



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

6TH MARINE CORPS DISTRICT
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5100
CO
19 Dec 12

POLICY LETTER 1-12

From: Commanding Officer
To: All Hands

Subj: FORCE PRESERVATION PLAN

Ref: (a) MCO 1500.58
(b) MARADMIN 240/11
(c) Handbook for Family & Friends of Service Members
(d) MARADMIN 308/11
(e) MARADMIN 647/11
(f) MCRD ERR Commanding General's Policy Letter 003-11
(g) 6th MCD Commander's Intent and Guidance
(h) 6th MCD Operation RESTORE VIGILANCE Campaign Plan
(i) 6th MCD Suicide Prevention Campaign Plan

Encl: (1) 6th MCD Force Preservation Reporting Letter
(2) Force Preservation Council Assessment Guide
(3) General Lejeune's Letter to his Officers
(4) Aristotle's Concept of Friendship
(5) Force Preservation Council Meeting Worksheet

1. Situation. Force preservation encompasses all of those activities that enable our Marines, Sailors, and civilians to be effective, successful, happy, and fulfilled by their service to our Nation in the Marine Corps. Force Preservation is absolutely essential to mission accomplishment, and therefore must be a top priority of every leader within the 6th MCD. *It certainly is with me!* This Policy Letter provides my thoughts and guidance on force preservation and how we will conduct force preservation councils. I *expect* and *require* all commanders and leaders to closely read this letter, discuss it with their Marines, and to execute its tasks.

Our frame of reference for Force Preservation must include everything that can detract from our Marines' ability to safely, honestly and ethically accomplish their mission. To achieve this, our focus should not be on the process but instead on our development as leaders and the climate in which we operate. Per references, we must remain positive, engaged, concerned, and involved. This includes mitigating factors that can lead to stress, fatigue, substance abuse, marital and/or relationship turbulence, deteriorating physical wellness, loss of mental and spiritual health, financial instability, and those other factors leading to poor ethical decision-making, thereby increasing the opportunities for misconduct. And make no mistake: reducing misconduct is an important part of force preservation.

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Let me talk about misconduct: the way many of us have heard misconduct described in the past is, "95% of our Marines are doing the right thing while the other 5% will always get into trouble." This type of thinking has multiple problems. First, it accepts that far too high a number of our Marines will actually commit acts of misconduct while ostensibly absolving the remaining 95% from any responsibility. *This is not acceptable.* Second, in this day and age of the global media, in which even one incident can cause catastrophic harm to our institution, this view accepts too great a risk without enough internal control measures. Third, with the time, effort, and energy we spend on training and developing our Marines, we cannot afford to lose the services of even one well-trained Marine for any reason, especially in this age of fiscal austerity. Finally, I just don't think the "95%-5%" way of describing our challenge is an accurate depiction of what is actually going on out there.

As reference (h) describes, I believe that as many 15-25% of our Marines are currently operating within "windows of vulnerability" in which a convergence of external factors (personal, financial, family, etc.) and/or internal factors (work-related, struggling performance, conflict within the command, etc.) make them vulnerable to making poor ethical decisions that can affect the rest of their lives. *This includes officers and senior staff non-commissioned officers!* Unfortunately, even one poor decision can create such rapidly cascading effects that it is nearly impossible to recover from. The context of recruiting duty amplifies and exacerbates these challenges.

A good portion of our Marines' recruiting activities take place after normal working hours, thereby limiting the time they spend with families. A large number of our Marines' families are young and with small children at home, adding more stress. Many young spouses are finding themselves in a strange place and away from the family support infrastructure of a large base they have come to rely upon -- another stressor. Our recruiting workplaces are not ideal places for Marines to conduct physical fitness training, potentially degrading their physical wellness -- another stressor. Recruiting duty is a fast-paced, non-stop, demanding independent duty environment, in which - without proper time management - there may not be enough time to accomplish the most basic life tasks -- another stressor. Simply put, faced with such steep and broad challenges, force preservation must become the detailed business of every leader within the 6th MCD.

2. Mission. Per the references and effective immediately, all commanders within the 6th MCD will create, formalize, and implement force preservation continuing actions and monthly Force Preservation Councils (FPCs) in order to support and enable our Marines and their families to be successful, happy, productive, and fulfilled citizens who believe in our mission and the good they are achieving for our Nation and the Marine Corps.

