

UNIT 1

The Elements of Surviving

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CHAPTER 1-1

Survival Preparedness

Survival Actions

Every day of our lives, we are engaged in surviving. Continually, we need air to breathe, food and water to nourish ourselves, and protection from the elements. As a society, we've created intricate networks of food production, distribution, and storage that can put fresh fruits on our tables in the dead of winter and make eating ice cream an everyday occurrence, even where there are no cows and no ice. Our water comes from public systems that are so convenient we seldom think about the wonder of having fresh, pure water piped into our homes. Our homes are sturdy and secure, insulated against heat and cold and kept comfortable by furnaces and air conditioners that may rely on energy sources hundreds of miles away.

Most of the time we survive without much effort, but when we travel in the backcountry, down wild rivers and across rugged terrain, we remove ourselves from the familiar networks of society. For a while we are on our own, fully responsible for our comfort and safety. That responsibility means we must do all we can to be prepared to survive.

Survival preparedness is being able to cope in situations where your safety is not automatically assured by the resources to which you are accustomed. Suppose a ski breaks, stranding you miles from the nearest road or a vehicle in which you're traveling breaks down far from help. You become injured or ill. On a hiking or boating trip, you are separated from your companions and become confused about your location. Bad weather disrupts your travel plans. To deal with unexpected circumstances, you'll need to understand the nature of the danger and know how to stay alive until you can get to safety.

Pattern For Survival

Develop a survival pattern that lets you beat all the odds against you for survival. This

Hypothermia: An abnormal and dangerous condition in which the temperature of the body is below 35°C, usually because of prolonged exposure to cold.

pattern must include food, water, shelter, fire, first aid, and signals placed in order of importance. For example, in a cold environment, you would need a fire to get warm; a shelter to protect you from the cold, wind, and rain or snow; traps or snares to get food; a means to signal for help; and first aid to maintain health. If injured, first aid has top priority no matter what climate you are in.

Change your survival pattern to meet your immediate physical needs as the environment changes. The keyword is *Survival*. The letters in this word can help guide you in your actions in any survival situation.

S - Size Up the Situation

Size Up Your Surroundings

Determine the pattern of the area. Get a feel for what is going on around you. Every environment, whether forest, jungle, or desert, has a rhythm or pattern. This rhythm or pattern includes animal and bird noises and movements and insects sounds.

Size Up Your Physical Condition

The trauma of being in a survival situation may cause you to overlook wounds you received. Check your wounds and give yourself first aid. Take care to prevent further bodily harm. For instance, in any climate, drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration. If you are in a cold or wet climate, put on additional clothing to prevent **hypothermia**.

Size Up Your Equipment

Check to see what equipment you have and what condition it is in.

Now that you have sized up your situation, surroundings, physical condition, and equipment, you are ready to make your

survival plan. In doing so, keep in mind your basic physical needs—water, food, and shelter.

U - Use All Your Senses, Undue Haste Makes Waste

You may make a wrong move when you react quickly without thinking or planning. That move may result in a serious injury or death. Don't move just for the sake of taking action. Consider all aspects of your situation (size up your situation) before you make a decision and a move. If you act in haste, you may forget or lose some of your equipment. In your haste you may also become disoriented so that you don't know which way to go. Plan your moves. Be ready to move out quickly without endangering yourself. Use all your senses to evaluate the situation. Note sounds and smells. Be sensitive to temperature changes. Be observant.

R - Remember Where You Are

Spot your location on your map and relate it to the surrounding **terrain**. This is a basic principle that you must always follow. If there are other persons with you, make sure they also know their location. Always know who in your group, vehicle, or aircraft has a map and compass. If something happens to that person, you will have to get the map and compass from him. Pay close attention to where you are and to where you are going. Do not rely on others in the group to keep track of the route. Constantly orient yourself. Always try to determine, as a minimum, how your location relates to local water sources (especially important in the desert) and areas that will provide good cover and concealment.

V - Vanquish Fear and Panic

The greatest enemies in a survival situation are fear and panic. If not controlled, they can destroy your ability to make an intelligent decision. They may cause you to react to your feelings and imagination rather than to your situation. They can drain your energy and

Terrain: The physical features of a piece of land; ground.
Vanquish: To gain mastery over an emotion, passion, or temptation, subdue completely.
Improvise: To make or invent something out of what is conveniently on hand.

thereby cause other negative emotions. More survival training and self-confidence will enable you to **vanquish** fear and panic.

I - Improvise

In the United States, we have items available for all our needs. Many of these items are cheap to replace when damaged. Our easy come, easy-to-replace culture makes it unnecessary for us to **improvise**. This inexperience in improvisation can be an enemy in a survival situation. Learn to improvise. Take a tool designed for a specific purpose and see how many other uses you can make of it.

Learn to use natural objects around you for different needs. An example is using a rock for a hammer. No matter how complete a survival kit you have with you, it will run out or wear out after a while. Your imagination must take over when your kit wears out.

V - Value Living

All of us were born kicking and fighting to live, but we have become used to the soft life. We have become creatures of comfort. We dislike inconveniences and discomforts. What happens when we are faced with a survival situation with its stresses, inconveniences, and discomforts? This is when the will to live—placing a high value on living—is vital. The experience and knowledge you have gained through life and your training will have a bearing on your will to live. Stubbornness, a refusal to give in to problems and obstacles that face you, will give you the mental and physical strength to endure.

A - Act Only After Thinking

Animal life in the area can also give you clues on how to survive. Animals also require food, water, and shelter. By watching them you can find sources of water and food.

WARNING

Animals cannot serve as an absolute guide to what you can eat and drink. Many animals eat plants that are toxic to humans.

L - Live by Your Wits, But for Now, Learn Basic Skills

Learn basic skills now. You need to know about the environment to which you are going, and you must practice basic skills geared to that environment. For instance, if you are going to a desert, you need to know how to get water in the desert.

Practice basic survival skills during all training programs and exercises. Survival training reduces fear of the unknown and gives you self-confidence. It teaches you to live by your wits.

S **Size Up the Situation**
(Surroundings, Physical Condition, Equipment)

U **Use All Your Senses,**
Undue Haste Makes Waste

R **Remember Where you Are**

V **Vanquish Fear and Panic**

I **Improvise**

V **Value Living**

A **Act Only After Thinking**

L **Live by Your Wits, But for Now, Learn Basic Skills**

CHAPTER 1-2

Conditions Affecting Survival

Overview

Survival is a synthesis of the basic survival information found in Air Force Regulation 64-4 *Survival Training*. Survival presents "good to know" information that would be useful in any survival situation. Much of this information is introduced through the "eyes" of an aircrew member; however, the information is just as useful to an individual lost hunting or stranded in a snow storm. We have all heard about these situations. They can and do happen all the time. The Air Force has courses to cover all aspects of survival which are presented to all active duty aircrew members.

Goals

Survival instruction will provide training in skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to successfully perform fundamental tasks needed for survival. An appreciation of these will help each student to develop confidence, to reduce mental and physical stress for those who find themselves in a survival situation, and to return safely from such a situation.

Surviving is extremely stressful and difficult. The survivor may be constantly faced with hazardous and difficult situations. The stresses, hardships, and hazards are caused by the increasing effects of existing conditions. The survivor's mission forms the basis for identifying and organizing the major needs of a survivor. The decisions survivors make and the actions taken to survive determine their chances for surviving. The three primary elements of the survivor's mission are: the conditions affecting survival, the survivor's needs, and the means for surviving.

These three basic conditions affect every survival situation (fig. 1-1). These conditions may vary in importance from one situation to another and from individual to individual. These conditions can be neutral—being neither for nor against the survivor, and should be looked upon as neither an

advantage nor a disadvantage. The survivor may give in to their effects—or use them to their best advantage. These conditions exist in each survival episode, and they will have great bearing on the survivor's every need, decision, and action.

Environmental Conditions

Climate, terrain, and life forms are the basic components of all environments. These components can present special problems for the survivor. Each component can be used to the survivor's advantage. Knowledge of these conditions may very well contribute to the success of the survival mission.

Climate

Temperature, moisture, and wind are the basic climatic elements. Extreme cold or hot temperatures, complicated by moisture (rain, humidity, dew, snow, etc.) or lack of moisture, and the possibility of wind, may have a life threatening impact on the survivor's needs, decisions, and actions. The primary concern, resulting from the effects of climate, is the need for personal protection. Climatic conditions also have a significant impact on other aspects of survival (for example, the availability of water and food, the need and ability to travel, recovery capabilities, physical and psychological problems, etc.) (fig. 1-2).

