

# LIFELINK

## NEWSLETTER

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## Seasonal Self-Care for Military Families

As you notice the leaves starting to change color, the sun setting earlier and the days getting cooler, take a look at how your family's schedules and routines may have transformed since the summer months. The fall season is a good time to adjust or establish self-care strategies for yourself and your family to help everyone keep an even keel leading into the holidays.

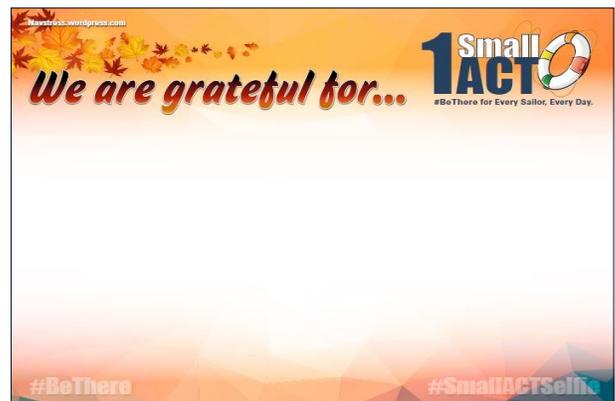
Self-care includes tending to basic needs that may sometimes fall by the wayside during busy times, such as eating a balanced diet, getting enough sleep and exercising regularly. It also includes coping skills and strategies to help you regroup and decompress. Good self-care can be a challenge for many and is unique for everyone. Check out these ideas to get your entire family on a path to restoring, revitalizing and recharging your self-care routines this fall:

- **Change Up Your Fitness Routine.** Exercise isn't merely a tool to promote physical health or another item on the to-do list; it's an overlooked but important type of self-care. As schedule demands increase, if you can't make it to the gym to take your usual run on the treadmill, move your run outdoors to enjoy the fall foliage, cooler temperatures and convenience that nature has to offer. While building your workout into your regular routine is ideal, switching it up will help you meet your goals without causing your fitness gains to plateau or your schedule to spin out of control. Check out other workouts you can try [here](#).
- **Make Sleep a Top Priority.** The clocks have "fallen back" and you may find that your family's sleep habits are falling out of rhythm. Creating a sleep-ready environment, following a consistent and relaxing sleep ritual, and avoiding stimulants before bedtime (such as sugar, alcohol, caffeine and nicotine) are all examples of healthy sleep habits that you and your family can incorporate into your self-care practices. A good night's sleep is so vital that even slight deprivation beyond the recommended seven to nine hours can negatively affect performance, memory and mood. For more sleep tips, check out Human Performance Resource Center's [Sleep Optimization](#) section.
- **Make Time for Play Time.** Even though it is sometimes dismissed as unproductive, "recess" is just as essential for adults as it is for kids. Play is important for many aspects of

our lives, boosting creativity, improving relationships and connection with others, fostering problem-solving skills, improving brain function and fueling emotional well-being. Rather than adding to your sensory overload from electronic gadgets, find unstructured activities that allow you to unplug while having fun and enjoying yourself.

- **Practice Gratitude.** Don't wait until Thanksgiving to share what you're thankful for; start now to cultivate an attitude of gratitude throughout the year. New Small ACT Selfie signs with a seasonal twist are now available, providing you and your family with the opportunity to jot down what you're grateful for, take a photo with the sign, and submit to [navysuicideprevention@gmail.com](mailto:navysuicideprevention@gmail.com) for publishing in the 1 Small ACT Photo Gallery on [Flickr](#) and [Facebook](#). To keep the practice going, create a gratitude jar and place it in a high-traffic area in your home or living space with small strips of paper and a pen or pencil nearby. Encourage everyone to write down one or two things for which they're grateful and take a moment to reflect on what life would be like without those things. When anyone needs a motivational boost, pull a strip from the jar.

Don't let taking care of yourself fall by the wayside; make it a priority for your entire family with simple healthy ways to navigate stress, restore a sense of controllability and enjoy the fall season. Stay tuned for more self-care tips leading into the holidays.



Seasonal Small ACT Selfie Signs now available [here](#).



## Lifelink Spotlight

Advancement in the Navy can be highly-anticipated, intimidating, life-changing and stressful. This is something that Chief Petty Officer Christian Evangelista knows very well.

