

U.S. ARMY CHAPLAINS' MITIGATION OF NEGATIVE (TOXIC) LEADERSHIP

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by

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ABSTRACT

U.S. ARMY CHAPLAINS' MITIGATION OF NEGATIVE (TOXIC) LEADERSHIP,
by Chaplain (Major) Lewis R. Messinger, 155 pages.

Chaplains can play a unique role in mitigating negative and toxic leadership. Army Doctrine Publication 6-22 *Leadership* describes negative and toxic leadership as it undermines basic tenets of Mission Command. Such leadership thwarts mutual trust and team-building, mocking Army senior leadership's commitment to high standards of ethical conduct and professionalism. Properly aware, equipped and supported, chaplains can provide effective mitigation of negative and toxic leadership in their organizations. Army regulations directly inform chaplains' ability to act. Chaplains advise their commands about the personal impact of leadership practices. They are evaluated for their consultation and confrontation skills and risk-taking ability. Regulations not only authorize chaplains' mitigation of negative or toxic leadership, but expect it. But the Chaplaincy ought not to be drawn into conflict with Command. Chaplains are especially challenged when the negative leader is their immediate superior. Senior chaplains' intentional mentoring and supervision may yield positive proactive solutions.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

How do we create specific conditions in which the Army commits itself to a culture of service and responsibility and behaviors of our profession as articulated in the Army Professional Ethic?¹

— GEN Martin E. Dempsey

Toxic leadership has captured the attention of the United States Army's most senior leaders. The "Profession of Arms" campaign launched by the Department of the Army in 2011 identifies professional leadership as fundamental to the success of everything the Army does. Professionalism in the Army demands individual self-monitoring and collective policing² if it is to be taken seriously. Professing professionalism necessarily means that negative or toxic leadership cannot be tolerated.

"Toxic" is an unfortunate term with negative connotations for whoever finds themselves with the label. Toxic can be applied to a wide array of personal behaviors and contexts subject entirely to the perceptions and attitudes of the recipients of that behavior. Therefore, I resolve to keep the Army definitions of negative and toxic leadership found in Army Regulation 6-22 *Leadership* as my primary reference throughout.

"Negative leadership generally leaves people and organizations in a worse condition than the leader found them. A form of negative leadership is toxic leadership. Toxic leadership is a combination of self-centered attitudes, motivations, and behaviors that have adverse effects on subordinates, the organization, and mission performance. This leader lacks concern for others, operates with an inflated sense of self-worth, and consistently uses dysfunctional behaviors to deceive, intimidate, coerce, or unfairly punish others to get what they want. for themselves. The negative leader completes short-

term requirements by operating at the bottom of the continuum of commitment, Prolonged use of negative leadership undermines the followers' will, initiative, and potential and destroys unit morale.”³

The problem of toxic leadership exists in many other organizations beside the Army. Yet the Army's institutional culture and organizational systems, to be shown, unwittingly empowers certain kinds of people enabling them to implement unhealthy leadership styles. The prevalent Army culture tends to reinforce and validate negative or toxic leader behavior when such behavior remains unchallenged. Such leaders often remain unchallenged especially when they demonstrate technical competency, tactical prowess and consistently show results.

The literature reviewed in chapter 2 covers the topics of toxic leadership and the unhinged negative narcissistic behavior that requires mitigation. The literature is wide and diverse on the subject to include popular self-help books for people wrestling with their toxic leaders in the civilian corporate world. Psychologists writing in academic and private practice settings tend to fall into two camps: Those who believe (1) toxic leaders know what they are doing and can change if they want to, and (2) those that do not.

The problem of negative or toxic leadership is well-documented in the civilian corporate business community and clinical psychological books and journals. Such leadership has not always been referred to as toxic, but as caustic, Type A, Machiavellian, micro-manager among the more prevalent in the last fifty years.⁴ But only in the last decade has the problem seemed to receive the attention it is due from the Army: first within its academic institutions and then by senior leadership. The research

and journalistic scholarship in the Army, and the military in general, has trended upward significantly in the last decade.

When I attended the U.S. Army Chaplain School for basic training in 2000, my classmates and I were told that we might someday be faced with working for a “jerk.” The only sage advice I remember receiving was “Choose your crosses wisely.” The way the situation was described to us at the time suggested that we as individual chaplains would be alone in that decision. By implication, we should not necessarily expect support or help from anyone in the wider Chaplain Corps. We were “on our own.” This project seeks to verify whether or not this dynamic is really true and what can be feasible solutions no matter what the truth holds.

Nothing in my personal or professional development, seminary training or civilian parish experience, nothing in my military training, prepared me for what I faced during my first deployment to Iraq. The troublesome dynamics outlined in the attached case study (see Appendix B) highlights a caustic bully whose unprofessional behavior went unchecked, unmitigated, in a stressful combat and counter-insurgency environment. In the aftermath of my experience, I discovered that mitigation of negative or toxic leadership is in fact directed and expected of chaplains by virtue of Army regulations.

Now I am gratified to learn that Chaplain Basic Course students hearing about Army leadership doctrine for the first time also get a chance to learn about negative or toxic behavior. Not only will they receive instruction about “what right looks like,”⁵ they also will come to understand how damaging toxic leadership can be to an organization. They will, perhaps by deduction, ascertain strategies and courses of action to deal with

this issue should the need ever arise. Junior chaplains may appreciate guidance and mentoring in this challenging area.

Chaplains properly aware, informed, equipped and supported can play a significant role in identifying and mitigating toxic leadership behavior in their organizations. Chaplains, properly employed, can mitigate the impact of toxic leadership on morale and group dynamics in the units they serve. Many chaplains across the Army have discovered significant ways to address toxic leadership within the context of their assigned organizations. Many have achieved significant results without losing their careers, and without succumbing to a “messiah complex.” Chaplains with such a complex may feel compelled to confront or rehabilitate a toxic leader single-handedly. As one might imagine, such approach is often met with less than optimal results for all involved.

This project aims to provide Army chaplains with basic understanding of negative and toxic leadership dynamics to create or enhance awareness. This project calls chaplains to consider and plan proper actions and responses that will mitigate the impact of negative leadership in healthy positive ways acceptable within the Army’s organizational culture. Results of a wide review of pertinent literature, and analysis of a focused pilot survey, should catalog many healthy positive strategies and best practices for chaplains to remain faithful to their callings and true to themselves.

Entire organizations can be faced with a prolonged journey with a damaging toxic leader. Such groups will benefit from a chaplain whose personal resiliency and spiritual foundation gives Soldiers moral courage and fortitude to remain faithful to their mission nonetheless.

The Problem of Toxic Leadership in the U.S. Army

Colonel George E. Reed, United States Army (Retired) and Dr. R. Craig Bullis, of the U.S. Army War College describe toxic leadership as being most self-interested, exploitative and abusive toward subordinates. Such leadership undermines the Army's organizational culture at grassroots level.⁶ It undermines positive organizational culture at the lowest levels and can have long and short term effects upon group dynamics and upon the individuals within those groups.

The detrimental nature of toxic leadership is antithetical to tenets of leadership currently spoken of by senior leaders at the very top of the Army. Putting self first is not conducive to effective team-building. Putting subordinates down in demeaning and humiliating ways may in fact build a cohesive team against the destructive leader. But a disjointed organization full of opportunists or survivalists seems more likely. Toxic leaders' poisonous and sometimes contagious behavior renders impossible their ability to create climates of mutual trust in their organizations.

Toxic leadership encompasses a wide spectrum of personality types, characteristic behaviors and group dynamics, from the exacting, tyrannical micromanager to the detached, absent and listless figurehead. For the purpose of this research I am narrowing my definition to the most recent one found in Army Doctrine Publication 6-22 *Leadership*. A brief perusal of the research of Drs. George Reed and Craig Bullis finds this definition reinforced. These scholars have cited trends and experience of toxic leadership prevalent in the Army within the last decade.

"Toxic" is a very relative and subjective term that will probably drop out of vogue in another decade or more. The term has negative connotations which are not helpful in

inciting someone to voluntarily seek help or make significant changes in their leadership style. The working definition of toxic provided in ADP 6-22 and by Dr. Reed serves our understanding of this moniker as it relates to the Army.

Narcissism's Link to Negative or Toxic Leadership

Army's organizational systems and culture enter into unintentional collusion with toxic leaders who may have powerful narcissistic tendencies. These tendencies alone are not necessarily negative in themselves. In fact, some are often necessary. The Army attracts and rewards many positive traits that many toxic leaders also possess. The negative narcissistic toxic leader is attracted to the risk-and-reward system and the ready-made groups of loyal followers who must submit to them. While Sigmund Freud, Michael Maccoby, Jean Lipman-Blumen and others identify many positive aspects of narcissism- decisiveness, aggressiveness, etc- there are negative aspects of narcissistic personality types and behaviors. When the positive aspects become exaggerated, the Army gets these traits also, the so-called "dark side" of narcissism prevalent in many toxic leaders.

Narcissism is nothing new, the very name used in psychology deriving from Ovid's mythological figure in his "Metamorphosis": the famous Narcissus. Narcissus, prideful and disdaining everyone around him, refuses the romantic overtures of a lovely maiden (Echo) whose unrequited love turns her into an empty, hollow remnant of her former self. Nemesis, the goddess of revenge, learns of this tragedy and lures Narcissus beside a pool of water. In his vanity, Narcissus gazes into the pool and becomes captivated by his own reflection. He subsequently falls in love with his own beauty not

realizing it is only an image. Realizing his love will never be truly expressed and satisfied, Narcissus dies . . . heartbroken.⁷

Sigmund Freud derived the term “narcissism” from Ovid’s pathologically self-involved creature from Greek mythology.⁸ Freud’s choice of term is perhaps unfortunate. The reputation conveyed in narcissism is based primarily upon the negative behavior, overshadowing the many positive attributes identified in recent literature explored in chapter 2. Freud himself did not wish to convey the notion that somehow a person with narcissistic traits was overwhelmingly or ultimately bad or evil, but that certain traits are a normal part of everyone’s development.⁹

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th edition (*DSM-IV*), published by the American Psychiatric Association and released in 2000, puts narcissism under the category of “Narcissistic Personality Disorder” (NPD). The complete *DSM-IV* description is attached as an appendix at the end of this chapter. *DSM-IV* suggests its origins are developmental in nature and that a person exuding symptoms (behavior) can change with self-awareness and cooperation.¹⁰ *DSM-V* is expected to be released in May 2013. The diagnostic criteria for narcissism has *not* been changed as originally believed, particularly with understanding to what constitutes a “personality disorder.”¹¹ NPD is defined more as an “impairment” in *DSM V*¹² (See Appendix A).

Staging the age-old debate of whether narcissism describes a particular person’s “state of being” or a specific set pattern of behaviors is beyond the scope of this project. I will avoid temptation of ascribing a diagnosis of narcissism—proscribed by *DSM IV* and now *DSM V*—to toxic leaders generally. I am not qualified to render such diagnosis. I can only identify particular traits and behaviors that can be seen and experienced and the

cumulative effects upon myself or the group or unit. That is all I suggest any of us do in identifying the problem of toxic leadership, especially to a perpetrator. “Toxic” is less than flattering. Apply a disparaging label to someone and we can expect the person to become defensive and even less disposed towards voluntary change.

While I have some significant experiences and educated hypotheses about toxic leadership behavior and underlying negative narcissism, I am not qualified to make such clinical diagnosis of individuals or an entire class of people. But I can identify behaviors measured against practices of common civility and human decency. I can measure behavior and its effect against the Army Core Values, the Mission Command and Leadership doctrine, and the Army Regulations themselves as they relate to building positive command climates and engendering moral and ethical organizations.

The danger of labeling anyone “narcissist” or “toxic” or any other kind of label is the propensity to believe that such terms are ultimate, unchangeable ascriptions. They may convey a notion that a person is by “nature” compelled to think and behave a certain way and that they will never change. Indeed, “That’s just how I am” or “I know I can be rough and brutally honest sometimes” would suggest a *status quo* not likely to change on its own. My experience with a toxic leader has taught me to separate characteristics of personality from behavior, the latter being a personal and cognitive choice.

My roles as a chaplain is not to render a clinical diagnosis upon a negative leader, either formally or informally. Their behavior, on the other hand, can be described, weighed for effects and measured empirically. This behavior can be juxtaposed to many doctrinal and ethical constructs and ill affects identified accordingly as matter-of-fact and in a non-blaming manner. Having a relationship with a toxic leader described by senior

officers as a “personality conflict” is too simple. Such a verdict makes the damage done by negative or toxic leaders too easy to dismiss.

The Army can be a “good fit” for the narcissist. Narcissism, according to Michael Maccoby, does not necessarily have to be bad. Indeed, the many positive attributes are of great value to the Army and are often rewarded. Jean Lipman-Blumen argues that many groups are enamored with essential qualities of high-performing narcissists. Indeed, some of their characteristics are even necessary during crisis and uncertainty. Since certain narcissistic or toxic leaders thrive on feeding subordinates’ uncertainty in order to provide the ever-elusive rescue, fear and uncertainty are their natural allies.¹³

If left unchecked, the Army unwittingly enables the negative attributes of narcissism to flourish; the very attributes that I identify in this project as being “toxic” to an organization. The aggression the leader directs toward the enemy or to the accomplishment of mission goals is now also directed at subordinates. Such leaders demonstrate self-assurance in taking a hard stance amid conflicting points of view. But now such leaders’ self-assurance has negative impacts for subordinates for whom he or she has a misguided perception. He or she often has a misguided perception because they have already made up their minds, practice confirmation bias, do not seek feedback or ask meaningful questions. The toxic leader’s decisiveness and swiftness of action often rewarded by superiors are the same attributes that can render a subordinate being unduly targeted and ostracized.

Rewards of promotion, higher positions of leadership and other accolades will often serve to validate the leader’s style and strategy. Without effective intervention, the

negative behaviors identified as toxic leadership may only continue unabated. “Why change now when what I’ve been doing has been working so well for me?”

The primary negative traits of narcissism include arrogance, which stems from *hubris*—a self-absorbed exaggerated personal pride usually maintained at the expense of other people. A person’s arrogance often translates into a condescending posture toward others and the marked aversion to criticism. Hubris can be understood as an unhealthy “celebration of self.” Army awards, promotions, parades, ceremonies and other *esprit de corps* events are usually meant to promote individual and organizational excellence and unit cohesion. However, they can also become tools for another of narcissism’s negative traits: vanity (or “vainglory”) and self-aggrandizement. This is the self-interest and self-promotion prevalent among toxic leaders as identified by Dr. George Reed in his collaborative work with Dr. Craig Bullis while at the Army War College.¹⁴

The even-tempered leader can often demonstrate to others that they are in control of their emotions. For many toxic leaders, it may be argued that their emotions are in control of them. The toxic leader may respond to external stimuli beyond their control in a manner most other people will deem exaggerated and inappropriate at best. The person may play down the disjointed or severe nature of their behavior. If confronted, such a person may proceed to blame their poor behavior on other people or circumstances¹⁵ Their *de facto* argument is that other people are responsible for their emotions and behavior. They are, in essence, out of control.

An individual who lacks self-awareness, empathy, social intelligence and emotional self-regulation may have a difficult time understanding the impact of their negative behavior much less appreciate the need for modifying that behavior. But I

believe narcissistic traits and behavior are products of a person's nurture in early development and informed by experience over time. Therefore, most people have the capacity to understand the effects of their behavior and modify it accordingly. Some toxic leaders, however, may only appreciate the implications in terms of what it may cost them personally in terms of status, prestige, rewards.

Another primary trait of narcissism, as in Ovid's original epic story of Narcissus, is the person's overwhelming concern for their reputation and image. A toxic leader in the Army may be very concerned about their reputation and image as they are portrayed to their superiors. A typical leader, one who is routinely positive and temperate as a matter of course may have little need or concern to worry about their reputation or image.

Healthy leaders understand that those kinds of things work themselves out over time. Their positive command climates and effective team-building become apparent over time and speak for themselves to everyone who relates to such organizations.

A positive reputation and image, most will probably understand, are the fruits of the hard labor of positive and effective leadership. They will not have to be continually monitored and managed. The toxic leader who as a rule treats others poorly, brags about it, and behaves in an unprofessional manner—is often most concerned about their reputation and image to superiors. This dynamic demonstrates to me that they know exactly what they are doing when they do it.

Whether negative or toxic behavior stems from a leader's inherent nature or from how they were nurtured can inform how receptive they will be to change. Answers to related questions can inform the nature and likelihood of successful intervention and

mitigation. Is he or she cognizant of their impact upon others? Do they care? Can the leader perceive or appreciate the need for change?

Army Mission Command and Leadership doctrine sets itself apart from mainstream organizational leadership models primarily because of the unique nature of the Army. The Army's role is to unquestioningly prosecute the nation's wars, inflict damage, death and injury to the enemy while likely sustaining some for itself in the process.¹⁶ Leaders with command authority hold within their grasp power to authorize deadly action, to willfully order someone to execute a mission likely to end with their death. Leaders' ability to galvanize their units can spell victory or defeat. Considered in exponential terms, they can determine the fate of the Army and nation.

Americans may render military service to their nation to preserve democracy. To do this, they must submit to an organization which must operate in the absence of democracy. Soldiers choose to be Soldiers but they do not choose their wars. They do not elect the officers appointed over them. Likewise, leaders are not often able to hand-select their own subordinates. Rank and position usually determine the nature and scope of decisions to be made; with or without the input from subordinates. In grave matters of war, it must be this way if we are to understand and accept that a military organization's success or failure is ultimately the Commander's responsibility and no one else's.¹⁷

Most self-regulating Army commanders readily appreciate the awesome power and responsibility they have. They are able to order the Soldier to action that may likely result in his or her death. They will be the only one to bear the weight of that decision—for life. They likely appreciate the deference they receive from subordinates in recognition of their wide-reaching authority and obligations. A self-regulating leader may

temper their words and actions in a measured manner to compensate for, but not negate, their advantage of power and position.

Consider the plight of the oversized man whose hands dwarf yours and who stands head and shoulders above everyone else. If he is empathetic and self-conscious with the people he encounters, and has his eyes open, he will quickly realize his disadvantage. He can be intimidating to others without having to say or do anything. His size is likely not his fault, but he can choose to mitigate its affect upon others by closely monitoring his non-verbal behaviors. He learns to take a step back when someone answers their door to him. He hesitates before entering others' personal space. He may wait for others to extend a hand in greeting, especially women. He already knows he is capable of "talking over" people physically. So he does not lean over them, even when angry, and is likely to measure his verbal expression to complement others'.

A toxic leader is likely to welcome the great power, authority and wide latitude with which to exercise it. He or she will likely use their immense size to their advantage as a rule rather than exception. The professional leader would divorce this dynamic from their modus operandi in favor of more even-tempered and positive means of motivating or influencing people. If their physical size or their large rank or position proves especially problematic, proven by the non-verbal cues from others, such leaders will make conscious efforts to compensate for it. They may decide to be more personable to subordinates than they might otherwise be.

One might argue that the Army incubates or enables toxic leaders by giving them near-unquestionable authority over subordinates. However, the senior leader's power advantage often puts subordinates in the position of giving in to the leader's desires and

demands, and tolerating belligerent and unprofessional behavior. Subordinates who habitually give in to unreasonable demands and routinely tolerate unprofessional tirades and temper tantrums only serve to validate such behavior for the perpetrator. Much like bullying, tantrums and coercion only work if the recipient allows it to work.

Any of the positive constructive frameworks described in Army doctrine give senior commanders ample criteria by which to evaluate subordinates' own leadership and to mitigate negative or toxic behavior at lower levels. The constructive measures, the building blocks of the Army's best practices as communicated through doctrine, can inform a leader's compliance with Army regulations regarding command and leadership in general.

The principle of "Army Well-being" governs a commander's obligation to "take care of people" and thereby maximize the human dimension of unit readiness.¹⁸ Army regulations themselves point to the obligations senior leaders and subordinates have to identify, confront, and mitigate toxic leader behavior. Chaplains are not exempt. Regulations put the teeth and urgency into any corrective or punitive measures brought to bear in mitigation.

Negative or toxic Leadership runs counter to the seven core Army Values: loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage. These seven core values are represented by the collective acronym which, not ironically, spells L.D.R.S.H.I.P. Espousing the Army core values are attributes of a leader's character described in Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-22, *Army Leadership*.¹⁹ Toxic leaders' caustic behavior circumvents essential Mission Command doctrine which governs all of the Army's war-fighting functions. The Army's relatively new "Profession

of Arms” campaign renders toxic behavior as blatantly unprofessional. Perhaps even more important, the tenets of the campaign remind us that self-regulation is the responsibility of everyone who would profess to be a “professional.”

The Army’s Core Values

Loyalty

“If anyone demands loyalty, given them integrity. If they demand integrity, give them loyalty.”²⁰ Air Force Colonel John Boyd knew which value preceded the other in importance. And trust is the only true foundation for loyalty. Commanders get the “swift trust” due their rank when they enter their organization for the first time. Subordinates may ascribe to them knowledge, experience and skills, to include interpersonal ones. They may make these ascriptions by virtue of their trust in the larger Army’s informed decision about the Commander’s ability to lead. The Commander’s behavior over time will determine whether the swift trust initially rendered will be enduring or not. Good leaders earn subordinates loyalty by training them well, treating them fairly, and living the Army Values.²¹

Loyalty, personal loyalty, is often very important to the toxic leader. It can be the glue that holds a dysfunctional organization together. A more temperate, self-regulating leader would be satisfied just knowing their subordinates are loyal to their nation and have the best interests of the Army, their unit and mission in mind. The climate of mutual trust and understanding which they foster, and only with the cooperation of their subordinates, on its own alleviates any doubts the leader may have. The toxic leader will often demand personal fealty tacitly implied through their words and actions.

Fealty is often very simple to render: A subordinate can easily communicate acceptance and “buy-in” to their leader’s toxic behavior. The subordinate’s visual or verbal agreements, assent, or acquiesce to the toxic leader’s brutal unprofessional and indiscreet remarks about peers and subordinates are usually enough. Laughing along with their inappropriate jokes or lewd remarks about others denotes acceptance and encourages it to continue. To simply do nothing implies consent.

Unfortunately for units under the weight of toxic leaders, fear masquerades as loyalty when subordinates keep their mouths shut and look the other way when peers and subordinates are treated unprofessionally. The Army is an authoritarian hierarchical culture where subordinates often compete with each other for future positions and livelihood. Faced with working for a toxic leader, subordinates may be more likely to ostracize anyone perceived as a target of their leader’s wrath. When one officer is “nuked in place” by their toxic leader, others reflexively “avoid the impact area.” Otherwise, they bear the risk of being “guilty by association.” Likewise, children will not usually ally themselves with the target of a playground bully for fear of being bullied themselves.

Subordinates of toxic leaders can become guarded in their interactions with others, avoid certain ones in the dining facility, or look over their shoulders should they happen to be approached by a targeted person. The temptation to “avoid the impact area,” so to speak, is beckoned by one’s innate desire and need to survive. Interestingly enough, survival is not an Army core value. And if loyalty is the only core value I manage to maintain, my toxic leader may be very happy but then the Army’s survival and that of our nation is in dire jeopardy. In these irksome circumstances, loyalty becomes fleeting. As

one survey respondent (see chapter 4) put it, “Loyalty is only a PCS away”—that is a permanent change of station, or request for release, or signed declination statement, etc.

Resonant leaders are those have a dynamic appeal and emotional connection with subordinates. They are proficient at managing ambiguity and uncertainty in their subordinates, through transparency and open communication. They may appeal to fear initially to identify a common threat and make the call to action. However, they quickly transition to communicating a hopeful vision of change. Fear is only a short-term motivator. Its powerful effect is short-lived and extended usage leads to burnout.²² The dissonant leader, emotionally disconnected from subordinates, may appeal to fear and play upon uncertainty. Performance ratings, promotion recommendations and their underlying threat to career and future livelihood are common tools to assert and maintain dominance and control—if the subordinate cares enough. A dissonant leader’s typical inept criticism, for example, may draw avoidance, tuning out, stonewalling or emotional distancing from their subordinates.²³

Duty

Conscientiousness is a human trait that internalizes duty. The Army leader takes responsibility for their actions and those of their subordinates.²⁴

Fulfillment of obligations and following orders can be done through commitment or compliance. The results may in fact look the same. Commitment is stronger over the long haul. Compliance usually gets the job done to standard in the short run. Individuals’ commitment toward the collective cause or mission greatly enhances the likelihood of its success. Such an organization is likely to achieve higher results over the long-term than one in compliance mode.²⁵ I can comply with an overbearing abusive leader in order that

he or she may simply leave me alone. I am not likely to identify with someone I do not trust or remotely care to emulate so I may or may not buy into the leader's stated goals. I am only tolerating him. I may or may not care if the mission is executed or completed successfully. I may only care to check the minimum number of "blocks" required because I do not really have any vested interest in the enterprise. Going the extra mile would seem unthinkable.

