AIRSCOOP

104th Fighter Wing • Massachusetts Air National Guard

Pride, Professionalism, Patriotism

Barnes Air National Guard Base

February 2015

With the silhouette of Hawaii's renowned Diamondhead in the distance, an F-15 Eagle from the 104th Fighter Wing, Massachusetts Air National Guard, takes off from Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam to participate in the Sentry Aloha exercise, Jan. 27, 2015. Story on page 4.

Photo by Senior Airman Loni Kingston

Col. Alexander Haldopoulos

AIRSCOOP

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PRIDE, PROFESSIONALISM, PATRIOTISM

Commander's Column

By Col. Alexander Haldopoulos, 104th Operations Group Commander

Sentry Aloha 15-1 is almost complete! As you read this article, approximately 130 members of the 104th Fighter Wing are preparing to begin the long trip back from Hawaii, some by C-17 and some via the F-15C. This year's Sentry Aloha exercise was bigger and better than last year's with more participants, providing more challenging training scenarios for our pilots. The first two weeks of stats are in – over 300 total hours and 138 sorties flown with just a single air abort. This doesn't include the last week of exercise flying and the Return to Barnes (RTB)! Awesome stats for any month, much less the Jan.-Feb. months where weather attrition typically rules the day. "Why travel all the way to Hawaii in the middle of January?" you ask. Allow me to attempt to provide some more background into this mid-winter training extravaganza.

At one time, the term ***"Snow Bird deployment"*** was supported by serious resources for those northern tier ANG units that struggled to accomplish significant combat training in the weather-challenged winter months. Back in the day, when money flowed more freely between the National Guard Bureau and the Fighter Wings, each northern tier unit was budgeted an annual Snow Bird deployment. No matter where we decided to train, NGB/A3 would write the check and off we'd go. In today's restricted budget environment, Snow Birds are a highly endangered species. So, we have to adapt and overcome because one thing's for sure; January-February snow in New England is showing no signs of becoming endangered no matter what your thoughts on Global Warming are!

Enter Sentry Aloha and the Hawaiian Raptors, an active associate unit integrating Active Duty members of the 15th Fighter Wing and Hawaii guardsmen of the 54th Fighter Wing. Up until now, this organization struggled to produce complex, dissimilar air combat training at their home station, a tiny island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Sentry Aloha is an NGB-sponsored exercise that provides these F-22s the necessary training opportunities to sharpen their combat skills in the PACOM AOR. Essentially, both sides benefit from this relationship. We receive excellent training working with the Hawaiian Raptors, and other deployed 4th and 5th generation assets, and we also benefit from the complex west Pacific scenarios that this exercise provides. Additionally, the F-22s benefit from hosting us and, as a result, NGB is happy to fund our deployment, which kills two birds with one stone – provide ANG Raptors integrated training and help Barnes get out of the New England tundra during the winter months!

This year's exercise involved the following units:

- Barnes F-15s
- Hawaiian KC-135s
- Elmendorf F-22s
- Hawaiian C-17s
- Eielson F-16

Aggressors:

- Navy F/A-18s
- Hawaiian F-22s
- Navy Hawker Hunters
- Guam B-52s

I hope you now have a better big-picture understanding of why we travel so far to obtain this training. Now, let's get in the weeds about the specific scenarios we set out to participate in. The Eielson F-16 Aggressors are a professional red-air fighter squadron. Their primary mission is to study the threat and fly and maneuver their F-16s

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Alcoholism is treatable!
Need help? Call 1-800-410-2560
Sexual Assault S.A.F.E. helpline
1-877-995-5247

Commander's Column continued

mimicking what our potential adversaries would do if we encountered them in combat. Additionally, they provide an effective electronic jamming capability

that attempts to simulate how we would be jammed as well. On any given exercise day, the deployed Fighter Wing typically flies two "goes"; one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Both of these multi-aircraft sorties involve many hours of mission planning to build the scenario and effectively plan with multiple weapons

systems in order to achieve the commander's intent. Not including the 10-12 hours of planning the day prior, many of these sorties, from pre-brief to debrief, take up approximately 12-14 hours culminating in extensive debriefs that determine root causes of specific mission failures or debrief focus points.

