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Grounded Leadership: Exploring Health and Wellness Strategies of Company Grade
Officers in the California Army National Guard

A Dissertation by
Greg Montanio

University of Massachusetts Global
Irvine, California
School of Education

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

May 2022

Committee in charge:

Keith Larick Ed.D., Committee Chair

Cindy Petersen, Ed.D.

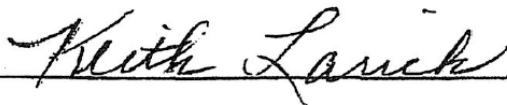
Karen J. Bolton, Ed.D.

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS GLOBAL UNIVERSITY


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Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

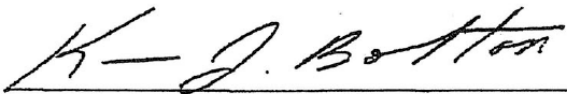
The dissertation of Greg Montanio is approved.

 _____, Dissertation Chair


Keith Larick, Ed.D.

 _____, Committee Member

Cindy Petersen, Ed.D.

 _____, Committee Member

Karen J. Bolton, Ed.D.

 _____, Associate Dean

Patrick Ainsworth, Ed.D

May 2022

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Officers in the California Army National Guard

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As I reflect on the journey of change that results in a dissertation, I am reminded of the excitement and nervous anticipation of attending my first immersion. I come away from this experience living through the realization that transformational change first begins with the conscious decision to personally change. This dissertation was born from the support and care of a support network who embarked on this journey with me to realize that change and to whom I wish to express my gratitude and thanks.

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ABSTRACT

Grounded Leadership: Exploring Health and Wellness Strategies of Company Grade Officers in the California Army National Guard

by Greg Montanio

Purpose: The purpose of this explanatory mixed methods study was to identify and describe what exemplary California Army National Guard (CA ARNG) company grade officers do to maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health.

Methodology: This study used a mixed methods approach relying on the collection of data to provide for a more flexible platform to triangulate multiple data sources and increase the validity of the study's findings. The study used a quantitative survey to examine how exemplary company grade officers in the California Army National Guard rated their use of grounded leadership strategies along with follow-on interviews and collected artifacts to discover in-depth and personal details regarding the participants' wellness-related practices.

Findings: Examination of mixed methods data from the 16 participants found that exemplary company grade officers maintain grounded leadership by (a) practicing activities that renew their physical energy sources, (b) practicing behaviors that foster an environment of positive emotions, (c) seeking opportunities that allow them to achieve different perspectives for problem solving, (d) using effective communication practices to meaningfully connect with others, (e) fostering a positive environment that prioritizes high performance results in meaningful achievement, and (f) appreciating others and finding ways to show others they care.

Conclusions: Exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers who (a) mitigate stress by engaging in activities that renew their physical energy have increased ability to withstand stressors, (b) mitigate stress and lead with a positive outlook will build the confidence of followers, (c) embrace constant learning will be more successful problem solvers, (d) practice effective communication will build and maintain genuine and meaningful relationships, (e) build a positive culture will have a positive influence on mission readiness, (f) build a positive work climate will instill a sense of mutual respect and discipline, (g) develop shared beliefs and values will unite a unit motivated to succeed.

Recommendations: Further research is recommended to replicate this study with different populations in the CA ARNG and other states to determine strategies to maintain grounded leadership and how they change throughout a military career.

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PREFACE

Following discussions and explorations regarding the opportunity to study Rosen's (2013) *Grounded: How Leaders Stay Rooted in an Uncertain World*, two faculty researchers and seven doctoral students discovered a common interest in understanding the ways exemplary leaders stay grounded using the six dimensions of health (i.e., physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual). Therefore, the collective interest of the seven doctoral students culminated in this thematic study. The thematic research team applied Rosen's (2013) theory to exemplary leaders in various fields and organizations.

The thematic research team and two faculty researchers determined an explanatory mixed methods design was most appropriate for the study of exemplary leaders and how they stay grounded. Exemplary leaders were selected by each peer researcher from various public, government, for-profit, and nonprofit organizations to examine the *grounded* behaviors these leaders practiced. Each researcher surveyed 15 exemplary leaders and interviewed five of the surveyed participants.