Commitment to duty can be a powerful life force that propels ordinary Soldiers to face their enemy audaciously just a few yards from death. For an individual to do that they must care deeply about the success of their mission and the well-being of the Soldiers to their left and right. Being in the same position but no longer caring seems unfathomable in comparison. A Soldier who no longer cares is in a very unfortunate and dangerous place. So is everyone around them. A toxic leader who habitually berates and humiliates their subordinates unwittingly shoulders more and more of that risk upon themselves and their organization.

Respect

The Army Chaplaincy's Strategic Plan 2009-2014 identifies the "creation of a culture of respect"²⁶ as a major objective chaplains in their respective roles must strive to achieve.

Toxic leaders who abuse and demean subordinates in disrespectful, unprofessional ways often demand unswerving respect in return. But the Army Values espouse respect demonstrated as "treating people as they should be treated": Army leaders should consistently foster a climate that treats everyone with dignity and respect. Fostering a positive climate begins with the leader's personal example.²⁷

Respect can be ascribed in much the same way as power. Effective leaders who inspire subordinates to be their very best and give 110 percent for its own sake are those that can create climates of mutual trust and understanding. When such leaders demonstrate their willingness to share hardship, risk and any disadvantage with their subordinates, subordinates are more easily able to identify with them. When such leaders submit themselves to the same core values, they earn referent personal respect in much the same way as they earn referent personal power. Such leaders earn referent respect and wield referent power regardless of rank or position.

A prominent figure with immense referent-personal power was Major Dick Winters of Easy Company—*Band of Brothers*—fame. Major Winters possessed such power because he had earned the respect of his men, first as a platoon leader in the Parachute Infantry that jumped into Normandy and afterward as Easy Company's commander. What prompted then-First Lieutenant Winters' men to audaciously attack and silence enemy gun emplacements one after another? Had they not respected him deeply, perhaps the job might have proven too irksome, too dangerous. But perhaps that thought never entered their minds because Lieutenant Winters was right there with them the whole time.²⁸ They identified with him. Unfortunately for the toxic leader, trust and genuine respect is not gained by virtue of their rank or position.

Can we respect ourselves even if our toxic leader does not? If the answer is “yes,” then there is hope for us and our ability to cope with such a person who may not change or leave any time soon. An individual demonstrates self-respect by unashamedly protecting their personal and professional boundaries and dignity with regard to others.

Self-respect is a prominent tenet of the Army Resiliency initiatives, a holistic approach to Soldier and Family Wellness.²⁹

Self-less Service

Self-less service means doing what is right for the nation, the Army, the organization, and subordinates. Neglect weakens a leader and can cause the Army more harm than good.³⁰

Certain toxic leaders may be the first to expound upon the virtue of self-less service-as it is practiced by other people! Dr. Reed identified certain consistencies with which survey respondents classified toxic leadership, a foremost one being self-interest.³¹ But the self-less leader puts their mission and needs of their organization before their own. This truly means one having the willingness to submit their reputation, future promotion and livelihood to the subservience of the organization for which they have responsibility. A self-less subordinate will be able to spot a self-interested superior with little difficulty. However, a subordinate's confronting a toxic leader may not be as easy.

Unfortunately many seasoned officers and non-commissioned officers who have a lot of experience and much to give the military may have a lot to lose by confronting their superior. If the subordinate has personal obligations of spouse, children and home, then confronting a negative leader who has direct influence upon future promotion can be especially difficult. Once they have committed to the Army as a career and have a vested interest in continuing they may be less likely to jettison it all and leave because of one negative or toxic leader. Further, they may not necessarily be too predisposed to assist subordinates struggling with such a leader.

These dynamics may epitomize the group of respondents to the 2011 Center for Army Leadership Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL): The group, with ranks ranging from sergeant to colonel,³² is comprised of people more likely to have worked for a toxic leader, being better suited or positioned to challenge their behavior but are less likely to. With four to twenty years of service already invested, they may be the ones more likely to simply wait the toxic leader out. However, these very individuals are also more likely to be able to find decent employ commensurate with their experience and abilities in the civilian workplace.

Not everyone needs or wants what the Army offers in terms of salary, benefits and perquisites; especially if it means they must submit to a toxic leader. Awards, ceremonies and *esprit de corps* events mean very little for those who have been habitually abused and demeaned by their superior. For some, the cost is not justified and some Soldiers are likely to leave the military. Who in the Army can truly calculate the cost in lost talent and experience owed to the impact of toxic leaders? And who really knows the extent of their damage when Human Resources Command merely processes voluntary separation packets one-at-a-time in isolation without any aggregate analysis?

Once the negative or toxic leader knows they are being challenged by subordinates, they may resort to heavy-handed intimidation tactics to alleviate the threat. They may intimate possibilities of one's service no longer being required. Their suggesting the possibility of one's relief and dismissal from service must be taken seriously for the moment. But it begs more reflection by the recipient.

More often than not, a toxic leader may make veiled threats in attempts to keep people in line and under their thumb. What one must ask themselves in that situation is,

“Does the toxic leader really possess whatever it is that I want or view as valuable?”

More often than not, the answer will be “no”; that is, if one is not dependent upon them for their identity and fortitude as a person. Toxic leaders may be more likely to repay subordinates who challenge their leadership style with poor or mediocre performance ratings. Being truly selfless means being willing to take the risk and taking it.

Honor

Honor provides the moral compass for character and personal conduct for all members of the Army. Honor holds the Army Values together. How leaders conduct themselves and meet obligations defines them as persons and leaders.³³ Honor demands subjugation of self-interest, career, personal comfort and life itself to the Army Values.³⁴ Awards and ceremonies are often meaningless or empty affairs when the sense of honor is lost. They will probably not inspire an abused subordinate whose character has been maligned and personal honor trampled on. Honor can compel subordinates to challenge toxic leader behavior. Honor can also propel them to other organizations where an individual’s personal honor is revered.

Remarkably, the toxic leader may guard their personal honor all while completely disregarding that of others. A person of integrity may decide to question or challenge their toxic leader’s behavior in a manner that is face-saving to that leader. And they honor themselves by finding help and support they need from others.

Integrity

Leaders of integrity consistently follow clear principles and possess high moral standards. They do the right thing because their character permits nothing less. To instill the Army values in others, they must demonstrate them.³⁵

For unlucky subordinates working for some of the worst toxic leaders, integrity may in fact be sacrificed on the Altar of Fear (“Loyalty”?) along with honesty and duty. Integrity is hard to find when a leader is focused intently upon doing everything the “right way” instead of being more concerned about doing the “right thing.” Integrity is the most fundamental of the Army core values. It is most informed by a person’s inherent character and demonstrated over time by consistency of purpose, words and actions. Integrity cannot be gained by viewing a PowerPoint show or receiving a schoolhouse block of instruction.

Subordinates who are truly intimidated and coerced by their toxic leader may find it more and more difficult to be honest with them. Leaders possessing certain personality types, and higher-than-average ego needs,³⁶ may actually encourage dishonesty among subordinates. Fear prompts cronyism and group-think bent toward the toxic leader’s preconceived notions of “what is right” and “how things should be.” Toxic leaders may alter reports to higher headquarters if they do not coincide with the toxic leader’s assessment or the image they desire to maintain for their superiors. In such an organizational culture, yes-men survive to live another day. Subordinates with integrity either face a hailstorm or eventually head for the exit.

Remember, “loyalty(fear) plus duty minus integrity equals blind obedience and cronyism.” In a toxic environment left unchecked, there is precious little room for personal courage.

Personal Courage

Personal courage is not the absence of fear, but the ability to put it aside and do what is necessary. Moral courage is the willingness to stand firm on values, principles and convictions regardless of consequences.³⁷

People with intestinal fortitude prone to acts of personal courage will usually resolve to act in such manner--if they care. Soldiers often care immensely about their unit, the Army, service to their nation in general, and if they have reason to believe that their action will achieve a meaningful result. Hope provokes courage. People who are hopeless about the prospect for positive change might otherwise be courageous. Having been worn down by a toxic leader to the point of not caring anymore, they may opt to simply leave such dysfunctional organizations; if leaving were only that simple. Ideally, the Army’s “Profession of Arms” initiatives, exemplified through the actions of senior leaders, will help foster a culture in which challenging poor behavior will not require the immense personal moral courage it does today. In fact, changes to organizational culture and the systems supporting it may themselves do the challenging and confronting of toxic leaders’ behavior.

Unfortunately for now, there are no guarantees that an individual’s personal courage to confront their toxic leader or intervene effectively will be duly rewarded by the organization they serve. Indeed, the Army core value of self-less service prompts a

Soldier to act regardless of the prospect of personal reward even to the extent of being willing to risk physical survival if necessary.

Army Leadership

Leadership is: “the process of influencing people and providing purpose, direction and motivation to accomplish the mission and *improve the organization*.”³⁸ Espousing the Army Values and possessing empathy are the foremost of an Army leader’s character traits³⁹ identified in Army doctrine as recently as 2012. Ascribing to the Army Values consistently through word and deed demonstrates a leader’s strength of character. This earns subordinates’ respect and emulation, the highest compliment a leader can hope for.

A primary focus of this study is upon the significance of a leader’s displaying empathy and the insurmountable damage caused when one does not. Empathy is the propensity to experience something from another’s perspective. More to the point: empathy is the ability for one to identify with and enter into another person’s feelings or emotions⁴⁰ without necessarily owning them for themselves. A leader’s empathy with subordinates is a very powerful demonstration that he or she identifies with them. Empathy is the bridge over which subordinates, in turn, identify with their leader. Trust and loyalty follow closely behind.

A typical attribute of toxic leaders is a pronounced lack of empathy.⁴¹ There are various psychological phenomena in which a lack of empathy figures prominent in the diagnostic criteria. Narcissism is just one such phenomenon. This study refrains from ascribing such diagnosis to *all* toxic leaders. Suffice it to say, the alignment of a considerable number of traits and behaviors may only be coincidental and not indicative of any one toxic leader’s disposition.

One must also consider the possibility of a prevalent perception that empathy is lacking. Perceptions are powerful and can have far-reaching consequences regardless of their being true or false. A perception is most always based upon patterns of speech and behavior that become correlative over time. A leader's demonstrated lack of empathy or its mere perception is well worth bringing to their attention in a discreet, tactful, non-blaming manner. Their immediate response in the short-term and overall reaction in the long-run will prove telling. The self-regulating, introspective and empathetic leader will likely view this as an opportunity for personal growth and perhaps even a learning opportunity for their organization. The leader who accepts criticism well and directs it toward improving themselves and their organization is probably not a toxic one.

The empathetic leader will probably recognize the measured risk their subordinate took in bringing criticism to their superior. They may or may not believe the criticism is legitimate. However, they will probably recognize it as being significant because it can point to bigger related issues. There is a distinct possibility that the initial issue the subordinate presents is the litmus test to see how the leader is going to respond to bigger issues. Shooting the messenger and going on a witch hunt will certainly deter honest feedback and group cohesion in the future. The worst toxic leaders are probably not looking for any.

The mark of an Army leader is their successful mission accomplishment coupled with improvement of their organization.⁴² Toxic leaders may argue for success and excellence when they employ draconian measures to improve the organization and thereby accomplish the mission. A self-regulating person may employ such measures over the short term but not at the cost of crushing subordinates through relentless and

tactless abusive behavior. Unfortunately, the toxic leader's superior officer may not recognize the difference if they are only looking at end results. The toxic leader may have delivered the goods again but at what long-term cost to the organization?

Toxic leaders, if they are not careful, can also influence and motivate their subordinates. Subordinates can be motivated to become distrustful of the toxic leader. In some severe cases, they may become distrustful of each other especially if individuals are operating in survival mode. Abused and maligned subordinates can be motivated into compliance block-checking where a "good enough" mentality reigns supreme. These and other short-sighted practices amass and compound the organization's risks, not mitigate or avoid them. Lieutenant General David G. Perkins, Commander of the Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, argues such practice serves to defer and compound risk only to be revisited again at some inopportune time in the future.⁴³ Finally, toxic leaders can motivate their subordinates to leave the Army for jobs and careers where unprofessional behavior at any level is not tolerated.

Improving the organization requires the leader to be a good steward of resources for optimal efficiency and effectiveness.⁴⁴ Toxic leaders may manage and martial people toward overall mission accomplishment and win accolades in the short term. But they do it by putting their organizations under duress such that key personnel are often attrited from within and not due to enemy action.

Not every Army leader can or needs be a commander. Those who are selected for command, we can surmise, have habitually demonstrated advanced aptitude and skill at leading people in ways that build positive, cohesive teams. Command is not simply a reward for good behavior. However, one may assume that a commander finds him or

herself in such pivotal position in an organization because they have routinely worked well with others. They probably find themselves in command because they know how to positively motivate subordinates and collectively create a command climate upon mutual understanding and trust.

The Army's mission command doctrine, like its leadership doctrine or any other doctrine, is Army doctrine because it is proven to be "what works best most of the time." Doctrine can and does influence Army regulations. This should not imply that Soldiers are meant to follow doctrine blindly. But doctrine is understood as the "default setting" especially in the absence of definitive regulation, local policy or direct order. Mission Command doctrine stands upon the premise that commanders will encourage subordinates' measured initiative.

Toxic leaders, especially those who cannot trust subordinates and resort to micromanaging, will have a difficult time making a go of this essential Army doctrine that is the bedrock for all others. Mission Command presumes a commander's ability to delegate. Under a toxic leader's command, a subordinate's risk of failure is often too great and too costly to prompt risk-taking initiative at lower levels of the organization. This dynamic may pass in a sterile training environment, but that commander assumes much risk in a combat environment.

Mission Command

Mission Command provides subordinates with latitude for disciplined, measured self initiative toward meeting the Commander's overall intent.⁴⁵ This dynamic often enables freedom of action at lower levels which often proves pivotal in the volatile throes of armed conflict. Commanders may grant freedom of action to subordinates based upon

demonstrated aptitude and skill but always based upon a mutual trust and understanding. The basis for trust and understanding must start with the Commander's own initiative and extend to subordinates.

The Mission Command philosophy emphasizes that command principles are fundamentally human. Such principles include: "build cohesive teams through mutual trust" and "create shared understanding."⁴⁶ A leader's ability to build cohesive teams and create a climate which engenders mutual trust is pivotal to the success of all the war-fighting functions. Trust motivates. It can drive subordinates' initiative⁴⁷ where the lack of trust can prompt cautious and measured half-steps and, at best, mere compliance.⁴⁸

Not to be confused with Mission Command, Detailed Command is the framework of choice for toxic, abusive and distrusting leaders. This is the platform of the micromanager. To be fair, detailed command style can have a rightful place in situations where the situation or environment is dangerous and uncertain. "Detailed command centralizes information and decision-making authority. Orders and plans are detailed and explicit, and successful execution depends on strict obedience by subordinates with minimal decision making or initiative on their part. Detailed command emphasizes vertical, linear information flow where information flows up the chain of command and orders flow down."⁴⁹

The detailed command approach may be appropriate when the leader is new to an organization and uncertain of the abilities of their subordinates. Detailed command may be a style implemented in particular situations to reinforce corrective training in the event of safety or other infractions. Further, detailed command may, by virtue of the Commander's psyche, be the only one he or she is able to implement. For reasons

discussed later, that leader may not be willing or even capable of developing a command climate based upon mutual understanding and trust. Trust involves one's assuming a certain degree of vulnerability in relation to other people. For some, the mere notion of vulnerability may be intolerable. But all Army command doctrine is now assumed under Mission Command in the new Field Manual 6-0 released in September 2011.

Profession of Arms

General Martin Dempsey, in January 2011 while yet the Commanding General of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, recognized the stark disparity between the Army's professed values and the troubling behaviors of an unfortunate few. The problem of toxic leadership has been an area where we have "struggled to maintain the highest standards of the Profession of Arms."⁵⁰

A primary characteristic of a profession is self-monitoring and regulation. A professional organization conducts these measures collectively in an intentional and routine manner. A truly professional person conducts these measures on an individual basis. Much as lawyers, physicians, clergy and other guilded professions ascribe to a code of ethics and behavior both individually and collectively, so does the Army.⁵¹ But unlike any other profession, the Army holds the "monopoly on violence and the mandate and trust of the people."⁵²

The "Profession of Arms" tenets include a Soldier being able to summon his or her ethical psychological capacities: these include self-command, empathy, and moral pride.⁵³ Self command entails not only accomplishing the mission but doing it while respecting human dignity.⁵⁴ This suggests that performance evaluations in the future will focus not only on mission-centric results but also upon human factors.

How well the Army aligns its organizational culture and climate with its institutional practices will influence the mindset of Army professionals and impact their commitment, satisfaction and well being.⁵⁵ How well senior Army leaders juxtapose toxic leadership mitigation with stated Army regulations, values, doctrine and campaigns will determine subordinates' ability to feel safe about combating toxic leadership and taking appropriate action.

Awareness of how institutional culture shapes professional behavior is a key leader competency.⁵⁶ I have attempted in this chapter to further raise awareness to how Army culture can enable and even reinforce unprofessional behavior. Self-awareness at the institutional level is as important as self-awareness at the individual level.⁵⁷ I am gratified to note the Army's formally adopting this form of institutional introspection. We know toxic leadership is a problem. Can we set the conditions so that subordinates will be empowered to confront toxic leadership and feel safe about doing it? My aim through this project is to enhance chaplains' awareness with regard to toxic leadership mitigation.

Hopefully, the "Profession of Arms" campaign will focus upon not only instilling positive leadership attributes from the top down in the short term. At best, they will be woven into the Army fabric in terms of identity and practice. Hence, these tenets, attitudes and related measures may become routine thus rendering a "campaign" unnecessary in the long term. The Army Ethic is means of motivation and self-control. It incites moral and ethical expertise. It promotes individual and collective development whereby institutional values align institutional practices.

Toxic leadership behaviors, considered incompatible with the Army Ethic, will be routinely monitored for and mitigated. If Soldiers and their families remain *deeply valued people* to the Army,⁵⁸ toxic leadership mitigation must remain a priority.

Multi-Source Assessment and Feedback (MSAF) 360 Evaluations

A 2011 survey of more than 22,630 soldiers from the rank of E-5 through O-6 and Army civilians showed that roughly one in five sees his superior as “toxic and unethical.” Conducted by the Center for Army Leadership, the 2011 CASAL survey found that rooting out toxic leadership from the ranks requires “accurate and consistent assessment, input from subordinates, and a focus beyond what gets done in the short-term.”⁵⁹ MSAF 360 appears poised to address that recommendation.

Also in 2011, following then-Army Chief of Staff General Martin Dempsey initiated the 360-Degree Multi-Source Assessment and Feedback (MSAF) leadership evaluation program, designed and administered through the Center for Army Leadership. He further directed the creation of the Commander’s Assessment Tool that will evaluate leaders being considered for battalion and brigade command. Current Chief of Staff General Ray Odierno said he believes “multidimensional feedback is an important component to holistic leader development.”⁶⁰

Knowing they will face evaluation from peers and subordinates alike, leaders demonstrating toxic behaviors can be encouraged to consider the likely ramifications of their actions. Not only will their successful delivery of mission-related results be considered, but the MSAF-related Commander’s Assessment Tool, now referred to as “Commander 360” evaluations, proves to reveal the underlying methods, and costs,

involved in attaining those results. Unfortunately, this initiative was not in place in 2003 (See Appendix B: Case Study-LTC Huck Trapper).

As of November 2013, the outlook for Commander 360 implementation has diminished. There are essential problems which will serve to take the teeth out of any mitigation measures against negative leadership. Commander 360s are likely not to impact senior leaders' formal selection or promotion processes. And they may only be used at general and flag officer level. All leaders need legal protection and recourse against unscrupulous comments rendered anonymously by peers and subordinates. But total transparency will undermine confidentiality. Without confidentiality, evaluations are likely to be less than candid.⁶¹

Army Regulations

Unlike doctrine, which is not prescriptive but merely describes proven best and accepted practices, Army regulations are not negotiable. Army regulations governing general standards of personal conduct does not distinguish between rank, position or level of authority.

Regulations regarding conduct are non-specific with regard to one's being a superior, peer or subordinate to another. Put simply, leaders are held to the same standards as the junior-most enlisted Soldier. Some would argue that leaders are held to a higher standard, exceeding those specified in black and white.

Army Regulation 600-20, *Army Command Policy*, in its 2008 update, prescribes a commander's obligation to foster an environment necessary to promoting "Army Well-being." The Army Resiliency initiatives seek to reinforce this promotion down to the individual-Soldier level. "Army Well-being" is the personal, physical, material, mental

and spiritual state of the Army Family which contributes to preparedness to support and accomplish the Army's mission.⁶² A multiple-page discussion suggests it a worthwhile emphasis, significant enough to warrant a senior leader's attention toward a subordinate's efforts along those lines.

There is tremendous power in solidarity. When senior leaders finally apply the Army command regulations and leadership doctrine to confront and mitigate issues of toxic leadership, solidarity will be achieved with subordinates. This solidarity will empower them to make the often difficult choice of confronting or reporting matters of toxic leader behavior.

Chaplain Corps Regulations

If anyone has any doubt about the prominent role the Chaplain can play in mitigating the impact of toxic leadership behavior in their organization, I refer them to the Army Regulations themselves. A few paragraphs in AR 165-1 *Chaplain Corps Activities* revised in 2009 provide ample justification for the Chaplain's role in mitigation. In fact, one can easily infer that such assertion by the Chaplain is required, if not demanded, by the situation.

Chaplains serve on the special or personal staff of a command with direct access to their commanders. Chaplains, in performing their duties, are expected to *speak with a prophetic voice* [emphasis mine] and must confront the issues of moral turpitude in conflict with the Army values. Chaplains advise the commander and staff on matters of religion, morals and morale including but not limited to--spiritual, ethical and moral health of the command, personal impact of command policies, *impact of leadership*

practices [emphasis mine] and management systems, and *plans or programs for advancing Army values and Soldier or Family resilience* [emphasis mine].⁶³

AR 165-1 identifies and explains the unique relationships and roles the Chaplain has within their organization, especially pertaining to that unit's commander. No chaplain is autonomous in their role as a military religious leader. Each is bound by the dictates of their respective ecclesiastical endorsing agency (civilian religious groups' authoritative body) and subject to the supervision and direction of senior chaplains. Likewise, no chaplain is merely a special staff officer whose roles and responsibilities are subject solely to the whims of their immediate commander. AR 165-1 speaks to the Chaplain's dual functionality. While chaplains remain accountable to their respective chains of command, they are also held accountable to the policies and directives of the Chief of Chaplains, a major-general and the Army's senior-most chaplain.⁶⁴

The Chaplain can also rest assured that justification can also be found within specific performance evaluation criteria in AR 623-3 *Evaluation Reporting System* (2012). Appendix C addresses chaplains specifically and identifies specific areas of assessment which clearly point to a chaplain's playing a pivotal role in toxic leadership mitigation. One may arguably conclude that his or her performance evaluation depends upon it.

The Chaplain should be evaluated by determining his or her effective use of consultation and confrontation skills: "The chaplain will raise questions that will enable commanders to understand the religious, moral and ethical impact of issues. This relationship will be issue-oriented, non-blaming and specific."⁶⁵ This suggests to me that a chaplain is well within their role and obligation to identify problematic behaviors in a

descriptive manner, without labeling as toxic, caustic, narcissistic, etc. The behaviors should then be linked to specific effects and impact they have on individuals' morale and unit's overall command climate. Far from telling the toxic leader they are wrong and toxic, leaders should be allowed to draw their own inferences. Finally, the Chaplain should quickly remind leaders of their good intentions to serve in the leader's best interest and that of the organization they lead. That said, many toxic leaders probably still will not like it and render a harsh or belligerent response. Then quickly comes a second and related evaluation criterion which the Chaplain thus far should fulfill in spades: risk-taking ability.

“In meeting the distinctive and diverse needs of Soldiers and Families, the chaplain will possess maturity and skills to make change even at the risk of being criticized for exercising his or her convictions”⁶⁶ Perhaps needless to say, the Chaplain may have more risk to be concerned about than criticism if the toxic leader is bent on punitive retaliation. While the cited regulation appears to give chaplains card blank to intervene and confront toxic leaders directly, there are certainly more areas and avenues to consider before constructing our own little-black-box-with-red-button-on-top. Pressing the red button, and taking positive steps that avert needing to, ought be topics of discussion and discernment between supervisory chaplains and their subordinates in proactive versus reactive mode.