The Barnestormers gain so much tactically from participating in Sentry Aloha. The operators hone their expeditionary fighter skills while operating out of a deployed environment and likewise, the maintainers and logisticians learn to provide excellent expeditionary support while away from the benefits of in-garrison facilities and familiarities. I'd like to thank all those Barnestormers who helped prepare the wing for this deployment; the maintainers who worked on the jets (10 Eagles - over 4,800 miles with no major MX issues), the logisticians who scheduled the C-17s and loaded up the expeditionary force, the finance and FSS personnel who helped with DTS processing and orders development and to squadron leadership that selected the deployers and made sure they were ready to go; my hat's off to you.

Every time we take Barnes on the road, we get a chance to show others why we are becoming the most respected Fighter Wing in the CAF. Also, I would like to personally thank Maj. Kona Zajac and Lt. Col. Pete Carr for their efforts as Project Officers for this year's Sentry Aloha. All this while

New England provided at least three separate snow storms totaling over 20 inches of frozen precipitation (to date)!

Mahalo,
Snip

Photos by Senior Airman Loni Kingston

First Sergeant's thoughts

By Master Sgt. Marnie Wallace, 104th FW Medical Group 1st Sgt.

The primary goal of the Air Force Personnel Fitness Program, governed by Air Force Instruction 36-2905, is to foster a force fit to fight at a moment's notice. Traditionally, prior to annual fitness assessments, I often receive inquiries concerning Air Force Fitness Program policies, procedures and standards. I would like to take this opportunity to provide some guidance by highlighting areas that address some of the most frequently asked questions. As active Americans I believe many of us face similar life style challenges that can affect our overall health and wellbeing. AFI 36-2905 encourages Air Force members to live a healthy lifestyle to ensure we are able to support our global mission. "The goal of the Fitness Program is to motivate all members to participate in a year-round physical conditioning program that emphasizes total fitness, to include proper aerobic conditioning, muscular fitness training, and healthy eating." For more information pertaining to AFI 36-2905 Personnel Fitness Program please review the following chapters:

Chapter 3 – Fitness Assessment

3.2 Fitness Assessment Components

3.3 Fitness Assessment Requirements

3.4 Assessment Procedures

Chapter 10 – Administrative And Personnel Actions

10.1 Adverse Personnel Actions (for Unsatisfactory Fitness Members)

10.4 AF Form 108, Physical Fitness Education and Intervention Processing

Please let me know if I can be of assistance.

Preparing pilots for combat

By Senior Airman Loni Kingston, 104th Fighter Wing Photojournalist

Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii – Over 140 Massachusetts Air National Guardsmen and approximately 10 F-15 Eagles from the 104th Fighter Wing , Barnes Air National Guard Base, Westfield, Massachusetts, have been deployed in support of Sentry Aloha, an annual air-to-air simulated combat exercise hosted by the Hawaii Air National Guard (HIANG).

According to Lt. Col. Charles Anthony, Director of Public Affairs for HIANG, " Sentry Aloha exercises are held to provide the Air National Guard, U.S. Air Force and Department of Defense counterparts a multifaceted, joint venue, with supporting infrastructure and personnel that incorporates current, realistic, integrated training to equip the war-fighter with the skill sets necessary to fly, fight and win."

"Sentry Aloha exercises have been conducted by the HIANG, about four times per year, for several decades. What makes this particular Sentry Aloha different is the number of visiting fighter aircraft participating in the exercise. In the past a Sentry Aloha would typically involve one visiting fighter squadron and a limited number of aircraft. For this exercise, F-22s and F-16s from Alaska, as well as F-15s from Massachusetts will participate. Currently, there are more than 400 visiting airmen and nearly 60 aircraft from six states participating," continued Lt. Col. Anthony.

The HIANG has hosted Sentry Aloha exercises for nearly 40 years, with the 104th FW participating in the last two years.

"Last year was our first year participating in this exercise," said Chief Master Sgt. Robert Beaulieu, Aircraft Maintenance Superintendent, 104th FW. "The F-15 has proven to be an important asset in this exercise," he added.

F-15 Eagles in coordination with F-22 Raptors are essential to fighter integration training. These two aircraft are indispensable for air-to-air combat preparedness.

"Because F-15s and F-22s are not co-located anywhere, this gives us the opportunity to concentrate on fighter integration with fifth generation Raptors, and to combine tactics against the most advanced threat that can be replicated anywhere in the world," said Col. Kenneth Lambrich, Vice Wing Commander, 104th FW.