3. Execution

a. Commander's Intent

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(1) Purpose. We will support and enable our Marines and their families to be successful, happy, productive, and fulfilled citizens who believe in our mission and the good they are achieving for our Nation and the Marine Corps.

(2) Method. I intend to *elevate* and *expand* the importance of force preservation by incorporating three mutually supporting lines of operation: (a) Extensive commander involvement in the force preservation process, to include training, assessment, identification, and chairing monthly FPCs; (b) Expanded use of supporting programs to make life better for our Marines and their families; and (c) Teaching and inculcating a spirit of friendship across the command. My vision is for these mutually supporting lines of operation to place enough "strings" on our people so we can help pull as many as possible through the "windows of vulnerability" they will inevitably encounter back into the "safe zone," enabling them to continue their careers as successful and happy Marines. I will be personally involved in monthly FPCs and would like to have at least a working knowledge of every individual in the command identified as being in a "window of vulnerability." Commanders will dedicate their time, effort, and resources to making force preservation within the 6th MCD a reality. Finally, I expect to continually discuss force preservation at our commanders' conferences to determine what we are doing well and what we can do better.

(3) End-state. Success will be achieved when every Marine, Sailor, and civilian in the command enjoys physical, psychological, social, and spiritual health; that all know their service and contributions are important, valued, and appreciated; and that all Marines, Sailors, civilians, and their family members are personally fulfilled by the good they are achieving for our Nation and the Marine Corps.

b. Lines of Operation. As noted above, this plan utilizes three mutually supporting lines of operation: 1) extensive commander involvement, 2) supporting programs, and 3) teaching and inculcating a spirit of friendship.

(1) Extensive Commander Involvement

(a) RS CO's will develop force preservation continuing actions and lead FPCs. They will forward a report of their FPC to the District Commander by the first Monday of each month [enclosure (1)], at which time I will chair 6th MCD FPCs. RS-level FPCs should include, at a minimum, the senior enlisted advisor, Executive Officer, and any additional staff deemed necessary by the RS CO. 6th MCD-level FPCs will include the CO, XO, Sergeant Major, Chaplain, Unit SACO, Medical Representative, Legal Officer, Family Readiness Officer, Personnel Officer, and Operations Officer.

(b) RS CO's will approve appropriate assistance and determine if any individual meets the criteria to be placed on the FPC watch-list. This screening may consist of an individual's service record, training folder, medical records, or any additional information such as financial worksheets, legal documents, etc.

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(c) RS CO's will identify individuals to the FPC for any of the following circumstances: any Marine receiving counseling or medical treatment for substance abuse or depression; pending legal and/or disciplinary action; pending relief; receiving treatment for Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS)/Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI); assigned to a limited duty status (LIMDU) or any other circumstance the RS CO deems significant enough to warrant nomination. The trigger for reporting a Marine to the 6th MCD FPC will normally be involvement of any outside agencies to assist with that Marine's situation, (for example, mental health providers, family services, chaplain support, medical, law enforcement and legal). However, RS CO's are encouraged to report any vulnerable Marine that they feel could benefit by focused application of 6th MCD Resources (Chaplain, Medical, Family Readiness Officer). The FPC Assessment Guide [enclosure (2)], can assist in this process.

(d) RS CO's may also nominate Marines, identified by the FPC as specific individuals who may benefit from a change of scenery, for a temporary transfer/TAD to the MCD as they work out their personal issues. These Marines will be briefed at the monthly FPC so that the District will be able to better support the Marine's transition from the RS to the MCD. The FPC will discuss the best section for the Marine to work during his personal "rehabilitation" at the District.

(2) Use of All Supporting Programs

(a) Marine Corps (Bystander, suicide awareness and prevention, OSCAR, "DStress" Hotline, life skills, family readiness, etc.). Proper training and employment of Marine Corps supporting programs is critical to force preservation. During all-hands and sector training, RS CO's should dedicate ample time to weave this training into their normal recruiting activities / operations. Training to create awareness and proper use of Marine Corps supporting programs should not wait until one time of the year, or be limited to one all-hands training - it is rather a continuing action and a critical aspect of commandership. Seasonal and specific training may be recommended or directed based on identified trends by 6th MCD.