AR 623-3 Section C-6 of Appendix C-chaplains' performance evaluation criteria-identifies many and varied approaches to toxic leadership mitigation. There is so much latitude given here without the Chaplain necessarily espousing the role of chastiser-in-chief and getting on the wrong side of a toxic leader:

Speak with a credible and prophetic voice on military procedures and policies that violate the ethical and moral values of the Army or that isolate or unjustly treat individuals and groups. *Facilitate healthy interpersonal relationships in . . . work groups* [emphasis mine] . . . and community activities. Provide ethical and moral leadership across the full spectrum of operations.⁶⁷

These last criteria do more than suggest that chaplains are not mere preachers, professors or trainers in these areas. Chaplains are expected to be exemplars.

Summary

Negative or toxic leadership is a significant if not widespread concern identified in civilian corporate cultures and clinical and academic studies for many years. The subject has caught the attention of senior Army leaders in the last decade. Today's Army doctrine and core values directly oppose such leadership styles. Understanding narcissism allows Army leaders to appreciate how Army organizational systems and culture enables negative or toxic leadership. The Army's Profession of Arms campaign and Commander 360 evaluations highlight the fact that senior leaders understand the problem and are striving to address it in multiple ways.

Army regulations direct and expect chaplains to act in significant ways to mitigate negative or toxic leadership, to include confrontation and other forms of direct intervention. While intent may be clear, specific courses of action are not. Junior chaplains may take action that inadvertently undermines their unique relationships. Their good intentions can get lost in the execution. Guidance and mentoring by seasoned supervisory chaplains appears likely to alleviate many potential pitfalls. Then chaplains, with the knowledge and support of their supervisors, can collaborate together to find solutions which are viable and likely to achieve positive results for all concerned.

¹U.S. Army TRADOC, “The Profession of Arms,” White Paper, December 2010, http://www.jcs.mil/content/files/2012-02/022312120752_Americas_Military_POA.pdf (accessed 14 November 2013), 3.

²*Ibid.*, 2.

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⁴J. M. Rayburn and L. G. Rayburn, “Machiavellian & Type A Personality,” *Journal of Business Ethics* (1996): 1209-1210, <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2F00412819#page-1> (accessed 19 November 2013).

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this project is to prove and demonstrate how chaplains have a vital role to play in mitigating the impact of negative or toxic leadership in their organizations. Primary sources from which I launch my inquiry of negative or toxic leadership mitigation by chaplains are the two authoritative Army Regulations regarding chaplains. Army Regulation 165-1, *Chaplain Corps Activities* revised in 2009, contains roles and responsibilities which more than suggest that chaplains must play a vital role in mitigating negative leadership behaviors in their organizations. Army Regulation 623-3, *Evaluation Reporting System* revised in 2012, provides an entire appendix devoted to chaplains' performance evaluation criteria. As with 165-1, certain evaluation criteria appear to authorize, direct and expect chaplains to confront, challenge or take other significant action.

Army Chaplain Corps Regulations

Chaplains must continually balance their responsibilities . . . and avoid placing the technical channel (supervisory chaplains at higher levels) in conflict with the chain of command.¹ I suspect this dynamic tension is why little has been heretofore written, discussed or actually done to identify chaplains' roles in mitigating negative or toxic leadership. One may argue that chaplains would not be required to do anything different than they are already likely doing. Chapter 4 and the survey will bear out the validity of that claim.

If there is a case study presented to chaplains about negative leadership, the case is typically and relatively sterile because it invariably involves a platoon sergeant, company commander or other “safe” leader in question as the subject. This makes it much easier for the Chaplain to take direct action and intervene and confront. Replace the subject with the Chaplain’s rater or senior rater and the case study is not as manageable. In such a case one might more easily conclude that any mitigation is the responsibility of that leader’s superior officer.

But the Chaplain Regulations in AR 165-1, *Chaplain Corps Activities* suggest, if not direct, otherwise: The Chaplain has direct access to the Commander and is expected to speak with a “prophetic voice” and confront the issues of moral turpitude in conflict with Army values. A primary responsibility for chaplains apart from performing or providing religious support to their constituencies, is advising the Command on matters of religion, morals and ethics, and among other things “personal impact of leadership practices.”² A chaplain speaking with a “prophetic voice” may attempt to warn of dire consequences or admonish for improper conduct or behavior. But if the leader is the Chaplain’s rater or senior rater, there will seldom be any “profit” in it for the appointed messenger.

Finally, chaplains are expected to solve problems and resolve issues at the lowest possible echelon.³ This could possibly encourage a junior chaplain to take matters into their own hands and attempt to confront and admonish the negative leader directly without any support or guidance. I surmise that the end results are rarely positive. But there is more.

The chaplains' performance evaluation criteria in Army Regulation 623-3 appear to authorize and direct confrontation:

Army Chaplains' Performance Evaluation Criteria

AR 623-3, *Evaluation Reporting System* provides specialized performance evaluation criteria for chaplains as well as for a unit's Staff Judge Advocate and other unique staff officers. The fact that these criteria are found within army regulations suggests to me that the following criteria are not only authorized, but expected:

1. *Consultation and confrontation skills.* The chaplain will raise questions that enable Commanders to understand the religious, moral and ethical impact of issues. This relationship will be issue-oriented, non-blaming and specific.
2. *Spiritual discernment.* Chaplains need to identify and enumerate the diverse possibilities of spiritual significance of common life experiences among the people they support.
3. *Risk-taking ability.* In meeting the distinctive and diverse needs of Soldiers and Families, the chaplain will possess maturity and skills to make change even at the risk of being criticized for exercising their convictions.⁴
4. Help identify for the Command potentially disruptive social patterns that violate federal standards of Equal Opportunity Act (EO).
5. Facilitate healthy interpersonal relationships in . . . work groups . . . and community activities.
6. Provide ethical and moral leadership across the full spectrum of operations.⁵
7. Provide instruction to Soldiers and Family members to develop their understanding in such areas as relationships . . . and stress management.⁶

The Army Regulations seem to mobilize the Chaplain for action to mitigate negative or toxic leadership in their units. They also seem to offer enough room for a junior chaplain to unknowingly traverse into a "no-man's land," cause trouble and get themselves into it, and possibly render themselves incapable of giving credible advice to their commands or support to their wider organizations. The regulations suggest that practicing confrontation and flexing one's risk-taking ability are possible ways to an outstanding performance evaluation. But the junior chaplain may be surprised when he or

she quickly discovers they are in receipt of a heat round or worse, when there is no one wearing religious insignia in their corner to support them.

Other primary source documents include the army's doctrinal publications on the Mission Command war-fighting function, Army Doctrine Publication 6-0 and Field Manual 6-0 both encompassing *Mission Command* published in 2011. ADP 6-22 and Army Doctrine Reference Publication 6-22 published in 2012 both expounding upon Leadership. Both go far in giving chaplains and others ample ways to identify negative leadership styles and practices as they undermine or circumvent the more healthy and positive ones.

Productive Narcissism

Narcissism, according to Michael Maccoby in his *The Productive Narcissist*, has both positive and negative characteristics.⁷ He would argue it not coincidental that many people with narcissistic tendencies attain positions of great power and prestige. Napoleon Bonaparte, George S. Patton, Douglas MacArthur, Richard M. Nixon, Henry Ford, General Electric's Jack Welch, Apple's Steve Jobs are among the foremost Maccoby describes. In reaching those high positions they can often do a lot of good for other people: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, Microsoft's Bill Gates, and perhaps even Abraham Lincoln (?) to name a few.⁸ They often have the ability to build and create from their own personal vision. Consider the achievements of Richard Wagner, Vincent Van Gogh,⁹ and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

Productive narcissists, according to Maccoby, are wired for rapid and disruptive change.¹⁰ Indeed, historically as a nation we have looked for narcissistic personalities to lead us through cataclysmic change.¹¹ Maccoby and others would argue that they possess

often hard to find traits that the Army essentially needs in times of crisis. They are the bold risk-takers¹² in times when more timid souls would not throw their hat in the ring. However, there remains the downside. And leaders who fare worst let their negative traits and weaknesses, especially un-bridled grandiosity, get the best of them.¹³

The leader with narcissistic tendencies is usually driven from within to achieve great goals and commensurate status. They crave respect and admiration.¹⁴ The Army's mission in defense of our nation is certainly such lofty, well-respected goal in our society. Such people are self-assured in their ability to lead and influence people to follow their great cause. If that great cause is the Army mission, then the leader has instant "buy in" and commitment from their subordinates. This dynamic makes following such leader very easy at first.

A primary way the leader gets a following in the Army is by design: their rank and position within the organization. Once they achieve a certain standing or rank, they can enjoy instant access to followers, or at least people who must submit to them—subordinates who often have little if any choice but to obey. The typical Army leader will use this dynamic to motivate subordinates to achieve the established goals for their unit's success, and be perfectly satisfied with such positive results. The leader with negative narcissistic tendencies may attribute that success to their own abilities and disposition toward greatness.¹⁵ The toxic leader may celebrate success in terms of their own greatness and denigrate the very subordinates upon whose shoulders they stand, the very—albeit witless—providers of the leader's "narcissistic supply."¹⁶

The toxic leader with narcissistic tendencies may practice various forms of coercive exploitation of their subordinates,¹⁷ thereby using their position of power and

advantage to achieve their own personal goals. This promotion of self interest, described by Dr. George Reed while still at the Army War College,¹⁸ is hard to hide from subordinates.

Arguably, the narcissistic leader may succeed in motivating people to achieve high and lofty goals they may not otherwise have met under a more timid, cautious leader. But the toxic leader whose charm fails to win others over may resort to employing fear and intimidation tactics to get the job done.¹⁹ Numerous forms of intimidation, peer pressure and public humiliation are used routinely to instill discipline, obedience and compliance—if not commitment—in subordinates.

Michael Maccoby identifies another positive trait of productive narcissists: They usually track in a highly-specialized field or niche and learn everything they can to acquire a high level of knowledge and technical competency.²⁰ They tend to become subject matter experts in their field. Such people can be extremely valuable to large organizations like the Army. They may be driven by the need to be indispensable. People who seek their advice or ingratiate themselves with laudatory remarks will probably find a welcome rapport.

Unfortunately, toxic leadership behavior sometimes results in highly-visible national news headlines which reflect poorly on the Army. The incidents typically involve leaders whose power and authority is wielded in a relatively insular environment over extended periods of time. Their autonomy and lack of oversight from their superiors can help them decide that it is “safe” for them to misbehave. They may be entrenched in their respective organization and feel they are immovable. They may have influential allies or backers (“sponsors”) in high places and therefore feel untouchable.

Organizational Behavior

In a total organization such as the Army, one which encompasses a greater part of a Soldier's life as opposed to holding a nine-to-five civilian job, bullying and shaming have been widely accepted practices. In an organizational culture where such practices of bullying and shaming continue to persist, the toxic leader finds a seedbed already prepared for them to plant their own variety. What differs in the execution is often determined by the toxic leader's lack of professionalism. Whereby a drill sergeant or squad leader may attack a subordinate's mistakes, lack of judgment or poor behavior, the toxic leader makes it personal. They will often attack the person's character and integrity.

Literature in the field of organizational behavior suggests that the decision process by which an individual and organization undertakes in addressing toxic leadership can, itself, be toxic. Peter Frost introduces the concept of "toxicity" in organizations, discussing the negative emotions that develop as a result of everyday organizational activity and arguing that toxicity is generated when these feelings are handled in a harmful rather than healing way.²¹ Toxicity can be defined simply as "widespread generation of negative emotions."²²

"Toxic leadership" is an ambiguous term subject to each individual's perceptions, prior experience, their proximity and relationship to the suspected leader. This ambiguity lends to individuals' questioning themselves "Am I the only one who experiences Colonel Toxic this way?" What if I confide my suspicions or concerns to a colleague and I turn out to be wrong? Perhaps I should allow more time to pass during which I can ascertain a more accurate perspective. If I am uncertain of whom I can confide in and

trust amongst colleagues in my own organization, I am less likely to voice concerns or conduct a “reality check” with fellow subordinates.

A product of an organization’s inertia in addressing the problem of toxic leadership is the creation of the “danger zone.” This zone is constructed around the four-hundred-pound gorilla in the room. Everyone knows he is there, is deathly afraid of him, but avoids the very subject of his presence because individuals’ fears are too great. The toxic decision processes examined here began as decision makers' anxiety and apprehension about an issue caused them to avoid dealing with it.

Unless the leader is completely derailed and feeding Soldiers directly to the meat grinder, individuals may not perceive there to be a great sense of urgency to mitigate toxic leadership behavior. Whatever the case might be, ambiguity and lack of urgency are primary contributors to the inertia that sets in, enabling individuals’ and organizational anxieties to fester. Meanwhile, negative emotions continue to mount until, in fits of exasperation, individuals react in unhelpful ways that only serve to perpetuate the toxic organizational climate. All this, and the purportedly-toxic leader themselves may likely remain completely aloof or unaware. Or, they may be completely aware of their organization’s dynamics because it is of their own design.

Challenging a person’s leadership abilities is fraught with a strong likelihood of their ego being hurt, of their negative knee-jerk defensive reaction. The negative emotional context can lend itself to further decision making avoidance. As much as adjacent leaders may empathize with the targeted individual, many may tend to distance themselves as far as possible. This is the “avoidant response,” which occurs when people imagine themselves experiencing another's plight.²³

Organizational dynamics featuring avoidant response are troubling to consider for any professional organization. The end result, others' avoidant response, is that the person in question is essentially abandoned by the wider group and even by those in roles of authority or responsibility to mitigate and resolve the situation. Will chaplains find themselves in a position where they, too, would respond in like manner? If so, is this dynamic acceptable to supervisory chaplains and senior Army leaders? If yes, then the reader need read or concern themselves with this subject no further.

In an all-volunteer force subject to the possibility of grave injury or death, a Soldier's positive motivation is the key that unlocks almost any door. A toxic leader may, in fact, motivate Soldiers to leave.

An organizational culture of safety could be one which encourages and reinforces confrontation or reporting of negative or toxic leadership. John P. Kotter, in his landmark book on leadership and influencing organizational culture called *Leading Change*, identifies eight key characteristics required for leading change. But one stands out: "Step 5. encouraging others to act upon leaders' vision."²⁴ This can only happen if there is a safe environment for the subordinate to exercise initiative. Until the Army's organizational behavior truly espouses such culture of safety, much as it does for suicide prevention, harassment and work-related safety violations, individuals may doubt their ability to successfully challenge negative or toxic behavior.

This culture of safety can be achieved in incremental steps over time, beginning at the top of the Army organization. Senior leaders will not only model "what right looks like" but will also provide significant encouragement and means for unprofessional subordinates to either modify their conduct for the better or leave the military. Senior

leaders will encourage prudent risk-taking by subordinates to intervene by reporting and mitigating toxic leadership behavior. Only a few mishandled cases of quashing and damaging retaliation can unravel any progress toward positive organizational change. Merely talking to the issue of toxic leadership will not change the Army's organizational culture. Senior leaders' communicating their resolve in bold strokes to correct unintentionally toxic leaders and dismiss unrepentant ones should get the job done. Bold strokes leave no doubt in subordinates' minds about what is unprofessional behavior.

Emotional Intelligence

Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence*, argues that emotional intelligence is more predictive of a person's success in relationships, business, organizational leadership and most other aspects of life than a person's IQ. In fact, people with higher IQs often tend to be lower on the "EQ" (emotional intelligence) scale.

"Emotional intelligence is the capacity of recognizing our own feelings and those of others for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and our relationships."²⁵

Citing the concept formulated by John Mayer and Peter Salovey, Goleman contends that EQ trumps IQ where emotional self-regulation and empathy outweigh purely cognitive abilities.²⁶ Cognitive skills requiring pure intellect and measured by academic terms of success do not necessarily enable people to successfully lead.

Goleman argues that emotional intelligence requires necessary skills that can be learned. Social awareness, empathy, self-management of emotions, self-motivation, managing relationships among others.²⁷ These skills are perishable. They can even be relearned as part of a person's recovery from trauma, abuse or neglect.

Goleman recommends exercises in “emotional judo” which intercepts someone at the peak of their rage. Done successfully, the person becomes distracted from their anger by the one who empathizes with their feelings and perspectives. They can then be drawn into an alternative focus which attunes them to a more positive range of feelings.²⁸ At first glance, this practice of judo would probably not be for the faint of heart. Timing is crucial. The interceptor probably would need to have a pre-existing rapport with the leader or else be able to make a powerful first impression. They may not make a second.

Teaching emotional intelligence skills in Army organizations, perhaps akin to training conducted by the Army Resiliency teams, continues to reinforce what right looks like and further distance the organization from accepting negative or toxic behaviors. Tactile hands-on learners are proven to be reactive rather than reflective in their initial decision making.²⁹ They may be more likely to draw conclusions too quickly and risk making wrong decisions about people or situations. Should a few of these individuals adopt negative or toxic leadership styles, interactive websites used for Army Resiliency or other similar training may not be entirely effective. Person-to-person mentoring or coaching of these individuals will be very appropriate.³⁰

Negative (Toxic) Leadership in Academia

The bi-monthly *Military Review* published by the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, is a peer-reviewed journal that provided initial groundwork and background references for completion of this study. Scholarship of Drs. George E. Reed, R. Craig Bullis, and Richard A. Olsen under the auspices of the U.S. Army War College and Command and General Staff College leadership departments provide pertinent

seminal research reports: They identify the nature and breadth of the problem of negative or toxic leadership in the Army.

Colonel George E. Reed, U.S. Army (Retired) and former instructor at the U.S. Army War College, provides a convenient working definition for toxic leadership. Dr. Reed describes toxic leadership, based upon results of a formidable survey in 2011 by the Center for Army Leadership, as having three common characteristics: The subject demonstrates (1) an apparent lack of concern for the well-being of subordinates, (2) a personality or interpersonal technique that negatively affects organizational climate, and that (3) subordinates are convinced that the toxic leader is motivated primarily by self-interest.³¹

In 2010, Drs. Reed and Olsen provided “Part Two” as means to present their analysis of a 2009 survey of Majors at CGSC as it pertained to negative leadership trends in the Army. They concluded that majors, with less time and investment in their careers, indicated greater likelihood of curtailing their careers than their more senior counterparts at the War College.³²

Lieutenant-Colonel Joe Doty and Master Sergeant Jeff Fenlason wrote “Narcissism and Toxic Leaders” for *Military Review*’s January-February 2013 edition. They identified key characteristics of negative narcissism that, left unchecked, can blossom into toxic leadership behavior. Doty and Fenlason recommend the Army’s enhancement of positive traits—aggressive risk taking, audacious world changing, etcetera-- as well as control and self-regulation of the more negative traits: poor listening, over-sensitivity to criticism, lack of empathy, to name a few.³³

The literature concerning narcissism traces its evolution from a healthy self-pride and concern for self identified by Freud, to irksome malignant self-love and hubris attained at the expense of others, a pathological personality disorder which the person deemed “narcissistic” and “toxic” has neither cognition nor control of.

Organizational versus Clinical Psychology: An Old Debate Revisited

Chaplain (Major) Nils Juarez Palma, currently a curriculum developer at the U.S. Army Chaplain Center in School (USACHCS), Fort Jackson SC, recently served as an instructor and small group leader to the Chaplain Captain Career Course (C4). In 2013, Chaplain Palma completed an insightful critique of divergent mental models of narcissism, those of the clinical and organizational psychologists. His work serves as a precursor and rationale for my intentional linking of negative narcissistic traits with toxic behavior. They have intrinsically-related characteristics which cannot be ignored.

“Narcissism is a normal personality trait that encompasses a wide behavioral range. Experts, such as Freud and Kohut, have supported this view; narcissism is not always pathological. Organizational psychologists assume that healthy narcissistic leaders provide exceptionally positive contributions to a company’s bottom-line. Pride, and not pathology, is what separates the healthy from the unhealthy narcissist leader. When pride overtakes the leader’s reason, his behavior becomes erratic and harmful; hence the toxic leader.”³⁴

Chaplain Palma argues that a clinical diagnosis—Narcissistic Personality Disorder—seems merely to stigmatize problematic people. We have already visited the socially stigmatizing effect of a “toxic” label. Mere reference to a need for “treatment” will incite many leaders to shrink back from seeking help voluntarily. They may push

back hard if they realize they are being “diagnosed” with a personality disorder.

Chaplains serving ill-affected organizations under such leaders will probably find themselves unqualified to make such determinations. But they are amply qualified to identify unprofessional caustic behavior and its impact.

Chaplains can provide, according to AR 165-1, religious and moral advisement that mitigates the effects of toxic leadership. From a pastoral perspective, the Chaplain can use moral leadership learning models to influence the unit with a message of temperance and reconciliation. Chaplains can do this without addressing the clinical perspective of diagnoses. In this manner, as advisors, trainers and mentors, the Chaplain is amply qualified to assist commanders and Soldiers.³⁵

Actual behavior and its impact need be our only professional rubric from which to guide ourselves with regard to mitigating toxic leadership. This fact negates the Chaplain’s need to “prove” a leader’s psychological disorder. Chaplains find themselves in a unique position near but not within the channels of command. This enables them to monitor the organization, gain valid feedback from a commander’s subordinate leaders, and provide credible assessments of morale and command climate.

Chaplains’ intervention may in fact invite change and personal growth without ever having to refer to someone as a “toxic leader.” The organizational psychologists offer an approach beyond their clinical counterparts which can set the stage for meaningful mitigation intended to arrest belligerent toxic behavior and point such leaders to a path of self discovery and their organizations to one of healthy change.

Chaplains have for many years received instruction on the dynamics of effective military leadership as part of the common curriculum of new chaplains’ basic training. In

recent years, aspiring chaplains are not only taught and shown what “right” looks like, but also what it does not— toxic leadership. USACHCS instructors visit this issue with basic trainees and also senior captains in the Captains Career Course.

The leadership curriculum makes use of two primary resources: (1) The seminal work of Dr. Reed in 2004, “Toxic Leadership,” which reinforces the Army’s doctrinal definition of toxic leadership, and Richard Hamon’s *Toxic Leadership-How to Win with a Toxic Leader*, outlines key strategies to survive the throes of toxic leadership and actually be a better person for it later. Hamon’s suggestions provide methods and ideas that serve to complement much of the mitigation findings presented in chapter 4. Hamon provides new chaplains with a meaningful set of strategies from which to approach the problem should they encounter it.

The survey of related literature would be inadequate if I did not offer a brief perusal of petty tyranny and workplace bullying. The inter-related characteristics of these subjects greatly inform how current or prior Army organizational culture and systems often enable and perpetuate negative or toxic leadership behaviors.

Petty Tyranny

Blake Ashforth, in his 1994 article entitled *Petty Tyranny in the Workplace*, identifies some key dynamics that often precede a leader’s disposition to implement potentially-toxic behaviors.

Chaplains can learn more about the leaders in their organizations by asking some initial questions early on in their tenures there. Answers to basic questions about Soldiers’ work ethic, how the leader understands their role and position of power and

their beliefs about the organization in general can reveal hints about how a leader intends to proceed.

Does the leader make comments or exude behavior that suggest a lack of trust or skepticism about subordinates' work ethic? Are all Soldiers lazy and require heightened discipline and supervision? Chaplains should ask these kinds of questions to better understand the command climate and organizational culture, not because they are profiling for "toxic leadership" but so that such practices might be averted. Arguably, chaplains can assume a significant role in helping a leader explore their beliefs and, where applicable, help them reframe their experience

"Theory X" includes beliefs that the average person dislikes work, lacks ambition, avoids responsibility, prefers direction, and is resistant to change. McGregor further argues that managers holding such beliefs often resort to a close, coercive leadership style.³⁶ In one of the few direct tests of McGregor's arguments, B.G. Fiman's survey in 1973 found that office supervisors endorsing Theory X attitudes were perceived by their subordinates to provide more structure and less consideration.³⁷

Ashforth surveyed 562 business students describing their most recent supervisor, presenting 89 descriptive items. Responses from those who identified their manager as one who "lorded their power over them" included these six descriptors as the most prevalent, representing an aggregate 41 percent of all responses. These results only serve to pre-empt and confirm the conclusions drawn by Dr. George Reed about toxic leadership and Chaplain Nils Palma's linking it to underlying narcissistic tendencies:

1. Arbitrariness and self-aggrandizement (e.g., "Uses authority or position for personal gain," "Administers organizational policies unfairly," "Plays favorites' among subordinates").

