits continue to build discipline, a sense of teamwork,

and a warrior spirit through martial arts training, close order drill and basic daily routine within the squad bays.”¹⁹ One example of a core value discussion during the foundation phase deals with integrity. This particular discussion links to the values and ethics class given by the company commander. In this discussion the recruits are introduced to a scenario where an individual uses another person’s credit card and then returns the credit card without being noticed. The recruits are then asked how the actions of this individual conflict with the Marine Corps’ core values. Throughout the discussion the DI emphasized how values directly influence decision making and that Marines are expected to uphold the Core Values even when not one is looking.

Reinforcement Phase: The reinforcement phase occurs during weeks 3 through 10. During this phase the DI’s continuously reinforced what was taught during the foundation phase and slowly introduce new topics such as those pertaining to Marine Corps policy and organizational values. Regarding policy, recruits learn the specific regulations about sexual harassment, substance abuse, equal opportunity, law of war and the code of conduct. Following the formal classroom instruction on Marine Corps policies the DI’s reinforce the classes and continue to develop the moral discipline of recruits through interactive core value discussions on each subject. Recruits also learn first-hand the meanings behind the organizational values held by Marines.

One of the organizational values taught is that every Marine is a Rifleman. Regardless of military occupational specialty or gender, every Marine is first and foremost a disciplined warrior. This value is reinforced during marksmanship training. Here recruits are introduced to Marine Corps Marksmanship and undergo an intense week of instruction followed by an additional week of live firing of the M16A2 service rifle, culminating in their qualification. Recruits also learn through their DI’s that Marines take care of their own. Although DI’s are

strict and often short-tempered with their recruits, the recruits eventually realize that the DI's are out to make them the best Marines that the Corps has to offer.

DI's understand and their performance supports that they are entrusted with the nation's most important resource: the sons and daughters of Americans. DI's take civilians, imbue them with the Marine Corps' Core Values, train them, transform them into Marines, and give them an opportunity to serve a greater cause than themselves. This phase focuses on the recruits ability to apply the core values, leadership traits and principles, moral and ethical decision making, as well as development of basic warrior skills.²⁰ Recruits continue to build their warrior ethos through basic warrior training (BWT). During BWT recruits learn to live and conduct hygiene in a field environment, to eat Meals Ready to Eat (MRE), to care for their weapons in wet/dirty/muddy environments, conduct combat formations, and move tactically through a field environment. Recruits are also assigned to leadership billets in both garrison and in the field environments where they apply the leadership traits and principles taught during the foundation phase. Physical strength and confidence continue to be developed through a progressive combat conditioning program, combat water survival training, and application in a field training environment.²¹

An example of a core value discussion during the reinforcement phase deals with interior guard. This particular displays a scenario where an individual departs from his post before he/she is actually relieved. This example is a clear violation of Marine Corps General Order, 5: To quit my post only when properly relieved. The recruits are then asked how the actions of this individual conflict with the Marine Corps' core values.

Evaluation Phase: Evaluation of recruits is continuous throughout the entire 12 weeks of training. At the completion of each phase of training, recruits are mentored or counseled on their ability to demonstrate and adhere to the core values by their DI team. This evaluation will eventually lead to the final conduct marks a graduating Marine will receive. In order to graduate, a recruit must meet seven specific graduation requirements which contribute to his/her proficiency marking.

The seven graduation requirements are: earn a tan belt in the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program, complete combat water survival requirements, qualify with the M16A2 service rifle, pass two written academic tests and a practical application test, pass the Marine Corps physical fitness test, pass the battalion commander's uniform inspection, pass the moral, mental, and physical evaluation of the crucible.²²

Those recruits who had difficulty mastering certain areas or who failed to display the core values commensurate with what is expected at their level are identified and provided remediation. The DI also provides counseling and if required may assign a study partner. Most recruits succeed following counseling and remediation and continue to train. Depending on the situation, those recruits who fail to succeed are set back in training or removed from training. Those recruits with a serious core values violation such as stealing, fighting another recruit, or cheating are often removed from training and discharged. Those with minor core values violations may be firmly counseled by their DI or made to conduct incentive physical training which is used to instill discipline, motivation, and correct minor deficiencies.