“It took me two tries to make E-6 or [petty officer] first class,” Evangelista said in a [related Navy.mil story](#). “I joined in 1996 and advanced to E-6 in 2004; it was my 7 ½ year mark in the Navy.” However, it was the 12 years he worked towards making chief, and reaching that goal two days before departing Transient Personnel Unit Puget Sound for terminal leave, that proved both the most rewarding—and the most challenging. “No words can explain how happy and shocked I was to find out I made chief. On my last and final attempt I made chief; it was like a dream come true.”

Chief Evangelista’s perseverance and exercising elements of the Principles of Resilience (Predictability, Controllability, Relationships, Trust and Meaning) allowed him to not only maintain his checks and balances throughout the advancement process, but also to thrive and continue his Navy career.

He applied *Predictability* to prepare and explore his options for both outcomes of the advancement process. He also leaned on the *Relationships* in his life to plan ahead and discuss those options. “I was in the Navy for 19 years and 9 months preparing to retire as a [petty officer] first class when my wife and I spoke about our options,” said Evangelista. “Plan A’ was if I advanced to E-7 or chief, to reenlist and continue my career, but if not I would retire and come home to my family.”

Chief Evangelista also exercised *Controllability* to maintain a positive outlook and did not let the setbacks he had experienced deter him from continuing to reach for his goal. He *Trusted* that his dedication and perseverance were two of the reasons he had achieved his goals to that point, and that things would be alright regardless of the outcome. He also found *Meaning* in the long journey. Twelve years is a long time to work for advancement,” said Evangelista. “I believed my time would come. Patience and hard work kept me motivated to reach my goal.”

For others working towards advancement in their Navy careers, Chief Evangelista has a few words of advice: “Never lose hope. There is always light at the end of the tunnel.”



Share your inspiring story with us by emailing [suicideprevention@navy.mil](mailto:suicideprevention@navy.mil).

## Plan of the Week Notes

*Below are sample Plan of the Week notes aligning with topics covered by the Every Sailor, Every Day campaign during the month of November:*

1. “Write your Way to Well-Being.” According to the Human Performance Resource Center, writing can help you process and make sense of challenging experiences even when you’re not ready to share your thoughts with others. Writing or journaling can help you express feelings that you may otherwise avoid and provides the opportunity to step back and look at your experiences with a clearer mind. Carve out 15-20 minutes to write when you’re feeling stressed, reflecting on the situation, how it’s impacting you and what you can do to navigate it. For more tips, check out <http://hprc-online.org/blog/write-your-way-to-well-being>.
2. Transitions can be hard on military kids who serve alongside their parents. As we head into the holiday season, check out these tips to build family resilience from Military OneSource: [www.militaryonesource.mil/family-and-relationships/marriage?content\\_id=282445](http://www.militaryonesource.mil/family-and-relationships/marriage?content_id=282445)
3. What do you do if you notice a shipmate posting thoughts about suicide on social media? First, take the post seriously, remembering that people may use humor to hide their pain. Next, reach out to your friend and ask if he or she is considering suicide. Let your shipmate know that you are concerned and care about his or her well-being, and offer that you are ready to listen if they need someone to talk to. Share information for resources that he or she can reach out to, such as a chaplain, trusted leader, or Military Crisis Line. If you don’t feel comfortable reaching out or if the post indicates that the person is at imminent risk, report it to the social media site’s safety team so that a member of the team can reach out to the person and offer options for seeking help. Read more about reaching out to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram safety teams here: <http://www.guardyourhealth.com/health-topics/suicide-prevention/social-media/>.
4. Help is available 24/7. Call 1-800-273-TALK (Option 1), text 838255 or visit [www.militarycrisisline.net](http://www.militarycrisisline.net).

## Required SAIL Training for SPCs

Suicide Prevention Coordinators must complete training on the Sailor Assistance and Intercept for Life (SAIL) Program by **December 5, 2016**. SPCs should download the training deck from [www.suicide.navy.mil](http://www.suicide.navy.mil) > **Command & Leaders** > **SAIL** and familiarize themselves with the contents. Compliance will be tracked at a later date, therefore, all SPCs must ensure that they are receiving **emails** from Navy Suicide Prevention Branch so that they receive further instruction as available.