(b) Chaplain. The Chaplain is a vital tool who should be interwoven into every area of the command, promoting morale and wellness, and treated as a first responder who is able to assess the needs and support as needed. Chaplains are unique in that they have 100% confidentiality and fall outside of the chain of command. Chaplains have a skill set that equips them to help with not only spiritual problems but personal and professional as well. Our Chaplain is a trained listener who models this "Spirit of Friendship" to ensure everyone has someone to count on in times of challenge. Resources available through the Chaplain include but are not limited to: counseling (clinical and pastoral), marriage enrichment, personal growth and family enrichment retreats, VA chaplain care, community life skills, substance abuse, domestic/rape support groups, divorce recovery, financial hardship, help finding local churches to worship

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in, numerous hotlines and web sites which connect you with organizations/resources to meet your specific need.

(c) Family Readiness. The District Family Readiness Officer/RS Deputy Family Readiness Officers are also vital tools for every Marine, Sailor, and civilian to increase their knowledge and ensure optimum resiliency during life cycle events. The goal of the Unit, Personal, and Family Readiness Program is to provide resource information and training, in addition to support services, enhancing a Marine's personal and family readiness. Training and resources (in person, telephonic, web) in the areas of financial stability, relationship building, disaster preparation, and life skills (time management, stress, anger management) are just a few of the offerings that provide district personnel and families the ability to cope with life, and for commands to be proactive in possibly identifying and avoiding destructive behaviors and/or situations.

(d) Medical. Timely and accurate reporting and follow-up for medical issues which affect our Marines, Sailors, and their families is also essential for force preservation. Given the dispersed environment and multitude of military and civilian health facilities in our AO, effective oversight of medical support is another aspect of commandership. 6th MCD oversight of health related processes and coordination of services can reduce a significant amount of stress on Marines who may already have a mental or physical injury. Coordination through the 6th MCD Medical Readiness Officer is an integral part of this plan. Medical professionals can provide services such as: Mental Health Evaluation, Inpatient Treatment, relief for "Good of the Service" (GOS), or TAD/transfer to Wounded Warrior Regiment. In this vein, it is imperative that private information be kept under the watch of medical professionals only and that RS CO's very closely guard and control release of medical information. Marines and Sailors within 6th MCD are required to sign a release of medical information form for all civilian providers. RS CO's must be notified of any scheduled medical appointment with any civilian medical providers. These measures will ensure force preservation within 6th MCD.

(3) Teach and Inculcate a Spirit of Friendship

(a) When Major General John Lejeune became the 13th Marine Corps Commandant, he penned an open letter that began: "In the first place, I want each of you to feel that the Commandant of the Marine Corps is your friend and that he earnestly desires that you should realize this. At the same time, it is his duty to the Government and to the Marine Corps to exact a high standard of conduct, a strict performance of duty, and a rigid compliance with orders on the part of all the officers" [enclosure (3)]. This spirit of friendship is not the "buddy-buddy" type many of us have seen or the "collegiality" common to a workplace of professionals, but rather one Marine sincerely wishing well for another, and then acting upon that urge during difficult times. Aristotle called this a "friendship of character," and thought it the highest form of friendship possible. Teaching and inculcating this is another pillar of force preservation.

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(b) This ethos is described in detail in *Leading Marines*. Every Marine in this command requires "friendships of character" to achieve their personal best. Aristotle once wrote, "We need friends when we are young to keep us from error, when we get old to tend upon us and to carry out those plans with which we have not strength to execute ourselves, and in the prime of life to help us with noble deeds" [enclosure (4)]. "Friendships of character" create "accountability partners" to think and do well for each other and for the institution. The Marine Corps mentorship program and Operational Stress Control and Reduction (OSCAR) program are part of this spirit of friendship.

c. Tasks

(1) Executive Officer

(a) Attend monthly FPCs and collect District Staff inputs and all FPC Reporting sheets from RS CO's.

(b) Attend FPCs prepared to discuss actions the staff can do to best support action plans.