A core value discussion during this phase involves a combat situation in Iraq. Here is the discussion: "A squad of Marines is dispatched on a scheduled patrol in Ramadi, Iraq.

Approximately 30 minutes into the patrol, the team was hit with an Improvised Explosive Device (IED). As the Marines dismounted the vehicles to begin to search for the person(s) that detonated the IED, they found one of their Marines in the patrol had been killed and four others were seriously wounded. In the search for the terrorists, one of the fire team's finds two men with detonating devices in a house approximately 100 yards away. A fellow Marine, distraught by the death of his friend, stated he wanted to kill the suspects; that no one will ever know. The squad leader stops his Marines from doing harm and takes the suspects into custody and eventually turns them over to the MPs."²³ The DI then talks to the recruits about the situation and asks questions pertaining to what type of moral and mental strengths were displayed by the Sergeant.

The evaluation phase evaluates the sum of the recruits training during the crucible. It is during the crucible that the recruit demonstrates that he/she has embraced the core values and the essence of the warrior ethos. The crucible is a 54-hour grueling field training exercise that consists of six day events, two night events and a final nine-mile hike. The evaluation consists of a series of physical, mental, and moral challenges conducted in an environment filled with adversity, friction, and hardship. The crucible is designed to emphasize the importance of teamwork and adherence to the core values, leadership traits, and leadership principles under arduous and stressful conditions. Recruits must pass with at least 80% of the required events.²⁴

The DI evaluates the recruits mentally, morally, and physically per the following criteria:

HONOR. The recruit demonstrates integrity, honesty, military bearing and respect for fellow recruits. The recruit takes responsibility for his/her actions or the actions of his/her team when designated the leader, wears the uniform with pride, and demonstrates maturity and sound judgment.

COURAGE. The recruit demonstrates mental and physical strength, and self-discipline, to include endurance and overcoming fatigue and muscle pain in the completion of physical tasks and obstacles. The recruit also demonstrates mental and moral strength by taking action in the absence of specific directions or guidance; maintaining composure under pressure; setting the example; displaying loyalty to the unit; and refusing to “cut corners” despite fatigue and less supervision.

COMMITMENT. The recruit demonstrates a sincere desire for self-improvement and knowledge. He/she also demonstrated teamwork (helps other recruits), dedication, selflessness, enthusiasm, and motivation.

The crucible is the defining moment in recruit training. It is also an event that recruits can fail and ultimately be discharged for failing to demonstrate the character and warrior ethos expected of Marines.²⁵

Transition Phase: The transition phase begins at the emblem ceremony immediately following the nine-mile “crucible hike”. During this ceremony the senior enlisted Marine in the company, the Company 1stSgt, addresses the recruits. As a mentor and leader the 1stSgt highlights where the recruits have been, what they have accomplished throughout their training, and the expectations the future holds for them as Marines. Following the 1stSgt’s speech the DI’s award the Marine Corps emblem to their respective recruits and calls them “Marine” for the first time.²⁶ It is during this moment that the transformation from recruit to Marine occurs. MCRD PISC considers the passing of the emblem from DI to new Marine so sacred that no spectators are permitted to observe the ceremony. During the passing of the emblem the new Marines often shed tears of joy for their accomplishments. Immediately following the emblem ceremony the company commander reminds the new Marines of their obligation to support and defend the Constitution of the United States by re-administering their Oath of Enlistment.

Following the emblem ceremony the new Marines celebrate their accomplishment with a Warrior's Breakfast.

During the transformation phase the new Marines operate in a more decentralized environment and the DI's are no longer required or needed to control every move of his/her platoon.²⁷ The new Marines receive briefs on "Sharing the Legacy" by guest speakers. Guest speakers for sharing the legacy briefs consist of retired Marines who discuss their personal experiences in the Marine Corps, their accomplishments after their tour of duty, and their expectations of the new Marines.