It is very likely in today's threat environment, that combat operations will require fighter integration. Our adversaries are continuously modifying their aircraft to get better and better, and as they do so, we need to stay in front of what is out there. Fighter integration and the training this exercise provides, helps us to accomplish that, said Maj. Nathaniel Zajac, Project Officer, 104th FW.

Photos by Senior Airman Loni Kingston

Simulation exercises are important in the training of a pilot's situational awareness while engaged in combat. This experience is necessary to acquaint pilots with the stress and chaos that can come while engaged in air-to-air combat. Among the chaos, pilots must maintain situational awareness in order to carry out their given objective.

"Once the simulation starts, there are good guys on one side and bad guys on the other. Once the first shot is fired, it's like swatting a hornet's nest," said Col. Lambrich. "Airplanes are everywhere trying to figure out the good guys from the bad guys, who is alive and who is dead. This is where the majority of the training comes in, especially for the younger guys," he added.

At the conclusion of each simulation, every pilot goes through a massive debrief to analyze all that happened in the air. Then they figure out what worked, what didn't work, and what can be done better during the next simulation.

Combat simulation training is practiced throughout the year, however, Sentry Aloha provides pilots in-depth fighter integration training that is not readily available while at home base.

"We will occasionally do fighter integration at home, but typically we are fighting against ourselves. Not that this is negative training, but we don't necessarily see all the effects of how the F-22 can operate fighting against a jamming platform ,or something like that, where we are forced to come out of our comfort zone," said Maj. Zajac. "Having over 30 craft in the air at the same time is an opportunity we do not get at home," he continued.

Combining assets from Alaska, Hawaii, and Massachusetts assists in incorporating required training and solidifying working relationships between states. "The relationship that we have formed with the HIANG is important in that we are able to support each other's training plan. The ability to have any outside craft is positive for our preparation and our overall mission," said Col. Lambrich.

"Experience and fighter integration are the two key take-away objectives from this exercise," said Maj. Zajac. "But above all, I would hope that every Airman will understand that we are guardsman from Massachusetts, and that our importance in the world is there."

Safety: How goes it?

By Senior Master Sgt. Thomas Dumais, 104th Fighter Wing Safety Office

The unit has experienced three injuries since the last How-Goes-It.

Worker injured shoulder; slip/fall on ice; not greater than first aid.

Worker sprained shoulder; private vehicle mishap; not greater than first aid.

Participant lacerated head; off duty on tree branch; greater than first aid.

The unit has experienced three mishaps since the last How-Goes-It

GMV Bus damaged AGE heater; backed into; $660.

GMV damaged AGE heater, heater impacted by unknown vehicle; $292.

GMV slid on ice/impact gate, minor scratches; $0.

Every month the Safety Office takes a few moments to write an article for this publication outlining basic information from mishaps we have experienced since the previous article. Our purpose for doing this each month is twofold. First, we hope that by sharing the errors of others, you might think about your own situations and apply lessons learned to prevent errors of your own. The second is to hopefully spark some conversation within the Wing with regard to safety. Both of these together culminate in safety information sharing to assist us in the Commander's overall mishap prevention program. This basically means we are using mishap information to help us prevent similar mishaps, thus better protecting our number one assets; YOU!

So with that said and as we look forward to better weather, hopefully each of us is not only thinking about the future, but living in the moment. This means not letting your guard down for items such as slips and falls on the ice, fire safety concerns in your homes, and using your head while driving in the winter weather.

When we think about the future, better weather items such as motorcycle rides, home repair, yard cleanup, and car maintenance come to mind. All of these are good to think about, but better if accomplished SAFELY! This means using risk management, your experience, and the experiences of others to hopefully help obtain a positive outcome. Basic things such as ladder safety, proper personal protective equipment, and adhering to warnings and cautions are all good ways to help obtain a positive result.

So here we are in February yet looking forward at March. All we ask of you is to continue to do the things you need to stay safe in the snow and ice, and at the same time be thinking about the March four-day UTA. Some may have to be in early and others may have to stay late depending on what you do. In either case we ask you to use risk management in coming here, while you are here, and while on your way home. After all the job is still the same; accomplish what you are doing SAFELY!