2. Belittling subordinates (e.g., “Yells at subordinates,” “Criticizes subordinates in front of others,” “Belittles or embarrasses subordinates”).
3. Lack of consideration (e.g., “Is friendly and approachable” [reversed], “Looks out for the personal welfare of group members” [reversed], “Does little things to make it pleasant to be a member of the group” [reversed]).
4. A forcing style of conflict resolution (e.g., “Forces acceptance of his or her point of view,” “Demands to get his or her way,” “Will not take no for an answer”).
5. Discouraging initiative (e.g., “Encourages subordinates to participate in important decisions” [reversed], “Trains subordinates to take on more authority” [reversed], “Encourages initiative in the group members” [reversed]).
6. Non-contingent punishment (e.g., “My supervisor is often displeased with my work for no apparent reason,” “I frequently am reprimanded by my supervisor without knowing why,” “My supervisor is often critical of my work even when I perform well”).³⁸

Ashforth admits that the research validity is challenged by the mere subjective, impressionistic nature of the issue. All answers are based primarily upon the respondents' perceptions of their leader, the context and the impact of that leader's behavior. Drs. Reed, Bullis and countless others researching this field raise the caution sign with regard to survey validations and application a label of “toxic leader” with its inherently negative connotations. Much of what is reported about toxic leadership, be it from surveys or a chaplain's counseling session, comes in the form of anecdotal evidence. Anecdotal story-telling necessarily includes the biases and subjectivity of the teller.

Ashforth concludes his article by making recommendations for future research: What role do subordinates play in the propagation of petty tyranny in their organizations?³⁹ Asked another way: “Do we discover any patterns or trends among subordinates that confirm or deny the petty tyrant's underlying beliefs and assumptions?” In other words, when exploring reports of toxic leadership behaviors we must not only examine the particular leader, but also consider the source. When we do this, we may

have additional perspective from which to challenge or validate the leader's underlying beliefs about subordinates, their leadership role or style, and the organization as a whole.

Workplace Bullying

“All service members have a personal responsibility to intervene in and stop any occurrences of hazing or bullying,” said Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, in a recent statement.⁴⁰

Workplace Bullying is repeated, health-harming mistreatment of one or more persons (the targets) by one or more perpetrators that takes one or more of the following forms:

1. Verbal abuse.
2. Offensive conduct/behaviors (including nonverbal) which are threatening, humiliating, or intimidating.
3. Work interference—sabotage—which prevents work from getting done
4. Is driven by perpetrators' need to control the targeted individual(s).
5. Is initiated by bullies who choose their targets, timing, location, and methods.
6. Requires consequences for the targeted individual.
7. Escalates to involve others who side with the bully, either voluntarily or through coercion.
8. Undermines legitimate business interests when bullies' personal agendas take precedence over work itself.
9. Is akin to domestic violence at work, where the abuser is on the payroll.⁴¹

Bullying requires both a committed act—acts done on a chronic basis—and a negative effect on the recipient, the target. Neither act nor harm alone defines bullying.

Without tangible impact, when there is no harm, there is no foul. Consequences may include damage to psyche, social status, and economic well-being.⁴²

Unlike schoolyard bullying, someone is not targeted because they were a "loner" without friends to stand up to the bullying gang leader. Nor are they a weakling. Most likely, they were targeted, for reasons the instigator may or may not be cognizant of, because they posed a "threat" to him or her. The perception of threat is often entirely in their mind, but it is what they perceive and believe as reality.⁴³

Some prime factors contributing to or enabling bullying are: (1) "The Way We Do Things Here," (2) Work Culture Provides Cutthroat Competition Opportunities, and (3) Zero-sum competition. Employees are pitted against each other in positions or tasks that allow only one winner to emerge from deliberate battles, creating many losers. Winning is carved out of the hides of the vanquished. It is a routine way to design work in sales jobs, but unnatural and destructive elsewhere. In government service and financially-strapped industries, budgets are tight and competition for scarce resource dollars ensues. Scarcity generates competition. One could argue that competition among Army leaders increases as they approach each selection or promotion board.⁴⁴ Since there will never be as many colonels as captains, one could argue that a survival mentality increases as one rises higher on the promotions pyramid.

Other primary factors include employers' response to acts of bullying. Whether bullies receive positive accolades in form of performance bonuses and promotions or their negative behavior goes unpunished they will be emboldened to persist and increase in their bullying.⁴⁵

How to Work for a Toxic Leader and Win

Certain authors believe it possible for someone to meet the challenge of working for a toxic leader and have it become a self-enhancing experience. Richard Hamon, a licensed marriage and family therapist with thirty years of certified clinical counseling experience, argues it not only possible but that such experience can be one from which a person can grow exponentially. He actually believes that, if done correctly, it is possible to actually *win* with a toxic leader.

Hamon suggests ways that enable unfortunate subordinates to find healthy alternatives to wallowing in frustration and hopelessness,⁴⁶ things that prompt even stronger negative emotions which lead only to negative outcomes.

Hamon suggests one simply observe the toxic leader's style and try envisioning walking a mile in their shoes. What can be learned about them to gain a better appreciation or understanding? Are there any such things that would prompt someone to tolerate the toxic leader's shortcomings?⁴⁷

Hamon also recommends we consider any ways we can exert a positive influence upon the leader. Is it possible that one can meet their toxic leader's wrath and rage with calm, even-handed and rational responses that can serve to exemplify more tempered, professional conduct? Hamon says "Yes." And military chaplains, with their unique access and privileged communication with leaders in the organizations they serve, have ample opportunity to show a toxic leader what "professional" and "emotionally intelligent" look like. But that opportunity can be squandered if one does not have control of their emotions.

“Avoid getting so angry that you criticize or condemn the leader” Hamon warns.⁴⁸ That can be a pitfall for chaplains or anyone who attempts to analyze their leader’s behavior. If we are too quick to affix the label “toxic” or to diagnose them with “narcissistic personality disorder,” we may unwittingly divorce ourselves from being the advocate they really need us to be.

Anger can only well up and overcome all emotion when one assumes other’s fears, hurts and sufferings for themselves. Empathy is a powerful tool most chaplains and other caregivers possess in great abundance. Lack of empathy is one of the chief deficiencies of many toxic leaders. Empathy is only a window, one that leaders deemed toxic either cannot or refuse to see through. Empathy, however, ought not convey wholesale ownership of other people’s emotional turmoil.

“How can we focus on the positive aspects of the person’s leadership and think strategically about our own position?,”⁴⁹ Hamon asks. Focusing on the good things a leader provides may serve to temper the more negative aspects. Are there any *good* aspects to the leader’s behavior? Can they be implemented or augmented in ways which diminish the more negative aspects?

A toxic leader’s belligerent behavior can often be traced to fears, insecurities, uncertainties and even feelings of inadequacy. Therefore, Hamon suggests brainstorming as a technique through which to discover possible ways we might help the leader feel less anxious or insecure.⁵⁰ A chaplain can leverage his or her privileged access and communication with their leaders, and leverage confidentiality, to give their leaders reality checks and opportunities to reframe their experiences. These dynamics are only possible if the leader allows it.

Finally, Hamon recommends reframing our experiences into opportunities from which to learn and grow. “Strong leaders in any group take care of their relationships, keeping lines for communication open and serving others.”⁵¹ Toxic leaders, by and large, are not willing or capable of caring for their relationships—unless they want to attain a self-serving goal or strategic advantage. Chaplains, however, can model strong leadership behaviors for the toxic leader they serve; but only if they are capable of effective self-care in the process. This includes keeping negative emotions in check.

For those of us already abused, misused or otherwise feel emotionally or verbally beaten up, toleration and advocacy may be a tall order to fill. In many instances, toleration itself should not be tolerated especially in view of damaging effects it has on organizations. Arguably, most forms toxic leadership behavior--whether pathological or cognitive, measured and intentional--should not be tolerated.

The Army’s mission command doctrine emphasizes healthy, positive leadership principles based upon a philosophy of professionalism and service. There is little if any room for toxic leadership behavior bent on unprofessional self-service. But Richard Hamon’s article offers a way for chaplains and other caregivers to serve their toxic leader in ways that may prompt them toward positive change, assuming change is possible.

Annual Surveys of Army Leadership 2009-2012

The September-October 2013 edition of *Military Review* addresses topics explored by the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic, to include challenges to Army professionalism. Dan Johnson identifies prevalent reasons why misplaced sense of loyalty and fears of being perceived as disloyal or not a team-player can lead to toleration of unethical or toxic conduct by a superior.⁵²

Perceptions and experience of negative leadership trends have been consistently reported in the Center for Army Leadership's Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL). Those perused for this study date from 2009-2012. These surveys provide credible evidence that negative or toxic leadership, while not prevalent, is a large enough issue impacting approximately 20 percent of the force at any given time.

Dr. John P. Steele, writing for the Center for Army Leadership (CAL) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, presented CAL's Technical Report 2011-3 in which he asks "Does the Army have leaders that are routinely seen as toxic?" His work has since been referred to colloquially as the "Toxic Leader Report." Steele cites the 2010 CASAL in which roughly 1 in 5, or 18 percent of service members surveyed indicated that their leader "does things and behaves in a way that is positive for the organization and themselves, but negative for subordinates" (e.g., toxic classification).⁵³

Steele relates how "the 2011 Profession of Arms campaign (PoA) senior leader survey revealed that only 27 percent responded that the Army is effective (47 percent ineffective) in identifying ineffective or negative leaders, and even less thought the Army was effective (17 percent effective; 57 percent ineffective) in rehabilitating or removing such leaders."⁵⁴

Steele cites the work of Drs. Reed and Bullis who collaborated on a report of a 2008 survey of senior leaders enrolled at the Army War College: Army War College students defined toxic leaders as those whom are: "focused on visible short-term mission accomplishment. They provide superiors with impressive, articulate presentations and enthusiastic responses to missions. But, they are unconcerned about, or oblivious to, staff or troop morale, and or climate. They are seen by the majority of subordinates as

arrogant, self-serving, inflexible, and petty.”⁵⁵ Bird summed up the literature aptly saying that the process for destructive leaders involves dominance, coercion, and manipulation, as opposed to constructive leaders who use influence, persuasion, and commitment.⁵⁶

Steele cites selfishness and narcissism as being expected and recurring themes. Almost all toxic and related leadership literature has mentioned these elements. These themes are also part of the theoretical framework of Einarsen and others. Toxic leaders, by definition, focus on themselves and their organizations, rather than on subordinates.⁵⁷

John Steele’s report I believe stands alone in magnifying negative leadership behaviors, namely those considered toxic behaviors as identified by the above-mentioned surveys. While not a problem for the Army in epidemic proportion, such negative leadership behaviors affect enough of the force—roughly 20 percent—to require some attention. The Army Profession of Arms Campaign and initiatives exploring the Army Professional Ethic, and their related publications, provide ample source material describing why negative leadership is such dire a threat to sound Mission Command doctrine and practice.

Colonels Charles D. Allen and William G. Braun III, U.S. Army Retired, discussed the Army Profession Campaign further in the September-October 2013 edition of *Military Review*. They explored trust and its implications for the Army profession in an article by the same name. They offered a definition of trust as a “willingness to be vulnerable” based on the expectation that a partner in exchange will not behave opportunistically.⁵⁸ A truly self-seeking leader without moral compass will take advantage of this dynamic and exploit subordinates to their own benefit.

Colonels Allen and Braun cite the Profession of Arms campaign surveys' assessment of trust across three related dimensions: (1) organizational climate—trust at unit level, trust in Army leaders, (2) institutional—within the wider Army organization amongst its components, and (3) public—trust rendered to the Army by mainstream American population and civilian authorities. One can readily draw the inference that any mistrust at grassroots organizational levels will undermine the credibility of the Army Profession at institutional and greater public levels too. "Creating trust takes a lifetime; losing it takes a moment."⁵⁹

Our professionalism will not be measured by how many Army Profession campaign speeches or slogans are rendered. The proof of the Army's professionalism lies in how well we practice good stewardship of what America has entrusted it: our sons and daughters. Ignoring or excusing away negative and toxic leadership behavior undermines professionalism in all aspects. Countenancing negative and toxic behavior and enabling it to continue unabated lends directly to cynicism and skepticism at lower levels. Junior enlisted personnel and officers carry these experiences, and their perceptions and impressions, with them as they progress higher.

Primary components of trust include integrity and predictability. Violations of trust happen with instances of self-serving, opportunistic, inconsistent, contradictory and deceptive behaviors. These violations can be remedied with candor and organizational distancing.⁶⁰ Organizational distancing occurs when words and actions, and group members' dispositions, essentially ostracize the contrary individual or behavior.

The Army does not condone suicide or sexual assault. Its members are subject to routine training and messages that reinforce this stance. Certain protocols are in place and

procedures mandated should instances occur or are likely to occur. I argue that training the positive leadership characteristics while underlining the potential damage caused by negative or toxic leadership behaviors can serve to create awareness and organizational distance from a leader's misbehavior.

"The best morale exists when you never hear the word mentioned. When you hear a lot of talk about it, it's usually lousy."⁶¹ General Dwight D. Eisenhower posited that "morale is only a topic of conversation when it is bad." If true, does leadership go the same way as morale? Professionalism? Our routine training of positive leadership and commensurate organizational behavior along the parameters of Mission Command and Leadership doctrine will go far to highlight divergent behavior if it occurs. Will such training emphasis and commensurate organizational distance deter the leader in question?

The 2011 CASAL cited by Dr. John Steele's "Toxic Leader Report," defined toxic leadership as those leaders "working to promote themselves at the expense of their subordinates, usually without considering long-term ramifications to their subordinates, their unit, and the Army profession."⁶²

Dr. Steele cites Drs. Reed's and Bullis' conclusion that survey results regarding negative or toxic leadership are going to always be skewed toward the low side regarding reporting. Those service members surveyed elected to remain in service despite their experience with a negative or toxic behaving leader. Or, perhaps, they are the "survivors" who have become tolerant or callous to it.⁶³

Colonel Brian Michelson, writing in the September-October 2013 edition of *Military Review*, cites the Army Gold Book 2011 study of the Army population's commission of felonies and misdemeanors. The survey suggests that criminal activity

decreases as rank increases. On a purely numerical basis this would make sense if we remember the pyramidal rank structure of the Army's organization.

There are always going to be more privates and specialists than colonels. But as he parsed the findings for himself, Colonel Michelson discovered 31 percent of all non-UCMJ criminal offenses were conducted by non-commissioned and commissioned officers.⁶⁴ The finding is troubling if we presume that senior leaders attain those higher positions by virtue of their heightened sense of moral responsibility and character.

While I do not intend this project to speak to Army leader misconduct generally, I do believe there can be certain important correlations drawn with respect to the Army's experience of negative or toxic leadership. First, the number of instances of misconduct reported decrease as rank increases. Michelson attributes this not only as reflection of senior leader character and espoused moral values, but also to the understanding that the Army's senior leaders, through the promotion or selection processes or disciplinary action, are effective to some degree at removing morally-challenged leaders before they progress further or higher.⁶⁵ I would argue the same as being true regarding negative or toxic leaders.

The "Commander 360" evaluation initiative expected to launch in 2014⁶⁶ seeks to provide such subordinate-driven feedback at a pivotal point in a senior leader's career—consideration for battalion and brigade command. Fortunately, Drs. Reed and Bullis in 2009 found that field-grade officers were found with least negative leadership behaviors than their counterparts in other rank categories. The recent CASAL surveys from the Center for Army Leadership confirm this.

The 2012 CASAL survey report published in April 2013 continues the trend of validating earlier findings: Negative or toxic leadership behaviors tend to be more prevalent further down the rank structure. They are least prevalent among those leaders at battalion or brigade command level.

The survey results also skew to the low side in reporting because of the insular nature of many senior positions as one progresses in rank. Indeed, the demand for moral integrity increases as rank and position increase---because fewer and fewer people are watching. I would argue that a battalion or brigade commander who could not operate independently and without supervision is probably incompetent and needs to be removed. But it's the very insular nature of senior leaders' positions that make certain mitigation of negative or toxic leadership behaviors hard to address, especially if they are the negative leader in question.

A leader's senior performance rater, one whose reviews are most influential upon future promotion, typically sits two positions higher in a location displaced from the subordinate. This dynamic can be exacerbated further during deployments. Hence, leaders senior to the subject are more likely to not be cognizant of negative ill-affective behavior at lower levels. They are more likely to give the subject the benefit of the doubt (stress, undisciplined or incapable subordinates, etc) unless a pattern is otherwise proven to them. Even then, a senior leader may be hesitant to move against someone who has a long list of desirable, albeit short-term, results.

Subordinates of a negative or toxic leader will often not have direct access to the leader's superior or to their higher headquarters. If they do, their access can be monitored or controlled in the rendering of reports or in determining which subordinate is permitted

to communicate with which superior and for what purpose. Subordinates will often be leery of circumventing their superior in the command or responsibility chains for fear of damaging and costly reprisals. Most arguably toxic leaders demand personal loyalty from their subordinates. The junior service member may feel hesitant or guilty about reporting their leader's bad behavior to anyone, let alone challenging such behavior directly. John Steele reports the 2011 survey conducted during the U.S. Army Profession of Arms Campaign having revealed 12 percent of respondents agreed that they had been pressured to cover up issues or act unethically.⁶⁷

From my experience, I would argue that many subordinates of such negative leaders will expect the Chaplain to be capable and willing to do something meaningful and constructive. The Army Regulations governing chaplains (advising the Command on the "personal impact of leadership practices")⁶⁸ and chaplains' performance evaluation criteria (confrontation and risk-taking ability, facilitate healthy interpersonal relationships)⁶⁹ all indicate that some significant action is within the Chaplain's purview. Ill-affected subordinates may seek out the Chaplain to voice concerns or complaints and vent about their troublesome experiences with their negative leader.

While many may come to the Chaplain merely for moral support, others come expecting the Chaplain to take definitive action in support of their plight. Regulations suggest in black-and-white that a chaplain's response is required and expected. Regulations provide the "what" toward mitigation but not nearly enough of the "how." The CASAL 2009 results found two-thirds of negative or toxic leadership going unquestioned or unreported.⁷⁰ The Army Profession of Arms Campaign 2011 survey

reported 10 percent of Army leaders conceal problems from their superiors.⁷¹ If the Chaplain has no role to play in mitigating these things, then whose role is it?

“These disappointing findings,” Colonel Michelson concludes, “highlight the developmental challenge the Army faces in getting the actions and conduct of its collective leadership to match espoused values.”⁷² Accomplishing that feat would enable the Army to demonstrate professionalism without having to talk about it or have campaigns. Army Chaplains have a direct role to play in helping the Army make that strategic linkage between doctrine, values and professional conduct of its leaders. One way for chaplains to do that could be effective and meaningful mitigation of negative or toxic leadership in their organizations; not saber-rattling, not witch-hunting or crusade-launching, but chaplains’ enacting a pro-active contingency plan toward positive intervention and organizational resiliency and well-being should the need ever arise.

Steele’s report discusses how personal perception informs one’s reception and interpretation of their leaders’ leadership style and behavior toward them. Steele explains, “Building on the idea of resilience is the concept of positive affectivity (PA). PA is the tendency to have a positive reflection of one’s own well-being, emotions, and level of engagement of both interpersonal relations and achievement.”⁷³ This can mean that the High-PA person will be less likely to take a leader’s demeaning remarks to heart. The High-PA subordinate will be more likely to “consider the source” if their personal assessment conflicts with that of their negative leader.

A Low-PA subordinate has a degree of self-doubt or uncertainty and is likely to feel critically hurt and demoralized. A Low-PA subordinate may be too quick to harbor anger or resentment and label their leader as toxic. This is a critical factor to consider

when considering a plan of mitigation against negative leadership behaviors. Does the subordinate really need to reframe the experience or reassess the situation? Are too many subordinates faced with having to do likewise? How many subordinates must feel demoralized before the impetus is placed elsewhere? Chaplains can help determine viable courses of action along these lines in their counseling regimen.

Dr. Steele's "Toxic Leadership Report" also addresses ingratiation as a strategy in dealing with damaging and destructive leaders. Ingratiation is a social influence strategy using flattery, opinion-conformity, or performing favors for others. A common goal of ingratiation and similar tactics is to gain control over others.⁷⁴ Used effectively, ingratiation essentially enables the individual to become a "smaller target" to their abusive leader. If I can appease the playground bully then he will not target me.

Ingratiation is a strategy of coping and surviving that has mixed results. The High-PA subordinates who practices ingratiation demonstrated the least levels of negative effects from abusive leaders. As one might surmise, those Low-PA subordinates who did not practice ingratiation fell under the most distress. Those who did attempt ingratiation only exacerbated the abusive tendencies of their negative leader. I surmise some leaders are fortunate to be able to intuit who was genuine and non-threatening and who was the pandering and insincere phony.

Ingratiation is not a tried-and-true, one-size-fits-all solution for subordinates' mitigating a strained relationship with a toxic leader. Ingratiation should be implemented strategically,⁷⁵ especially with those negative leaders exhibiting exaggerated narcissistic tendencies. My only real concern about ingratiation is that it may continue to stroke an already overblown ego, enflame the leader's malignant hubris, and lead to cronyism

(“yes-men”) and sycophancy⁷⁶ (“bootlicking”) amongst subordinate leaders in the organization. In such environment, I cannot imagine subordinates will speak sufficient truth to power about leadership behavior or any other matter. In such an environment I surmise that Lieutenant General David Perkins’ warning will thereby hearken true: When cronyism reigns supreme and candor is absent, the negative leader unwittingly assumes future exponential risks that will raise their ugly heads at the most critical, inopportune time.⁷⁷

2012 CASAL: April 2013

Toxic leaders promote themselves at the expense of their underlings, and usually do so without considering long-term ramifications to their subordinates, their unit, and the Army profession. CASAL’s assessment of negative leadership over the last three years reveals that toxic leadership is not understood in a universal manner. The proportion of leaders who express agreement that their superior demonstrates any specific negative behavior is one- fifth or less. Perceptions of negative leadership appear at junior levels and are less perceived at higher levels.⁷⁸

I believe the diversity of perception can be attributed to two measures: (1) junior leaders are not accustomed to rough treatment by a superior, or (2) senior leaders exude fewer if any of the characteristics described by ADP 6-22 or Drs. Reed or Bullis. I would like to believe that the second measure holds true because the institutional Army, with its collective selection and promotion boards, tends to recognize leaders who know how to get along well with subordinates.

MMAS Theses, Papers

Various students at the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, provide senior field-grade officer perspectives and contributions to the research into toxic leadership issues particular to the Army. They each identify the problem of toxic leadership at the organizational level from their vantage points after considerable time in service and numerous command and staff experiences. For example Lieutenant Colonel Denise Williams, in work supervised by Dr. Reed, identifies various forms of toxic leaders. She charges the Army with tolerating it. She recommends intervention early in one's career to alleviate future ill effects. This requires awareness and education on the part of superiors.⁷⁹

Summary

Army Chaplain Corps regulations prescribe roles and responsibilities that necessitate chaplains' mitigation of negative leadership in significant direct ways. Chaplains' performance evaluation criteria demonstrate that the Army expects appropriate action. These regulations form the starting point for formulating mitigation strategies and courses and action.

Courses of action are informed by our understanding of the negative leader and the organization's behavior in response to that leader. Petty tyranny and workplace bullying are topics which can inform the Army's need for organizational culture change. The Army needs the positive characteristics of a productive narcissist. The organization suffers when the leader's pride and ego exaggerates those traits toward negative consequences. Negative or toxic leaders can learn skills to enhance their emotional intelligence. Practicing these skills can lead them to self-awareness and better regulation

of their emotions and behavior. They can be imparted to ill-affected subordinates struggling to cope with the negative leader and yet remain positive and effective.

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- ¹Department of the Army, Army Regulation (AR) 165-1, 11.
- ²*Ibid.*, 12.
- ³*Ibid.*, 3.
- ⁴Department of the Army, AR 623-3, 83.
- ⁵*Ibid.*, 83.
- ⁶*Ibid.*, 84.
- ⁷Michael Maccoby, *The Productive Narcissist* (New York: Broadway Books, 2003), 9.
- ⁸*Ibid.*, 7.
- ⁹*Ibid.*, 93.
- ¹⁰*Ibid.*, 10.
- ¹¹*Ibid.*, xiv.
- ¹²Michael Maccoby, "Narcissistic Leaders," *Harvard Business Review* (January-February 2000), www.maccoby.com/Articles/NarLeaders.shtml (accessed 24 November 2013).
- ¹³Maccoby, *The Productive Narcissist*, xiv.
- ¹⁴Maccoby, "Narcissistic Leaders."
- ¹⁵*Ibid.*
- ¹⁶Sam Vaknin, "Malignant Self-Love: Narcissism Revisited," <http://samvak.tripod.com/msla.html> (accessed 24 November 2013).
- ¹⁷Maccoby, "Narcissistic Leaders."
- ¹⁸Reed, "Toxic Leadership," 67.
- ¹⁹Maccoby, "Narcissistic Leaders."
- ²⁰*Ibid.*

²¹Peter J. Frost, *Toxic Emotions at Work: How Compassionate Managers Handle Pain and Conflict* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2003), 12.

²²Sally Maitlis and Hakan Ozcelik, "Toxic Decision Processes: A Study of Emotion and Organizational Decision Making," *Organization Science* 15, no. 4 (2004), <http://search.proquest.com/docview/213829579?accountid=28992> (accessed 24 November 2013), 375-93.