Terrain

Mountains, prairies, hills, and lowlands, are only a few examples of the infinite variety of land forms which describe "terrain." Each of the land forms have a different effect on a survivor's needs, decisions, and actions. A survivor may find a combination of several terrain forms in a given situation. The existing terrain will affect the survivor's needs and activities in such areas as travel, recovery, sustenance, and, to a lesser extent, personal

protection. Depending on its form, terrain may cause travel to be easy or difficult; provide protection from cold, heat, moisture, wind make surviving a seemingly impossible task (fig. 1-3).

Life Forms

For survival and survival training purposes, there are two basic life forms—plant life and animal life (other than human). Geographic areas are often identified in terms of the abundance of life (or lack thereof). For example, the barren arctic or desert, forests, the tropical rain forest, the polar ice cap, etc., all produce images regarding the quantities of life forms. These examples can have special meaning not only in terms of the hazards or needs they create, but also in how a survivor can use available life forms (fig. 1-4).

Plant Life. There are hundreds of thousands of different types and species of plant life. In some instances, geographic areas are identified by the dominant types of plant life within that area. Some species of plant life can be used advantageously by a survivor—if not for the food or the water, then for improvising camouflage, shelter, or providing for other needs.

Animal Life. Reptiles, amphibians, birds, fish, insects, and mammals are life forms which directly affect a survivor. These creatures affect the survivor by posing hazards (which must be taken into consideration), or by satisfying needs.

The Survivor's Condition

The survivor's condition and the influence it has in each survival episode is often overlooked. The primary factors which constitute the survivor's condition can best be described by the four categories shown in figure 1-5. Survivors must be aware of the role a survivor's condition plays both before and during the survival episode.

Physical

The physical condition and the fitness level of the survivor are major factors affecting survivability. Survivors who are physically fit will be better prepared to face survival episodes than those who are not. In short, high levels of physical fitness will enhance a survivor's ability to cope with such diverse variables as: temperature extremes, rest or lack of it, water availability, food availability, and extended survival episodes. In the last instance, physical weakness may increase as a result of nutritional deficiencies, disease, etc.

Psychological

The survivor's psychological state greatly influences their ability to successfully return from a survival situation.

Psychological effectiveness in a survival episode results from effectively coping with the following factors:

1. Initial Shock - Finding oneself in a survival situation.
2. Pain.
3. Hunger.
4. Thirst.
5. Cold or Heat.
6. Frustration.
7. Fatigue - Including Sleep Deprivation.
8. Isolation - Includes extended duration of any episode.
9. Insecurity - Induced by anxiety and self-doubts.
10. Loss of Self-Esteem.
11. Loss of Self-Determination
12. Depression—Mental “lows”

A survivor may experience emotional reactions during a survival episode due to the previously stated factors, previous (life) experiences (including training) and the survivor's psychological tendencies. Emotional reactions commonly occurring in survival situations are:

1. Boredom - Sometimes combined with loneliness.
2. Loneliness.
3. Impatience.
4. Dependency.
5. Humiliation.

6. Resentment.
7. Anger - Sometimes included as a sub-element of hate.
8. Hate.
9. **Anxiety.**
10. Fear - Often included as a part of panic or anxiety.
11. Panic.

Psychologically survival episodes may be divided into “crisis” phases and “coping” phases. The initial crisis period will occur at the onset of the survival situation. During this initial period, “thinking” as well as “emotional control” may be disorganized. Judgment is impaired, and behavior may be irrational (possibly to the point of panic). Once the initial crisis is under control, the coping phase begins and the survivor is able to respond positively to the situation. Crisis periods may well recur, especially during extended situations (captivity). A survivor must strive to control if avoidance is impossible.

The most important psychological tool that will affect the outcome of a survival situation is the *will to survive*. Without it, the survivor is surely doomed to failure—a strong will is the best assurance of survival.

Material

At the beginning of a survival episode, the clothing and equipment in the survivors possession, the contents of available survival kits, and salvageable resources from the automobile or aircraft are the sum total of the survivor's material assets. Once the survival episode has started, special attention must be given to the care, use, and storage of all materials to ensure they continue to be serviceable and available. Items of clothing and equipment should be selective along with improvised items.

Anxiety: A state or feeling of uneasiness, uncertainty, and fear resulting from the expectation of some threat or danger

Clothing appropriate to anticipated environmental conditions should be worn or carried as space permits.

The equipment available to a survivor affects all decisions, needs, and actions. The survivor's ability to improvise may provide ways to meet some needs.

Legal and Moral Obligations

A survivor has both legal and moral obligations or responsibilities.

Responsibilities influence behavior during survival episodes and influence the *will to survive*. Examples include feelings of obligation or responsibilities to family, self, and/or spiritual beliefs.

A survivor's individual perception of responsibilities influence survival needs, and affect the psychological state of the individual both during and after the survival episode. These perceptions will be reconciled either consciously through rational thought or subconsciously through attitude changes. Training specifically structured to foster and maintain positive attitudes provides a key asset to survival.

Duration—The Time Condition

The duration of the survival episode has a major effect upon the survivor's needs. Every decision and action will be driven in part by an assessment of when recovery or return is probable. Rescue capabilities, the distances involved, climatic conditions, the ability to locate the survivor, are major factors which directly influence the duration (time condition) of the survival episode. A survivor can never be certain that rescue is near.

CHAPTER 1-3

The Survivor's Needs

The two fundamental goals of a survivor—to maintain life, and return—may be further divided into four basic needs. These needs include: personal protection, health, travel, and communications (signaling for recovery). Meeting the individual's needs during the survival episode is essential to achieving the survivor's fundamental goals (fig. 1-6).

Maintaining Life

Three elementary needs of a survivor in any situation which are categorized as the essential components of maintaining life are personal protection, nutrition, and health.

Personal Protection.

The human body is fragile. Without protection, the effects of environmental conditions (climate, terrain, and life forms) and of induced conditions (radiological, biological agents, and chemical agent) may be fatal. The survivor's primary defense against the effects of the environment are clothing, equipment, shelter, and fire. Additionally, clothing, equipment, and shelter are the primary defenses against some of the effects of induced conditions (fig. 1-7).

The need for adequate clothing and its proper care and use cannot be overemphasized. The human body's tolerance for temperature extremes is very limited. However, its ability to regulate heating and cooling is extraordinary. The availability of clothing and its proper use is extremely important to a survivor in using these abilities of the body.

Survival equipment is designed to aid survivors throughout their episode. It must be cared for to maintain its effectiveness. Items found in a survival kit can be used to help satisfy the four basic needs. Quite often, however, a survivor must improvise to overcome an equipment shortage or deficiency.

The survivor's need for shelter is twofold as a place to rest and for protection from the effects of the environmental. The duration of the survival episode will have some effect on shelter choice. In areas that are warm and dry, the survivor's need is easily satisfied using natural resting places. In cold climates, the criticality of shelter can be measured in minutes, and rest is of little immediate concern (fig. 1-8).

Fire serves many survivor needs: purifying water, cooking and preserving food, signaling, and providing a source of heat to warm the body and dry clothing (fig. 1-9).

Nutrition

Survivors need food and water to maintain normal body functions and to provide strength, energy, and endurance to overcome the physical stresses of survival.

Water. The survivor must be constantly aware of the body's continuing need for water (fig. 1-10).

Food. During the first hours of a survival situation, the need for food receives little attention. During the first 2 or 3 days, hunger becomes a nagging aggravation which a survivor can overcome. The first major food crisis occurs when the loss of energy, stamina, and strength begin to affect the survivor's physical capabilities. The second major food crisis has a more gradual effect. A marked increase in irritability and other attitudes may occur as the starvation process continues. Early and continuous attention must be given to obtaining and using any and all available food. Most people have food preferences. The natural tendency to avoid certain types of food is a major problem which must be overcome early in the survival situation. The starvation process ultimately overcomes all food prejudices. The successful survivor overcomes these dislikes before physical or psychological deterioration sets in (fig. 1-11).

Health (Physical and Psychological)

The survivor must be the doctor, nurse, corpsman, psychologist, and cheerleader. Self-aid is the survivor's sole recourse.

Prevention. The need for preventive medicine and safety cannot be overemphasized. Attention to sanitation and personal hygiene is a major factor in preventing physical, morale, and attitude problems.

The need for cleanliness in the treatment of injuries and illness is self-evident.

Safety must be foremost in the mind of the survivor; carelessness is caused by ignorance and/or poor judgment or bad luck. One false move with a knife or ax can result in self-inflicted injury or death.

Self-Aid. In the event of injury, the survivor's existence may depend on the ability to perform self-aid. In many instances, common first aid procedures will suffice; in others, more primitive techniques will be required (fig. 1-12).