Chaplain's Corner - Joy in the face of adversity

By Maj. Ken DeVoie, 104th Fighter Wing Chaplain

If you have walked through this life for any amount of time, you cannot help but to notice that there are major differences in how people respond to major life changes. Some deal with them with such great grace and class that they even seem to exude tremendous peace in the midst of such adversities. Others seem to always stumble at the slightest change or obstacle that life throws at them and they are always living in a continual state of Drama. They even seem to move from drama to drama in life. It almost defines their personality and how people interact with them. As a Christian pastor, and in counseling people, I point out that at the heart of drama is some human brokenness and most often sin (anger, jealousy, envy, hatred, coveting, lust, sloth, etc...). The Greek word for "sin" transliterated is *amartia*, which literally means to "miss the mark;" as in an archer not hitting the bulls-eye on the target when he shoots an arrow at it.

These life changes I refer to include, but are not limited to: *job changes or loss of job, deployments, illnesses, death of loved ones, failures in important or broken relationships, moving, having children,* or *retirement.* We can be sure that there is no life lived that does not face change and adversity of some sort. How we respond to these changes and adversities, many times un-planned events, can make all the difference in our health and finding lasting joy in life. [**Note**: I did not say happiness. Happiness is a temporary state of mind and is very conditional on the circumstance of the moment, but joy is transcendent of all these variables.] Too many Americans are trying to be "happy" – a temporary state, instead we should be seeking the joy that life can bring; even in the face of change and adversity.

It is no secret that those who have established a meaningful spiritual dimension as part of their life-style, handle adversity and change with greater ease and are able to find a lasting joy in living life, despite the circumstances that do not always seem fair. Joy can be more easily had by fostering this spiritual dimension in our lives. Prayer, worship, meditation, scriptural contemplation, joining a church, synagogue, temple or mosque are a couple of means that can help an individual connect and foster a deeper meaning to life that brings joy even in the face of adversity and change. I want to encourage you to foster this dimension for a lasting balance in life and for your overall resilience as a member of the military family. The Chaplain's are available for consultation, advice and a variety of other services that you may need. Stop by Building 12 anytime and stay away from Drama.

EO vs EEO—What's the difference?

By Master Sgt. Frances Frederick, 104th Fighter Wing Equal Opportunity office

Throughout the course of my career in the ANG, I have often heard the terms Equal Opportunity and Equal Employment Opportunity used interchangeably. It may come as a surprise to many that there are significant differences between EO and EEO.

Military EO

-Mandated through DoD Directives/ policies (primarily DoDD 1350.2, *Department of Defense Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) Program*) and individual Service equal opportunity policies, regulations and instructions to promote an environment free from personal, social, or institutional barriers that prevent service members from rising to the highest level of responsibility possible.

- Unlike in the EEO system, age, disability, and genetic information are not protected categories for filing EO complaints.

- Coverage limited to active duty military, their family members, and retirees.

-Ensures that the military services (to include the Reserve components) establish MEO and affirmative action programs that identify and resolve EO problems through formulating, maintaining, and reviewing affirmative action plans (AAPs) with established objectives and milestones, including accountability in personnel management.

-Provides complaint processing and resolution procedures to address alleged violations of EO policy. Military complaint processes are separate and distinct from civilian EEO channels.

-Complaints may also be adjudicated through Inspector General (IG), commander-directed investigations, or the chain of command.

EEO

-Mandated through laws and regulations to prevent and eliminate discrimination in employment policies or practices and provide equal access and fair, open, consideration in hiring, training, promotion, and other personnel actions.

-Protected Title VII categories include race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, and genetic information

- Coverage limited to federal civilian employees and applicants for employment. In exceptional cases, federal contractors may be included.

- Guidance within DoD is primarily contained in DoDD 1440.1, *The DoD Civilian Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program.*

--Provides for federally controlled complaint mechanisms to redress alleged violations. Unlike military EO processes, the EEO appellate system can lead ultimately to district court.

Several years ago, the active duty Air Force combined the offices of Equal Opportunity and Equal Employment Opportunity. While the procedure for investigation and processing of complaints are different, the same personnel manage both. In the Air National Guard, the office of Equal Opportunity remains a separate entity, working with military concerns only. Civilian issues are handled by the base EEO representatives.

For information related to Military Equal Opportunity, please contact Lt. Col. David Castonguay, 2nd Lt. Nadine Edwards, or Master Sgt. Fran Frederick at 698-1328.