(c) Ensure all designated 6th MCD FPC members attend.

(d) Keep written notes from 6th MCD FPC [enclosure (5)] and maintain all written submissions.

(e) Ensure all Higher Headquarters FPC reporting requirements are met.

(2) Sergeant Major

(a) Attend monthly FPCs and work with the RS Sergeants Major to ensure all documentation is properly submitted.

(b) Provide recommendations and advice on action plans.

(3) Designated FPC Members (Chaplain, Family Readiness Officer, Unit Medical Readiness Officer, Unit SACO, Legal Officer, Operations Officer, and Personnel Officer)

(a) Act as primary members of the FPC.

(b) Provide appropriate updates for discussion during FPC meetings which includes current status and District actions for Marines of concern.

(c) Attend FPC meetings prepared to discuss service members from your section showing signs of stress or within a "window of vulnerability."

(4) RS Commanders

(a) Chair monthly FPCs.

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(b) Assign FPC members in writing.

(c) Incorporate training and employment of the three lines of operation into all-hands training and sector all year round.

(d) Submit monthly FPC Reports to the District Commander via the XO by the first Monday of each month.

4. Administration and Logistics.

a. Units shall keep a record of FPCs for accountability purposes either through use of enclosure (1), or a locally developed report.

b. All reports will be kept in a lockable and secure containment device and will be treated with the same level of sensitivity as personally identifiable information.

c. Information developed by the board should be used by the CO as deemed appropriate for the enhancement of safety and for referral/assistance to the appropriate resource. The FPC is not a punitive proceeding. Information discussed by the board will frequently involve sensitive, private issues that shall be protected. FPC members are accountable for protecting such information and limiting its dissemination.

5. Command and Signal

a. Command. Sequence of Command is: CO, XO, and OPSO.

b. Signal. Per phone roster and RCEN.


W. J. BOWERS

6th MCD Force Preservation Council (FPC) Report

From: Commanding Officer, RS _____
To: Commanding Officer, 6th Marine Corps District

On _____ date, I led an FPC for this command and submit the following report of our action plans.

1. Trends within RS ____:

- a. Item and recommendation
- b.
- c.

2. Nominations for District FPC: (RS CO's are encouraged to categorize their nominations as 1) assignment as an active FPC case where the Marine is in the "window of vulnerability" and the command is actively treating the Marine and 2) the Marine has been brought back into the safe zone but requires tracking.)

a. Name: Marine's Rank, name, and billet Discussion: A brief paragraph (or more) about the Marine's circumstances and why they are currently vulnerable.

Action Plan: Your concrete action plan on actions to be completed within the next 30 days to help this Marine get back into the safe zone.

b. Same as above.

3. Corresponding data sheets and RS FPC notes are attached.

I. M. MARINE

Enclosure (1)

6th MCD Force Preservation Council Assessment Guide

This Force Preservation Council Assessment Guide is provided to assist leaders in identifying many risk factors associated with dysfunctional behavior.

Work/Personal Safety Factors:

- Manning/staffing inadequate
- Required training and certifications not complete
- Failing to follow safety procedures
- Lack of supervision
- Failure to correct previously identified problems
- Physical or mental fatigue
- Intoxication
- Complacency toward work assignments
- Sleep loss
- Stress
- Lack of adherence to procedures
- Reckless driving
- Relationship (both personal and marital)

Spiritual Factors:

- Unbalanced sense of personal well-being
- Expressed lack of purpose, design and destiny
- Lacking or expressing a real sense of purpose or connectedness with team members, family, command, divine etc.
- Personal (wholeness) compass is seemingly out-of-whack as it relates to every area of life-spiritually, emotionally, psychologically, relationally and physically
- The belief system has been jarred. Crisis of faith or meaning (i.e. "How could a good God allow...")
- Life seems to have no value or significance
- Loss of joy/enjoyment/pleasure of one's passions and things that are moving. (For instance, riding a motorcycle no longer provides sense of freedom)
- Marine clearly is unable to determine right from wrong and exhibits this in his/her decision making behaviors. Maybe no longer sees the big picture of Corps, Combat, and Country etc.
- Lack of compassion
- No longer attends place of worship, no longer reads sacred/devotional materials or engages in a fellowship role of those of like mindedness (church fellowship, synagogue or faith group relational activities, etc.).