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²⁵Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, 317.

²⁶*Ibid.*, xiv, 45.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 43.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 124.

²⁹Darwin B. Nelson and Gary R. Low, *Emotional Intelligence*, 2d ed. (New York: Prentis Hall, 2011), 27.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 28.

³¹Reed, "Toxic Leadership," 67.

³²George E. Reed and Richard A. Olsen, "Toxic Leadership: Part Deux," *Military Review* (November-December 2010): 61.

³³Joe Doty and Jeff Fenlason, "Narcissism and Toxic Leaders," *Military Review* (January-February 2013): 56.

³⁴Nils Juarez Palma, "Toxic Leadership and the Narcissism Epidemic: A Cognitive Behavioral Therapeutic Approach."

³⁵Nils Juarez Palma, email correspondence with author, 13 November 2013.

³⁶Douglas McGregor, *The Human Side of Enterprise* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960).

³⁷B. G. Fiman, "An investigation of the Relationships Among Supervisory Attitudes, Behaviors, and Outputs: An Examination of McGregor's Theory Y," *Personnel Psychology* 26 (1973): 95-105.

³⁸Blake Ashforth, “Petty Tyranny in Organizations,” *Human Relations* 47, no. 7 (1994): 755.

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰David Vergun, “Zero Tolerance in Army for Bullying; Hazing,” *Army Times*, 13 August 2012, <http://www.army.mil/article/85308/> (accessed 21 November 2013).

⁴¹Workplace Bullying Institute, <http://www.workplacebullying.org/individuals/problem/definition/> (accessed 21 November 2013).

⁴²Workplace Bullying Institute, <http://www.workplacebullying.org/2013/02/07/consequences/> (accessed 21 November 2013).

⁴³Workplace Bullying Institute, <http://www.workplacebullying.org/individuals/problem/who-gets-targeted/> (accessed 21 November 2013).

⁴⁴Workplace Bullying Institute, <http://www.workplacebullying.org/individuals/problem/how-bullying-happens/> (accessed 21 November 2013).

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⁴⁶Richard Hamon, “How to Win with a Toxic Leader,” <http://ezinearticles.com/?Toxic-Leadership—How-to-Win-With-a-Toxic-Leader&id=862048> (accessed 21 November 2013).

⁴⁷*Ibid.*

⁴⁸*Ibid.*

⁴⁹*Ibid.*

⁵⁰*Ibid.*

⁵¹*Ibid.*

⁵²Daniel Johnson, “The Greatest Threat Facing the Army Profession,” *Military Review* (October-November 2013): 70.

⁵³John P. Steele, Center for Army Leadership (CAL), Technical Report 2011-3, *Antecedents and consequences of toxic Leadership in the U. S. Army: A Two Year Review and Recommended Solutions* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: CAL), 10.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*

⁵⁵J. M. Bird, “Destructive Leadership in the Army; Prescriptions for Change” (Research project, U.S. Army War College, 2010), 6.

- ⁵⁶Steele, 3.
- ⁵⁷Ibid., 35.
- ⁵⁸Charles D. Allen and William G. Braun III, “Trust: Implications or the Army Profession,” *Military Review* (September-October 2013): 75.
- ⁵⁹Ibid., 77.
- ⁶⁰Ibid.
- ⁶¹<http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/d/dwightdei149103.html> (accessed 8 December 2013).
- ⁶²Department of Army, Technical Report 2011-1: 2010 CASAL Volume 2 Main Findings (Washington DC: GPO May 2012), 2.
- ⁶³Steele, 10.
- ⁶⁴Brian M. Michelson, “Character Development of U.S. Army Leaders,” *Military Review* (September-October 2013): 33.
- ⁶⁵Ibid.
- ⁶⁶Dr. Melissa Wolfe, Center for Army Leadership, discussion with author, Fort Leavenworth KS, October 2013.
- ⁶⁷Steele, 23.
- ⁶⁸Department of the Army, AR 165-1, 12.
- ⁶⁹Department of the Army, AR 623-3, 83.
- ⁷⁰Steele, 19.
- ⁷¹Ibid., 12.
- ⁷²Michelson, 33.
- ⁷³Steele, 33.
- ⁷⁴Ibid., 34.
- ⁷⁵Ibid.
- ⁷⁶Definition: A servile self-seeker who attempts to win favor by flattering influential people. a person who praises powerful people in order to get their approval. <http://merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sycophant> (accessed 21 November 2013).

⁷⁷Perkins.

⁷⁸Ryan Riley, Josh Hatfield, and Art Paddock, Technical Report 2013-1, Center for Army Leadership Annual Survey of Army Leadership Main Findings, 2012

⁷⁹Williams. “Toxic Leadership in the U.S. Army.”

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Chapter 1 serves to introduce the problems and challenges of toxic leadership in terms of how it undermines and contradicts professed Army core values, doctrine, and regulations. It should serve as a springboard from which Army chaplains can begin addressing the impacts of a toxic leader's behavior in the organizations they serve.

Ambiguity Despite Common Definitions

There will always be ambiguity inherent to a survey of chaplains' mitigation of negative or toxic leadership. As discussed previously, this relatively recent term can mean different things to different people. For those who have not experienced troublesome, damaging behavior by a colleague or boss, the term and subject matter may fall upon deaf ears. In fact, such individuals may deem it as not applicable to them or their experience so that they effectively exclude themselves from the survey.

This survey and overall project will not devolve into long and difficult exercise in semantics. ADP 6-22, *Leadership* provides definitions for negative and toxic leadership which can serve to mitigate ambiguity. These definitions have been reinforced by the research of Drs. George E. Reed and Craig Bullis at the Army War College. These definitions cite specific behaviors and effects but do not pretend to be exhaustive. The open-ended nature of the survey, despite my effort to limit the scope by suggesting common definitions, will nonetheless create some degree of ambiguity.¹

Narcissism Defined

Certain common traits of toxic leaders are also prevalent characteristics of negative narcissism (See Appendix A). People with deeply narcissistic tendencies are often attracted to the Army in their search for admiration and recognition. The Army provides ready-made groups of willing or unwilling-but-obedient followers. The Army even requires some of their aggression and decisiveness especially in combat situations. Such people are often amply rewarded with ever-promising positions and higher rank. I do not pretend to be an expert in this field and will refrain from rendering personality diagnoses here, I will simply focus upon demonstrable behavior and allow the reader to draw his or her own inferences.

Chapter 1 demonstrates how toxic leadership behavior begs a subordinate leader's, and chaplain's, attention. It serves as an indictment against toxic leadership behavior and all attempts to excuse or explain it away. Chapter 1 undergirds one's rationale and consideration of preventive, interventive or mitigating action. It should further indict those who see or have knowledge of the problematic behavior and choose to do nothing.

Chaplains have no reason to do nothing especially because they in fact have definitive guidance and performance evaluation criteria² within the Army Regulations themselves. Army Regulation 165-1, *Army Chaplain Corps Activities*, revised in 2009, and AR 623-3, *Evaluation Reporting System*, revised in 2012, provide directives and sanctions for chaplains' appropriate actions.

The review of literature in chapter 2 identifies the challenges of toxic leadership behavior and presents widespread and divergent recommendations in mitigating its effect.

Cited behavior and recommendations derive primarily from the academic, corporate and psychological realms. Chapter 2 demarcates the pertinent literature into genres that demonstrate the wide array of attitudes, opinions, psycho-social theories and mitigation practices. These derive from American business culture, the academic and psychological professions, and the recent research conducted by the Center for Army Leadership and the War College. They are meant to inform chaplains' mitigation strategies without necessarily being a definitive guide.

I found six general literature genres of toxic leadership behavior and those personality characteristics which may inform such behavior, such as narcissism:

First, people who exude toxic leadership behavior in military and corporate worlds commit an unforgivable crime and must be promptly dismissed (genre one). This stance is often found in news publications citing recent firings of toxic leaders, or senior Army leaders speaking to the subject. But I suspect that following this track is more easily said than actually done.

Second, toxic leaders do not know that what they are doing is toxic and they cannot help themselves. This genre presumes there are pathological phenomena at work which cannot be altered. They need to be fired immediately, but there is room for our empathy and forgiveness. Underlying genre two is the probability that such individuals cannot be reckoned with rationally. They are likely to respond irrationally to a subordinate's request for reprieve or redress. They are likely to crush or avoid intervention measures. They may or may not be able to be helped by clinical professionals (see genre four). Chaplains do not rank among clinical professionals. And if

the toxic leader is our commander, we are most assuredly not the ones to be doing that sort of helping.

Third, toxic leaders know exactly what they are doing when they do it, it being part of their strategy of domination and control, and they simply care more about themselves than they ever will about others. This genre presumes a more punitive response is warranted. It suggests toxic leaders should be chastised and challenged to change their behavior, more likely to succeed if they are convinced it is in their own best interest. It begs the question of whether or not someone can truly follow orders involving concern for others when the toxic leader clearly does not. Skeptics may argue that such leaders will simply pay lip service to their superiors and go through the motions until they are once again in the clear.

Fourth, toxic leaders often possess personality characteristics that can be addressed clinically through counseling, psycho-therapy, etc. Such people can be rehabilitated and remain valuable members of their organizations. Sometimes their being subject to traumatic life events can trigger positive change. Or they can, with intentional and structured treatment, essentially “outgrow” their toxicity.

Fifth, we need the positive qualities that many albeit toxic leaders happen to possess. People who are or become toxic leaders often have qualities which are actually required and desired by organizations. Aggressiveness, bold-risk taking and championing a cause (even if only their own) are all valuable attributes of an Army leader. They often get results and reap rewards.

Sixth, toxic leaders are not going away. They remain a fact of life which must be reckoned with. Subordinates can learn to cope effectively without losing their souls or

their professionalism. There are ample ways in which a subordinate can work effectively with and for their toxic leader without relinquishing their personal identity, pride or integrity. They also have the option of walking away. The last option can be much harder to do in the Army and it could mean voluntary or involuntary separation. In some ways the last method may be the easiest for the traumatized subordinate and most costly to the Army.

I expect to make special use of genres 4, 5, and 6. These suggest multiple ways forward that can be redemptive and rehabilitative for the negative leader while capitalizing on their desirable traits. They offer numerous methods of achieving professional effectiveness in a difficult or strained work environment. They offer ways chaplains can continue to render meaningful support to traumatized subordinates while dealing with their own traumatic experience in positive, healthy ways. I expect to be able to link much of the literature in these genres with the survey results as discussed below.

I expect to draw my major conclusions about chaplains' mitigation strategies through an Internet-delivered anonymous survey. This survey was conducted among Army chaplains of all ranks, prior positions and experiences, currently on active duty at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. This survey served as an initial pilot for a wider survey to be conducted across the entire Regular Army in November 2013. Due to time constraint only the pilot survey results are discussed here.

The pilot survey's respondents comprised a non-probability group sample on the basis of convenience and availability. That is, the nature and scope of the survey does not allow for a margin of error to be known.³ This general sample survey conducted among U.S. Army chaplains was launched in August 2013 and was expected to yield divergent

answers. These answers derive primarily from chaplains' diverse military contexts and experience. A thorough analysis of those findings, and helpful links to the literature discussed above, will embody chapter 4.

Measures of central tendencies may be illustrative or instructive in general but ought not be construed as definitive. I am not attempting to identify a mode that which is a response or course of action that occurs most frequently.⁴ If a mode is identified, it may suggest validity in prescribed situations found in the survey results. But it may not be feasible or warranted in other situations. Therefore, any measurement or analysis identifying trends or patterns in the course of chapter 4 may not necessarily lead to blanket recommendations.

Presumptions About Army Chaplains

The survey described below is expected to validate certain presumptions about the feasibility of Army chaplains' mitigation of the effects of toxic leadership in their organizations. Responses are drawn from Army chaplains possessing varying ranks, years of service and experience with toxic leadership behavior. Their experience and recommendations are likely to be heavily informed by their rank, position and longevity in the Army. Their guidance and recommendations may be just as heavily influenced by the fact they are generally well educated with above-average interpersonal communication skills and emotional intelligence. Further, they are likely to quickly sympathize with people trying to cope with their toxic leader. Presumably, most or all will assume the role of personal advocate rather than wishing to remain a disinterested bystander.

Most responses will be flavored by the reality that most Army chaplains are ordained Christian ministers. As such, they are likely to have some valuable experience from serving in civilian parishes, community churches and the like. Typical chaplains' responses will likely emphasize putting the best positive interpretation on another's words or behavior. Respondents are likely to recommend or demonstrate collaborative, cooperative and consensual processes and decision-making. This is expected in spite of their working in a relatively authoritarian, autocratic rank-and-policy-driven organization influenced by toxic leadership.

Christian chaplains may likely recommend "turning the other cheek" that is, if they misinterpret Jesus of Nazareth's meaning in Matthew 5:9.⁵ Taken in original context, turning one's cheek in fact negates a humiliating *Godfather*-like back-handed slap, it merely glances off.⁶ Christian chaplains will recall the Beatitudes which include "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."⁷ Some chaplains, like many other people, will be more prone to want to avoid confrontation. They may act out in passive-aggressive ways or recommend avoidance or passive mitigation measures which do not alleviate the problem. But turning the other cheek is not passive but defends a person's integrity.

The risks of avoidance and passivity include harboring resentment, mounting anger, and not effectively achieving clarity and resolution assuming the latter is possible. Perhaps even more dangerous to themselves and the organizations they serve is adopting passive-aggressive mitigation measures which only tend to aggravate what are probably already difficult relationships and untenable positions. The survey should reveal a wide range of experiences and recommendations.

Pilot Survey at Fort Leavenworth

Respondents will likely self-select for this survey based primarily upon their having direct experience with toxic leadership or at least having a general interest in the subject. The survey as previewed by Dr. R. Craig Bullis of the U.S. Army War College is exploratory in nature and does not assume any individual respondent has any particular experience in dealing with toxic leadership. Regardless of level of experience, the survey provides an opportunity to capture all respondents' recommendations and guidance with regard to a chaplain's role in toxic leadership mitigation.

The survey begins with a single screening question that will determine whether respondents' recommendations are based on personal experience, others' experiences, or otherwise. If the respondent checks "Yes" as having experienced toxic leadership behavior in their organization, the survey continues with Question 2 and the remaining questions designed to capture the unit's dynamics, morale and culture in the organization before and after they rendered any mitigation. The remaining questions are designed to highlight primary successes and failures of this mitigation and how they impacted the organization, individual Soldiers, the toxic leader himself, as well as personally for the Chaplain. Should the respondent initially check "No" to Question 1, they are taken directly to Question 6 where they can still leave potentially valuable advice and recommendations based upon informed opinion, experiences of others, and formal or informal education or training.

The survey requests asks demographical information from each respondent to include rank, age, years of service and Army component. If they have experienced and mitigated toxic leader behavior, they are asked to provide a brief overview of climate and

conditions before, during, and after their mitigation. They are asked to validate the success or shortcomings of their mitigation measures in terms of how it affected subordinates, the leader, and the chaplains themselves.

Question 1 (the “experience” screener) does not screen out any respondent’s further answers and no one is thereby disqualified from the survey. However, a “No” answer does automatically prompt them to Question 6 and the remainder of the survey. Experienced or not, all participants continue through Question 6 in order to capture any insights, advice or recommendations they may have that would contribute to the overall results of the survey.

All participants are asked to identify helpful supportive measures, to include when a supervisory chaplain may involve themselves in the mitigation process or otherwise support their subordinate chaplains. Participants are asked to consider when or if direct confrontation of a toxic leader is warranted as well as the alternatives to confrontation. Further, they are asked to consider whether a supervisory chaplain’s withholding of support from a subordinate is an appropriate response and when. Finally, they are asked to consider all the many ways they may continue to provide meaningful care to their ill-affected organizations all the while caring for themselves in positive, healthy ways.

I anticipate a major divergence in responses between relatively new, junior chaplains and their senior seasoned counterparts at higher levels. I presume most junior chaplains will have a more idealistic approach to mitigating toxic leadership. I presume most senior chaplains will have a more pragmatic approach given their wider knowledge of Army organizational systems and culture.

Presumptions About Senior Chaplains

Senior chaplains will probably want to recommend steering clear of direct confrontation. They will have more realistic expectations for their mitigation measures. They will place more emphasis upon allowing the Army systems to work, namely the performance evaluation process and selection and promotion boards. Senior chaplains will be more likely to recommend junior chaplains remain squarely focused on caring for subordinates ill-affected by toxic leadership, to include caring for themselves. Their recommended courses of action will less likely be aimed at changing individuals or prompting wider organizational change of Army policy or culture. They will likely conclude: “You cannot, and should not, go it alone,” “Let the system work,” and “Putting your position at risk may result in lost opportunities to minister to ill-affected Soldiers.”

Senior chaplains are likely to have more of a vested interest in the organization they serve. They have likely given the Army the best years of their lives. I surmise chaplains in the field-grade ranks (Major, Lieutenant-Colonel and Colonel) possess between ten and twenty-five years of service. They are more likely to follow a course toward eventual retirement from military service. They will recommend caution or avoidance and tend to be protective of what could eventually become an untenable position if not careful.

Senior chaplains may be less likely to advocate risk-taking if it involves putting their own careers on the line. But they are also more likely to be better positioned with sufficient influence to impact toxic leader mitigation and support subordinate’s efforts in meaningful ways, if they chose. I am hoping the survey results will demonstrate a firm resolve that will contradict my presumptions in this regard. However, I am skeptical that

responses in this area of risk-taking will be little more than ideal wishful thinking and unrealistic.

Senior chaplains may not likely recommend withholding support from subordinate chaplains. First, respondents can define “support” in any manner they wish, another significant point of ambiguity in this research. Second, there will likely be some sentiment among senior chaplains that will tend to give the toxic leader the benefit of the doubt. They will be more likely to withhold their professional support or positional influence from a subordinate chaplain who decides on their own to confront their toxic leader directly. The hypothesis will be proven or disproven by the responses I receive to the pertinent survey question which explores whether or not withholding of support is an appropriate response, and when.

“Speaking the prophetic voice,” actually now identified by the regulation approved and published in 2009, draws upon the identity that most chaplains I am familiar with would have brought with them from the civilian world. Chaplains with prior parish or community church ministry in the civilian world often found themselves as the primary leaders of their organizations. Their words were often instructive and, in certain contexts, authoritative.

Army chaplains certainly are not expected to check their pastoral identities at the door. However, they most certainly are not at the top or center of their organizations. Their exercise of “pastoral authority” especially in the face of blatant abuses or wrongdoing by a toxic leader can nonetheless be met with rage and career-ending actions. While some leaders may respect the Chaplain’s effort, those that will negate or undermine it usually do so for reasons that make them toxic leaders to begin with. This

survey expects to reveal the conditions and likelihood that such chaplains under duress from toxic leaders will receive some form of support from their senior more experienced chaplains.

Presumptions About Junior Chaplains

Newer, junior chaplains may have little if any experience with toxic leadership behavior. Rather, I expect many of their responses to be hypothetical, theoretical, idealistic and in some cases naïve. Likewise, such responses are not expected from the more senior, seasoned chaplains with higher ranks and longer terms of service who will probably be more pragmatic and realistic.

Junior chaplains may tend to place their focus upon the problematic leader rather than squarely upon their ill-affected subordinates. That is my personal voice of experience speaking. Junior chaplains may explore the possibility of confronting the toxic leader directly by wagering their interpersonal rapport established with that leader. I expect a few will tout the “messiah-complex” virtue and attempt going it alone as a solitary crusader. They may be more likely to recommend “speaking the truth in love” or at least “speaking the prophetic voice.”⁸ Indeed, the latter measure appears in black-and-white hard copy in the new Army Regulation 165-1, *Chaplain Corps Activities* published in 2009. The regulations contained in AR 165-1 leave little if any room for chaplains to remain disinterested bystanders in their units.

Some junior chaplains may have an exaggerated assessment of their abilities in navigating troubled waters in the wake of a toxic leader. I know I did myself. Such respondents are more likely to conclude: “I can do this. I can get the toxic leader to see the error of his ways and single-handedly make the difference for my organization. My

Soldiers and my commander will love me.” There may also be some junior chaplains that will be as naïve as I was: that somehow the toxic leader will see the good intentions in my efforts in react in a reasonable, fair-minded manner.

All but the first yes-no screening question being qualitative in nature. The survey features free-text answer boxes for the respondent to essentially answer in any manner they chose to answer the question. The prevalent shortcomings of such open-ended survey questions are subjectiveness, unconfirmable bias and ambiguity. I must therefore avail myself to receiving responses which may be irrelevant⁹ to the overall purpose of the project: collecting and compiling a compendium of best practices and recommendations from chaplains’ experiences in mitigating toxic behavior in their organizations. A second obvious shortcoming is that open-ended questions require much more thought than multiple-choice responses. A series of such open questions is likely to discourage some respondents from completing the survey in entirety if at all.

Each survey question is posted to its own designated webpage. A status bar is featured at the bottom to show progress as participants continue. The survey is designed to take participants from one question to the next by advancing through the pages. This may lessen the likelihood for participants to go back and revise previous answers. It may lend to providing more honest responses.

Chaplains often come from a world where consensus-building is a *modus operandi* in order to encourage cooperation and buy-in from members of their community parishes. Such methods can be very powerful over the long-term but, I argue, would tend to be a more limited method in the military. With regard to determining how chaplains

can successfully mitigate the ill-effects of toxic leadership behavior, I do not expect to arrive at a universal, definitive answer that a Delphi model would espouse.

The Delphi method of consensus building involves multiple questionnaires administered by a knowledgeable group of specialists in a given professional field. Respondents are asked a series of initial questions which are then analyzed and collated by the group of specialists. This group then shares all survey results and analysis with each participant, describing the various perspectives which represent all the various answers. The respondents are given subsequent surveys which build upon the prior results. The results of subsequent surveys are carefully monitored to determine the amount of change toward a particular series of responses. This process continues until eventually all respondents arrive at the “one right answer.”¹⁰

Quite unlike the underlying goal of using the Delphi method, my arrival at one universal, definitive answer is not expected: not for methods of toxic leadership mitigation, not for the nature and level of support rendered by senior chaplains, not for the many significant ways chaplains can effectively support units ill-affected by a toxic leader. Therefore, this research project does not purport to proffer a single “silver bullet” answer to fit all people and circumstances—far from it.

The survey does not follow the true Delphi method because there is only a single questionnaire and no convening a team of moderators. A single person will analyze results and draw conclusions. Respondents get no feedback and there is no opportunity to compare responses and collaborate on any change of thought, opinion or direction. Therefore true Delphi-like results are not anticipated or expected. While ascertaining a common viable and successful approach is valuable, it is not the ultimate goal of the

survey or the research project as a whole. Toxic leadership behavior manifests itself in divergent individuals, circumstances and contexts. Finding a single definitive course of action for its mitigation is unlikely, much less recommending one.

The analysis of the survey results promises to be the centerpiece of this research project. The survey results will either prove or disprove the thesis: “U.S. Army Chaplains, properly informed, equipped and supported, can provide meaningful mitigation of toxic leadership behavior in their organizations.”

This project serves to inform and equip and provide avenues for chaplains to seek and possibly gain needed support from colleagues and supervisory chaplains. Supporting a chaplain faced with mitigating toxic leader behavior can come in various forms. Mentoring and other encouragement, moral support by simply being a sounding board for ideas and frustrations are invaluable ways supervisory chaplains can support their subordinates. Spiritual direction, presumably by someone not in the chaplain’s rating chain, is an outlet through which a stressed and struggling chaplain can find focus and direction. Spiritual direction is a means to personal resiliency and enables a chaplain to not only survive but thrive in a difficult and challenging environment he or she has probably not encountered before.

This project is expected to reach some meaningful conclusions about chaplains’ direct intervention and confrontation of the toxic leader. There may or may not be situations when such direct approach is warranted. Such approach may or may not be supported by the Chaplain’s supervisory chaplain. Chaplains who adopt a messiah complex or “Lone Ranger” mentality and opt for going this hard and treacherous road

alone, without guidance and direction from their supervisory chaplain, will likely find themselves on a solitary path.

I am especially concerned not to portray myself as an advocate for so-called “rogue” chaplains taking license with Army Regulations and the wide latitude these regulations can provide. Indeed, one may argue that even the Chaplain Corps will occasionally find itself with toxic leaders and those prone to negative narcissistic tendencies. The preliminary survey bears evidence of that dynamic but any further exploration is beyond the scope or intent of this project.

This project seeks to identify ways chaplains can attain the support of their supervisory chaplains, remain effective care-givers to their units, and avoid the many traps in mitigating negative or toxic leadership behavior.

