Victory Times

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Chaplain's Corner

"Me first" mentality helps no one

By Chaplain Paul Ramsey
MND-C Family Life chaplain

My father was the pastor of a small church in Indianapolis, Ind. where I grew up. Since that was the case, very often we would find ourselves picking up and taking home people in our personal vehicle. Sunday after Sunday, Wednesday after Wednesday, we found ourselves doing this very thing.

I recall one Sunday evening, at all of maybe 6 or 7 years of age, I had reached the breaking point. While we were taking our church musician home, I said words that I had been waiting for quite some time to say "I want to go home first!"

It was not the fact that I had said the words, per se, for which I received a verbal drubbing. It was because I had said it in the car, in the company of the person whose destination was causing my personal delay. The other reason was that it appeared to be a selfish request on my part. The verbal beatings intensified once we dropped off my "personal delay."

We live in a world that maintains an attitude of "me first" in many ways. It happens when it comes to discussing expectations in relationships, one's sense of importance as it applies to dealing with others in general, and how we view ourselves in relation to our comrades. For some, their self esteem is clearly at stake and wrapped up in their need to be first at everything. There is no such thing in their minds as learning from their mistakes and mishaps.

The Bible tells a story of a mother who came to Jesus to discuss positions in the kingdom of heaven. She wanted each son to sit on either side of Jesus as heads in the kingdom. Now, any mother would want great things for her children, but that one took the cake. Jesus kindly informed her that it was not his to decide, but his Father in heaven.

When we think of the values that all service members are required to possess, one is selfless service. Certainly we live in an era when what makes life convenient and comfortable for ourselves seems to be the highest priority. Our highest priority is to serve others, and reap the benefits of the joy that serving others brings. Even to the point of giving our lives for others.

Some of us may have been born into what could be referred to as the "me generation," a group of folks that would be considered to have a primary focus on themselves. However, we are called to be focused on others as Soldiers and servants of our nation. The Army values are not about one's self, they are about living a life that benefits others in such a way as to be at peace with ourselves. Hence, you get something out of it anyway.

Did you know?

More and more studies are showing that people born after 1982 are more self serving than any other generation of adults ever.

Instead of working to prove why they are important, the Me Generation lives under the assumption that people simply understand they are important. They're being touted as the most narcissistic generation ever.

They are focusing harder on their schooling and careers and waiting longer to get married and have children.

The Me Generation, however, is very succeptible to depression. Throughout their childhood, these individuals were taught that everyone is special and a winner.

When they experience the losses and failures common with growing up and adulthood, it tends to trigger the helplessness and hopelessness of depression.

Information from www.washingtonpost.com

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Today's missions write tomorrow's history

Servicemember's journals document wartime experiences downrange

By Staff Sgt. Joy Pariante
13th Public Affairs Detachment

Everyone has a story to tell. This is especially true for deployed servicemembers. Pictures, letters, blogs and journals give fellow troops, those at home and future generations a real picture of what it was like serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"We know how it was supposed to happen, how it was planned, but what we're looking for is personal reactions, how people felt. Maybe it went down a little differently than it was reported," said Navy Cdr. Doreen J. Fussman, historian, Multi-National Corps – Iraq.

"History relies more than anything on first person accounts," said Lt. Col. William S. Story, historian, Multi-National Forces – Iraq. "It's much better than what is processed through public affairs, the media and the command."

The most valuable source for telling the story of the war is in the words of servicemembers on the ground, Story said. "The best histories of past wars are Soldiers' journals."

Many troops feel as though their day-to-day lives aren't important or exciting enough to merit documenting them, but this isn't the case, Fussman said. "They may not feel their story is important, but it really is. It may not feel as important as the guy who got the Silver Star, but someone will want to read it."

"Whether your experience of war is great or awful, write it down today when you're feeling it," Story said. Historians advise recording thoughts and feelings as often as possible to capture a more detailed, complete picture of varying war experiences. Both military and civilian historians are interested in hearing the stories of both boredom and excitement. These opposing viewpoints are part of what makes the full deployment experience clearer to those who aren't here, Story said. "This war is complicated and it could go many different directions. It's a hard war to understand. It's hard to understand encountering IEDs (improvised explosive devices) and IDF (indirect fire) everyday and it's hard to understand the boredom," Story said.

