Balance

By Chaplain Douglas Vrieland

I recently began meeting with a personal trainer on a weekly basis. As an "aging baby-boomer" I'm finding that Command PT is designed for people in their 20s, not in their 50s. After six months of backaches and numerous trips to the chiropractor, I decided to see if I could find a more age-appropriate workout plan that was both challenging and effective. I began meeting with Norway Samson on Friday mornings, and learned that the reason for my backaches was that my muscles were tight. He told me that I was plenty active; my problem was that I didn't take the time to stretch properly on a regular basis. The result is that my muscles had become very tight, putting more stress on my back and resulting in frequent injuries. We often spend more of our time together stretching than actually exercising.

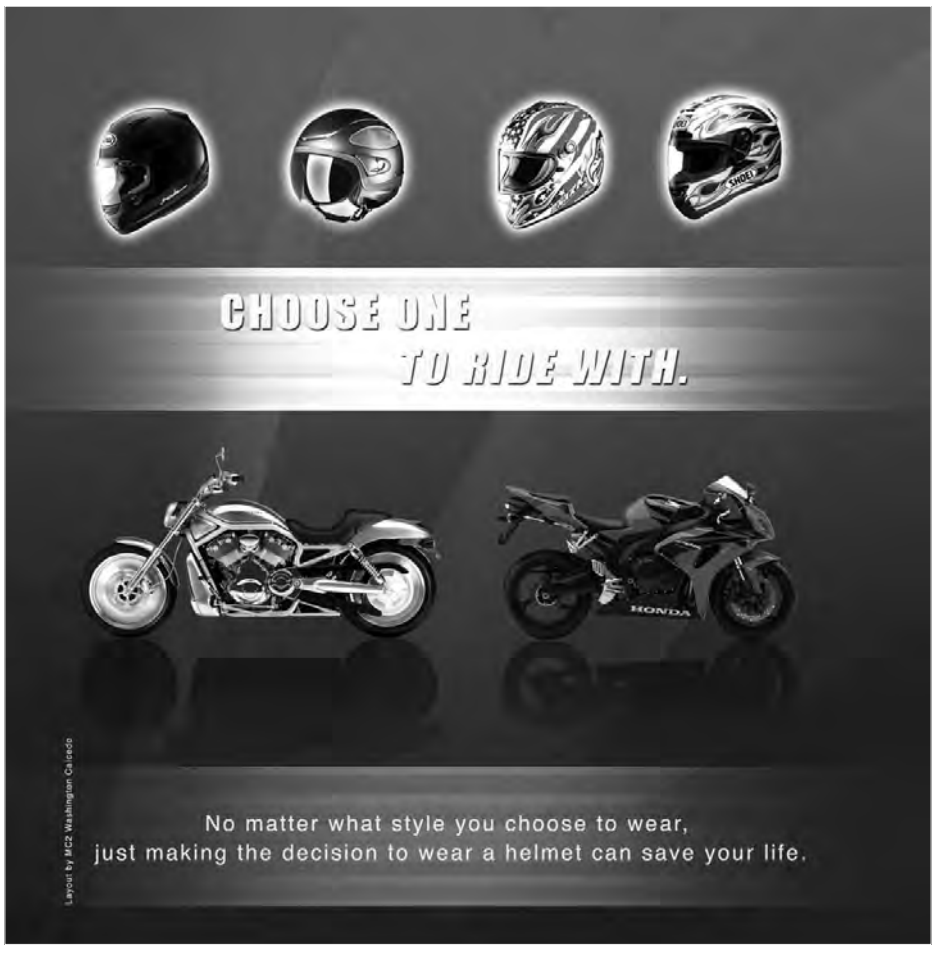
I never gave much thought to the role of stretching in a workout. For me it was about as important as changing into PT clothes—something that had to be done, but essentially a waste of time and something to be done as quickly as possible. Before going on a run, I might lean against a wall and pull on my foot, stretching my quads. Takes about 30 seconds. Stretch completed, time for the run. The important part of the workout was the cardiovascular exercise. The goal was to get that heart rate up for as long as possible to burn those calories. Stretching was simply a waste of time. The result of this attitude is a body that is stiff, cramps easily, and is more prone to injury. I thought I was taking care of myself, but in fact my workout time was unbalanced, and ultimately I would pay the price.

