

Tip Sheet

Acoustic Environment and Use of Music During Deployment For Self Support and Resilience

Concepts and Assumptions

- This tip sheet draws on concepts from Positive Psychology and wellness-based approaches to use music, controlled sound, and silence during deployment or emergency shelter operations, and/or disaster recovery.
- Be present and focus on “present-ness” while on duty and as well as off duty. Therefore, be mindful and allow yourself to be present with rest, leisure, and down time too. “All work and no play...” is not balanced or healthy.
- Strive for some sort of off duty routine, no matter how simple or basic, e.g. making your bed/cot; laundry clothes, etc. Create and respect ritual or routine that is nourishing for you.
 - Accompany your ritual and routine with music, sound track, or silence to suit your preference and needs
- Consider ritual for contemplation, meditation, prayer – as best suits your needs and beliefs. Literally create little moments of spiritual connection by take a breath and creating a moment of connection both on duty and off duty.
 - Technique – breathe and feel your feet (grounding and awareness) to tie brain and body together and modulate stress response. Use music to support.
- Brain Research in Positive Psychology reveals positive experiences take ~20 sec. of awareness to form positive memories whereas the tendency to make negative memories occurs much quicker (amygdala activated as a protective mechanism), relatively speaking. Be conscience and take the time to focus on positive moments as part of your routine. Intentionally focus on positive and notice it to maintain balance.
- Give yourself permission to experience humor and laughter. Recognize that we are not saying, “it’s all good” or use rose-colored glasses. We are saying balance the equation of living during deployment (and beyond) to make us more resilient.
- Meet your physical need to move and to move freely outside the constraints of personal protective equipment. Move freely and use music to support that. This helps relaxation So, if you normally do yoga, maintain that routine, if possible. Or, try a little dance/movement time.
- Buddy up with someone for mutual support and “check in”.
- Be nonjudgmental of your experiences as well as others’ experience.

Technology

- Consider a small digital music player/device, given power/charging facility.
- Consider some personal sound gear such as sleep headband or very comfortable headphones. Some people prefer noise-canceling phones (require charging). Earbuds are ok but they can potentially damage if sound levels are too high or they are ill fitting.
- Silicone earplugs – can shape them to fit and offer more ambient sound protection barrier. Useful for sleep. Likewise, many like to use eye-masks during sleep and nap times.
- Consider a little mechanism to share personal music and videos to pool arts library.

- Consider a small portable solar or kinetic charger for small digital devices in case generator or power is interrupted in staff quarters.

Selecting Music

- Personal preference matters. Your preferred music is best.
- Familiarity matters when it comes to choice of music and how you want to use it. Music can influence the extent to which you find it evocative, relaxing, or energizing. So, for example, for sleep/rest - avoid lyrics as it can engage and activate brain and body responses. Be mindful of how a piece of music offers you energizing, activating, and evocative (emotional) responses. Be aware that music can be associated with memories.
- Use the “isoprinciple” in music therapy practice; that is, select music to match where you are at energetically and emotionally and then shuffle/program the music to take you to where you want to be energetically and emotionally. e.g., Wound up and you want to chill out and get some sleep.
- Be mindful of entrainment effects of music and rhythm. Entrainment is the phenomena of vibration coming in synchrony. So, if a piece of music has a driving beat/rhythm, physical responses tend to entrain including heart rate, respiratory rate, and BP. Therefore, be aware how regular/irregular a music beat is in music and how fast/slow it is relative to how you feel.
- Use music and headphones (or other) to create a sound container, personal space, privacy, and/or isolation. This is useful for shared living quarters where you need to create a pseudo-private space for rest.
- Be aware of lyrics as they can be good for shifting mood and singing/humming along; but, this is not great for sleep, meditation, prayer.¹
- Welcome and try active music making including singing, humming, whistling, drumming, jug band, etc. It can provide free, uninhibited movement, necessary recreation, pleasure, and relaxation or tension release.

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¹ Certain antimalarial prophylactic medications (e.g., mefloquine) may induce highly vivid and sometimes agitating dream states. Be aware of effect of music during sleep/rest so as not to reinforce unwanted states.

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