For information regarding Equal Employment Opportunity, please contact Maj. Wendy Kiepke or Chief Master Sgt. Andres Huxtable.

More and more and more snow to remove

By Senior Master Sgt. Robert Sabonis, 104th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Snow plows, blowers and sweepers from the 104th Fighter Wing, Barnes Air National Guard base, Westfield, Massachusetts., remove snow from the base, taxiways and runways over the past few weeks to maintain its 24/7/365 alert posture, as well as allow the F-15 Eagles to take off for day-to-day routine training missions.

With the forecast of yet even more snow arriving this weekend, take the extra time to clear the sidewalks around your building and spread salt to help prevent slips and falls. A shovel and container of salt should be located inside the door of every building on base. Be careful not to over exert yourself while removing the snow.

We've heard it many times, but be prepared. Keep some canned goods on hand, as well as batteries, candles and matches.

We live in New England, so none of this is new to us. Take it slow, be safe, and use common sense.

Photos by Senior Master Sgt. Robert Sabonis.

For Your Information

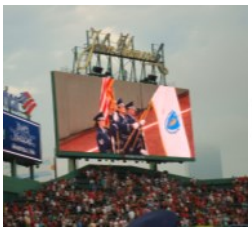
Barber Shop Open

The Barber Shop will be open for the 2015 UTA dates.
Enter Building 008, South Entrance.
POC for Barber Shop operations is Master Sgt. Tina Dimino-Frazer, at (413) 568-9151, x698-1234.

Base Honor Guard looking for new members

- Be part of the tradition of excellence
- Honor those who have fallen at military funerals
- Represent the ANG & AF at military & sporting events
- All ranks/specialties can apply

Please contact Tech. Sgt. Christine Lupacchino or Maj. Matthew Mutti by e-mail.



Barnes Family Flyer

Sign up TODAY to receive the Barnes Family Flyer, a weekly email with information on benefits, entitlements, events and job opportunities for our Barnes family community! Call or email Jennifer Cesaitis today at (413) 568-9151x 698-1183 or email Jennifer.cesaitis@ang.af.mil

Skiing at Blandford

Blandford Ski Area's Military appreciation day is scheduled for Sunday, February 15. All military personnel, both active and retired, may ski or snowboard for free at Blandford, when they present a valid military ID. There will be a flag raising ceremony at noon at the flagpole in front of the new lodge. The American Legion colorguard will be present, and we will have a guest singer for the national anthem. A reception will be held on the sundeck of the old lodge, immediately following the flag raising ceremony. Light refreshments will be served. The Col. Bill Whitman memorial race will be held at 2 o'clock.
This is a fun recreational giant slalom race held on Broadway Trail. I hope many people can join us.

PVC Upcoming 2015 Events

March UTA: On Sat., March 7, the Pioneer Valley Club will host a Beirut tournament. Beirut is a game in which players throw a ping pong ball across a table with the intent of landing the ball in a cup at the other end. The game typically consists of two teams of two players each with 6 or 10 cups set up in a triangle formation on each side. Each team then takes turns attempting to shoot ping pong balls into the opponent's cup. If a ball lands in a cup, the cup is removed from the table. The first team to eliminate all of the opponent's cups is the winner. If you would like to participate in this event, please contact Staff Sgt. Mike Kennedy or Senior Airman Ari Gunning for more information. Even if you do not plan to participate in the tournament, come cheer on your friends and join us in celebrating St. Patrick's Day while enjoying some green beer and Reuben sandwiches.
May UTA: On Sat., May 2, the Pioneer Valley Club will be hosting a "Cinco de Mayo" celebration. Frozen margaritas will be available for purchase.
June UTA: On Wed., June 10, the Pioneer Valley Club will be hosting a "Cook Your Own Steak Night". Reservations are required for this event. See your PVC Council representative for more information.
*Non-alcoholic beverages are always available.
Do you have an event coming up and need a venue? The Pioneer Valley Club is available for rental by PVC members. Please contact Master Sgt Shannon Huard for more information.

PVC Corner

Did you know that the Pioneer Valley NCO Club is a Non-profit organization? Are you aware of what your membership money goes towards each year? A lot of people don't realize that the NCO Club is more than just a bar. We make donations to many different organizations on behalf of its members throughout the year. This past year we have donated to The Family Readiness Group, we have sponsored a hole in a Golf Tournament for the Soldiers Home fundraiser, and sponsored 10 Veterans from the Soldiers Home for the UTA Thanksgiving Meal just to name a few. Your membership money goes towards all maintenance and improvements made at the NCO Club as well. Without your annual donations none of this would be possible.