## Money Goals for Your 30s: Wise Up



### News and Resources

1 Small ACT "I am Grateful For..." Signs  
[Navy Suicide Prevention](#)

[Video] Be There: Help Save a Life  
[YouTube](#)

This 'Life-Changing' Shift has made Submariners much Happier  
[NavyTimes](#)

Navigating Stress as a Family  
[NavyNavStress](#)

Making Light of Darker Days  
[HPRC](#)

Mantastic Movember  
[Guard Your Health](#)

Navy Families Take Back the Night for Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault  
[Navy.mil](#)

Group Aggression and Hazing  
[HPRC](#)

CNIC Observes Warrior Care Month  
[Navy.mil](#)

[Video] Military Health System Drug Take Back Option  
[Health.mil](#)

Commanding Officer's Suicide Prevention Program Handbook  
[Issuu](#)

1 Small ACT Photo Gallery  
[Flickr](#)

### Current and Upcoming Events

**Veterans Day**  
November 11

**Warrior Care Month**  
November

**Military Family Appreciation Month**  
November

**SPC Training Webinars**  
November 16, 0800 CT  
December 6, 1000 CT  
[Register Here](#)

With each passing decade of our lives comes the realization that the future will happen, our older and wiser selves become more of a reality, naiveté is shed (to some degree) and we are more acquainted with life's responsibilities, obstacles and opportunities ahead. As you developed a **sense of financial freedom in your twenties**, you may have done things to secure your future such as setting up an emergency fund, automating deposits for your monthly savings and thinking twice before making

purchases. Your thirties are a prime time to build upon that foundation now that you're more established in your career and have a better sense of your personal, professional and family goals. Like in your twenties, keeping an eye on the future is vital so that you're not jumping into life-changing financial commitments, living outside of your means or piddling away the progress you've achieved so far. Here are a few tips to help on the road to financial wellness:

**Stick to your savings.** Whether you built a cushion in your twenties or are just now getting around to it, consistent saving is one of your biggest wealth-building allies. Allocate and do your best to stick to saving ten to fifteen percent of your earnings for both short or long term goals such as retirement and/or transition from military to civilian life, major purchases, emergency savings, moving expenses, etc. Rather than saving whatever you have left over at the end of the month, pay yourself *first* to stay on track. P.S. – if you haven't yet developed a budget so that you have a better roadmap for spending, debt reduction and saving, it's time to get on it! Check out budgeting resources from Military OneSource [here](#).

**Avoid the wealth effect.** Making more money from bonuses, tenure or advancement does *not* mean that you should spend more. Challenge yourself to live on your previous take-home pay to reap the benefits of additional savings in order to meet your goals. Be wary of the temptation to "keep up with the Joneses" by impulsively using new money to reward yourself with luxuries. Having a **financial plan** for any new money can help you fund your next steps wisely rather than blowing through your gains without anything to show for them (besides a new tech gadget). If purchasing a newer car or home, or funding a vacation is a goal that you're working toward, include savings for these milestones in your money plan. You may also opt for using new money to increase your short or long-term savings or pay down debt.

**Prepare for transition.** Many military members start a second career in their thirties—or are preparing to in their early forties—and must face new financial realities in terms of pay and benefits. Familiarize yourself with the new Blended Retirement System, which takes effect in 2018 and offers the option of a monthly annuity or lump sum plus reduced monthly annuity pay. Check out these infographics for a quick overview of the new system for **active component** and **reserve component** retirement. Keeping your **transition from service in mind** when making money decisions can help you stay ahead of stress down the line. Even making modest adjustments to your lifestyle—such as cutting back on buying lunch or making more meaningful strides to quit smoking (to benefit your health *and* wallet)—can help you pad your savings in the event that you don't immediately re-enter the workforce.

While you may have been more of a risk-taker in the past, now that you're a little wiser with a few more years under your belt, take a close look at your assets to ensure that your security isn't on the line. Checking your credit report regularly through [annualcreditreport.com](#) (the only authorized website for free credit reports), reviewing your insurance coverage so that you can adjust based on your needs and find the best rates, and exploring ways to diversify your investments are wise money moves for this chapter in life. As always, continue to consult with your local Fleet and Family Support Center, Command Financial Specialist, Military OneSource personal financial counselors and local installation resources for specific guidance when you need it. Military OneSource **investment** and **retirement** calculators are also great tools.