Illness and the need to treat it is more commonly associated with long-term situations such as an extended evasion episode or captivity. When preventive techniques have failed, the survivor must treat symptoms of disease in the absence of professional medical care.

Psychological Health. Perhaps the survivor's greatest need is the need for emotional stability and a positive, optimistic attitude. An individual's ability to cope with psychological stresses will enhance successful survival. Optimism, determination, dedication, and humor, as well as many other psychological attributes, are all helpful for a survivor to overcome psychological stresses (fig. 1-13).

Returning

The need to return is satisfied by successful completion of one or both of the basic tasks confronting the survivor: aiding with recovery and traveling.

Aiding With Recovery

For survivors to effectively aid in recovery, they must be able to make their position and the situation on the ground known. This is done either electronically, visually, or both (fig. 1-14).

Electronic signaling covers a wide spectrum of techniques. As problems such as security and safety during combat become significant factors, procedures for using electronic signaling to facilitate recovery become increasingly complex.

Visual signaling is primarily the technique for attracting attention and pinpointing an exact location for rescuers. Simple messages or information may also be transmitted with visual signals.

Travel on Land

A survivor may need to move on land for a variety of reasons, ranging from going for water to attempting to walk out of the situation. In any survival episode, the survivor must weigh the need to travel against capabilities and/or safety (fig. 1-15). Factors to consider may include:

1. The ability to walk or traverse existing terrain. In a nonsurvival situation, a twisted or sprained ankle is an inconvenience accompanied by some temporary pain and restricted activity. A survivor who loses the mobility, due to injury, to obtain food, water, and shelter, can face death. There is a safe and effective way to travel across almost any type of terrain.

2. The need to transport personal possessions (burden carrying). There are numerous documented instances of survivors abandoning equipment and clothing simply because carrying was a bother. Later, the abandoned materials were not available when needed to save life, limb, or aid in rescue. Burden carrying need not be difficult or physically stressful. There are many simple ways for a survivor to carry the necessities of life (fig. 1-16).

3. The ability to determine present position. Maps, compasses, etc., permit accurate determination of position during extended travel. Yet, the knowledgeable, skillful, and alert survivor can do well without a full complement of these aids. Constant awareness, logic, and training in nature's clues to navigation may allow a survivor to determine general location even in the absence of detailed navigation aids.

4. Restrictions of limitations to select and maintain a course of travel. The tools used in determining position are the tools used to maintain a course of travel. A straight-line course to a destination is usually the simplest, but may not always be the best course for travel. Travel courses may need to be varied for diverse reasons, such as to get food or water, or to avoid hazardous or difficult obstacles or terrain. Careful planning and route selection before and during travel is essential.

CHAPTER 1-4

Psychological Aspects of Survival

Psychology to Survival

It takes much more than knowledge and skills to build shelters, get food, make fires, and travel without the aid of standard navigational devices to live successfully through a survival situation. Some people with little or no survival training have managed to survive life-threatening circumstances. Some people with survival training have not used their skills and died. A key ingredient in any survival situation is the mental attitude of the individual(s) involved. Having survival skills is important; having the will to survive is essential. Without a desire to survive, acquired skills serve little purpose and invaluable knowledge goes to waste.

There is a psychology to survival. The person in a survival environment faces many stresses that ultimately impact on his mind. These stresses can produce thoughts and emotions that, if poorly understood, can transform a confident, well-trained person into an uncertain, ineffective individual with questionable ability to survive. Thus, every survivor must be aware of and be able to recognize those stresses commonly associated with survival. Additionally, it is imperative that the survivors be aware of their reactions to the wide variety of stresses associated with survival. This chapter will identify and explain the nature of stress, the stresses of survival, and those internal reactions survivors will naturally experience when faced with the stresses of a real-world survival situation.

Contributing Factors

Persons in a survival situation must recognize that coping with the psychological aspects of survival are at least as important as handling the environmental factors. In any survival situation, the survivor will be in an environment that can support human life. The survivor's problems will be compounded

Stress: Any emotional, physical, and social factor that requires a response or change which can cause an increase in body temperature.

because they never really expected to bail out or crash-land in the jungle, over the ocean, or anywhere else. No matter how well prepared, people probably will never completely convince themselves that “it can happen to them.” However, the records show it can happen. Before people learn about the physical aspects of survival, they must first understand that psychological problems may occur and that solutions to those problems must be found if the survival situation is to reach a successful conclusion.

Need for Stress

Stress is not a disease that you cure and eliminate. Instead, it is a condition we all experience. Stress can be described as our reaction to pressure. It is the name given to the experience we have as we physically, mentally, and emotionally respond to life's tensions.

We need stress because it has many positive benefits. Stress provides us with challenges; it gives us chances to learn about our values and strengths. Stress can show our ability to handle pressure without breaking; it tests our adaptability and flexibility; it can stimulate us to do our best. Because we usually do not consider unimportant events stressful, stress can also be an excellent indicator of the significance we attach to an event — in other words, it highlights what is important to us.

We need to have some stress in our lives, but too much of anything can be bad. The goal is to have stress, but not an excess of it. Too much stress can take its toll on people and organizations. Too much stress leads to distress. Distress causes an uncomfortable tension that we try to escape and, preferably, avoid. Listed below are a few of the common

signs of distress you may find in people or yourself when faced with too much stress:

- Difficulty making decisions.
- Angry outbursts.
- Forgetfulness.
- Low energy level.
- Constant worrying.
- Tendency to make mistakes.
- Thoughts about death or suicide.
- Trouble getting along with others.
- Withdrawing from others.
- Hiding from responsibilities.
- Carelessness.

As you can see, stress can be constructive or destructive. It can encourage or discourage, move us along or stop us dead in our tracks, and make life meaningful or seemingly meaningless. Stress can inspire you to operate successfully and perform at your maximum efficiency in a survival situation. It can also cause you to panic and forget all your training. Key to your survival is your ability to manage the inevitable stresses you will encounter. The survivor is the person who works with his stresses instead of letting his stresses work on him.

Survival Stresses

The emotional aspects associated with survival must be completely understood just as survival conditions and equipment are understood. An important factor bearing on success or failure in a survival episode is the individual's psychological state. Maintaining an even, positive psychological state or outlook depends on the individual's ability to cope with many factors. Some include:

- Understanding how various physiological and emotional signs, feelings, and expressions affect one's bodily needs and mental attitude.
- Managing physical and emotional reactions to stressful situations.
- Knowing individual tolerance limits, both psychological and physical.
- Exerting a positive influence on companions.

Apathy: Lack of emotion or feeling; an indifference to things generally found to be exciting or moving.
Exhaustion: The condition of being extremely tired, to wear out completely.
Fatigue: Physical or mental weariness due to energetic activities.
Resignation: A giving up of a possession, claim or right.

Nature has endowed everyone with biological mechanisms which aid in adapting to stress. The bodily changes resulting from fear and anger, for example, tend to increase alertness and provide extra energy to either run away or fight. These and other mechanisms can hinder a person under survival conditions. For instance, a survivor in a raft could cast aside reason and drink sea water to quench a thirst.

Two of the critical threats to successful survival are yielding to comfort and **apathy**. Both threats represent attitudes which must be avoided. To survive, a person must focus planning and effort on fundamental needs.

Many people consider comfort their greatest need. Yet, comfort is not essential to human survival. Survivors must value life more than comfort, and be willing to tolerate heat, hunger, dirt, itching, pain, and any other discomfort. Recognizing discomfort as temporary will help survivors concentrate on effective action.

As the will to keep trying lessens, drowsiness, mental numbness, and indifference will result in apathy. This apathy usually builds on slowly, but ultimately takes over and leaves a survivor helpless. Physical factors can contribute to apathy. **Exhaustion** due to prolonged exposure to the elements, loss of body fluids (dehydration), **fatigue**, weakness, or injury are all conditions which can contribute to apathy. Proper planning and sound decisions can help a survivor avoid these conditions. Finally, survivors must watch for signs of apathy in companions and help prevent it. The first signs are **resignation**, quietness, lack of communication, loss of appetite, and withdrawal from the group. Preventive measures could include maintaining group morale by planning, activity, and getting the organized participation of all members.

Many common stresses cause reactions which can be recognized and dealt with appropriately in survival situations. A survivor must understand that stresses and reactions often occur at the same time. Anticipating stresses and developing strategies to cope with them are two ingredients in the effective management of stress. It is therefore essential that the survivor in a survival setting be aware of the types of stresses he will encounter.