Summary

Regulations tell chaplains to act. Junior chaplains are likely to conduct themselves in ways they were accustomed to in their civilian pastorates. They may act in ways that ultimately circumvent accepted Army practices or undermine their credibility despite their good intentions. Supervisory chaplains are in a better position to assess a situation and weigh possible strategies and risks. Senior chaplains have institutional knowledge and extensive personal experience that the junior chaplain probably does not. The senior chaplain is a survivor. While they likely occupy positions that can affect greater change and influence, they may not be likely to risk their own careers in defense of a struggling subordinate. Instead, they will tend to recommend mitigation primarily in terms of care for ill-affected Soldiers. They may recommend an indirect approach that does not

confront the negative leader yet preserves the chaplains' credibility and advisory role with the Command.

¹Richard A. Parker and Louis Rea. *Designing and Conducting Survey Research* 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 54.

²Department of the Army, AR 165-1, 11-12; Department of the Army, AR 623-3, 81-83.

³Parker and Rea, 172.

⁴*Ibid.*, 89.

⁵"I tell you do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other cheek also." Matthew 5:39.

⁶John L. Berquist, *Controlling Corporeality* (NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002), http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turning_the_other_cheek (accessed 8 December 2013).

⁷*Holy Bible*: Matthew 5:5, New Revised Standard Version.

⁸Department of the Army, AR 165-1, 3-3, 12.

⁹Parker and Rea, 45.

¹⁰Harry A. Linstone and Murray Turoff, *Using the Delphi Method*, I. Introduction, <http://is.njit.edu/pubs/delphibook/ch1.html> (accessed 8 December 2013).

CHAPTER 4

MITIGATION MEASURES

In my thirteen years of active duty experience, I have found that Army chaplains tend to avoid having formal or even informal conversations with each other about controversial subjects. These subjects, usually of a religious or political nature, are typically the type that could potentially draw chaplains into conflict with each other based on biblical interpretation, theological outlook, denominational polity, etcetera.

Chaplains need to have intentional discussions about difficult subject areas especially when they are likely expected to speak to an issue or act in an official capacity. The military's recent acceptance of a service member's homosexual orientation and recognition of same-sex marriages are prime examples. Chaplains will eventually be requested to give accommodation based upon the expectations of others, or to respond appropriately to angry factions on either side. These and other difficult subjects require chaplains' collective deliberation and contingency planning ahead of time.

Negative or toxic leadership has not traditionally been a topic of discussion or training in the Army Chaplaincy. This is a difficult subject because someone might have an expectation that a chaplain should do something to address the problem. And the mitigation may be difficult because chaplains must avoid putting the Chaplaincy in direct conflict with the Command. Most of the time, this dynamic is not an issue. But what if the negative or toxic leader poses a threat to a chaplain's career and livelihood?

Preliminary Sample Survey at Fort Leavenworth:
Scratching the Surface

A preliminary sample survey of thirty five (35) Regular Army chaplains was conducted in October 2013 among students and garrison-based chaplains at Fort Leavenworth, KS. The sole selection criterion for this group of prospective respondents was their availability and general willingness to support the research project. The group comprised active duty chaplains in the ranks of Captain, Major, Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel located within the Combined Arms Center or otherwise assigned to Fort Leavenworth's garrison. More than half of respondents have served between five and fifteen years. As the group was mainly comprised of students within the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, more than 86 percent of them had rank of Major. Chaplain-Majors come to CGSC directly from serving as brigade chaplains or will soon depart to assume such supervisory role.

From the group of thirty five prospective respondents, eighteen responded and completed the survey in entirety. The total response rate is above 45 percent, well above average for a typical internet-delivered voluntary survey. One respondent chose not to complete the survey and notified me of their lack of experience with negative (toxic) leadership. As noted in chapter 3, the respondents self selected based on their interest and experience with the subject. Most of them had a significant story to tell.

A summary of their responses, outlined below, provides compelling evidence that this subject is a worthy and warranted topic for wider discernment and discussion among U.S. Army chaplains. Responses to the preliminary survey indicate that many chaplains indeed find themselves with a significant role to play in mitigating negative leadership practices, or that subordinates in their organization have that expectation of them. Some

chaplains have had break-down as well as break-through moments with their commanders that have impacted their personal and professional lives for good or for ill. Many of the respondents indicate, albeit tacitly, that they understood their actions to already be within their purview as chaplains. None expressed surprise or bewilderment that Soldiers or subordinate chaplains approached them for help with a negative or toxic leader.

This chapter highlights and summarizes the troubling dynamics chaplains often face regarding the impact of negative leadership behavior. More importantly, this chapter provides a summation of best practices drawn from chaplains' personal experiences, and guidance and recommendations a supervisory chaplain would offer to a subordinate one.

Sixty-three percent of respondents indicated that they had to address negative or toxic leadership behavior in organizations they have served. Respondents described their negative leader's behavior and organizational dynamics which for me serve to confirm the aforementioned CASAL survey findings and the working definition of "toxic leadership" provided by Drs. George Reed and Craig Bullis and numerous others. Respondents' experiences also validate definitions of negative and toxic leadership in ADP 6-22, *Leadership*, newly published in 2012, as being a leader's style or practices that leave the organization worse off than when they found it.

Respondents described their leaders as not listening, self-serving, rude and abrasive. Subordinates tended to perceive their leader as having a general lack of concern for others. Certain respondents indicated their negative or toxic leader as being their supervisory chaplain. Other descriptors included their leader always being unpredictable, angry, inconsiderate, absent, lazy and otherwise not conducive to team-building. Some

routinely humiliated and ridiculed subordinates in group settings. Some ignored others' efforts to affiliate and be congenial. Respondents indicated that these characteristics were the norm and not the exception. Some reported conduct of their negative leader that suggests blatant character flaws and gross violations of UCMJ for adultery and other misconduct.

Confrontation and Consultation: Direct Approach

Underlying the chaplain's decision to confront their commander about negative leadership tends to be either the degree of personal rapport previously established, the severity of the issues, or a combination of the two factors. Chaplains who indicated having a prior and deep rapport with the leader reported more favorable outcomes. Some chaplains were able to confront the issue indirectly when their leader voiced related concerns or frustrations to them. However, in some instances certain chaplains perhaps miscalculated their relationship and rapport with their leader as being better or stronger than it really was. Those chaplains' direct approach was not always appreciated by their boss. Those chaplains may have been "in the right" but they were not always successful.

Chaplains can think strategically about how to confront a leader without being or becoming adversarial. Of course, the recipient's perception will often determine ultimate success or failure. Certain chaplains indicated a practice of documenting the issues or concerns and consulting colleagues, supervisory chaplains or the Staff Judge Advocate prior to proceeding. This collaborative approach enables the Chaplain to verify their own perspectives with others'. It can help them weigh risks. Collaboration with others can determine whether chaplains' assessment of their own abilities, expectations and goals are realistic or not. Collaboration may foster wider support to correct an organizational

problem. It may in fact aid the unfortunate chaplain in the future should his or her efforts meet adverse reaction.

Chaplains who frame concerns and issues to their senior leader in tones and terms of advocacy versus accusation or admonishment tend to have favorable results. This means the Chaplain neither affixes labels (“toxic”) upon individuals nor renders personal assessments unless requested. While some chaplains might expect a negative knee-jerk reaction initially, the leader’s reframing their experience or changing course or attitude is proof positive that confrontation can work if the leader is receptive to it. One commander had originally decided to withhold information from a general officer because he “did not need to know.” The Commander personally conveyed this decision to subordinates in a group setting. Ultimately, he changed course when the Chaplain advised him of the precedent he would be setting within his own command.

Successful chaplains present issues or concerns based upon facts and specific circumstances, e.g. behaviors ABC lead to reactions XYZ. These can be reinforced with cumulative and anonymous feedback provided the Chaplain from subordinates. Leaders should want to know how their words and actions are being received by subordinates. Are they having the desired effect? Are there negative impacts that undermine the leader’s ability to encourage trustworthiness and respectful candor among subordinates? Does lack of trust or candor cause the leader to unwittingly assume unacceptable risks?

Chaplains who can frame concerns in ways that show care and concern for the leader’s position, responsibilities and reputation will tend to be more successful than those bent on demonstrating the numerous ways their leader is wrong or “toxic.” Chaplains who come to their leader with a spirit of helpfulness and advocacy, and can

describe how a leader's behavioral change can personally benefit them, those chaplains are more likely to be considered loyal allies who can live to serve another day.

The Army regulation outlining confrontation and consultation puts them squarely upon the Chaplain,¹ no one else. Therefore, it is not within the Chaplain's prerogative to delegate or abdicate that role to others. A chaplain's supervisory chaplain, executive officer, chief of staff or deputy commander are individuals whose personal rapport with a senior leader may enable them to be viable sounding boards for chaplains' vetting concerns and issues. However, their perceptions and actions as a result could thwart the Chaplain's advocacy and undermine his or her credibility with the senior leader. Whatever the Chaplain is compelled to say or do should be done in person and in private. It ought not be transmitted by others or via email as both measures lack context of tone or intent.

One question which must certainly be asked when considering any mitigation measures, to include confrontation, is "Whose needs are being met by taking XYZ action?"² One could also apply it to the leader in question: Whose needs are being met when the leader in question does XYZ? If actions persistently reflect the leader's personal needs, then one might want to dig deeper into the context and circumstances.

Certain respondents considered confrontation as being outside of their "lane" as chaplains, or hinged their consideration of confrontation upon whether or not they possessed the authority or had the role or responsibilities that warranted confrontation. One chaplain replied, "Chaplains have to be the first line of defense with toxic leaders. If we do not have the courage to confront, then who will?" Another suggested that differences in rank would tend to dissuade them from direct confrontation of a senior

leader. One decided it best to go through their senior chaplain for any confrontation measures, and that confronting even company-grade leaders was overstepping their boundaries. A healthy discussion and determination regarding AR 165-1 roles and responsibilities and AR 623-3 evaluation criteria appears to be warranted.

Subordinate Chaplains' Mitigation

Nearly 40 percent of respondents indicated that their subordinate chaplains requested their assistance in mitigating negative or toxic leadership behavior. Over 40 percent believed there were situations in which their support of subordinate chaplains would endanger their own career. Fifty percent reported not being sure.

The survey bore out a significant shift in responses when the Chaplain was asked to consider confrontation in support of a subordinate chaplain. One chaplain suggested viable criteria that also offered a way to approach the concerns with the subordinate's senior leader. He would confront a senior leader if the effectiveness of his subordinate chaplain was in question or jeopardy. Does the situation affect the ability of the subordinate chaplain to function and minister effectively? The senior chaplain now has a credible reason for approaching the senior leader or the Command, to verify the subordinate chaplain's effectiveness and explore the underlying context further. He or she may then determine the time and method to approach the subject of leadership practices as it impacts subordinates' performance. It may even take place within the same meeting or conversation. The senior chaplain's goal is to help the junior chaplain help their organization. Communicating this intent to senior leaders may pave the way to more positive reception of subordinates' concerns.

Respondents would recommend their subordinate chaplains confront senior leaders under a variety of difficult circumstances: behavior damaging to morale, prevention of danger, safety issue or violations of the law. Confrontation is warranted when the situation becomes a matter of personal ethical, moral or religious conviction. Chaplains' direct confrontation in a respectful manner is always appropriate, so long as subordinates appreciate the risks involved, and refrain from a delivery full of emotional reaction. Subordinates ought not point out a leader's faults directly, but discuss the unit climate and reasons for the negativity. Pointing to specific instances that dramatically effected morale may clue the leader to genuine leadership concerns without calling the leader out directly. But, says another respondent, disengage at the first sign the leader is unwilling to listen or be honest with themselves. In this instance, another approach at a later time may be necessary.

Some respondents indicated they either could not, or did not feel able to confront their leader. Their mitigation of negative leadership practices rested solely upon taking care of ill-affected subordinates and themselves in the process. Some avoided their senior leader and ceased rendering reports or advice when their initial efforts to confront them were rebuffed. Many respondents indicated they remained effective care-givers with their troops despite their leaders' impact upon them or other subordinates. Some resigned themselves to lying low until the first person realized a permanent change-of-station.

While no respondent suggested direct confrontation was inappropriate in any and all circumstances, some chaplains may believe that they may not necessarily be the best person to fulfill that role. Some chaplains may believe the Army's organizational systems are efficient and effective at mitigating negative leadership behaviors. They might argue

that the evaluation reporting and promotion systems would tend to weed negative leaders out over time. They would probably believe that the negative leader's superior would be right person to confront them versus the Chaplain. In this instance, chaplains may be absolved from confrontation and exonerated if they opt not to confront. In any case, chaplains ought ask themselves, "Which is more likely to happen?"

Over 80 percent of respondents weighed in regarding senior chaplains' considering what support, if any, they should render to subordinates faced with negative or toxic leadership behavior. Responses ranged from a supervisory chaplain's direct confrontation of the subordinate's senior leader to explicitly stating their not wanting to get involved but for last resort.

Supervisory chaplains can help subordinates frame the situation and discuss various strategies for successful resolution and their commensurate risks. If the subordinate chaplain feels compelled to ask assistance from the higher headquarters, request should be made solely through their supervisory chaplain. Basic questions such as "Who needs to know?," "Who needs to be involved to affect change?" and similar others can help determine a viable course or courses of action.

Matthew 18: A Biblical Approach

Of course, one might expect a Judeo-Christian chaplain to render a biblical reference for mediation, negotiation and conflict resolution.

1. If your brother sins, point out his fault to him in private. If he listens to you, then you have gained that one. If he does not,
2. Take one or two other brothers along so that testimony can be drawn from two or three witnesses. If they still refuse to listen, then

3. Tell it to the church, and if they refuse listen even to the church, then treat them as a pagan or tax collector³ (they are likely to be shunned or separated from the community).

Unfortunately, this famous pericope has been used or referred to as the step-by-step approach to getting rid of or shunning people from Christian communities. Rather, Matthew 18 serves as a template how-to guide for *reconciliation*. “Who needs to know,” with respect to Matthew 18, is determined primarily by the culprit’s degree of regret or obstinance.

Matthew 18 may not immediately square with a military culture. But it can certainly guide a chaplain’s initial attempts to address pressing concerns of morale or ill-affective leadership practices or behaviors. Private conversations with the individual in question are much less a threat to a leader’s image, prestige and ego than a public encounter. Should the leader readily believe the Chaplain comes as an advocate for them and their organization, they may be more likely to listen or even heed some advice. The leader may be more conducive to considering change if the encounter is devoid of emotional reaction. However, if they sense anger or hostility, not only will the encounter probably fail to correct the problem but may also create a new problem for the Chaplain!

One might consider a private encounter to confront a senior leader when the situation is tentative or uncertain. Often, the leader may offer a perspective or background information that helps interpret, if not excuse, their disposition or attitude. They may believe their actions are warranted and provide rationale that is hard to refute. Credible rationale or not, morale issues and subordinates’ perceptions are true measures of reality for an organization no matter what a leader believes about their behavior.

Nearly 25 percent of respondents indicated their belief or perception that senior chaplains do not really support subordinates dealing with this challenging issue. This squares with 94 percent of respondents who believed supporting a subordinate's mitigation of negative or toxic leadership could put their own careers at risk, or were otherwise uncertain about career risk.

While the aggregate survey results make no correlations to individual respondents' rank, we might hypothesize about risk-aversion with regard to mitigating toxic leadership. John P. Kotter's research into various organizational leadership dynamics show demonstrates how senior leaders tend to be more risk-adverse than more junior subordinates. Those in a position to do the most tend also to be the most hesitant and cautious.⁴ The "tactical Private" may have less status or prestige to wager than the senior Major or Lieutenant Colonel, and presumably that much less to lose. Indeed, the one with more clout and more wherewithals to effect change may be just as likely to withhold their support or influence. Chaplains at all levels ought to have intentional and candid discussions about this troublesome dynamic if they desire to have true expectations of each other as professionals with integrity.

Senior chaplains usually become senior chaplains because they took the right steps, had generally positive experiences and survived. The system that saw fit to promote them at each pivotal juncture of their career also passed over countless others. The Army as an organization confirmed for them that they know what right looks like. Senior chaplains' tempered guidance, even-handed approach to mitigation, and hesitancy to confront negative leaders should give junior chaplains pause for concern and rightfully so. The circumstances surrounding negative leadership, often in the context of a

deployment, can be very convoluted. One cannot always presume to remain at their operational or emotional best. A strategic pause is often in order. A good strategy for mitigation can only come from an equally good initial assessment.

Are the leader's questionable behaviors driven by particular stressors or isolated concerns such as their own troubled marriage, death in the family, etc? Or is their negative impact the rule rather than the exception? The stressors related to the awesome authority and responsibility many Army leaders must undertake are also credible pause for a chaplain's concern. That particular leader who has the knack for treating many people poorly likely will find themselves alone. There is a very good chance that the unit's Chaplain is the negative leader's chaplain too whether they want to be or not.

Does the junior chaplain have the emotional maturity and intestinal fortitude to undertake confrontation or other measures solely on their own? Are they able to construct a solid representation of the problematic behavior and organizational dynamics? Can they view the situation objectively? Or are they invested emotionally and owning everyone else's negative experiences? Is he or she using their supervisory channels properly, asking the right questions, and seeking guidance prior to taking any action? Will the leader in question be more receptive to a peer or other whose counsel will be more respected and effective? Senior chaplains' prior knowledge of subordinates' temperaments and dispositions can give them a more accurate perspective on strengths, weaknesses, and behavioral tendencies that could help or hinder.

Respondents reporting negative leadership behaviors often cite being under tremendous stress. The Chaplain's ancillary role as a counselor is often brought to bear in mitigating the negative impact of toxic leadership amongst subordinates. Through

counseling and battlefield circulation (known colloquially amongst chaplains as the conduct of “ministry of presence”), chaplains often receive qualitative and quantitative data that can be used to bring matters to the attention of the senior leader. Soldiers will tell anecdotal stories, and any number of them can approach the Chaplain for counseling or self-care activities. All of these things enable the Chaplain to recognize trends, patterns and Soldiers’ sentiment and disposition. The Chaplain can use these things to inform the leader about their organizational climate and morale.

Some chaplains recognized a marked change in “toxic subordinates” once their senior leader either departed or changed for the better. Toxic subordinates may be likened to those who often feel compelled to mimic their higher leader’s negative behavior. Perhaps they do it because they are in a survival mode. Or subordinates may be envious of their senior leader’s rank and position. They may view those things as proof of success. Some subordinates may conclude that their emulating such negative leadership practices is the pathway to their own success. This dynamic is what can make negative or toxic leadership so insidious.

Overall, respondents reported mixed results from their mitigation measures. Leaders who recognized their error tended to set a better tone for their organizational climate and a positive example of self learning for subordinates to emulate. Some reported improved working relationships between senior leaders and subordinate staff. Respondents also reported significant negative outcomes, either because of or in concert with their mitigation measures. One commander was relieved for cause. Some leaders resented their chaplains’ input to the point of reprisal and marginalizing. One respondent

reported the situation to have grown worse than ever despite four captains' requests for release from active duty and numerous complaints to the local Inspector General.

Respondents also reported mixed results for how their mitigation measures affected the leader in question. One commander persistently diverted blame despite his being relieved. Over half of respondents indicated no significant change, plus a negative reaction or disposition to their efforts. One respondent found some measured success by seeking to ease his supervisor's workload and creating a quiet environment which seemed to calm him down. One unfortunate chaplain's efforts culminated while watching his commander argue with the Brigade Chaplain. On the positive side, one leader adopted a more patient approach with his staff. Another did not change initially but left the door open for future dialogue and consideration.

All respondents indicated some measures of stress and personal or professional duress as a result of their experience. While some indicated justification and fulfillment in doing their duty to mitigate the situation, they also paid a price for essentially "doing the right thing." Certain respondents reported receiving negative performance evaluations. Some pondered leaving the Army themselves. Some have changed from their idealized opinions of the Chaplain Corps or the Army in general. One believed they would have been better off professionally had they not had to contend with the problem. On the positive side, some chaplains reconsidered their roles not only as religious leaders but also as staff officers and supervisors who can help organizations and subordinates in similar circumstances. In the aftermath, some have required considerable time, a number of years, in order to heal, learn and personally grow from their experience.

Respondents each in their own fashion reported being drawn into mitigating negative leadership by virtue of their position and roles in their units, not in spite of them. Respondents cited counseling trends, staff interaction and organizational dynamics as primary ways in which they assessed the situation. Subordinates often expect the Chaplain to act in some capacity to address the problem, directly or indirectly. Each respondent had their vocational roles and identity challenged by their experience. Not one gave any indication that their mitigation measures were somehow outside of a chaplain's purview to act. Some chaplains' courses of action demonstrated more personal competency than others'.

If I could summarize respondents' recommendations to junior chaplains as the "Ten Commandments of Negative (Toxic) Leadership Mitigation," they would be:

1. Do your best.
2. Take care of yourself first.
- 3 . Create bridges not walls.
4. Focus on Soldiers' reactions without owning them.
5. Do not contribute to the toxic soup.
6. Counsel patience, introspection, and perseverance.
7. Avail yourself of same counsel.
8. Enable self and others to reframe one's personal experience.
9. Confront the leader tactfully.
10. Try not to lose credibility with the leader.

Chaplains who focus upon doing their job really well tend to foster trust in their organization. For some demanding leaders, negative or toxic or not, outstanding job performance is the sole measure used to determine an officer's worth and credibility. Professional leaders may dislike someone personally yet still judge their capabilities and performance fairly. However, unprofessional leaders who have a personal dislike for someone may not necessarily be satisfied with what could otherwise be considered exceptional job performance.

If one believes that chaplains tend to be people-pleasers, have a deep desire to be liked and thought well of, then one can readily imagine many pitfalls when the person to be pleased is a negative or toxic leader with insatiable ego or security needs. One pitfall a chaplain can fall into is attempting to please the boss at all costs when it was not best for them or in their organization's best interest. Placating the boss can tend to diminish the various ministry roles. If one believes that any underlying narcissism is purely a pathological personality disorder (see Appendix A), then one can doubt whether the leader is capable of ever being genuinely pleased.

Army Leadership Requirements Model: An Indirect Approach

Juxtaposing certain aspects of common negative leadership behaviors and attributes with the Army Leadership Requirements Model can provide ample means for training and approaching the subject of negative leadership with the leader themselves. Described in ADP 6-0, *Mission Command* and ADP 6-22, *Leadership*, the Army Leadership Requirements Model further demonstrates how subversive and undermining negative leadership behaviors can be for an organization. The juxtaposition is based upon

the working definition of negative and toxic leadership presented in ADP 6-22, and narcissism diagnostic criteria in DSM IV (see Appendix B).

Certain few leaders exude behaviors and personality traits that tend to be abusive, self-serving and leave the organization worse off than they found it. Selected out here are those aspects within the model that would tend to be most compromised by negative, ill-affective leaders:

Attributes

1. Character: demonstrate Army Values, Empathy, Service Ethos and (personal) Discipline.
2. Presence: maintain military and professional bearing and resilience. There is a very great possibility that the particular leader will have relatively high standards for subordinates' maintaining professional and military bearing. However, subordinates will measure a leader by that leader's own pronounced standard. Does the leader meet or exceed his or her own standard?
3. Intellect: exhibits mental agility, sound judgment, interpersonal tact, and expertise.

Competencies

1. Leads: builds trust, leads by example.
2. Develops: creates professional environment, fosters esprit de corps.⁵

A leader's personal resiliency in the face of stressful demands or uncertainty will shape their agility and adaptability and their leadership style as a result. It will inform

their ability to judge soundly, rashly or erratically. Their level of self awareness or lack thereof will determine their interpersonal tact in relationship with others. Is the leader in touch with what stressors trigger their own feelings of uncertainty or anger? Are they capable of altering their responses of their own volition? Do they seem prone to involuntary knee-jerk reaction? Can they temper their reactions based upon circumstantial context, timing, or the needs or concerns of subordinates?

How does the leader's personal behaviors enable or circumvent the building of cohesive teams based upon mutual trust? Are those dynamics likely to change if the leader alters his or her approach to practicing leadership? Are they eager to explore innovative ways of approaching any challenges or deficiencies to their leadership style? Do they avail themselves to even discussing their personal leadership style? Answers to these and similar questions will help the Chaplain determine second and third-order effects of their mitigation strategies. A leader's responses and attitude about the subject of their leadership can help the Chaplain measure risks, weigh courses of action, and design strategies for mitigation.

3. Achieves: gets results.

The Army rewards expertise and tactical competence with promotions and positions of increasing authority and responsibility. Senior leaders readily recognize expertise and competence, especially when they are tied to consistent achievement of good end results. Senior leaders who focus mainly upon a subordinate's delivering good results can be short-sighted. They may be unaware of the long-term human cost of achievement.