Servicemembers interested in documenting their time in Iraq for posterity have numerous ways to do so, Fussman said. They can keep written journals, electronic journals or blogs, record a spoken journal or use photographs or video to tell their story. Troops should always keep operational security in mind when shooting pictures or video, Fussman said.

Photo courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania

Journals, like this one from the French and Indian War, are one of the most valuable resources available to historians hoping to tell the story of a war or conflict. Journals hold personal feelings and sometimes more accurate accounts of actual events.

Those interested in submitting their journals can send them in hard copy or electronically to Story at mnfihistorian@iraq.centcom.mil or LTC Wm. Shane Story, MNFI-SCJS Historian, Unit 91400, APO AE 09342. Writers' names can be kept anonymous on request and journals do not have to be reviewed by the individual's chain of command. Historians also aren't concerned with spelling or grammar used in compositions, Fussman said. The important part is the content.

"No one will ever understand what it's like here unless people who are experiencing it can put it in to words now," Story said.

ELECTRICAL
EVERYONE'S BU

Story courtesy MNC-I PAO
Photos by Marine Cpl. Frances Goch

Recent reports highlighting the electrical deaths of 16 servicemembers in Iraq have brought heightened awareness to the risk electricity poses in theater.

Officials with Task Force Safe, a task force designed to help create awareness among servicemembers in Iraq regarding electrocutions and fires, state that walking into a trailer or building shouldn't be a cause for worry of electrocution, but there are some do's and don'ts when it comes to playing it safe with electricity.

– Set your air conditioner on a low fan/cool setting.

– Turn off your lights and TV.

– Unplug all non-essential devices such as hair dryers, laptops, game systems and rechargeable items.

– Turn off power strips if not in use.

– Plug refrigerators directly into a wall outlet, not into power strips.

– Practice good housekeeping; keep your room neat and organized.

– Keep all items: bed, linen, boxes, etc. a safe distance away from electrical outlets.

– Don't use non-approved devices and power strips.

– Don't 'daisy chain' power strips (plugging one power strip into another.)

– Don't use hot plates.

Also, TF Safe is stressing its 'Top 10 things to keep safe.'

– If you feel a tingle of electricity or mild shock – report it immediately.

– Leave the technical work to the experts. Check for and report any potential electrical issues such as: loose connections, exposed wiring and any burned or charred marks on the wall. If this exists, report it.

– Check your power strips and adapters to ensure they are certified. Look for the European CE or United Statess UL mark embedded in the device.

– Never overload the circuit. Do not daisy chain power strips and do not stack adapters.

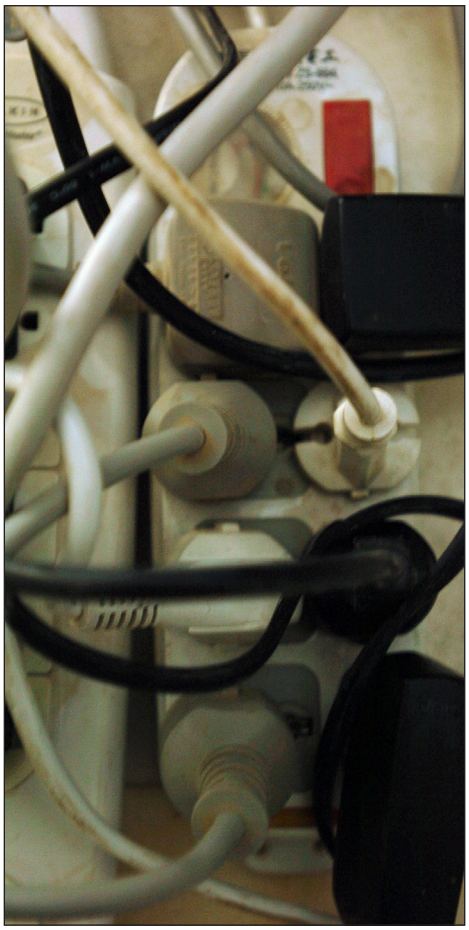
– Make sure you keep at least 6" clearance in front of and around the wall outlets. Keep items or debris from making contact with the power strips.