Injury, Illness, or Death

Injury, illness, and death are real possibilities a survivor has to face. Perhaps nothing is more stressful than being alone in an unfamiliar environment where you could die from hostile action, an accident, or from eating something lethal. Illness and injury can also add to stress by limiting your ability to maneuver, get food and drink, find shelter, and defend yourself. Even if illness and injury don't lead to death, they add to stress through the pain and discomfort they generate. It is only by controlling the stress associated with the vulnerability to injury, illness, and death that a survivor can have the courage to take the risks associated with survival tasks.

Uncertainty and Lack of Control

Some people have trouble operating in settings where everything is not clear-cut. The only guarantee in a survival situation is that nothing is guaranteed. It can be extremely stressful operating on limited information in a setting where you have limited control of your surroundings. This uncertainty and lack of control also add to the stress of being ill or injured.

Environment

Even under the most ideal circumstances, nature is quite fearful. In survival, a survivor will have to struggle with the stresses of weather, terrain, and the variety of creatures occupying an area. Heat, cold, rain, winds, mountains, swamps, deserts, insects, dangerous reptiles, and other animals are just a few of the challenges awaiting the survivor working to survive. Depending on how a survivor

handles the stress of his environment, his surroundings can be either a source of food and protection or can be a cause of extreme discomfort leading to injury, illness, or death.

Pain

Pain, like fever, is a warning signal calling attention to an injury or damage to some part of the body. Pain is discomforting but is not, in itself, harmful or dangerous. Pain can be controlled, and in an extremely grave situation, survival must take priority over giving in to pain.

The biological function of pain is to protect an injured part by warning the individual to rest it or avoid using it. In a survival situation, the normal pain warnings may have to be ignored in order to meet more critical needs. People have been known to complete a fight with a fractured hand, to run on a fractured or sprained ankle, to land an aircraft despite severely burned hands, and to ignore pain during periods of intense concentration and determined effort. Concentration and intense effort can actually stop or reduce feelings of pain. Sometimes this concentration may be all that is needed to survive.

A survivor must understand the following facts about pain:

1. Despite pain, a survivor can move in order to live.
2. Pain can be reduced by:
 - a. Understanding its source and nature.
 - b. Recognizing pain as a discomfort to be tolerated.
 - c. Concentrating on necessities like thinking, planning, and keeping busy.
 - d. Developing confidence and self-respect.

When personal goals are maintaining life and returning, and these goals are valued highly enough, a survivor can tolerate almost anything.

Thirst and Dehydration

The lack of water and its accompanying problems of thirst and dehydration are among the most critical problems facing survivors. Thirst, like fear and pain, can be tolerated if

the will to carry on, supported by calm, purposeful activity, is strong. Although thirst indicates the body's need for water, it does not indicate how much water is needed. If a person drinks only enough to satisfy thirst, it is still possible to slowly dehydrate. Prevention of thirst is possible if survivors drink plenty of water any time it is available, and especially when eating.

When the body's water balance is not maintained, thirst and discomfort result. Ultimately, a water imbalance will result in dehydration. The need for water may be increased if the person:

- Has a fever.
- Is fearful.
- Perspires unnecessarily.
- Rations water rather than sweat.

Dehydration decreases the body's ability to function. Minor degrees of dehydration may not noticeably affect a survivor's performance, but as it becomes more severe, body functioning will become increasingly impaired. Slight dehydration and thirst can also cause irrational behavior. One survivor described it:

The next thing I remember was being awakened by an unforgettable sensation of thirst. I began to move about randomly and finally found a pool of water.

We finally found water. In the water were two dead deer with horns locked. We went down to the water and drank away. It was the best drink of water I ever had in my life. I didn't taste the stench of the deer at all.

While prevention is the best way to avoid dehydration, virtually any degree of dehydration is reversible simply by drinking water.

Cold and Heat

The average normal body temperature for a person is 98.6°F. Victims have survived a body temperature as low as 20°F below normal, but consciousness is clouded and

thinking numbed at a much smaller drop. An increase of 6 to 8 degrees above normal for any prolonged period may prove fatal. Any deviation from normal temperature, even as little as 1 or 2 degrees, reduces the survivors ability to function.

Cold is a serious stress since even in mild degrees it lowers the ability to function. Extreme cold numbs the mind and dulls the will to do anything except get warm again. Cold numbs the body by lowering the flow of blood to the extreme, and results in sleepiness. Survivors have endured prolonged cold and dampness through exercise, proper hygiene procedures, shelter, and food. Wearing proper clothing and having the proper climatic survival equipment when in cold weather areas are essential to enhance survivability.

- (1) One survivor described cold and its effect:

Because of the cold water, my energy was going rapidly and all I could do was to hook my left arm over one side of the raft, hang on, and watch the low flying planes as they buzzed me. . . . As time progressed, the numbing increased . . . and even seemed to impair my thinking.

- (2) Another survivor remembered survival training and acted accordingly:

About this time, my feet began getting cold. I remembered part of the briefing I had received about feet freezing so I immediately took action. I thought about my shoes, and with my jack knife, cut off the bottom of my Mark II immersion suit and put them over my shoes. My feet immediately felt warmer and the rubber feet of the immersion suit kept the soles of my shoes dry.

Just as "numbness" is the principal symptom of cold, "weakness" is the principal symptom of heat. Most people can adjust to high temperatures, whether in the hold of a ship or in a harvest field on the Kansas prairie. It may take from 2 days to a week before circulation, breathing, heart action, and sweat glands are all adjusted to a hot climate. Heat stress also emphasizes dehydration,

which was discussed earlier. In addition to the problem of water, there are many other sources of discomfort and impaired efficiency which are directly connected to heat or to the environmental conditions in hot climates. Extreme temperature changes, from very hot days to very cold nights, are experienced in desert and plains areas. Proper use of clothing and shelters can decrease the effects of such extremes.

Bright Sun has a tremendous effect on eyes and exposed skin. Direct sunlight or rays reflecting off the terrain require dark glasses or improvised eye protectors. Previous suntanning provides little protection; protective clothing is important.

Blowing wind, in hot summer, has been reported to get on some survivors' nerves. Wind can be an additional source of discomfort and difficulty in desert areas when it carries particles of sand and dirt. Protection against sand and dirt can be provided by tying a cloth around the head after cutting slits for vision.

Fear has been experienced among survivors in sandstorms and snowstorms. This fear results from both the impact of the storm itself and its absence of landmarks showing direction of travel. Finding or improving shelter for protection from the storm itself is important.

Loss of moisture, drying of the mouth and mucous membranes, and rapid dehydration can be caused by breathing through the mouth and talking. Survivors must learn to keep their mouths shut in desert winds as well as in cold weather.

Mirages and illusions of many kinds are common in desert areas. These illusions not only distort visual perception but sometimes account for serious incidents. In the desert, distances are usually greater than they appear and, under certain conditions, mirages interfere with accurate vision. Reversed reflections are a common occurrence.

Hunger

A considerable amount of edible material (which survivors may not initially regard as food) may be available under survival conditions. Hunger and semi-starvation are more commonly experienced among survivors than thirst and dehydration.

Aversion: A feeling of dislike toward something; a desire to avoid or turn away from it.

nor any decrease in mental efficiency from short periods of total fasting.

The prolonged and severe Minnesota semi-starvation studies during World War II revealed the following behavioral changes:

- Dominance of the hunger drive over other drives.
- Lack of spontaneous activity.
- Tired and weak feeling.
- Inability to do physical tasks.
- Dislike of being touched or caressed in any way.
- Quick susceptibility to cold.
- Dullness of all emotional responses (fear, shame, love, etc.).
- Lack of interest in others—apathy.
- Dullness and boredom.
- Limited patience and self-control.
- Lack of a sense of humor.
- Moodiness—reaction of resignation.

Frequently, in the excitement of some survival, hunger is forgotten. Survivors have gone for considerable lengths of time without food or awareness of hunger pains. An early effort should be made to procure and consume food to reduce the stresses brought on by the lack of food. Both the physical and psychological effects described are reversed when food and a protective environment are restored. Return to normal is slow and the time necessary for the return increases with the severity of starvation. If the lack of food is complete and only water is ingested, the pains of hunger disappear in a few days, but even then the mood changes of depression and irritability occur. The individual tendency is still to search for food to prevent starvation and such efforts might continue as long as strength and self-control permit. When the food supply is limited, even strong friendships are threatened.

Food aversions may result in hunger. The different group opinions may discourage those who might try foods unfamiliar to them. In some groups, the barrier would be broken by someone eating the particular food rather

than starving. The single individual has only personal prejudices to overcome and will often try strange foods.