It's that time of year again, and the Pioneer Valley NCO Club Coins are available at the NCO Club and with Club Council Representatives.
The cost is $10.

Religion notes

Protestant Service on Saturday, Feb. 7, at 11 a.m. in the Chapel. Chaplain Stephen Misarski presiding.

Orthodox/Catholic Service on Sunday, Feb. 8, at 11:30 a.m. in the Chapel. Father Ken DeVoie presiding.

Welcome to new members

Calvin Cooper	OSF	19 Dec 2014
Zachary Archambault	MXS	30 Dec 2014
Daniel Yerrington	131FS	2 Jan 2015
Michael Reynolds	MDG	11 Jan 2015
Dariusz Zeinkiewicz	AMXS	15 Jan 2015
Maimuna Margues	LRS	21 Jan 2015
Mark Silvers	131FS	22 Jan 2015

Congratulations on your retirements

SMSgt Willard Stewart	SFS	1 Apr 2015
TSgt Jeanette Boos	CES	11 Mar 2015
TSgt Michael Michaud	MXS	1 Jun 2015
SSgt John Kostka	AMXS	7 Jun 2015
TSgt James O'Brien	AMXS	7 Jul 2015
MSgt Thomas Miskiv	CES	17 Jul 2015

CCTV broadcast line up

Channel 7 - Video schedule & Base Info
Channel 9 - Training videos/Warrior Network
Channel 10 - Pentagon Channel - inoperative

Morning	Training Video
0900-0940	Forklift Fundamentals and Ops
0940-1013	Confined Space Awareness
1013-1023	Basic Ladder Safety
1023-1053	Lockout/Tagout
1053-1101	FOD Prevention
1101-1108	Copyright Infringement

Afternoon	Training Video
1300-1340	Forklift Fundamentals and Ops
1340-1413	Confined Space Awareness
1413-1423	Basic Ladder Safety
1423-1453	Lockout/Tagout
1453-1501	FOD Prevention
1501-1508	Copyright Infringement

Promotions

To Senior Airman (E-4)

Neal Colburn	CES
Andrew Lawrence	AMXS
Brendan Schwartz	MXS
Michael Stewart	131FS

To Staff Sgt. (E-5)

Angelica Mendoza	MDG
Adam Smith	MOF

To Technical Sgt. (E-6)

Michael Minaham	AMXS
Niesha Nixon	CMPFT

To Master Sgt. (E-7)

Gregg Harrison	LRS
Tony Linton	MDG
David Sutherland	OSF

WHAT'S FOR LUNCH?

Saturday
Entrée: Lemon herb chicken, beef stroganoff, scalloped potatoes, egg noodles, peas, carrots

Soup: Beef chili, cream of chicken soup

Salad bar: A variety of vegetables, salads, and toppings

Dessert: Brownies, yellow cake w/choc icing, ice cream

Sunday
Entrée: Pork chops w/mushroom gravy, crispy baked chicken, mashed potatoes, rice, broccoli, corn

Soup: Beef chili, cream of chicken soup

Salad bar: A variety of vegetables, salads, and toppings

Dessert: Assorted cookies, carrot cake, ice cream

Short Order: Burgers, grilled tuna & cheese, grilled chicken sandwiches and fries

AGR & Officer Meal Rate $5.55

Letting Go, Taking Action, Moving Forward: A Warrior's Path to Living Meaningfully

Dr. Frank Gallo, Director of Psychological Health

Welcome back. This month we will pick up where we left off in December and January with your learning skills to stay with pain and engaging them from a foundation of good breathing.

Ask your self, "Given what's important to me, what am I willing to experience and do to move in that direction in this moment and in this situation?

Being willing to stay with your pain opens you up to what life has to offer you moment-to-moment. It allows you to see the unobstructed value of having pain. What was once a struggle to get away from, transforms into something worth having. It becomes a source of joy. Besides, how is the getting rid of it, managing it, coping with it, fixing it, fighting with it, or running from it working for you? Let's explore now the alternative, which is staying with it.