– Know where the fire extinguishers are in your living and working areas and know how to use them.

– Unplug all non-essential items when not in use.

– Plug refrigerators and microwaves directly into an outlet, not into a power strip.

– No cooking or open flames in your living and work areas.



Overloading power strips, such as seen in this photo, can cause short circuits and possibly fires. "Leaders should ensure soldiers do not plug a bunch of things into one power strip," said Jesse L. Martin, Multi-National Corps – Iraq safety director.

– Check CHU'sdays (On Tuesday, check your smoke detector and fire extinguisher.)

For more safety information, visit the Army Combat Readiness/ Safety Center at https://crc.army.mil/home/

'Daisy chaining' power strips such as these are one of several things officials and safety personnel with Task Force Safe are calling an unsafe electrical practice.

Get to know a Marine...

Interview and photo by Marine Cpl. Frances L. Goch
MNC-I PAO

Cpl. Brandon D. Holland

Unit: Multi-National Force - Iraq chief of staff protective services detail
Job title: PSD agent
Age: 22
Time in Service: 4 years, 6 months
Family: Son, four-year-old Devon Dudley
Hobbies: "Playing drums and bass guitar, lifting weights, wrestling and spending time with my family."
Person you most admire: "I admire everyone for being themselves."
Why you joined: "For a new experience and lifestyle."
One thing you'd change about the Marine Corps: "I wouldn't change a thing."
One thing you'd never change about the Marine Corps: "The way the Marine Corps is built on tradition and continues to maintain those traditions."
Goals: "To see a lot more tomorrows."
Something you wish everyone would do: "Become more diverse and start to educate themselves more on other cultures as well as one another."
Words of wisdom: "Don't just be good, be great."
Best thing about being deployed: "Being able to get away from all of the critics, politicians, and media who criticize the war and be able to witness first hand the great things that are done on a daily basis by great men and women."
Best Boot Camp memory: "When my squad leader made a head call on a pile of snakes."

Work smarter to prevent carpal tunnel

By Jesse Martin
Corps Safety Office

Do you have tingling, numbness, or pain in your hands? Do you have episodes of sudden hand weakness or inadvertently drop or fumble with small objects? If so, you may have Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. The carpal tunnel is a narrow passageway, about as big around as your thumb, located on the palm side of your wrist. This tunnel protects a main nerve to your hand and the tendons that bend your fingers. Pressure placed on this median nerve produces the numbness, pain, and, eventually, hand weakness that characterizes CTS.

Repetitive motion or too much pressure on the wrists can cause fluid to accumulate within the tissues. If your work or hobbies are hand-intensive, involve awkward repetitive wrist or finger motions, forceful pinching or gripping, and/or working with vibrating tools, you may be at higher risk of developing the condition. In severe cases, surgery is needed to prevent permanent nerve injury.

Preventive strategies include:

Avoid gripping things too tightly or pushing with your fingers too forcefully.

Resting and stretching your hands every 15 to 20 min.

Using big pens with oversized soft grip adapters and writing gently.

Keeping a good posture with your wrists in a natural position, your back straight, and your head up.

Not wearing restrictive watchbands or jewelry.

Eating a healthy, well balanced diet

Keeping your hands warm.

If you develop symptoms of CTS, these techniques or the short term use over-the-counter pain medications may provide some relief. You might also try wearing a wrist splint at night and avoid sleeping on your hands because nerve injury might be occurring then. For recurrent or persistent pain, numbness, or weakness, see your doctor right away.