Controlling hunger during survival episodes is relatively easy if the survivor can adjust to discomfort and adapt to primitive conditions. This man would rather survive than be fussy:

Some men would almost starve
before eating the food. There was a
soup made of lamb's head with the
lamb's eyes floating around in it.
. . . When there was a new prisoner,
I would try to find a seat next to him
so I could eat the food he refused.

Fatigue

In a survival episode, a survivor must continually cope with fatigue and avoid the accompanying strain and loss of efficiency. A survivor must be aware of the dangers of over-exertion. In many cases, a survivor may already be experiencing strain and reduced efficiency as a result of other stresses such as heat or cold, dehydration, hunger, or fear. A survivor must judge capacity to walk, carry, lift, or do necessary work, and plan and act accordingly. During an emergency, considerable exertion may be necessary to cope with the situation. If an individual understands fatigue and the attitudes and feelings generated by various kinds of effort, that individual should be able to call on available reserves of energy when they are needed.

A survivor must avoid complete exhaustion which may lead to physical and psychological changes. A survivor should be able to distinguish between exhaustion and being uncomfortably tired. Although a person should avoid working to complete exhaustion, in emergencies certain tasks must be done in spite of fatigue.

Rest is a basic factor for recovery from fatigue and is also important in resisting further fatigue. It is essential that the rest (following fatiguing effort) be sufficient to permit complete recovery; otherwise, the fatigue will accumulate and require longer periods of rest to recover from subsequent

effort. During the early stages of fatigue proper rest provides a rapid recovery. This is true of muscular fatigue as well as mental fatigue. Sleep is the most complete form of rest available and is basic to recovery from fatigue.

Short rest breaks during extended stress periods can improve total output. There are five ways in which rest breaks are beneficial:

- They provide opportunities for partial recovery from fatigue.
- They help reduce energy expenditure.
- They increase ability by enabling a person to take maximum advantage of planned rest.
- They relieve boredom by breaking up the similarity of the task.
- They increase morale and motivation.

Survivors should *rest before output shows a definite decline*. If rest breaks are longer, fewer may be required. When efforts are highly active or similar, rest breaks should be more frequent. Rest breaks providing relaxation are the most effective. In mental work, mild exercise may be more relaxing. When work is continuously the same, changes of activity, conversation, and humor are effective relaxants. In deciding on the amount and frequency of rest periods, the loss of ability resulting from longer hours of effort must be weighed against the absolute requirements of the survival situation.

Fatigue can be reduced by *working "smarter."* A survivor can do this in two practical ways; (a) Adjust the pace of the effort. Balance the load, the rate, and the time period. For example, walking at a normal rate takes less effort than fast walking. (b) Adjust the technique of work. The way in which work is done has a great bearing on reducing fatigue. Taking as little effort as possible is most important. Rhythmic movements suited to the task are best.

Mutual group support, cooperation, and competent leadership are important factors in maintaining group morale and efficiency, thereby reducing stress and fatigue.

A survivor usually feels tired and weary before the physiological limit is reached. In addition, other stresses experienced at the same time; such as cold, hunger, fear, or

despair, can intensify fatigue. The feeling of fatigue involves not only the physical reaction to effort, but also slight changes in attitudes and motivation. Remember, a person has reserves of energy to cope with an important emergency even when feeling very tired.

As in the case of other stresses, even a moderate amount of fatigue reduces efficiency. To control fatigue, it is wise to observe a program of periodic rest. Because of the main objective—to be rescued or reach civilization—survivors may overestimate their strength and risk exhaustion. On the other hand, neither an isolated individual nor a group leader should underestimate the capacity of the individual or the group on the basis of fatigue. The only sound basis for judgment must be gained from training and past experience. In training, a person should form an opinion of individual capacity based on actual experience. Likewise, a group leader must form an opinion of the capacities of fellow members. This group didn't think:

By nightfall, we were completely bushed. . . . We decided to wrap ourselves in the 'chute instead of making a shelter. We were too tired even to build a fire. We just cut some pine boughs, rolled ourselves in the nylon and went to sleep . . . and so, of course, it rained, and not lightly. We stood it until we were soaked, and then we struggled out and made a shelter. Since it was pitch dark, we didn't get the sags out of the canopy, so the water didn't all run off. Just a lot of it came through. Our hip and leg joints ached as though we had acute rheumatism. Being wet and cold emphasized the pain. We changed positions every 10 minutes, after gritting our teeth to stay put that long.

Sleep Deprivation

The effects of sleep loss are closely related to those of fatigue. Sleeping at unaccustomed times, sleeping under strange circumstances (in a strange place, in noise, in light, or in other distractions) or missing part or all of the accustomed amount of sleep will cause a

person to react with feelings of weariness, irritability, emotion tension, and some loss of efficiency. The extent of an individual's reactions depends on the amount of disturbance and on other stress factors which may be present at the same time.

Strong motivation is one of the principal factors to compensate for the impairing effects of sleep loss. Superior physic and mental conditioning, opportunities to rest, food and water, and companions help in enduring sleep deprivation. If a person is in good physical and mental condition, sleep deprivation can be endured 5 days or more without damage, although efficiency during the latter stages may be poor. A person must learn to get as much sleep and rest as possible. Restorative effects of sleep are felt even after "catnaps." In some instances, survivors may need to stay awake. Activity, movement, conversation, eating, and drinking are some of the ways a person can stimulate the body to stay awake.

When one is deprived of sleep, sleepiness usually comes in waves. A person may suddenly be sleepy immediately after a period of feeling awake. If this can be controlled, the feeling will soon pass and the person will be wide awake again until the next wave appears. As the duration of sleep deprivation increases, these periods between waves of sleepiness become shorter. The need to sleep may be so strong in some people after a long period of deprivation that they become desperate and do careless or dangerous things in order to escape this stress.

Isolation

Loneliness, helplessness, and despair which are experienced by survivors when they are isolated are among the most severe survival stresses. People often take their associations with family, friends, military colleagues, and others for granted. But survivors soon begin to miss the daily interaction with other people. However, these, like the other stresses already discussed, can be conquered. Isolation can be controlled and overcome by knowledge, understanding, deliberate countermeasures, and a determined will to resist it.

Natural Reactions

Man has been able to survive many shifts in his environment throughout the centuries. His ability to adapt physically and mentally to a changing world kept him alive while other species around him gradually died off. The same survival mechanisms that can help us can also work against us if we don't understand and anticipate their presence.

It is not surprising that the average person will have some psychological reactions in a survival situation. We will now examine some of the major internal reactions you and anyone with you might experience with the survival stresses addressed.

Fear

Fear is an emotional response to dangerous circumstances that we believe have the potential to cause death, injury, or illness. This harm is not just limited to physical damage; the threat to one's emotional and mental well-being can generate fear as well.

Fear can *save a life*—or it can *cost one*. Some people are at their best when they are scared. Many downed fliers faced with survival emergencies have been surprised at how well they remembered their training, how quickly they could think and react, and what strength they had. The experience gave them a new confidence in themselves. On the other hand, some people become paralyzed when faced with the simplest survival situation. Some of them have been able "to snap themselves out of it" before it was too late. In other cases, a fellow aircrew member was on hand to assist them. However, others have not been so fortunate. They are not listed among the survivors.

How a person will react to fear depends more upon the individual than it does upon the situation. This has been demonstrated both in actual survival situations and in laboratory experiments. It isn't always the physically strong or the happy-go-lucky people who handle fear most effectively. Timid and anxious people have met emergencies with remarkable coolness and strength.

Anyone who faces life-threatening emergencies fear. Fear is conscious when it results from a recognized situation or when experienced as worry of upcoming disaster. Fear also occurs at a subconscious level and creates feelings of uneasiness, general discomfort, worry, or depression. Fear may vary widely in intensity, duration, and frequency of occurrence, and affect behavior across the spectrum from mild uneasiness to complete disorganization and panic. People have many fears; some are learned through personal experiences, and others are taught to them. Fear in children is directed through negative learning, as they are taught to be afraid of the dark, of animals, of noise, or of teachers. These fears may control behavior, and a survivor may react to feelings and imagination rather than to the problem causing fear.

When fantasy distorts a moderate danger into a major catastrophe, or vice versa, behavior can become abnormal. There is a general tendency to underestimate and this leads to reckless, foolhardy behavior. The principle means of fighting fear (in this case) is to pretend that it does not exist. There are no sharp lines between recklessness and bravery. It is necessary to check behavior constantly to maintain proper control.

One or more of the following signs or symptoms may occur in those who are afraid. However, they may also appear in circumstances other than fear.

- Quickening of pulse; trembling
- Dilation of pupils.
- Increased muscular tension and fatigue.
- Perspiration of palms of hands, soles of feet, and armpits.
- Dryness of mouth and throat; higher pitch of voice; stammering.
- Feeling of "butterflies in the stomach," emptiness of the stomach, faintness, and nausea.