I think there is a lesson here that we can apply to all of life. When our life gets out of balance, eventually we will pay a price. For example, as members of the military we work very hard. It is not uncommon for us to work twelve, fourteen, or even more hours in a single day, especially when we are on sea duty. There is always work that has to get done, and the work is important. In order to meet these challenges, we begin to skimp on other areas of our lives. Rather than taking a regular lunch hour, we grab a high-calorie meal at a fast-food restaurant and eat it at our desk. We skip PT, we go to bed late and get up early, we go in on our day off. We can handle such imbalance for awhile, but if it continues long enough eventually we will pay a price. Our health will deteriorate, our relationships will suffer, or we will dry up spiritually.

Those who are raising a family often struggle with balancing family responsibilities with career demands. The military asks us to give 110 percent. Our spouse and our children need our time, energy, and attention. Often there are just not enough hours in the day or enough emotional energy to meet all the demands that are placed on us. How do we balance these competing demands?

And then there is the need we all have for personal time. Time to read a book, watch a movie, or engage in a hobby. Do you ever feel guilty taking some time for yourself, thinking that you are being selfish? Is it possible that such personal time is in fact a way to restore balance to our lives? Could it be that taking time for ourselves on a regular basis keeps us healthy and helps us do our job more effectively?

We are just beginning the summer season. Many of us will spend more time outdoors, more time with our families, perhaps even take some leave. I encourage each of us to ask ourselves the question, is my life in balance? Is there any aspect of my life that I've been neglecting, and if so what adjustments can I make to achieve better balance? Remember, when our life gets out of balance, eventually we will pay a price.



Navy issues guidance for Sailors transitioning from active to reserve

From Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

MILLINGTON, Tenn. – The Navy announced guidance streamlining the transition from active duty to Selected Reserves (SELRES) through Perform to Serve (PTS) or Early Career Transition Program (ECTP) in a message released June 5.

Navy Administrative Message (NAVADMIN) 179/12 outlines a new process for active duty and full-time-support Sailors transitioning to the SELRES via PTS or ECTP to receive Navy Personnel Command (NPC)-funded separation orders with an intermediate stop at their requested Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC).

"The benefit is a seamless transition from active duty to the reserves," said Master Chief Navy Counselor (SW/AW) Joe Mack, NPC Career Transition Office (CTO). "Before Navy established CTO, a Sailor would have to separate from the Navy and contact a reserve recruiter in order to join the reserves, which could take months. CTO continues to streamline the process."

According to the message, Sailors who receive a SELRES quota through PTS or ECTP must use Career Management System/Interactive Detailing (CMS/ID) to select a NOSC nearest to the area they intend to reside after release from active duty.

Working with a command career counselor, a completed reserve affiliation screening checklist must be forwarded to CTO to ensure completion of all required enlistment and reserve affiliation documents before a Sailor begins terminal leave.

Transitioning Sailors who complete this process at least two months prior to separation will receive funded orders from their command to their NOSC where they will complete their release from active duty (separation) processing and reserve affiliation. Under this process Sailors affiliating with a NOSC greater than 50 miles from their residence are authorized up to three days per diem while completing their active duty to SELRES processing at the NOSC.

"This process will take an active duty Sailor affiliating with the SELRES from their current assignment to their NOSC without a break in service," said Mack.

Failure to comply with the process outlined in the message may cause delays in transitioning and require the Sailor to complete separation processing from their active component command. The Sailor will incur the expense in reporting to their selected NOSC.

The CTO was established under the Navy's continuum of service initiative to ease the transition of personnel from active duty to reserve billets, decrease transition processing times and error rates, and increase reserve affiliation among qualified Sailors leaving active duty.

Since it's inception CTO has assisted 1,021 enlisted Sailors with their transition from the active duty to the reserve component.

The Navy Reserve offers a two-year deployment deferment for Sailors who join the reserve within six months of leaving active duty.

SELRES service requires a minimum commitment of one weekend a month and two weeks every year. However, flexible drilling options may be made available depending upon reserve unit requirements and procedures.

For more information, read NAVADMIN 179/12 available in the message section at www.npc.navy.mil.