Announcements

Supply career progression

The Victory Chapter of the National Property Management Association, the first international chapter to be formed by the NPMA, a leader in property and asset management is offering bachelor's and associate's degrees completely online. NPMA can meet your professional development needs through educational courses, training, and certification programs. For more information, email Monty Spicer at monty.spicer@gmail.com.

CISSP Exams offered

Posting of Certified Information System Security Professional (CISSP) Examination for interested military of civilian personnel. POC is Capt. Richard Y. Kofie, 822-5108.

Story ideas for Victory Times

Do you know of a good story on Camp Victory that you think should be covered for the Victory Times? Please submit your ideas to Staff. Sgt. Joy Pariante at joy.pariante@iraq.centcom.mil. Please include any interesting facts about the topic and point of contact information.

R&R Briefings

Reunion and Suicide Intervention Briefings are at the Victory Chapel, Monday at 3 p.m., Wednesday at 9:30 a.m., Saturday at 3 p.m. All servicemembers who are going on leave or redeploying must attend this briefing.

The Corps Report

The Corps Report has been scheduled to its new regular time slots of Monday at 4:15 a.m. eastern, 11:15 a.m. Baghdad and Sunday at 1:15 p.m. eastern, 8:15 p.m. Baghdad.

Women's Equality observance

In celebrating the 19th Amendment giving Women the right to vote, the Multi-National Corps - Iraq Human Relations Office will sponsor movie night for the month of August. Following the movie will be a discussion the theme of the movie.

August 15 - Frida

August 22 - The Color Purple

Movies will show 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the Al Faw Palace ballroom.

AFN Freedom Radio

Al Asad 107.3	Fallujah 105.1	Taji 107.3
Ali Base 107.3	Kirkuk..... 107.3	Tal Afar..... 107.3
Ar Ramadi.. 107.3	Kirkush..... 107.3	Taqqadum.. 107.3
Baghdad 107.3	Mosul 105.1	Tikrit 100.1
Balad 107.3	Q-West 93.3	*All stations are FM*

Camp Victory Bible Studies

Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
Women's Bible Study 7 p.m. Bldg 24F; Gospel Protestant Bible Study 7 p.m. Hope Chapel	Women's Bible Study 7 p.m. Bldg 24F	Young Adult Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Hope Chapel	Men's Bible Study 7 p.m. Victory Chapel; Spanish Bible Study 7 p.m. Bldg 24F	Foundations Bible Study, Mini Chapel 6:30 p.m.	SeventhDay Adventist 10 a.m. Victory Chapel	Men of the Bible Study 5 p.m. MLB Room, Oasis DFAC

Do you have an announcement about an event of interest to the Camp Victory community? Contact Spc. Samuel J. Phillips at samuel.phillips1@iraq.centcom.mil with the information. Information for community announcements needs to submitted at least two weeks prior to the event to allow for timely publication.

Operating Hours

Coalition Cafe
Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Dinner 5 - 8 p.m.
Midnight Dining 11 p.m. - 1 a.m.
Sports Oasis
Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Dinner 5 - 9 p.m.
Education Center
8 a.m.-midnight
Camp Liberty Post Exchange
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Fitness Center
Open 24 Hours
Victory Main Post Office
Monday-Sunday 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Saturday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
MNC-I STB Mailroom
9 a.m. - noon
5 - 7 p.m.
Al Faw Palace Post Office
Wednesday and Sunday
1-6 p.m.
Golby Troop Medical Clinic
Sick Call
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon
Dental Sick Call
Monday - Friday 7:30 - 10:30 a.m.
Saturday 9 - 10:30 a.m.
Mental Health Clinic
Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. - noon
Post-Deployment Health Briefings
Monday, Wednesday and Friday 1 p.m.
Pharmacy
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon;
1 - 4:30 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon
Legal Assistance/Claims
Saturday-Monday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Worship Hours