Accompanying these physical symptoms are the following common psychological symptoms:

- Irritability; increased hostility.
- Talkativeness in early stages, leading finally to speechlessness.

- Confusion, forgetfulness, and inability to concentrate.
- Feelings of unreality, imagining things, panic, or numbness.

Throughout military history, many people have coped successfully with the most difficult odds. In adapting to fear, they have found support in previous training and experience. There is no limit to human control of fear. Survivors must take action to control fear. They cannot run away from fear. Appropriate actions should be to:

- Understand fear.
- Admit that it exists.
- Accept fear as reality.

Training can help survivors recognize what individual reactions may be. Using prior training, survivors should learn to think, plan, and act logically, even when afraid.

To effectively cope with fear, a survivor must:

1. **Develop confidence.** Use training opportunities; increase capabilities by keeping physically and mentally fit; know what equipment is available and how to use it; learn as much as possible about all aspects of survival.

2. **Be prepared.** Accept the possibility that “it can happen to me.” Be properly equipped and clothed at all times; have a plan ready. Hope for the best, but be prepared to cope with the worst.

3. **Keep informed.** Listen carefully and pay attention to all briefings. Know when danger threatens and be prepared if it comes; increase knowledge of survival environments to reduce the “unknown.”

4. **Keep busy at all times.** Prevent hunger, thirst, fatigue, idleness, and ignorance about the situation, since these increase fear.

5. **Know how fellow survivors react to fear.** Learn to work together in emergencies—to live, work, plan, and help each other as a team.

6. **Practice religion.** Don't be ashamed of having spiritual faith.

7. **Cultivate “good” survival attitudes.** Keep the mind on a main goal and keep everything else in perspective. Learn to tolerate discomfort. Don't exert energy to satisfy minor desires which may conflict with the overall goal—to survive.

8. **Cultivate mutual support.** The greatest support under severe stress may come from a tightly knit group. Teamwork reduces fear while making the efforts of every person more effective.

9. **Exercise leadership.** The most important test of leadership and perhaps its greatest value lies in the stress situation.

10. **Practice discipline.** Attitudes and habits of discipline developed in training carry over into other situations. A disciplined group has a better chance of survival than an undisciplined group.

11. **Lead by example.** Calm behavior and demonstration of control are contagious. Both reduce fear and inspire courage.

Every person has goals and desires. The greatest values exercise the greatest influence. Because of strong religious, moral, or patriotic values, people have been known to face torture and death calmly rather than reveal information or compromise a principle. Fear can kill or it can save lives. It is a normal reaction to danger. By understanding and controlling fear through training, knowledge, and effective group action, fear can be overcome.

Anxiety

Associated with fear is anxiety. Because it is natural for us to be afraid, it is also natural for us to experience anxiety. Anxiety can be an uneasy feeling we get when faced with dangerous situations (physical, mental, and emotional). It is generally felt when individuals perceive something bad is about to happen. A common description of anxiety is “butterflies in the stomach.” Anxiety creates feelings of uneasiness, general discomfort, worry, or depression. When used in a healthy way, anxiety urges us to act to end, or at least master, the dangers that threaten our existence. If we were never anxious, there would be little motivation to

make changes in our lives. The soldier in a survival setting reduces his anxiety by performing those tasks that will ensure his coming through the ordeal alive. As he reduces his anxiety, the soldier is also bringing under control the source of that anxiety—his fears. In this form, anxiety is good; however, anxiety can also have a devastating impact. Anxiety can overwhelm a survivor to the point where he becomes easily confused and has difficulty thinking. Once this happens, it becomes more and more difficult for him to make good judgments and sound decisions. To survive, the survivor must learn techniques to calm his anxieties and keep them in range where they help, not hurt.

Insecurity

Insecurity is the survivor's feeling of helplessness or inadequacy resulting from varied stresses and anxieties. These anxieties may be caused by uncertainty regarding individual goals, abilities, and the future in a survival situation. Feelings of insecurity may have widely different effects on the survivor's behavior. A survivor should establish challenging but attainable goals. The better a survivor feels about individual abilities to achieve goals and adequately meet personal needs, the more secure the survivor will feel.

Loss of Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is the state or quality of having personal self-respect and pride. Lack of (or loss of) self-esteem in a survivor may bring on depression and a change in perspective and goals. Survivors should try to maintain proper perspective about both the situation and themselves.

Loss of Self-Determination

A self-determined person is relatively free from external controls or influences over his or her actions. In everyday society, these "controls and influences" are the laws and customs of our society and of the self-imposed elements of our personalities. In a survival situation, the "controls and influences" can be very different. Survivors

may feel as if events, circumstances, and (in some cases) other people, are in control of the situation. Some factors which may cause individuals to feel they have lost the power of self-determination are bad weather, or rescue forces that make time or movement demands. This lack of self-determination is more perceived than actual. Survivors must decide how unpleasant factors will be allowed to affect their mental state. They must have the self-confidence, fostered by experience and training, to live with their feelings and decisions, and to accept responsibility for both the way they feel and how they let those feelings affect them.

Anger

Anger is a strong feeling of displeasure and belligerence aroused by a real or supposed wrong. People become angry when they cannot fulfill a basic need or desire which seems important to them. When anger is not relieved, it may turn into a more enduring attitude of hostility, characterized by a desire to hurt or destroy the person or thing causing the frustration. When anger is intense, the survivor loses control over the situation, resulting in impulsive behavior which may be destructive in nature. Anger is a normal response which can serve a useful purpose when carefully controlled. If the situation warrants and there is no threat to survival, one could yell or scream, take a walk, do some energetic exercise, or just get away from the source of the anger, even if only for a few minutes. Here is a man who couldn't hold it.

I tried patiently to operate it (radio) in every way I had been shown. Growing more angry and disappointed at its failure, I tore the aerial off, threw the cord away, beat the battery on the rocks, then threw the pieces all over the hillside. I was surely disappointed (fig. 5-2).

Frustration

Frustration occurs when one's efforts are stopped, either by obstacles blocking progress toward a goal or by not having a realistic goal. It can also occur if the feeling of self-

worth or self-respect is lost. The goal of survival is to stay alive until you can reach help or until help can reach you. To achieve this goal, the survivor must complete some tasks with minimal resources. It is certain, in trying to do these tasks, that something will go wrong; that something will happen beyond the survivor's control; and that with one's life at stake, every mistake is magnified in terms of its importance. Thus, sooner or later, survivors will have to cope with frustration when a few of their plans run into trouble.

A wide range of obstacles, both environmental and internal, can lead to frustration. Frustrating conditions often create anger, accompanied by a tendency to attack and remove the obstacles to goals.

Frustration must be controlled by channeling energies into a positive, worthwhile, and obtainable goal. The survivor should complete the easier tasks before attempting more challenging ones. This will not only instill self-confidence, but also relieve frustration.

One outgrowth of this frustration is anger. There are many events in a survival situation that can frustrate or anger a person. Getting lost, damaged or forgotten equipment, the weather, unlivable terrain, and physical limitations are just a few sources of frustration and anger. Frustration and anger encourage impulsive reactions, irrational behavior, poorly thought-out decisions, and, in some instances, an "I quit" attitude (people sometimes avoid doing something they can't master). If the survivor can harness and properly channel the emotional intensity associated with anger and frustration, he can productively act as he answers the challenges of survival. If the survivor does not properly focus his angry feelings, he can waste much energy in activities that do little to further either his chances of survival or the chances of those around him.

Panic

In the face of danger, a person may panic or "freeze" and cease to function in an organized manner. A person experiencing panic may have no conscious control over individual actions. Uncontrollable, irrational behavior is common in emergency situations.

Anybody can panic, but some people go to pieces more easily than others. Panic is brought on by a sudden overwhelming fear, and can often spread quickly through a group of people. Every effort must be made to boost morale and calm the panic with leadership and discipline. Panic has the same signs as fear and should be controlled in the same manner as fear. This survivor allowed pain to panic him.

With his parachute caught in the tree, he found himself suspended about five feet above the ground . . . one leg strap was released while he balanced in this aerial position and he immediately slipped toward the ground.

In doing so, his left leg caught in the webbing and he was suspended by one leg with his head down. Unfortunately, the pilot's head touched an ant hill and biting ants immediately swarmed over him (fig. 1-18).

The person should make every attempt possible to free himself from this entangled position and not allow panic to dominate his thoughts. Swinging from the inverted position could allow an individual to reach a branch or untangle himself.