Staying with your thinking painful thoughts or feeling difficult feelings related to a life story involves using some new Me Noticing skills. Let's begin with noticing that pain associated with such thinking or feeling has a quality of *uncertainty*. Not knowing what will happen if you don't do something about your thoughts or feelings right now creates an urgency to act, to protect yourself and stay safe from what your mind tells you is dangerous, and to feel better right now. The urgency comes in the form of a strong feeling that reels you in and hooks you to put on the emotional body armor – the Iron Man suit – and move away from pain. You feel tense, tight, and rigid, not wanting to be there and wanting to get out quickly. That is what being hooked feels like.

In the following exercise, you will practice staying with the uncertainty, holding and making space for painful thoughts and feelings without doing the habitual thing to move away. Staying still, you will begin to loosen up and soften your grip on the problem solving approach to pain and realize you don't fall into a black hole. You may record the exercise on your own and use it regularly. You can also find the exercise podcast on the Wing's training web site in the Me Noticing section.

Exercise: Staying With Uncertainty

1. Begin by finding a quiet place where you can sit in a chair and pay attention.

2. Place your feet squarely on the ground. Sit up in the chair so your back is straight but not rigid. Relax your shoulders and arms, and place your hands with palms down on your lap, and fingers naturally open. Your head should feel level looking forward. This posture helps you stay awake. There is nothing particularly difficult about doing this exercise. It just requires your attention.

3. Close your eyes now, or find a place in front of you like the floor or wall where you can fix your gaze, and focus on your breathing.

4. Breathe in through your nose, feeling your belly going out when you inhale, and breathe out through your nose, feeling your belly going in when you exhale (pause 30-seconds).

5. As you inhale, feel the cool fresh air flowing in through your nostrils, filling you up. Silently say to your self, "I feel awake and refreshed" (pause 15-seconds). As you exhale, feel the warm air flowing out through your nostrils. Silently say to your self, "I feel warm and relaxed" (pause 15-seconds).

6. Now continue practicing just your breathing. Feel the heaviness of your body as you exhale through your nose. Its weight falls naturally on your belly. Its energy through your legs and feet, and into the ground. Feel the sense of groundedness through your whole body (pause 30-seconds).

7. Remember, breathe in through your nose feeling your belly going out, and exhale through your nose feeling your belly going in. Focus on breathing a little slower, deeper, smoother, and quieter, relaxing more-and-more with each exhale (pause 30-seconds).

8. Now shift your attention to your toes. Starting with your toes, scan up your body and follow the scan right to the top of your head (pause 15-seconds). Notice the position you are sitting in, and the way your body feels in the chair (pause 15-seconds). As you pay attention to your body, practice remaining still except for breathing (pause 15-seconds).

9. As time passes, you might notice you feel an itch (pause 10-seconds). You might also notice a thought to scratch, or move (pause 10-seconds). When you have a feeling, or a thought, what do you notice in your body (pause 10-seconds)?

10. Your only task now is to notice any thoughts and feelings without any effort to make them different. Stay still, and watch as your mind and body tell you to do things. Notice too that you can remain still, despite their requests, and bring yourself back to your breathing (pause 60-seconds).

11. Continue to remain still as you notice different thoughts and feelings. Remember, there is no need to respond to what your mind and body are telling you. You can simply observe their requests. You can simply watch your thoughts and feelings come and go, like clouds passing along the sky outside your house, and bring yourself back to your breathing (pause 60-seconds).

12. Now, in your mind, shift your attention to the image of the room (pause 10-seconds). Gently open your eyes.

What did you notice as you did the exercise? Using the words "I noticed" in your response, was your attention more engaged with the exercise or more engaged with other things during the exercise (for example, "I noticed I was more engaged with the exercise")? Using the words "I am noticing" in your response, are you noticing having less distress now than you did before the exercise, about the same, or more distress (for example "I am noticing less distress")? What did you learn from doing the exercise?

When you quiet your self down and stay present with your breathing, you can notice the repeated wanderings of your mind and that you always come back. If you did not have some reference point that you always come back to like breathing in this exercise, then you would never notice your being distracted by the repeated wanderings of your mind telling you what to do especially under conditions of uncertainty.

In the next Airscoop, we will continue your learning skills to stay with pain focusing on the fact that thinking painful thoughts or feeling difficult feelings related to a life story are fluid, not static, or fixed behaviors. Your thoughts and feelings have a quality of impermanence, fleeting and changing moment to moment.

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