Medical/Psychological Factors:

- Sleeplessness
- Apathy
- Lateness
- Irritability
- Increased alcohol usage
- Decline in work habits
- Missing deadlines
- Breaking items of little value
- References to poor family relationships
- Excessive sick call/medical appointments
- Excessive prescription drug usage
- Withdrawal from group/work/social functions
- Constant negativity
- Labile affect (quick change in display of emotion)
- Lost attention to detail
- Slows down or derails group process
- Missing meetings
- Constant somatic complaints (fatigue, headaches, lower back pain, stomach aches, vague ailments)
- Recent relationship changes (often dramatic)
- Fellowship [role of synagogue/church or faith]
- Excessive neediness
- Authority issues
- Overgeneralizations/prejudiced opinions of others
- Lack of empathy
- Unable to joke/show humor with coworkers
- Poor military bearing
- Disheveled uniform
- Poor grooming habits
- Trouble passing written tests while in academic environment
- Viewed as an outcast per peer evaluation



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LtGen John A. Lejeune: Kindly and Just

Title: Kindly and Just
Category: Letter No. 1
Author/Presenter: Major General John A Lejeune, USMC
Commandant of the Marine Corps
Date: 19 September 1922

TO THE OFFICERS OF THE MARINE CORPS:

I feel that I would like to talk to each of you personally. This, of course, is impossible for me to do. Consequently, I am going to do the next best thing by writing letters from time to time which will go to all the officers. In these letters, I will endeavor to embody briefly some of the thoughts which have come into my mind concerning our beloved Corps.

In the first place, I want each of you to feel that the Commandant of the Corps is your friend and that he earnestly desires that you should realize this. At the same time, it is his duty to the Government and to the Marine Corps to exact a high standard of conduct, a strict performance of duty, and a rigid compliance with orders on the part of all the officers.

You are the permanent part of the Marine Corps, and the efficiency, the good name, and the esprit of the Corps are in your hands. You can make or mar it.

You should never forget the power of example. The young men serving as enlisted men take their cue from you. If you conduct yourselves at all times as officers and gentlemen should conduct themselves, the moral tone of the whole Corps will be raised, its reputation, which is most precious to all of us, will be enhanced, and the esteem and affection in which the Corps is held by the American people will be increased.

Be kindly and just in your dealings with your men. Never play favorites. Make them feel that justice tempered with mercy may always be counted on. This does not mean a slackening of discipline. Obedience to orders and regulations must always be insisted on, and good conduct on the part of the men exacted. Especially should this be done with reference to the civilian inhabitants of foreign countries in which Marines are serving.

The prestige of the Marine Corps depends greatly on the appearance of its officers and men. Officers should adhere closely to the uniform regulations, and be exceedingly careful to be neatly and tidily dressed, and to carry themselves in a military manner. They should observe the appearance of the men while on liberty, and should endeavor to instill into their minds the importance of neatness, smartness and soldierly bearing.

A compliance with the minutiae of military courtesy is a mark of well disciplined troops. The exchange of military salutes between officers and men should not be overlooked. Its omission indicates a poor state of discipline. Similarly, officers should be equally careful to salute each other. Courtesy, too, demands more than an exchange of official salutes between officers. On all





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occasions when officers are gathered together, juniors should show their esteem and respect for their seniors by taking the initiative in speaking to and shaking hands with their seniors. Particularly should this be done in the case of commanding officers. The older officers appreciate greatly attention and friendliness on the part of the younger officers.

We are all members of the same great family and we should invariably show courtesy and consideration, not only to all other officers, but to the members of their personal families as well. Do not fail to call on your commanding officers within a week after you join a post. On social occasions, the formality with which all of us conduct ourselves on strictly military occasions should be relaxed and a spirit of friendliness and good will should prevail.

In conclusion, I wish to impress on all of you that the destiny of our Corps depends on each of you. Our forces, brigades, regiments, battalions, companies and other detachments are what you make them. An inefficient organization is the product of inefficient officers, and all discreditable occurrences are usually due to the failure of officers to perform their duties properly. Harmonious cooperation and teamwork, together with an intelligent and energetic performance of duty, are essential to success, and these attributes can be attained by cultivating in your characters the qualities of loyalty, unselfishness, devotion to duty, and the highest sense of honor.