Hate

Hate—feelings of intense dislike, extreme aversion, or hostility—is a powerful emotion which can have both positive and negative effects on a survivor. An understanding of the emotion and its causes is the key to learning to control it. Hate is an acquired emotion rooted in a person's knowledge or perceptions. The accuracy or inaccuracy of the information has nothing to do with learning to hate.

Any person, any object, or anything that may be understood intellectually, such as political concepts or religious belief, can promote feelings of hate. Feelings of hate (usually accompanied with a desire for vengeance or revenge) have sustained former prisoners of war through their harsh ordeals. If an individual loses perspective while under the influence of hate and reacts emotionally, rational solutions to problems may be

overlooked, and the survivor may be endangered.

To effectively deal with this emotional reaction, the survivor must first examine the reasons why the feeling of hate is present. Once that has been determined, survivors should then decide what to do about those feelings. Whatever approach is selected, it should be as constructive as possible. Survivors must not allow hate to control them.

Resentment

Resentment is the experiencing of an emotional state of displeasure toward some act, remark, or person that has been regarded as causing personal insult or injury. Luck and fate may play a role in any survival situation. A ill-fated survivor may feel jealous resentment toward a fellow survivor, travel partner, etc., if that other person is perceived to be enjoying a success or advantage not presently experienced by the observer. The survivor must understand that events cannot always go as expected. It is damaging to morale and could affect survival chances if feelings of resentment over another's attainments become too strong. Imagined slights or insults are common. The survivor should try to maintain a sense of humor and perspective about ongoing events and realize that stress and lack of self-confidence play roles in bringing on feelings of resentment.

Depression

As a survivor, depression is the biggest psychological problem that has to be conquered. It should be acknowledged that everyone has mental "highs" as well as mental "lows." People experiencing long periods of sadness or other negative feelings are suffering from depression. A normal mood associated with the sadness, grief, disappointment, or loneliness that everyone experiences at times is also described as depression. Most of the emotional changes in mood are temporary and do not become permanent. Depressed survivors may feel fearful, guilty, or helpless. They may lose interest in the basic needs of life. Many cases of depression also involve pain, fatigue, loss

of appetite, or other physical ailments. Some depressed survivors try to injure or kill themselves.

Psychiatrists have several theories as to the cause of depression. Some feel a person who, in everyday life and under normal conditions, experiences many periods of depression would probably have a difficult time in a survival situation. The main reason depression is a most difficult problem is that it can affect a wide range of psychological responses. The factors can become mutually reinforcing. For example, fatigue may lead to a feeling of depression. Depression may increase the feeling of fatigue, and this, in turn, leads to deeper depression and so on.

Depression usually begins after a survivor has met the basic needs for sustaining life, such as water, shelter, and food. Once the survivor's basic needs are met, there is often too much time for that person to dwell on the past, the present situation, and on future problems. The survivor must be aware of the necessity to keep the mind and body active to eliminate the feeling of depression. One way to keep busy (daily) is by checking and improving shelters, signals, and food supply.

Impatience

The psychological stresses brought about by feelings of impatience can quickly reveal themselves in physical ways. Internally, the effects of impatience can cause changes in physical and mental well-being. Survivors who allow impatience to control their behavior may find that their efforts prove to be counterproductive and possibly dangerous.

Potential survivors must understand they have to bear pain, misfortune, and annoyance without complaint. In the past, many survivors have displayed a lot of endurance, both mental and physical, in times of distress or misfortune. While not every survivor will be able to display such strength of character in all situations, each person should learn to recognize the things which may make them impatient to avoid acting unwisely.

Loneliness and Boredom

Man is a social animal. This means we, as human beings, enjoy the company of others.

Very few people want to be alone all the time! As you are aware, there is a distinct chance of isolation in a survival setting. This is not bad. Loneliness can weaken a person's spirits during a survival episode. Some people learn to control and manipulate their environment and become more self-sufficient while adapting to changes. Others rely on protective persons, routines, and familiarity of surroundings to function and obtain satisfaction.

The ability to combat feelings of loneliness during a survival episode must be developed long before the episode occurs. Self-confidence and self-sufficiency are key factors in coping with loneliness. People develop these attributes by developing and demonstrating competence in performing tasks. As the degree of competence increases, so does self-confidence and self-sufficiency. Military training, more specifically survival training, is designed to provide individuals with the competence and self-sufficiency to cope with and adapt to survival living.

In a survival situation, the countermeasure to conquer loneliness is to be active, to plan and think purposely. Development of self-sufficiency is the primary protection since all countermeasures in survival require the survivor to have the ability to practice self control.

Loneliness and boredom can bring to the surface qualities you thought only others had. The extent of your imagination and creativity may surprise you. When required to do so, you may discover some hidden talents and abilities. Most of all, you may tap into a reservoir of inner strength and courage you never knew you had. On the other hand, loneliness and boredom can be another source of depression. As a person surviving alone, or with others, you must find ways to keep your mind productively occupied. Additionally, you must develop a degree of self-sufficiency. You must have faith in your capability to "go it alone."

Hopelessness

Hopelessness stems from negative feelings—regardless of actions taken, success is impossible, or the certainty that future events will turn out for the worst no matter

what a person tries to do. Feelings of hopelessness can occur at any time during a survival episode. Survivors have experienced loss of hope in trying to:

- Maintain health due to an inability to care for their sickness, broken bones, or injuries.
- Considering their chances of returning home alive.
- Seeing their loved ones again.
- Believing in their physical or mental ability to deal with the situation.

During situations where physical exhaustion or exposure to the elements affects the mind, a person may begin to lose hope. The term "give-up-itis" was coined in Korea to describe the feeling of "hopelessness." During captivity, deaths occurred for no apparent cause. These individuals actually willed themselves to die or at least did not will themselves to live. The original assumption (in the minds of such people) is that they are going to die. To them, the situation seemed totally hopeless and they abandoned themselves to fate. It was possible to follow the process step by step. The people who died withdrew themselves from the group, became depressed, then laid down and gave up. In some cases, death followed rapidly.

One way to treat hopelessness is to eliminate the cause of the stress. Rest, comfort, and morale building activities can help eliminate this psychological problem. A positive attitude has a powerful influence on morale and combating the feeling of hopelessness.

Since many stress situations cannot be dealt with successfully by either withdrawal or direct attack, it may be necessary to work out a compromise solution. The action may entail changing a survivor's method of operation or accepting substitute goals.

Guilt

The circumstances leading to your being in a survival setting are sometimes emotional and fatal. It may be the result of an accident or a camping trip where you got lost. Perhaps you were the only, or one of a few survivors.

While naturally relieved to be alive, you simultaneously may be mourning the deaths of others who were less fortunate. It is not uncommon for survivors to feel guilty about being spared from death while others were not. This feeling, when used in a positive way, has encouraged people to try harder to survive with the belief they were allowed to live for some greater purpose in life. Sometimes, survivors tried to stay alive so that they could carry on the work of those who did not survive. Whatever reason you give yourself, do not let guilt feelings prevent you from living. The living who abandon their chance to survive accomplish nothing. Such an act would be the greatest tragedy.

Preparing Yourself

Your mission as a survivor in a survival situation is to stay alive. As you can see, you are going to experience an assortment of thoughts and emotions. These can work for you, or they can work against you. Fear, anxiety, anger, frustration, guilt, depression, and loneliness are all possible reactions to the many stresses common to survival. These reactions, when controlled in a healthy way, help to increase a survivor's likelihood of surviving. They prompt the survivor to pay more attention in training, to fight back when scared, to take actions that ensure food, water, and security, to keep faith with others, and to strive against large odds. When the survivor cannot control these reactions in a healthy way, they can bring him to a standstill. Instead of rallying his internal resources, the survivor listens to his internal fears. This survivor experiences psychological defeat long before he physically gives up. Remember, survival is natural to everyone; being unexpectedly thrust into the life and death struggle of survival is not. Don't be afraid of your "natural reactions to this unnatural situation." Prepare yourself to rule over these reactions so they serve your ultimate interest—staying alive with the honor and dignity associated with being a human being.

It involves preparation to ensure that your reactions in a survival setting are productive, not destructive. The challenge of survival has

produced countless examples of heroism, courage, and self-sacrifice. These are the qualities it can bring out in you if you have prepared yourself. Below are a few tips to help prepare yourself psychologically for survival. Through studying this text and attending survival training you can develop the *survival attitude*.

Know Yourself

Through training, family, and friends take the time to discover who you are on the inside. Strengthen your stronger qualities and develop the areas that you know are necessary to survive.

Anticipate Fears

Don't pretend that you will have no fears. Begin thinking about what would frighten you the most if forced to survive alone. Train in those areas of concern to you. The goal is not to eliminate the fear, but to build confidence in your ability to function despite your fears.