Expertise, competence, and persistent delivery of the goods do not necessarily determine whether or not the subordinate will make a good leader at higher levels, or at any level. Those aspects alone will not account for the human capital often required to achieve good results over the long term. While those aspects are necessarily required of Army leaders, the positive leadership traits and practices identified in ADPs 6-0 and 6-22, and the Army Leadership Requirements Model all provide for enduring positive morale and organizational resilience long after the mission is accomplished. These resources provide many acceptable avenues through which chaplains can address negative leadership issues with the people who perhaps need to hear it most.

Traps

Chaplains can easily fall into two related dangerous traps because of their unique position in their organization. Chaplains in their empathy may identify with the suffering subordinate, internalize the issue and assume ownership of other people's problems. A toxic leader's subordinate may come to a chaplain for moral support, describe the latest unprofessional behavior and its impact, feel better and walk out. Does the problem or issue leave the counseling session also or does it remain? What does the Soldier want or expect the Chaplain to do with their concern or issue? What should the Chaplain do with the new revelation? Are there enough credible reported instances of negative or toxic behavior that warrant a chaplain's further action? Unfortunately, if the Chaplain cannot maintain enough emotional distance from the ill-affected subordinate, he or she may not be able to render an objective and tempered response. He or she is likely to be reactive to the negative side than positive and proactive.

Secondly, chaplains are faced with walking a fine line between mediation and triangulation. Subordinates may not relish confronting their negative leader personally. Their position and rank difference may further hinder what often promises to be an intimidating chore anyway. They may come to their chaplain with hope that the Chaplain of all people will be able to intervene, affect change, and alleviate the problem for them.

Some subordinates may have questionable intentions when they approach the Chaplain. The Chaplain's response to such subordinates' concerns or issues may unwittingly enable a perception that the Chaplain is somehow colluding with them. Having a second set of eyes and ears devoted to discerning the problems and courses of action can potentially avoid these traps and keep the Chaplain viable in their unit.

Supervisory Chaplain Support

Respondents reported mixed results when they requested assistance or support from their supervisory chaplains. Some reported successful intervention without involving their supervisory chaplain. But those who did ask for help may not have always been well served: "Most of the time we do not really support," "Senior chaplains do not want to get involved," or there is no action because of some real or perceived collusion between the senior chaplain and the leader in question.

Some respondents described their support in terms of fostering a coaching or mentoring relationship with subordinates. One suggested allowing their subordinate to face the situation on their own, with their supervisor's advice and encouragement, versus taking the challenge out of their hands. The experience can be one to learn and grow from. Ultimately, the leader in question may prefer the junior chaplain's approach as opposed to intervention from a higher level. Just because a senior chaplain has the

prerogative of approaching a senior leader does not necessarily mean he or she should. However, of those advocating a supervisory chaplain's direct intervention all indicated it would be a measure of last resort, not the first.

Respondents reported supporting to their subordinate chaplains primarily with encouragement and counsel. Supervisors rendered advice on viable courses of action, risk-mitigation if those various options and making appropriate reference to Army policy when needed. Some offered general discussion on how to handle difficult leaders and how to care for oneself in the process.

There are certain instances when supervisory chaplains would withhold support from their subordinates. Supervisors should seek to ascertain the deeper context and circumstances of the negative behavior or its perception. Are there reports or indications of a problem that derive from other sources? Do they confirm or refute the subordinate's concerns? Does the junior chaplain show a pattern of being part of the problem? Chaplains may interpret leaders' actions as being toxic instead of necessary for the unit's own good. Has the subordinate chaplain acted in good faith to follow their supervisory chaplain's guidance and recommendations? Are they not worthy of a supervisor's follow up or intervention if they complied but met with ill result?

Care for the Care-giver

Chaplains care for other Soldiers. Supervisory chaplains are responsible for seeing not only to mission completion and success, but to the welfare of their subordinates.

Most provided a wide variety of personal self-care and coping strategies that worked successfully for them or that they are commending to others.

1. Faith and spiritual discipline, direction
2. Physical Exercise to alleviate stress and promote well-being
3. Consultation with supervisory chaplain for reframing, strategy and course of action development
4. Commiserate with trusted friends and chaplains in adjacent units
5. Focus on maintaining or enhancing personal relationships

Chaplains should do their best not to act on their own in isolation. When dealing with difficult leaders, one would do best not only to keep their own counsel but to seek out wise counsel from senior and supervisory colleagues. As hard as it may be to ask a supervisory chaplain for help, the subordinate would do well to consider wise counsel before acting on their own. Ultimately, chaplains' vows, oaths, consciences and livelihoods must reach equilibrium.

Summary

The level and nature of responses to the October 2013 pilot survey at Fort Leavenworth, KS, indicates the topic of chaplains' mitigation of negative leadership is relevant and timely. Junior chaplains reported mixed results for their mitigation measures along with much perplexity. Not all are convinced that they can expect support and assistance from their senior chaplain colleagues. Responses vacillated between direct confrontation and total avoidance. One indicated toxicity amongst chaplains. Chaplains reporting best results had prior rapport with the leader, reported themselves as high performers generally and reportedly did not fret over any possible threat to career, promotion, or livelihood.

The pilot survey was conducted primarily amongst chaplain-majors. Therefore, one might presume some of them responded to supervisory and subordinate support questions based upon their experience as a brigade or deputy chaplain. Supervisory chaplains were understandably hesitant and cautious when considering direct intervention in support of subordinates. The majority were either aware of or unsure about the degree of career risk. They primarily recommended collaboration and mentoring of subordinates in framing their experience and guiding their strategic decision process. Better for the subordinate to own their experience, learn from it, and shape better positive mitigation in the future.

¹Department of the Army, AR 623-3, Appendix C (Chaplains).

²Chaplain (Colonel) Ronald Thomas, Combined Arms Center, Fort Leavenworth KS; his favorite question has limitless applications.

³Matthew 18:15-17(New Revised Standard Version), Holy Bible.

⁴John P. Kotter, “Accelerate,” *Harvard Business Review* (November 2012): 6.

⁵Department of the Army, ADP 6-22, iii.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study demonstrates the need for Army chaplains to be aware of the dynamics and impacts of negative or toxic leadership in their organizations. Chaplains need to be prepared to take appropriate action which is commensurate with their own capabilities and organizational needs. This action may or may not include confrontation or other direct intervention measures. Further, the Army's Chaplain Corps and performance evaluation regulations each point definitively to roles and responsibilities that can be brought to bear on negative leadership mitigation.

Select chaplains' experiences and recommendations were solicited initially through a limited sample survey of convenience. Chaplains largely reported being familiar with negative or toxic leadership behavior. Most responses indicate chaplains readily recognize mitigation of negative or toxic leadership as within their purview. They do not indicate surprise or trepidation when subordinates approach them for support or assistance in this area. No respondent reported their having deferred it to someone else.

Negative and toxic leadership does not necessarily evolve in an organization overnight. Neither do successful mitigation measures. As this study reveals, there are no bona-fide "silver bullet" one shot-one kill answers to successful mitigation.

The limited scope of the preliminary survey conducted within the Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth certainly degrades its value of being in any way normative or representative of the wider chaplaincy. However, responses captured in the random convenience sampling and the level of self-selection among prospective respondents is very telling. If the pilot survey results are any indication of future wider

survey results, a wider survey conducted amongst all active component chaplains in could yield upwards of six hundred responses. That prospect suggests to me that this and related leadership and mitigation topics are timely and relevant for the Army Chaplaincy's consideration.

If the survey could be revised, it would have included more pointed questions to pinpoint chaplains' awareness and abilities to identify and mitigate negative leadership in terms of organizational behavior: What clues did you find that indicated the leader was disposed to negative or toxic leadership behavior? When did you know that you would probably have to play a role in mitigating that behavior? How were you prepared or not prepared to play that role?

Chaplains report much personal duress and threats to career progression when faced with negative or toxic leadership. Respondents report mixed results from their respective mitigation measures. A small but significant percentage of respondents conveyed a belief that supervisory chaplains have not been, or will not be supportive to subordinates. Senior chaplains are uncertain or hesitant to involve themselves directly in mitigation measures at subordinate levels. This is perhaps due to potential adverse impact upon their careers.

So long as chaplains wear the uniform and rank of their respective military services, they will likely continue to render deference to their respective commanders. The Chaplain Corps will continue to balance its advisory role and multiple functions without bringing itself into direct conflict with the chain of command.

Not a Political Commissar

Chaplain (Major) Nils Juarez Palma cautions chaplains to avoid creating the impression of being a “political commissar” in their organization. Historically, political commissars were officers assigned to particular military units to ensure proper political indoctrination and compliance of all personnel to include their senior leaders. Political commissars existed in the Russian Red Army during times of war. They held the same military rank of the commander to whose unit they were assigned. Commissars monitored and reported wayward leaders to the senior government authorities. They also had the real power to countermand a commander’s orders if necessary. Political officers and commissars were deemed necessary in Russia where the army was used to exert social as well as military control. Political leaders could not afford to lose control over the military.¹

Commanders ought never have to worry about their chaplain usurping their rank or authority. Chaplains’ choice of mitigation measures ought to be made considering how the leader in question will likely perceive them. Are they an advocate for the Command and the betterment of the organization fueled with a passion to support each? “Whose needs are being met” by the Chaplain’s tact and tone and method of approach to mitigation?

This study did not research or otherwise discuss rank deference other than how it can impede a junior chaplain’s ability, or perception about their ability, to mitigate against ill effects of negative leadership. What if chaplains wore no rank and their performance evaluations rendered primarily by supervisory chaplains? These are old and

tired questions which deserve answers once again as they relate to a chaplain's irksome but necessary role in mitigating negative leadership.

Conduit for Mitigation and Healthy Change

The Chaplain occupies a unique position in the organization they serve that is unique despite their rank and not because of it. Chaplains can raise subordinates' needs and concerns and enable him or her to articulate issues or problems when either side may be talking past each other: (1) They have, or should have, the ear of the Command as well as the ear and pulse of those under the Command, (2) Chaplains' understanding of their organizational culture, systems and policies, and (3) Chaplains are familiar with their leaders' personalities and temperaments. They can serve to mediate or negotiate where appropriate, especially if circumstances are confusing, conflicted or otherwise emotionally charged. They can serve in this capacity with rank immaterial. In the case of negative leadership mitigation, does the Chaplain's rank open some doors and close others? This question remains open for discussion.

Since the wider Army currently promotes a doctrine of leadership concentric with Mission Command, and expresses and intends to practice an Army Professional Ethic, current regulations governing chaplains appear to complement, not conflict. Proof of sound leadership and professionalism or lack thereof will be found at grassroots level. Here is precisely where good stewardship of our profession is challenged the greatest.

Current Challenges

The rank deference and organizational culture can shape our stewardship. Does the Chaplain Corps' senior leaders fully expect junior chaplains to take bold and albeit

necessary action versus negative leadership if careers and livelihoods could be threatened in the process? While the naïve seminarian's or ideal schoolhouse answer may be "Yes," just how realistic is it? Is it naïve to assume that chaplains, many with families and other formidable obligations, will defy common precedent and take measured strategic risks that potentially endanger their career progression? If the answer is "Yes" do they stand to be supported by their supervisory chaplains?

Supervisory chaplains' hesitance or uncertainty to insert themselves directly into subordinates' mitigation efforts needs further exploration. Subordinate chaplains faced with mitigating negative leadership need to know what they can reasonably expect—and not expect—from their supervisory chaplain prior to taking definitive action. I believe the wider active component chaplain survey conducted in November 2013 testifies to the need for further discussion and expectations management between subordinates and supervisors. Some visceral responses via direct emails sent from certain respondents immediately after its launch indicate once again that this topic is a very timely and relevant one.

Mitigation can start before negative or toxic leadership ever rears its head in a unit. A robust leadership development training plan can be the beginning of a sound contingency plan for indirect mitigation. The curriculum offered to Chaplain Basic and Captain Career Course students at USACHCS provides rudimentary concepts and case studies that highlight what both right and wrong look like. Training in positive and negative leadership behaviors and styles along the lines of current Mission Command and Leadership doctrine will essentially create organizational distance away from the

negative. Such a focus on sound leadership serves to make abhorrent leadership practices more pronounced, more noticeable and less likely to be accepted tacitly or otherwise.

The Army incessantly trains and prepares itself because its core competencies are always complex and difficult, risky and outright dangerous. Likewise, chaplains ought to plan ahead for any possible contingency they may face to include negative or toxic leadership. Will chaplains recognize the tell-tale signs, dispositions, attitudes of leaders and the resulting organizational behavior soon enough? Will chaplains assert their roles and responsibilities to be part of the solution and not caught up in dysfunctional dynamics themselves? Some have and some have not.

Most if not all senior chaplains would probably expect subordinates to make their own initial honest efforts. If I were the supervisory chaplain, I would prefer to know the dynamics and circumstances ahead of time in case the junior chaplain needs or expects my support later. I would expect subordinates to request my counsel or to outline for me their initial courses of action before they execute them in their unit, be they mitigation measures that confront, counsel, train or educate.

Prepare to Go It Alone, But Not Isolated

If only a single conclusion could be drawn based upon personal experience, this current research, collaboration and survey results, then subordinate chaplains must prepare themselves for mitigating negative or toxic leadership on their own should the need ever arise. While they can receive guidance and counsel from their supervisory chaplain, the Army Chaplain Corps regulations and evaluation criteria indicate that their roles and responsibilities are not transferable to others. And there is only one chaplain in each organization above a company.

Unfortunately, the pilot survey does not contain questions to capture subordinates' expectations of supervisory chaplains with regard to mitigation and support. Had I included such questions, I might have received more definitive answers that would inform a subordinate's expectations management regarding a difficult subject. I can easily presume in general terms that subordinate chaplains would expect counsel and moral support from their supervisory chaplains in facing negative leadership mitigation. But assuming subordinates might expect more direct involvement or intervention in terms of advocacy or confrontation if necessary is probably not off the mark either.

Are supervisory chaplains at their level prepared and willing to intervene if they deem the situation warrants it? We can deduce from the preliminary survey results what those answers might be. We might consider respondents' expectations of supervisors based on what support they themselves are prepared or willing to provide to their own subordinates. However, asking senior chaplains to identify their expectations of their own respective supervisory chaplains would be a good starting point for future discussion about mitigation as well as many other topics.

Leaders can showcase both good and bad leadership models during professional development education or training at unit level. The *Mission Command* (ADP 6-0) and *Leadership* (ADP 6-22) doctrine offers stand-alone curriculum by itself. Chaplains or other unit leaders can implement this training focus whether or not negative or toxic leadership exists in the unit. Posters, slogans and "quotes of the day" can be the visual artifacts that reinforce a unit's effort to distance itself from negative or toxic leadership behavior.

Upon beginning their tenure or welcoming a new commander to their unit, chaplains can highlight their interest and abilities in educating subordinates about good and bad leadership models as they relate to current leadership doctrine. Chaplains can get significant cues from senior leaders by how well the subject matter resonates with them. Are they enthusiastic and supportive? Are they suspicious or skeptical? Are they indifferent and not likely to reinforce your training initiative? Whatever their reception, chaplains should explore with their leaders any underlying biases or experiences that may inform the leader's disposition. They will probably come away from the conversation with the impression that their chaplain is interested in getting to know them, their experiences, and what they value as being important.

The Army Resiliency and Army Family Wellness initiatives provide ready-made avenues of approach to address this important topic of negative leadership mitigation. These initiatives can provide approaches to prevention and coping. Chaplains do not necessarily have to play a direct role in facilitating these initiatives. But such initiatives seem to support and reinforce what many chaplains already strive to do: care for soldiers and their families and advise the Command on morale issues affecting them. Further inquiry into how chaplains and their organizations can leverage these proven initiatives to support negative leadership mitigation at unit level appears to be more than justified.

Regimen for Mitigation Course of Action Development

Senior chaplains working under the auspices of the Office of the Chief of Chaplains or the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command asked pointed questions in their initial response to my request to survey the wider chaplaincy [see request memo attached to Appendix C for answers]. Their questions can serve to filter how chaplains

can fulfill their roles and responsibilities for the mitigation of negative leadership. These questions can serve to inform and measure anything the chaplaincy may consider doing be it in the realm of safeguarding sound leadership, advising the Command or providing religious support to Soldiers. They can further be used to aid chaplains in formulating their own customized mitigation plans when necessary.

1. Does this activity fall within one of the core competencies for chaplains?
2. Is this activity a religious support, advise the command or related activity?
3. How does it fit with what the chaplaincy or the wider Army is already doing in this area?
4. How do Army Chaplain Corps and other regulations inform or shape this activity?
5. Does the activity replicate or duplicate what chaplains already are or should be doing?
6. How does the activity support the Army Chaplaincy Strategic Plan and Chief of Chaplains' own initiatives?

Two of the more pointed questions were “Is mitigation of toxic leadership a Chief of Chaplains imperative?” and “Has the Chaplaincy identified mitigation as a core competency reflected in our doctrine or training?” I initially presumed this line of questioning was negative “pushback” rendered as a way to deter, delay or discourage me from pursuing this challenging subject. I believed senior chaplains would be overly cautious and hesitant to embrace or endorse this project or surveying initiatives. I believe I was asked these questions out of concern that I was somehow calling for new policies, procedures or programs. Chaplains and their supervisory chaplains ought revisit and

embrace what Army regulations already direct and what many chaplains are already doing: negative or toxic leadership mitigation.

These questions from the Chief of Chaplains Office have served to help me better clarify my position and validate my request for wider distribution of my survey instrument. The Chief of Chaplains Office granted approval to my request perhaps not entirely due to my eloquent rationale but because of the timeliness and relevance of this topic. The high degree of the sample group's responses to the pilot survey indicates the subject is timely and relevant.

Mentorship at All Levels

Mentorship can be construed as a crucial subset of leadership. Voluntary mentoring relationships can impart personal and institutional knowledge and experience not always conveyed through formal education or training. Mentorship leaves a legacy for subordinate leaders. Chaplains should impart to subordinates lessons learned from difficult experiences, whether counted among their successes or failures. Whether a mentor's lesson from toxic leader mitigation includes a hard-fought victory or monumental defeat, junior chaplains will probably appreciate hearing about it so they can optimize their likelihood for success or avoid the missteps and pitfalls.

The support of the Chief of Chaplains' office helps execute the wider survey and enables me to build a broader perspective on this topic. The results of the wider survey promise to highlight vantage points expressed by the broader base of chaplains in the Regular Army. I am hopeful that such results could be viewed as credible and representative of the wider Army Chaplaincy. Perhaps then they will find acceptable use and reference for future collaboration on mitigation measures. They can inform

chaplains' mentoring relationships, personal coping and overall well-being while caring for the organizations, leaders and subordinates with whom they serve.

¹S. A. Tyushkevich, *The Soviet Armed Forces: A History of Their Organizational Development* (Moscow: 1978), <http://www.mvep.org/zampolit.htm> (accessed 30 October 2013), 12.

APPENDIX A

DSM IV and V-Narcissistic Personality Disorder (Diagnostic Criteria)

Origins

Like most personality disorders, there are many factors that may contribute to the development of symptoms. Because the symptoms are long lasting, the idea that symptoms begin to emerge in childhood or at least adolescence is well accepted. The negative consequences of such symptoms, however, may not show themselves until adulthood.

Symptoms

The symptoms of narcissistic personality disorder revolve around a pattern of grandiosity, need for admiration, and sense of entitlement. Often individuals feel overly important and will exaggerate achievements and will accept, and often demand, praise and admiration despite worthy achievements. They may be overwhelmed with fantasies involving unlimited success, power, love, or beauty and feel that they can only be understood by others who are, like them, superior in some aspect of life.

There is a sense of entitlement, of being more deserving than others based solely on their superiority. These symptoms, however, are a result of an underlying sense of inferiority and are often seen as overcompensation. Because of this, they are often envious and even angry of others who have more, receive more respect or attention, or otherwise steal away the spotlight.

Treatment

Treatment for this disorder is very rarely sought. There is a limited amount of insight into the symptoms, and the negative consequences are often blamed on society. In this sense, treatment options are limited. Some research has found long term insight oriented therapy to be effective, but getting the individual to commit to this treatment is a major obstacle.

Prognosis

Prognosis is limited and based mainly on the individual's ability to recognize their underlying inferiority and decreased sense of self worth. With insight and long term therapy, the symptoms can be reduced in both number and intensity.

American Psychiatric Association. DSM-IV Narcissistic Personality Disorder (2000), Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, American Psychiatric Association, <http://allpsych.com/disorders/personality/narcissism.html> (accessed on 28 April 2013).

APPENDIX B

Case Study (LTC Huck Trapper)

Disclaimer: All personal names have been changed throughout this case study.

“Let them hate you so long as they fear.” - Caligula

LTC Huck Trapper assumed command of his battalion in June, 2003, approximately one month after the unit deployed to Iraq from Germany. His was the last change of command ceremony in a line of successive changes of command from corps to division to brigade over a one-month period after our brigade and division deployed to follow Third Infantry Division and First Marine Expeditionary Force. The relationships I had managed to forge with the Battalion Commander and Executive Officer came to naught as LTC Jones returned to Germany and MAJ Smith moved to brigade headquarters. The Brigade Chaplain, who I had only met initially in the early part of January, also transitioned out at the end of June for the deputy job at division. Chaplain Boone, we were told, would be arriving in Baghdad to complete the transition. So much for my establishing rapport with my superiors.

“Have you met LTC Trapper, yet?” my wife asked over the telephone. “I met him the other day with his wife. He seems like a nice guy.” By then, I had not. But soon I was attending his change of command ceremony at brigade headquarters and yes in fact he seemed very friendly, outgoing and amicable. We spoke together briefly, enough to mutually suggest hope for a positive working relationship.

Unfortunately for LTC Trapper and the rest of us, we endured our first Soldier killed-in-action (KIA) before the sun set on his first day in command. This KIA was a direct result of conditions in place or set in motion before the Commander’s arrival in country. I can only imagine the immense pressure he faced from his superiors as well as the immediate prospect of having to write a consolatory letter to the Soldier’s grieving family.

At the time we surmised that the KIA was retribution for an earlier incident the week or two prior. A junior Soldier new to his unit was given a faulty crew-served weapon to use in his guard-facility overwatch duties. When the Soldier pulled the charging handle back, it did not set but rather slid forward again on its own. This caused an unexpected discharge of rounds into the nearby marketplace and resulted in civilian casualties. The frazzled Soldier sat in tears in the back of the M2 Bradley shaking bodily while his head nodded in disbelief. He was trying to absorb the blame for the negligent discharge.

Morale was low for that Soldier’s platoon. It had responsibility for guarding a museum full of dioramas and mannequins. But it was a museum nonetheless. Soldiers were put to guard it because of the high-profile looting of antiquities from the Iraq Museum in Baghdad; the knee-jerk reaction to the outcry from the international community that resulted. The platoon’s morale would go much lower.

The platoon endured its first KIA soon after a perimeter wire was removed to facilitate civilian vehicle traffic to and from the marketplace. This was done to appease

locals after the negligent discharge. The platoon's leadership was incredulous at the lack of concern for the unit's security. The platoon leader voiced as much to the Brigade Command Sergeant Major who visited the site in the days after the negligent discharge. "Which way out of here?" the Sergeant Major asked, "Left or right?"

With the concertina wire removed from blocking the street in each direction, a free flow of civilian automobile traffic could pass by our Soldiers' guard positions. On the very first evening of LTC Trapper's battalion command, PFC Kranz was killed by a grenade thrown from a passing car. Sitting next to him was SPC Washburn who remained unscathed. But the beverage cooler in front of him was obliterated.

Certain Soldiers of the beleaguered platoon took matters into their own hands. After enduring the first KIA of the deployment, a number of detainees began appearing at the brigade's detention center more scuffed up than others; all rounded up by Soldiers in the same platoon.

Two weeks later and two blocks over, an Iraqi shot SPC Gutknecht out of his Bradley turret in front of the museum. The detainee abuse continued unabated. I later found out through third-party sources that the platoon leader and platoon sergeant were removed from the company. The company First Sergeant was relieved. The platoon was split up and certain of its members were under investigation.

In the aftermath of both KIAs I had spent a number of days with Soldiers in the platoon and company affected. Numerous Soldiers, to include sergeants, lieutenants and junior enlisted approached me with their concerns and request for explanation of all the upset. As the Battalion Chaplain, I guess I was expected to know the answers. I was expected to know the rationale for decisions made which I, in fact, was never privy to. Nor did I necessarily need to be. However, what transpired between the Battalion Commander and me immediately following would shape and taint the remainder of my tenure in that battalion.

I believe I had acted in accordance with Army Regulation 165-1, chaplain-related regulations which in 2004 referred to as "Chaplain Activities in the U.S. Army": to inform and advise the Commander regarding patterns of discontent and legitimate concerns affecting unit morale. Further, the battalion chaplains were supposed to report morale issues to the Brigade Chaplain in the regular course of reporting.