Let each one of us resolve to show in himself a good example of virtue, honor, patriotism and subordination, and to do all in his power, not only to maintain, but to increase the prestige, the efficiency, and the esprit of the grand old Corps to which we belong.

With my best wishes for your success and happiness, I am, as always,

Your sincere friend,

/s/ John A. Lejeune

Major General Commandant



Aristotle's Concept of Friendship

This Force Preservation Plan emphasizes "teaching and inculcating a spirit of friendship" as one of its lines of operation. I wanted to provide a more complete understanding of what this means and how it is consistent with the "spirit of friendship" General Lejeune describes in his letter. Aristotle's timeless philosophical work -- *Nicomachean Ethics* -- contains two chapters on friendship in which he describes the three types of friendship, why friendships are so important, and why the highest form of friendship is essential to living a happy, fulfilled and virtuous life.

The first is a "friendship of pleasure" in which people are friends simply because they enjoy one another's company. This type of friendship is most common among young people. It tends to focus on people entering into friendships primarily because they seek pleasure for themselves. Since this type of friendship is based solely upon enjoyment by the people involved, it quickly fades once the pleasure stops. While it is possible for "friendships of pleasure" to exist among people of either strong or weak character, they cannot be sustained because eventually life events will force ethical choices upon them that expose the one with the weaker character, thus ending the friendship. This type of friendship is the "buddy-buddy" type we've seen in which the pleasure gained is more important than the mutual virtue adhered to. This is why it is so difficult for many of our newest Marines to retain their high school friends.

The second is a "friendship of utility" in which people are friends because it brings mutual advantage upon them both. This type of friendship is primarily based upon the usefulness of one individual to another, and is most commonly seen in the workplace. This is usually regarded as a higher form of friendship than one of pleasure because it is assumed that the collegiality among true professionals is intended to achieve some higher form of good - but not always. While friendships of utility are more numerous than the other types, there is little to sustain them once the mutual usefulness to each individual wears off. And like pleasure, these friendships also do not place as much emphasis on the character of the people involved.

The highest form of friendship, according to Aristotle, is a "friendship of character." Although these friendships are rarer, they are essential to a meaningful life. These friendships depend primarily upon virtuous people sincerely wishing well for one another. This type of friendship arises primarily from the character and core values of the people involved; therefore, the people involved must be truly virtuous or, at the least, one of them must have a highly developed sense of character to draw out the potential virtue in the other. This is known as "mentorship." "Friendships of character" are what General Lejeune describes in his letter and are what we must teach and inculcate in the 6th MCD. An intricate web of "friendships of character" comprised of Marines wishing well for one another - and acting upon that wish - is the best force preservation tool we have.

6th MCD Force Preservation Council (FPC) Meeting Worksheet

The FPC shall review personal and professional circumstances and direct particular attention toward uncovering underlying medical physiological, social, behavioral and/or psychological factors that affect personal safety and judgment. The FPC is convened in the interest of force preservation and shall make no recommendations that are disciplinary in nature. During FPC deliberations, consideration shall be given to current unit operational tempo, workload, command communications, and other factors that may influence unit personnel.

Date: _____

Members present: _____

Nominations: _____

Notes: _____

All members discussed the following as related to each individual:

1. OpTempo. How is training and OpTempo affecting the Marine?
2. All members should discuss the following related to each individual:
 - a. Risk-taking behavior (including alcohol and/or drug screening).
 - b. Professional discipline (pending legal issues).
 - c. Career development and other job performance factors.
3. Critical indicators:
 - a. Declining performance -failure to meet required standards or qualifications progress.
 - b. Known violations or instances of poor discipline.
 - c. Presence of major life stressors.
4. Medical Concerns:
 - a. Chronic conditions or mental health issues.
 - b. Limited duty or awaiting a Physical Evaluation Board.
 - c. Medication concerns.
5. Family/Individual Concerns:
 - a. Family stability (relationship, new additions to family)
 - b. Financial Issues (large number of loans, credit card debt)