Be Realistic

Don't be afraid to make an honest estimate of situations. See circumstances as they are, not as you want them to be. Keep your hopes and expectations within the estimate of the situation. When you go into a survival setting with unrealistic expectations, you may be laying the groundwork for bitter disappointment. Follow the saying, "Hope for the best, prepare for the worst." It is much easier to adjust to pleasant surprises about one's unexpected good fortunes than to be upset by one's unexpected harsh circumstances.

Adopt a Positive Attitude

Learn to see the potential good in everything. Looking for the good not only boosts morale, it also is excellent for exercising your imagination and creativity.

Remind Yourself What is at Stake

Remember, failure to prepare yourself psychologically to cope with survival leads to

reactions such as depression, carelessness, inattention, loss of confidence, poor decision-making, and giving up before the body gives in. At stake is your life and the lives of others who are depending on you to do your share.

Train

Through military training and life experiences, begin today to prepare yourself to cope with the hardship of survival. Demonstrating your skills in training will give you the confidence to call upon them should the need arise. Remember, the more realistic the training, the less overwhelming an actual survival setting will be.

Learn Stress Management Techniques

People under stress have a potential to panic if they are not well-trained and not prepared psychologically to face whatever the circumstances maybe. While we often cannot control the survival circumstances in which we find ourselves, it is within our ability to control our response to those circumstances. Learning stress management techniques can significantly enhance your capability to remain calm and focused as you work to keep yourself and others alive. A few good techniques to develop include relaxation skills, time management skills, assertiveness skills, and the ability to control how you view a situation.

Remember, “the will to survive” can also be considered to be “the refusal to give up.”

CHAPTER 1-5

The Will to Survive

The Will To Live

History is filled with accounts of ordinary people who, when threatened by extraordinary circumstances, were able to walk hundreds of miles, endure intense heat and cold, and overcome great hunger, thirst, pain, and loneliness. With the right frame of mind, a person can survive hopeless situations.

How can you develop a positive mental attitude? Some people seem to have a natural ability to remain optimistic in the face of hardship, and everyone can practice the mental toughness survival situations demand. If you enjoy athletics or you're trying to master an academic subject or artistic skill, you know it's not easy to work hard at it every day, and yet by doing so you not only come closer to achieving your goal, you also discipline your mind. For example, you may go on an outing and, after an exhausting hike, want nothing more than to sit against a tree and let someone else make camp. If you fight off that yearning and pitch the tent, get supper cooking, and secure your gear for the night, you'll probably discover you had a reserve of energy just waiting to be tapped. Push yourself now and then when conditions are right so that you realize you have those energy reserves and mental toughness, and in a real emergency they may tip the balance in your favor.

The will to survive is defined as the desire to live despite seemingly hopeless mental and/or physical obstacles. The tools for survival are furnished by the individual, and the environment. The training for survival comes from survival training publications, instruction, and the individual's own efforts. But tools and training are not enough without a *will to survive*. In fact, the records prove that "will" alone has been the deciding factor in many survival cases. While these accounts are not classic examples of "how to survive," they illustrate a single-minded survivor with a powerful *will to survive*. The will to survive can overcome most hardships. There are cases

where people have eaten their belts for nourishment and boiled water in their boots to drink as broth.

One incident where the *will to survive* was the deciding factor between life and death involved a man stranded in the Arizona desert for 8 days without food and water. He traveled more than 150 miles during searing daytime temperatures, losing 25 percent of his body weight due to the lack of water (usually 10 percent loss causes death). His blood became so thick that the lacerations he received could not bleed until he had been rescued and received large quantities of water. When he started on that journey, something must have clicked in his mind telling him to live, regardless of any obstacles which might confront him. And live he did—on guts and will alone! (fig. 1-19)

Let's flip a coin and check the other side of "will." Our location is the Canadian wilderness. A pilot ran into engine trouble and chose to deadstick his plane onto a frozen lake rather than punch out. He did a beautiful job and slid to a stop in the middle of the lake. He left the aircraft and examined it for damage. After surveying the area, he noticed a wooded shoreline only 200 yards away where food and shelter could be provided—he decided to go there. Approximately halfway there, he changed his mind and returned to the cockpit of his aircraft where he smoked a cigar, took out his pistol, and blew his brains out. Less than 24 hours later, a rescue team found him. Why did he give up? Why was he unable to survive? Why did he take his own life? On the other hand, why do people eat their belts or drink broth from their boots? No one really knows, but it's all related to the *will to survive*.

Overcoming Stress

The ability of the mind to overcome stress and hardship becomes most apparent when there appears to be little chance of a person

surviving. When there appears to be no escape from the situation, the “will” enables a person to begin to win “the battle of the mind.” This mental attitude can bridge the gap between the crisis period and the coping period.

Crisis Period

The crisis period is the point at which the person realizes the gravity of the situation and understands that the problem will not go away. At this stage, action is needed. Most people will experience shock in this stage as a result of not being ready to face this new challenge. Most will recover control of their faculties, especially if they have been prepared through knowledge and training.

Shock during a crisis is normally a response to being overcome with anxiety. Thinking will be disorganized. At this stage, direction will be required because the individual is being controlled by the environment. The person’s center of control is external. In a group survival episode, a natural leader may appear who will direct and reassure the others. But if the situation continues to control the individual or the group, the response may be panic, behavior may be irrational, and judgment is impaired. In a lone-survivor episode, the individual must gain control of the situation and respond helpfully. In either case, survivors must evaluate the situation and develop a plan of action. During the evaluation, the survivor must determine the most critical needs to improve the chance of living and being rescued.

The Coping Period

The coping period begins after the survivor recognizes the gravity of the situation and resolves to endure it rather than give in. The survivor must tolerate the effects of physical and emotional stresses. These stresses can cause anxiety which becomes the greatest obstacle of self-control and solving problems. Coping with the situation requires considerable internal control. For example, the survivor must often overcome urgent desires to travel when that would be counterproductive and dangerous. A person

must have patience to sit in an emergency action shelter while confronted with an empty stomach, aching muscles, numb toes, and suppressed feelings of depression and hopelessness. Those who fail to think helpfully may panic. This could begin a series of mistakes which result in further exhaustion, injury, and sometimes death. Death comes not from hunger pains but from the inability to manage or control emotions and thought processes.

Attitude

The survivor’s attitude is the most important element of the *will to survive*. With the proper attitude, almost anything is possible. The desire to live is sometimes based on the feelings toward another person and/or thing. Love and hatred are two emotional extremes which have moved people to do exceptional things physically and mentally. The lack of a *will to survive* can sometimes be identified by the individual’s lack of motivation to meet his survival needs.

It is essential to strengthen the *will to survive* during an emergency. The first step is to avoid a tendency to panic or “fly off the handle.” Sit down, relax, and analyze the situation rationally. Once thoughts are collected and thinking is clear, the next step is to make decisions. In normal living, people can avoid decisions and let others do their planning. But in a survival situation, this will seldom work. Failure to decide on a course of action is actually a decision for inaction. This lack of decisionmaking may even result in death. However, decisiveness must be tempered with flexibility and planning for unforeseen circumstances. As an example, an aircrew member down in an arctic nontactical situation decides to construct a shelter for protection from the elements. The planning and actions must allow sufficient flexibility so the aircrew can monitor the area for indications of rescuers and be prepared to make contact—visually, electronically, etc.—with potential rescuers.

Tolerance is the next topic of concern. A survivor will have to deal with many physical and psychological discomforts, such as unfamiliar animals, insects, loneliness, and depression. Aircrew members are trained to

tolerate uncomfortable situations. That training must be applied to deal with the stress of environments.

Survivors must face and overcome fears to strengthen the *will to survive*. These fears may be founded or unfounded or be generated by the survivor's uncertainty or lack of confidence. Indeed, fear may be caused by a wide variety of real and imagined dangers. Despite the source of the fear, survivors must recognize fear and make a conscious effort to overcome it.

Optimism

One of a survivor's key assets is optimism—hope and faith. Survivors must maintain a positive, optimistic outlook on their circumstance and how well they are doing. Prayer or meditation can be helpful. How a survivor maintains optimism is not so important as its use.

Optimism: To expect the best possible outcome or to emphasize the most positive aspects of a situation.

Summary

Survivors do not choose or welcome their fate and would escape it if they could. They are trapped in a world of seemingly total domination—a world hostile to life and any sign of dignity or resistance. The survival mission is not an easy one, but it is one in which success can be achieved. This has been an introduction to the concepts and ideas that can help a survivor return. Having the *will to survive* is what it's all about!

