

# STOKING THE FLAMES FOR STRESS-IS-ENHANCING MINDSET INTERVENTIONS WITHIN THE MILITARY

## Assessing palatability of a Positive Stress Mindset approach to a Cardiopulmonology Rehab class in a major Military Treatment Facility

### INTRO

- Messages about the negative impacts of stress are pervasive in Western culture and health systems.
- Evidence suggests that stressors are more deleterious to physical and psychological health when individuals view stress as debilitating and harmful.
- Conversely, a Stress-Is-Enhancing (SIE) Mindset obtained by past experience or intervention promotes adaptive cardiovascular and hormonal responses, better occupational performance and decreased struggle with anxiety and mood.
- Cardiopulmonary rehabilitation historically addresses the risks of "chronic stress" through stress management techniques and CBT interventions.
- There are no published studies on promoting the positive aspects of stress in a cardiac or pulmonary patient population. However, a brief mindset intervention has led to a more adaptive cardiovascular response (elevated cardiac output and lower total peripheral resistance reactivity) in a laboratory stress condition
- The initial SIE class was presented to evaluate initial palatability within the military and cardiopulmonary populations, both likely having received previous information during their career and in medical appointments on the danger of stress to their health.

### METHOD

- Anonymous surveys were collected to evaluate patient opinion of novel SIE information (n = 7) on a 5-pt Likert scale
- A Health Psychology Fellow reviewed information from Alia Crum and Kelly McGonigal with patients in an interactive discussion with brief skills training

### RESULTS

All participants agreed or strongly agreed that content was understandable, 6/7 patients strongly agreed the class was satisfying and relevant to their condition and all patients agreed or strongly agreed they would recommend the class to others.

### DISCUSSION

- Post intervention feedback from cardiopulmonary class attendees indicated overall positive experience.
- Considerable research is still needed to understand the benefits and risks of SIE interventions to military populations, to include those who develop chronic disease during or after their military career
- Shifting the military culture towards a greater SIE mindset will involve the need to educate military leaders and healthcare professionals on the benefits of SIE approaches

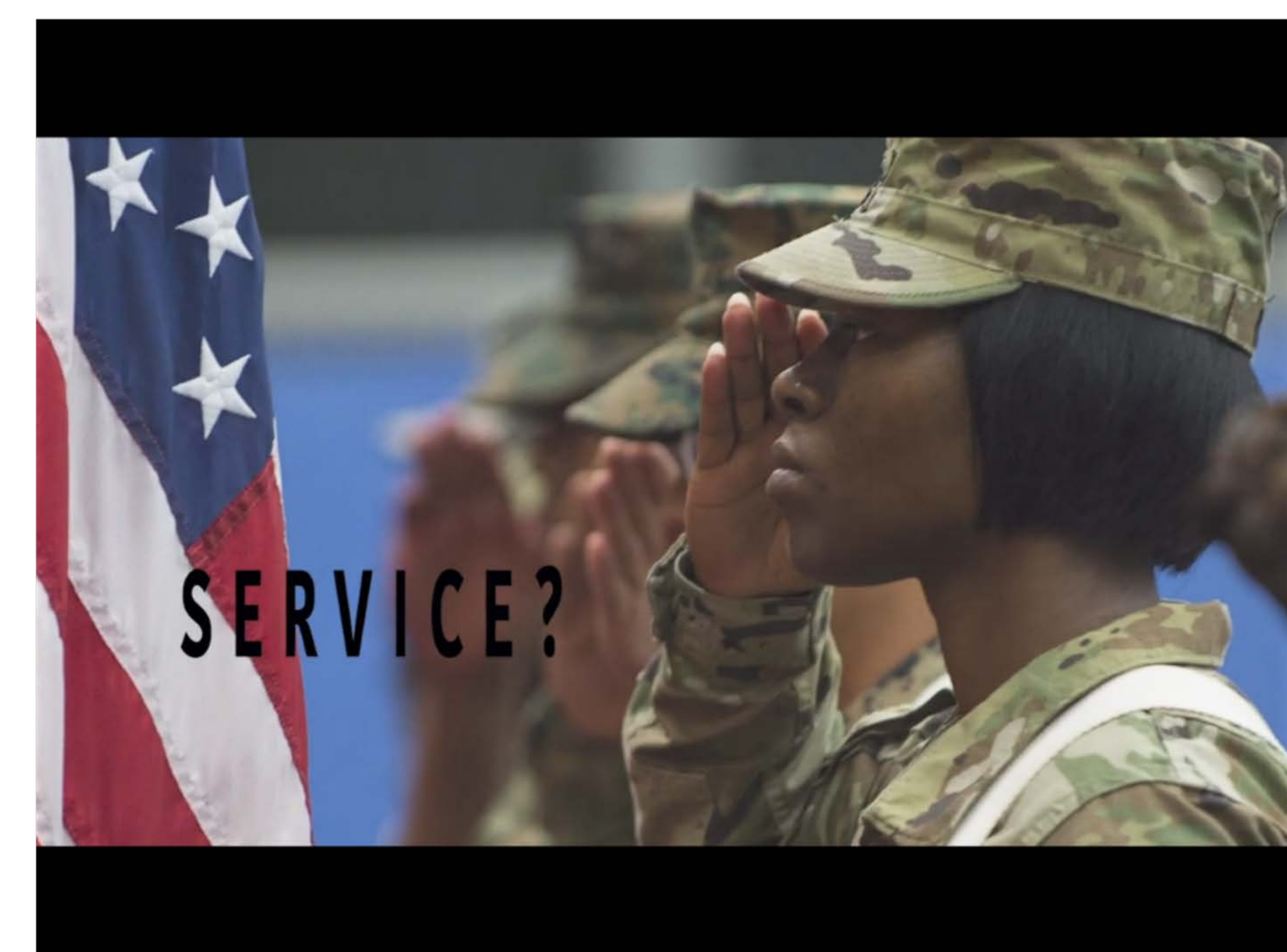
Watch our Videos

*Stress-is-Enhancing (4:37)*



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=yKBIC5KwO1Y>

*What is Your Why? (3:51)*



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N\\_K5ivZYlgE&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_K5ivZYlgE&feature=youtu.be)



**Maj John Blue Star, Lt Col Robert Vanecek,  
Capt Megan Gaschk, Capt Megan Davis  
Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center, Lackland AFB, TX**

*The views expressed are those of the author(s)/presenters and do not reflect the official views or policy of the Department of Defense or its Components*

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