Hearing the guest lecturers supports the adage "Once a Marine, Always a Marine." No longer considered recruits, the new Marines now address their DI's by their rank and last name instead of calling the "sir" or "ma'am". The new Marines are also referred to by their rank and last name instead of "recruit."

Also, during transition week the new Marines receive classes on driver's safety, leave and liberty conduct, and a brief on their first assignment following basic training which is at the School of Infantry, Camp Lejeune, N.C. The core value discussions during this week include scenarios involving fraternization, sexual assault, sexual responsibility, child abuse and operational culture.

Family day occurs one day prior to graduation. During family day the new Marines show their family members around the base and introduce their DI's. The transformation is most apparent to the new Marines' family members. The final event is graduation, an opportunity to showcase discipline, teamwork, and *esprit de corps*. Graduation is a day no Marine forgets.²⁸ The DI is a person a recruit never forgets.

The VBT concept class is also an important part of the sustainment training in the Recruit Training Regiment at Parris Island. As part of the sustainment training each recruit training company, which consists of three company grade officers, a 1stSgt, and approximately 24 DI's, returns to DI School where it receives refresher VBT classes and conducts ethical decision games. The officers in the training company include the company commander and two series commanders. The Company Commander is normally a Captain while the Series Commanders may be Captains or First Lieutenants. The Company Commander commands the company and each series commander commands their respective series. Each series commander is in charge of 3 training platoons and normally 12 DI's. One training company consists of 6 training platoons. This sustainment training is a requirement for all training companies prior to the start of a new training cycle. The majority of the ethical decision games involve recruit training violations that resulted in administrative or punitive action taken against a DI, team of DI's, or a recruit. Following the VBT class the returning company will then be re-evaluated on the RTO. Before permitted to begin training a new cycle of recruits each member in the recruit training company MUST pass the RTO test.

The focus of VBT at DI SCH is to develop DI's who have a clear understanding of VBT, are prepared to effectively and convincingly deliver core values discussions to recruits, and who have taken personal ownership of the Marine Corps' Core Values. DI SCH develops instructors with the above qualities by giving classes on VBT methodology, values, and core values discussions. This values class stresses the definitions of and importance of the Marine Corps' core values and also introduces the students to the values currently held by the recruits entering the recruit training cycle. Due to the strict recruiting standards, the values observed in the recruits are no shocker to the DI's. Some of the key values held by today's youth that the

instructor shares with the students include self reliance, independent thinkers, optimism, and activism. The values that are considered inconsistent with the Marine Corps are quickly addressed by the DI's: these values pertain mainly to the clothing styles in vogue today (teens wearing trousers that display their underwear).

Following the class on values, the DI SCH instructors teach their students how to conduct core values guided discussion with recruits. An invaluable tool utilized by DI SCH is the core values personal example binder that each student is issued upon arrival. This binder includes the 42 core value guided discussion outlines that are being used in the recruit training environment. With this binder the student becomes very familiar and well versed in the discussions he/she will use subsequent to graduation as he/she begins making Marines.

While training at DI SCH each student is tasked to perform a total of seven core value guided discussions (6 ungraded, the final for grade) amongst his/her peers which is facilitated by their respective squad instructor. The students use the personal example binders to annotate their experiences with the particular subject and share them with the group. In the event the student has no or very little experience with the subject core value discussion, the student learns from and annotates their peers' experiences. By listening to and annotating their peers experience the student gains an understanding of the subject and will be able to share this information while conducting guided discussions with his/her own recruits.

DI students are also taught the techniques of military instruction followed up by a practical application where the students are graded on their ability to give a 15-minute period of instruction to his/her peers. DI students also conduct observations of a recruit training company in garrison and during the conduct of the crucible. Due to his/her lack of knowledge and

experience with both recruit training, recruits, and the crucible, the DI student initially observes; He/she has no interaction with the recruits until later observations. During later observations and following the successful mastery of the RTO, while being supervised the DI student is permitted to interact with the recruits. To ensure students have a personal ownership of the core values, a core values inventory is conducted at the beginning of a new class. This inventory is a questionnaire that asks the students to define the core values of honor, courage, and commitment. It also asks students to describe violations of the core values they have witnessed and what action they took regarding the violation. For DI students who had difficulty mastering the curriculum or who have violated a core value, DI school has established a Performance Review Board. The PRB is a board that is used to identify troubled students, identify trouble areas, and recommend corrective action to overcome the deficiency. The student is given a period of 20 days to correct the issue which may include: mastery of a written test or practical application of COD, overcoming physical deficiencies which may include achieving a first class PFT score, or mastering the obstacle and/or confidence courses.