The Commander had asked me about morale previously so I believed he would be receptive to hearing Soldiers' concerns. My prior experience prompted me to address these matters with the Executive Officer (XO) before taking them to the boss. The XO said he was not sure, and certain things were still under investigation, but that he would take it to the Commander himself. I was wrong in a number of ways.

To this day I have no idea what was said between the XO and the Battalion Commander. Whatever it was, it was enough to paint me into a corner for the rest of the deployment. I was wrong for abdicating my Chaplain role and allowing the XO to act on my behalf with our boss. I was wrong for assuming that the Commander would be receptive to addressing issues of morale in one of his companies. The XO did not do me any favors either. "The boss isn't happy" he said. And LTC Trapper shot me a heat round in a one-way mobile defense on his way to the Battalion Tactical Operations Center (TOC). He was loud and belligerent. But by that time, such behavior was widely

understood by subordinates as his standing operating procedure. Perhaps he had asked me about morale because that was simply the question to ask the Chaplain.

Soon after this exchange, LTC Trapper gave me additional duties unrelated to my chaplain functions and put me on notice that I was in need of remedial professional development. The XO would take me on as a special project. Perhaps in my commander's eyes, my sending that morale report to the Brigade Chaplain was not the best thing I could have done. LTC Trapper confided to me privately: "I won't be able to use you if you continue to send reports like that to brigade." As far as he was concerned I should be focused upon disseminating command messages and official talking points to the troops. I was to be a sort of propaganda minister for the battalion. My additional duties, the battalion newspaper and deployment yearbook, would occupy enough of my time so I would not be rendering an ear where it did not belong. LTC Trapper would routinely bring copies of the paper to brigade headquarters and furnish them to visiting VIPs.

Initially, I took whatever he and the XO told me to heart. I never had a commander so dissatisfied with my performance. Of course, I had never tried to work in a combat zone before. I was on thin ice. My first inclination was to do whatever I could to win the Commander's confidence and enter into his good graces; a treadmill. I would eventually conclude, much too late, that I never had LTC Huck Trapper for a commander before either!

I was now experiencing difficulties and having my abilities questioned and performance denigrated such that I had not lived through before. The Brigade Chaplain was brand new. I certainly did not want him to know I was having problems with my commander, or that my commander was in any way dissatisfied with me. I wanted the Chaplain to believe I was squared away and holding my own in a tough kinetic counter-insurgency environment. Who wants to tell their new supervisor they are having difficulties? I did not reveal to Chaplain Boone the dynamics or the problems as they unraveled until much later. This only hurt me in the long term. I, in fact, had a difficult time initially trying to figure out what was going on and the true nature of the fix I was a in. That was my second pivotal mistake. I should have put my own wounded pride aside and consulted Chaplain Boone much earlier. Meanwhile, Chaplain Boone could only assume things were fine. By the time I clued him in about my commander's animosity toward me, and his scrutiny of my performance, Chaplain Boone initially felt compelled to give LTC Trapper the benefit of the doubt. Because I had initially withheld my problems from my brigade chaplain, only much later was Chaplain Boone able to construct a more accurate and broader picture of my situation and help me in real, meaningful ways.

Chaplain Boone confronted LTC Trapper initially out of concern for my commander's assessment of my performance and for my improvement. Later, when Chaplain Boone was convinced that my performance was well above average but being assessed unfairly, he procured LTC Trapper's support for my transfer. Much later, and with Chaplain Boone's permission, I went to the Brigade Commander myself. The Colonel would single-handedly orchestrate the move albeit well after redeployment. "Sounds like [he's] not getting a fair shake" he said. But my request cost me in terms of my subsequent performance evaluation. For that there would be no remedy. Chaplain

Boone ultimately went to the mat for me but when he looked back in his corner there was nobody there.

As weeks and months passed out of 2003 into 2004, company-grade officers, sergeants and junior enlisted Soldiers alike continued to convey to me one more abusive remark, one more character attack, one more condescending speech. During a mission anyone within earshot of the radio might hear a company commander or platoon leader get berated by their boss.

Once LTC Trapper entered the mess hall to find three cooks laying out dinner. “What’s it gonna be, fellas?” he asked. “Chicken, sir” one replied. “You guys like chicken, right?” The three African-American Soldiers did not respond. They were visibly guarded but all three proceeded to drill him through with their eyes.

LTC Trapper relished his ability to demonstrate to his subordinates the expanse of his intellect: Once we were all waiting in a very long line at Baghdad airport to receive our individual Rapid Field Issue gear. The boss arrived in his humvee, walked to the head of the line and proceeded to count the number of Soldiers standing in line. “I was told it takes each Soldier about twelve minutes to get their RFI in here. And because there are [X number] of you, that means the last guy will have to wait [enter a ridiculous number] hours.” He snickered to himself and turned and went inside.

Hardly a day would pass when someone would not relay to me the boss’ unprofessional remarks or behavior: the company XO who was told he was worthless, the junior enlisted Soldier told he was mistaken for marrying a German girl because “they don’t have any values,” the half-German battle captain irate at his boss’ labeling all Germans (*de facto* his mother) as “heathens and savages.”

The particular night battle captain, CPT Molson, had been a non-commissioned officer who came into the officer corps through officer candidate school. Prior to enlisting, he had been working for Allied-Signal Aerospace. He had paid his own way through college and arguably had many credentials and abilities before rejoining the Army as an officer. He did not have to come back. He did not owe the Army anything. He volunteered for the Army and for the Iraq deployment because he loved it and followed a military tradition to include his father and grandfather.

LTC Trapper had indeed come to his new infantry battalion ready to command. But his Ranger tab was noticeably absent from his left shoulder. A few company commanders and staff officers did have it, to include CPT Molson. Perhaps LTC Trapper felt he had to go the extra mile to prove how much of a tough guy he was. But LTC Trapper probably discovered early on that it was easier to simply denigrate the significance of the badge than to actually prove himself to anyone. LTC Trapper would routinely make unsolicited remarks to CPT Molson, such as, “You know, they don’t teach you anything technical in Ranger School you don’t already know.”

I have come to find out that LTC Trapper is exactly right about Ranger school. Ranger school may not make anyone technically proficient at anything. Because it is a *leadership course*. Ranger school graduates will have what is necessary to successfully complete the course before they ever arrive. Those who are selected out by their peers for dismissal are usually peered out because they do not play well with others. They are only motivated when *they* are in charge. When others are in charge, they are tired and hungry. They ultimately demonstrate that they are not a team-player.

To hear LTC Trapper wax on about *esprit de corps* and Army Values bordered on ludicrous. He demanded timely and accurate reporting from his subordinates, but not from himself if it did not serve his purpose:

The “mortar attack that never happened” was the straw that broke the camel’s back for CPT Molson. On the evening prior to Commander-U.S. Central Command’s visit to our FOB, Iraqi dissidents attacked our FOB with multiple mortar rounds. One scraped the side of a building and failed to detonate. A local Iraqi brought another dud round to the gate the next day with it still protruding from the hood of his car. Also on that day, Veterans’ Day, our battalion had scheduled our own version of the Olympic Games. The next day, CPT Molson reported an undetonated round to brigade for disposal. LTC Trapper had directed CPT Molson to alter the original report, word-smithing it down to suggest a less dangerous incident. A local Iraqi girl was killed by the “mortar attack that never happened.” But the VIP visit and battalion Olympics went off without a hitch. Character is peculiar to each person: *It cannot be faked*.

CPT Molson’s experience with LTC Trapper convinced him he did not have to stay. During his Combat Infantry Badge ceremony, the Brigade Commander had asked CPT Molson, “So CPT Molson, are you ready to take command?” “My refrad will be on your desk in the morning, sir.” By this time for CPT Molson, LTC Trapper’s games, power-plays and manipulation were irrelevant. Stunned, the Brigade Commander stammered, “Uh, we won’t go there” and moved along. So did CPT Molson. CPT Molson left the Army in 2005 as voluntarily as he had entered it.

Often enough I could see and hear LTC Trapper’s nauseating tirades and antics for myself: The Signal Officer (SIGO) endured LTC Trapper’s mockery of his wife’s delivering of her intelligence report, there in front of peers and subordinates alike. “*Ohhh! She’s my little Seabiscuit!*” the Commander crooned. The SIGO did all he could to keep his 9mm holstered. LTC Trapper hammered him once when the computer network was not working properly. He needed to send his autobiography to the History Channel. LTC Trapper had crushed and humiliated the SIGO’s predecessor for legitimate short-comings in his performance. But he did it in front of that officer’s peers and colleagues that only served up bitterness and resentment.

The TOC was a place someone went if they had to. Ahead of radio updates one might feel as if someone had brought in an oxygen tank and turned the valve on in reverse, or that they spread broken glass or eggshells about in attempts to trip someone up. LTC Trapper would walk in. Conversation ceased and all heads faced maps, radios or computer screens.

As his subordinate, I could surmise through LTC Trapper’s words and third-party accounts that he did not get on necessarily well with his counterparts in adjacent battalions. While he persisted in his conviction that we had to be-- and were--the very best, it necessarily meant that our adjacent battalions were not. Other officers and I perceived this not to be the sign of healthy competition but a political ploy to demarcate himself from other battalion commanders. True or not, I at least had the perception that LTC Trapper considered them to be on opposing teams, each competing with him for their commander’s top-block performance ranking.

Over the course of three to four months our forward operating base (FOB) was transformed from dank and dirty university dormitories into a first-rate military

compound. It would eventually house all of our outlying companies in one location. Iraqi laborers built new fourteen foot walls with wire on top and intermittent light posts. We had retractable steel gates. Along all our outer facing roofs they built new brick walls with guard positions at every corner.

The FOB featured renovated living quarters for Soldiers, a dining facility, theater, chapel, morale and welfare center with computers, Ping-Pong and smoothies, volleyball court, medical aid station, and maintenance area. Our FOB was certainly a great place compared to what some other units had to endure in austerity. It became a showcase for every passing VIP. LTC Trapper named it after his loving wife. Later, LTC Trapper directed signage to be affixed to the wall indicative of his favorite baseball team and daughter's college alma mater.

LTC Trapper once spoke of eventually returning to Germany and having a victory parade down the main street of town. Of course, the burgomeister would have to consent. Nothing like it had probably happened since World War II. We should probably get one of the old infantry half-tracks running again so he would have something cool to ride in. I think there is one in the motor pool.

"Hey Chaplain, have you ever seen the padre in *The Longest Day*? You know the one who drops his communion kit in the stream and then swims around frantically trying to find it? That's who I think of when I think of you." [Congratulations, sir. You just lost me. I am checked out. I no longer need to worry about going the extra mile on the treadmill for you.]

After April's extension and move out to Baghdad airport, I am ready to leave the battalion. But missions continue south of the city and down at Al Karbala. Still very adroit and functional in LTC Trapper's battalion, my chaplain assistant and I head south and take our places alongside the surgeon at the forward aid station. By June, the Battalion Executive Officer introduces me to the new XO one morning and disappears. I never see him again.

The disgruntled night battle captain had moved up to brigade headquarters upon our unit's arrival in our new camp near the airport. CPT Molson had seen and heard enough, so much that he disavowed himself of the company command he was scheduled to receive that summer, in favor of voluntary release from active duty. Today, that scorned night battle captain is a GS-14 intelligence officer for the FBI. FBI 1, Army 0. But it did not have to be that way. Who in the Army really knows the cost incurred in terms of lost talent and experience due to a toxic leader? Perhaps no one. In the case of CPT Molson, I can ask the FBI.

Early in 2004, desperate, I had asked the Division Chaplain to move me to another battalion. Two were coming vacant and I could give my commander relief from me if I were placed elsewhere. At that time, I cared little about the fact that some other poor sport would have to follow me there and take my place. He visited me once or twice but did nothing other than relegate me as "high maintenance." By that time, Chaplain Boone knew better. He orchestrated a transfer within the brigade with the initial cooperation of LTC Trapper, the Brigade Commander, and LTC Andrews who would be my new commander. This measure was ultimately struck down by the Corps Chaplain: "The idea of moving an infantry battalion chaplain out of his unit while in a combat zone this late in the fight is not a good one." This is my hunch so quotations are mine. Once

LTC Trapper realized I was eager for the transfer too, he withdrew his support. I believe he did this because he wanted to keep his thumb over me.

Prior to the Corps Chaplain's inaction, LTC Andrews and I interviewed and he indicated his eagerness to have me come over. He was guarded in his remarks concerning my commander, yet he said enough to let me know that he had his own opinion about LTC Trapper and what was going on in my battalion and with me. LTC Andrew's outgoing chaplain invited me to speak at his last prayer breakfast in Baghdad, on the morning of 14 June 2004. At its conclusion, LTC Andrew's thanked me and introduced me as one soon to come onto his team. In his outstretched hand was a brilliant Commander's Excellence coin, just for me.

My last significant conversation with LTC Trapper occurred later that night at about 1930. It proved to be the "Aha!" moment I needed to finally understand where I went wrong the year before. Up until then, I was clueless as to how deep my infraction was. "What did you ever do?" the Brigade Chaplain asked. Now I could tell him:

The conversation began with LTC Trapper laying out the ground rules for how the conversation would proceed; he apparently needed me to know that he was in charge. First, he chastised me as being disloyal for "looking for another job" [my interview with LTC Andrews]. This, after Chaplain Boone had already secured his initial support and authorized me to meet LTC Andrews. Then LTC Trapper told me he had spoken to LTC Andrews and "LTC Andrews doesn't think much of you!" If LTC Andrew's coin could have burned a hole in my pocket, that was the time!

"The Soldiers saw you hanging out with the troublemakers. And besides that, *you took the word of criminals over mine*. Those guys [responsible for detainee abuse] came to you because they were afraid for their ass. And that's why the Soldiers don't come to you chaplain."

"Well, sir, they *have* come to me," I replied. "Who?" The conversation degenerated from there. LTC Trapper offered: "I didn't steal anything. I didn't murder anyone." And then he finally stood up: "Do you believe in penance chaplain?" "Sure" I said, I had been serving it all the previous year. "Why don't you look at yourself and your own faults instead of other people's?" LTC Trapper said, walking away. I was as much done with him at that point as he was with me.

"Does he have any redeemable qualities?" the Brigade Commander once asked me. In fairness to LTC Trapper, there are many who would laud him as a brilliant, competent tactician and an aggressive commander not afraid to take the fight to the enemy. LTC Trapper would probably believe the safest place to be on the battlefield is the very tip of the spear. No, our battalion did not hunker down behind four walls waiting out the year for our replacements. And, truth be told, we did not suffer another fatality in Iraq and we redeployed in July 2004. Yes, I do believe our aggressive and vigilant stance in Baghdad precluded additional Soldiers' deaths and I give my commander credit for that.

LTC Trapper would undoubtedly want us to know that the greatest defense is having an even better offense. I believe that LTC Trapper not only lived by this mantra as a military commander against insurgents in Iraq but also in his day-to-day interactions with people in general; so much that he created enemies where there once were none. He formulated them first in his mind and then behaved accordingly. By the end of the

deployment, I truly was the enemy he always took me to be. But it did not have to be that way.

I felt so trapped and in such an untenable position from early on that I never did confront LTC Trapper's caustic demeanor and unprofessional behavior, at least not directly. I never suggested to him that his words or actions had such stifling effects upon individual Soldier morale. After he rebuffed me initially and told me I could be easily disposed of, I never told him of the many complaints or concerns brought to my attention throughout the deployment. Instead, I internalized them. I assumed ownership of whatever new toxic behavior was laid at my feet by one of my Soldiers. I allowed myself to become a voodoo doll of sorts for everyone else's push-pins. This only served to breed deep anger and resentment over the long term. And in this manner, I did LTC Trapper, my unit, and the Army a great disservice. Who knows? Had I stood up to him LTC Trapper might still have crushed me. But perhaps the epilogue below would not have had to come as late as it did.

"Let 'em hate ya" LTC Trapper use to say of his Soldiers, "when they're bouncing their grandkids on their knees and enjoying their retirement." The man may have a point there, but did hatred of a commander ever have to be a necessary part of a sound leadership model? No. But it certainly puts the bulls-eye painted on his humvee and the side bets of his sniper teams into proper perspective. Through the fear and intimidation he inspired, due mainly to his own insecurities and weakness, did hatred necessarily become a part of *his*. In that regard, I deeply regret the fact that this tragic man viewed me as a threat and not as the ally I could have been.

Epilogue: Successor's Assessment

The largest validation I have ever received since leaving LTC Trapper's battalion came from my successor there. While our sister battalions were organizing for our flights north from Kuwait for yet another year in Iraq in 2006, we had time for a brief collegial conversation before going our separate ways. Chaplain Mike Nikolson discussed LTC Trapper's departure the year prior. He briefly mentioned some of the challenges in my old battalion and the deployment he and his Soldiers faced. Then he added, "I don't know what all happened back then. But whatever happened wasn't because of you." To this day, I do not believe Chaplain Nikolson could possibly know how much encouragement those words gave me for "Iraq: Part Two" and these intervening years.

Disclaimer: All personal names have been changed throughout this case study.

APPENDIX C

Chaplain Mitigation of Negative (Toxic) Leadership- Pilot Survey

Survey Title: Chaplain Mitigation of Negative or Toxic Leadership-Oct2013

Survey Description: A general sample survey of U.S. Army Chaplains, either active or reserve, designed to gather chaplains' experiences in identifying and mitigating Toxic Leadership to ascertain best practices.

Survey Introduction (in body of email invitation prior to URL survey link)

U.S. Army Chaplains of all components are invited to participate in a survey that is designed to gather chaplains' experiences in identifying and mitigating Toxic Leadership. Completion of this survey will provide the basis for discussion and collaboration for junior chaplains faced with mitigating the impact of Toxic Leadership: the end result of a Masters of Military Art and Science (MMAS) research project conducted by a 2013 CGSC student. Your participation is voluntary and all responses are confidential. Expect the survey to require 25 - 30 minutes to complete. This survey system meets Army security standards and has been reviewed and approved by the Combined Arms Center (CAC) LD&E Human Protections Administrator. Point of Contact is Maria L. Clark, LD&E Human Protections Administrator at maria.l.clark.civ@mail.mil. This survey has been reviewed and approved and the survey control number is 13--09-093. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

The Survey

1. Page 1. Demographics: Army Component, Rank, Years of Service.
2. Page 2. Survey Notes: Perceptions of negative or toxic leadership behavior can be very subjective and biased. Please use the following working definition found in Army Doctrine Publication 6-22 *Leadership* (May 2012):
Negative leadership leaves people and organizations worse than when the leader them. One form of negative leadership is toxic leadership.
Toxic leadership is a combination of self-centered attitudes...lack of concern for others...inflated sense of self-worth. Toxic leaders consistently use dysfunctional behaviors to deceive, intimidate, coerce, or unfairly punish others to get what they want. The negative leader completes short-term requirements by operating at the bottom of the continuum of commitment, where followers respond to the positional power of their leader to fulfill requests. This may achieve results in the short term, but ignores the other leader competency categories of *leads* and *develops*. Prolonged use of negative leadership to influence followers undermines the followers' will, initiative, and potential and destroys unit morale. (ADP 6-22, paragraph 11, 3)
3. Page 3. Question 1: Have you ever addressed toxic leadership behavior or its effects in any organization you have served? (Drop-down box to select Yes or No.) If Y, go to Page 3, If N go to Page 7.
4. Page 3. Question 2: Without naming names and locations, describe the situation. (open-ended, free-text box)

5. Page 3. Question 3: Describe how you handled the situation. (open-ended, free-text box)
 6. Page 3. Question 4: What resources did you use? (open-ended, free-text box)
 7. Page 3. Question 5: Describe your organization's dynamics after your efforts to mitigate. (open-ended, free-text box)
 8. Page 3. Question 6: How did your mitigation efforts affect the leader portraying toxic behaviors? (open-ended, free-text box)
 9. Page 3. Question 7: How did this situation affect you? (open-ended, free-text box)
 10. Page 4. Question 8: Have you experienced a situation in which a subordinate chaplain requested your support in mitigating toxic leadership behavior? (open-ended, free-text box)
 11. Page 4. Question 9. What type of support did you provide? (open-ended, free-text box)
 12. Page 4. Question 10. How do you recommend junior chaplains continue to minister to members of an organization ill-affected by toxic leadership? (open-ended, free-text box)
 13. Page 4. Question 11. How do/did you recommend junior chaplains care for themselves when they are ill-affected by toxic leadership? (open-ended, free-text box)
 14. Page 4. Question 12. Under what conditions would you encourage your subordinate chaplains to confront their toxic leader directly? When not? (open-ended, free-text box)
 15. Page 4. Question 13 When might you consider confronting the toxic leader directly? When not? (open-ended, free-text box)
 16. Page 5. Question 14. How do senior chaplains determine the support needed for a subordinate chaplain faced with mitigating negative or toxic leadership behavior? (open-ended, free-text box)
 17. Page 5. Question 15. Are there related situations that might warrant withholding support from subordinate chaplains? (yes, no, unsure)
 18. Page 5. Question 16. What type of situation would warrant withholding support for a chaplain faced with toxic leadership behavior?
 19. Page 5. Question 17. Are there related situations in which supporting a subordinate chaplain could put your own career at risk? (yes, no, unsure) Please explain. (open-ended, free-text box)
 20. Page 6. Question 18. Please provide any other comments/recommendations you have for chaplains mitigating the impact of negative or toxic leadership. (open-ended, free-text box)
- Survey complete. Please click FINISH.

APPENDIX D

Chaplains' (AC) Survey Justification Memo

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
COMMAND & GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE
100 STIMSON AVENUE
FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS 66027

ATZL-LSA-CH (165)

22 OCTOBER 2013

MEMORANDUM TO Director of Operations, DACH 3/5/7, Office of Chief of Chaplains

SUBJECT: Request for Email Distribution List Pursuant to Negative Leadership Survey

1. The undersigned requests approval and release of AC chaplain email distribution list IOT conduct a voluntary blanket survey entitled "Chaplain Mitigation of Negative (Toxic) Leadership". This survey will provide pivotal research findings for undersigned's master's thesis project, MMAS, at CGSC, Fort Leavenworth, KS.
2. Purpose. The survey explores chaplains' experience addressing negative or toxic leadership behavior and its impact in their organization. Respondents report successes and failures both personally and in their role as supervisors to subordinate chaplains. The ultimate goal of this survey is to demonstrate a need for further study and discussion in the Army Chaplain Corps about chaplains' proper role and function.
3. Core Competency: Nurture the Living and Advise the Command. AR 165-1 (roles and responsibilities) and AR 623-3 Appendix C (chaplain performance evaluation criteria) seem to authorize and direct chaplains' direct and/or indirect roles in mitigating the impact of negative leadership behaviors in their units. The MMAS and survey expect to convey a viable way forward. Preliminary sample survey results at Fort Leavenworth confirm chaplains' unique position necessitates their direct or indirect roles in this area. Our challenge is doing this without putting CHs in conflict with CDRs.
4. Current Army-wide Initiatives. The Army's 2014 launch of Commander 360 evaluations which include subordinate feedback for prospective command selectees, the Army's various Resiliency initiatives, and ongoing development of the Army Professional Ethic all call for and reinforce chaplains' core competency to advise the command on the impact of leadership practices (AR 165-1 paragraph 3-3b, p. 12).
5. Chaplain Corps Strategic Plan and Chief's Initiatives. Mitigation of negative leadership supports both "creation of a culture of respect" (Major Objective 1.5, Army Chaplaincy Strategic Plan 2011-2014, p. 10) as well as the Chief's current initiative to foster mentoring relationships for junior chaplains.
6. Teaching model. The undersigns MMAS writing project and survey expects to provide means for brigade chaplains' supervisory or mentoring roles for subordinate

chaplains as they face mitigating negative leadership behavior. The strategy is meant to be a collaborative, proactive and contingency-oriented one versus an individual chaplain's reactive measures taken in isolation. Undersigned does not intend this MMAS and survey to insinuate a call for any new program, policy or initiative by OCCH. Undersigned intends only to offer focus and recommendations toward what many chaplains are or could or should be doing anyway. Responses to the local preliminary sample survey conducted at Fort Leavenworth in October 2013 already bear this out.

7. Data Use and Personal Protection. The survey is strictly voluntary and respondents are self-selecting. The undersigned researcher receives no personally-identifiable information and respondents shall remain anonymous. All survey results remain the property of CGSC. The survey is approved and administered by Ms. Maria Clark, Human Protections Administrator, at CGSC. She can be reached at (913) 684-7332 and via email at maria.l.clark.civ@mail.mil. Only Ms. Clark is to receive and administer an email distribution list upon approval of OCCH.

8. The undersigned can be reached via Network Enterprise email at lewis.r.messinger.mil@army.mil or via personal phone (484) 225-9015.



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