Victory Chapel (Bldg. 31)
Thursday
7:30 p.m..... Latter Day Saints Seminary
Saturday
11 a.m...Seventh Day Adventist Service
8 p.m. Catholic Mass
Sunday
7 a.m..... Liturgical Protestant Service
2 p.m..... Latter Day Saints Service
4 p.m..... Epicopal/Lutheran Service
Mini Chapel (Bldg. 24F)
Tuesday
7:30 p.m..... Latter Day Saints Service
Wednesday
7 p.m.....Men's Fellowship
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
11:30 p.m..... Roman Catholic Mass
Friday
1 p.m..... Muslim Prayer Service
6:30 p.m.....Jewish Service
8 p.m..... Women's Fellowship
Sunday
8 a.m..... Eastern Orthodox Service
10 a.m..... Protestant Sunday School
3 p.m.....Church of Christ Service
7:30 p.m..... Latter Day Saints Service
Hope Chapel (Bldg 24B)
Monday
12 p.m..... Charismatic Prayer Meeting
Sunday
8:30 a.m..... Collective Protestant Service
10 a.m..... Roman Catholic Mass
12 p.m..... Gospel Service
6:30 p.m..... Contemporary Protestant Service
Warrior Chapel (Camp Liberty)
Friday
6:30 p.m.....Victory Base Open Circle

Troops build friendships with soccer

By Staff Sgt.
Joy Pariante

13th Public Affairs Detachment

In the dusty streets and empty lots of Sadr City, Baghdad, Diwaniya and Mosul, improved security conditions have allowed servicemembers to work at rebuilding a nation. They're dribbling, passing and kicking their way to a better Iraq through a universal language – soccer.

Soldiers on patrol playing soccer with Iraqis is a common image, but the meaning is much deeper than an afternoon "pick-up game" or handing someone a ball. Soccer has become a very effective way for American forces to overcome the language and culture barrier with the Iraqi people and start building friendships that could change the future. And they want folks back home to join in the effort.

Iraq's national sport has spurred the grassroots movement, Operation Soccer Ball. The mission of Operation Soccer Ball is to bring soccer balls from back home to servicemembers who can then hand them out to foster the spirit of friendship between troops and the people of Iraq. While bringing soccer balls to Iraqis has been going on for some time, an effort of this scale hasn't been attempted before.

Chief Warrant Officer Stormy Ripley, personnel recovery, Multi-National Corps – Iraq is helping to expand this program in 2008. She recently saw firsthand how the game of soccer builds relationships with the people of Iraq, especially the children. During a mission with the humanitarian group Hearts for Baghdad, Ripley saw how excited people got when someone took out a soccer ball. "Everyone, even pregnant mothers, wanted soccer balls," Ripley said.

"Starting up a game of soccer helps our Soldiers in the field bridge the gap caused by language differences," said Air Force Maj. Ravi Chaudhary, director of operations, personnel recovery, MNC-I. "The soccer ball is an incredibly medium for building relationships with the future of Iraq, the kids."

And the timing is right for building strong relationships in Iraq. With security conditions rapidly improving in the country, the children are coming out, and American servicemembers have more opportunities to work on rebuilding the nation and connecting with its people. "We can work together, not just for Iraq, but for the world in general," Ripley said.

Photo courtesy of Operation Soccer Ball

Soccer has proven to be an extremely effective way of bridging the language gap and building friendships in Iraq.

Chaudhary and Ripley want this program to be a way for the American public to have an impact on the frontlines. "This isn't military driven, it's meant to be something Americans can wrap their arms around," Ripley said.

And many back home are already jumping at the chance to put a soccer ball in the hands of an Iraqi. Ripley said there was a 14 year-old girl who put out a donation box to raise money and purchased 14 soccer balls to send here. E-mail traffic between Operation Soccer Ball and the states indicates that hundreds more soccer balls will be on their way to Iraq in the coming months.

Operation Soccer Ball also needs units on the ground in Iraq to communicate with the program and let them know how many soccer balls they need and arrange for pick up, Ripley said. This way, when units head out on convoys or organize air drops, they have plenty of soccer balls on hand.

"We're bringing the American message of hope and peace to the Iraqi citizens, and that's a powerful message," Chaudhary said.

If you would like information on how to participate, please e-mail stormy.ripley@iraq.centcom.mil