The staff at Drill Instructor School is clearly focused on the mission of making drill instructors who, in the words of an instructor at the school, "Get it." When asked what he meant by "Get it," the instructor stated that his goal is to "create DI's who understand the importance of making Marines who embrace the Core Values."²⁹ Every day, upon arrival at DI SCH and before the first class of the day, the class as a whole recites the DI Pledge. The DI Pledge was written by DI's for DI's:

*"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 Marines, thoroughly indoctrinated in love of Corps and country. I will demand of them, and demonstrate by my own example, the highest standards of personal conduct, morality and professional skill."*³⁰

Marine Corps recruits are trained, led, mentored, and transformed from civilian to Marine by their DI's who will be with the recruits until the recruits become Marines and graduate from recruit training. DI's learn their profession at Drill Instructor School. One of the most important courses taught at DI SCH is its Values Based Training class. Through Values Based Training at DI SCH, DI students solidify their understanding of the Marine Corps' Core Values, they further develop the skills required to effectively and convincingly deliver core values discussions, and they also accept personal ownership of the core values that they will work around the clock to instill into their recruits. DI's are known for having great time-management skills and take every opportunity to conduct Values Based Training through teaching, remediating, modeling, mentoring and relating nearly every situation and class that is taught through a core values discussion with their recruits. Through the Values Based Training methodology DI's instill the Marine Corps' Core Values to their recruits. This methodology establishes a solid foundation which greatly enhances the individual Marines' ability to make sound moral and ethical decisions on and off the battlefield.

¹"Beginning the Transformation," Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, South Carolina, 28 May 2008.

² Beginning the Transformation," 30

³ DI SCH web page: <http://www.mcrdpi.usmc.mil/units/rtr/battalions/dischool/index.asp>

⁴ "Beginning the Transformation," 30

⁵ Program of Instruction, Drill Instructor School, Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, SC, July 2008

⁶ Depot Order P1513.6B, Recruit Training Order

⁷ Marine Corps Order P1326.6D, Special Duty Assignment Manual

⁸ SDA checklist, A2

⁹ DI SCH POI

¹⁰ RTO, 1-3

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- ¹¹ "Beginning the Transformation," 30
- ¹² "Beginning the Transformation," 10
- ¹³ "Beginning the Transformation," 11
- ¹⁴ "Beginning the Transformation," 11
- ¹⁵ Senate Armed Services Committee on Marine Corps Posture. Commandant of the Marine Corps, General James T. Conway, 4 June 2009.
- ¹⁶ SSgt Alex Ayala, interview conducted on 11 December 2009.
- ¹⁷ "Beginning the Transformation," 23
- ¹⁸ Sturkey, Marrion F. Warrior Culture of U.S. Marines, 110
- ¹⁹ "Beginning the Transformation," 23
- ²⁰ "Beginning the Transformation," 24
- ²¹ "Beginning the Transformation," 24
- ²² "Beginning the Transformation," 24
- ²³ "Moral Strength, Core Value Discussion Instructor Guide, version 4, MCRD Parris Island, 15 October 2008
- ²⁴ "Beginning the Transformation," 24
- ²⁵ "Beginning the Transformation," 24
- ²⁶ "Beginning the Transformation," 24
- ²⁷ "Beginning the Transformation," 24
- ²⁸ "Beginning the Transformation," 24
- ²⁹ GySgt Frank Robinson, interview conducted on 11 December 2009.
- ³⁰ DI SCH web page: <http://www.mcrdpi.usmc.mil/units/rtr/battalions/dischool/index.asp>

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