The team agreed that for increased validity, data collection would involve mixed methods using both interviews and surveys. To ensure thematic consistency, the team cocreated the purpose statement, research questions, definitions, survey questions, interview questions, and the study procedures.

Throughout the study, the term *peer researcher* was used to refer to the other researchers who conducted this thematic study. The thematic team consisted of Cancy McArn, who studied Human Resource administrators who are women of color in K-12 urban school districts in California; Audrey Dangtuw, who studied mental health leaders

serving veterans in Washington state; Greg Montanio, who studied company grade officers in the California Army National Guard; Vicki Hou, who studied mid-level leaders in California community colleges; Martha Godinez, who studied victim specialists in California; Penny Shreve, who studied female presidents of California community colleges; and Christopher Schoenwandt, who studied field grade officers in the California Army National Guard.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Modern leaders face a complex, dynamic, demanding, and globally interconnected workplace. Organizational leaders are asked to do more with fewer resources such as time, money, and staffing (Babiak-Vazquez, 2016). These turbulent conditions are fueled by rapid advancements in digital technology, political developments, and regulation and are further complicated by external factors and crises such as COVID-19 (Bennett, 2017; Dweck, 2012; Luis & Vance, 2020; Stricker et al., 2018). Researchers have described this environment as volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (Bennett, 2017) in which leadership has never been more difficult or crucial (Ducheyne, 2017; Millar, 2018; Pangaribuan, Wijaya, Djamil, Hidayat, & Putra, 2020). The modern leadership climate requires continual performance, the ability to adapt, learn, and innovate in dynamic conditions (Rahmadani, Schaufeli, Stouten, Zhang, & Zulkarnain, 2020). How a leader interprets and reacts in uncertainty is a large determining factor in leader success. Archilochus, a Greek poet, stated “We don’t rise to the level of our expectations; we fall to the level of our training” (Feloni, 2017, para. 3). Therefore, in this turbulent stress-filled environment it is imperative that leaders are trained to employ strategies when stressors are present and thereby retain personal health to maintain productive and exemplary leadership.

According to a Center for Creative Leadership survey, 88% of leaders reported that work was a primary source of stress and that leadership heightened stress levels (M. Campbell, Baltes, Martin, & Meddings, 2007; Holcomb, 2020). If work demands present stressors that do not match an individual’s coping abilities, more stress can be experienced, which in turn prompts a physiological response. Interpreted negatively,

stress and continual activation of the physiological stress response mechanisms can result in medical, psychological, and behavioral distress resulting in poor physical health and unhealthy mentalities (Holcomb, 2020; Sallen, Hemming, & Richartz, 2018). All of these contributing factors are contrary to individual wellness and can have a net negative affect on a leader's ability to lead.

Strategies for managing stress are especially important to a military leader in terms of battle preparation and more significantly, awareness to the battles they wage in the operational environment. Described as “a composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences” that affect a leader's mission, the operational environment is dynamic and ever evolving (U.S. Department of the Army, 2014b, p. 1-1). National Guard leaders are citizen soldiers who operate in turbulent multiple modern operational environments; they must not only navigate leadership obstacles in their civilian careers but also be available to provide exemplary leadership during times of crisis through military activations when called upon to perform military duty (Vest, 2014). As a reserve component of the Army, National Guard soldiers can be activated in local communities for domestic missions, such as wildfires and civil unrest and recently, for civil support during the global pandemic or federally for overseas operations such as the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars (National Guard Bureau [NGB], n.d.).

The coronavirus global pandemic of 2020 and unprecedented number of high-level domestic operations have contributed to National Guard soldiers being activated in higher numbers and for longer periods than at any time since WWII, beginning in 2001 after the 9/11 attacks (Ott, 2021; St. Laurent, 2004; *Reserve Forces*, 2005; Winkie, 2020). These prolonged activations can have detrimental effects to National Guard soldiers in

terms of chronic stress exposure without a break between their civilian and military duties. It is important to understand how National Guard leaders manage stress and remain grounded in their leadership.

Background

The relationship between overall health and performance can be traced back to ancient cultures seeking the balance of mind, body, and spirit (Cohen, 2010). This progressive concept known as wellness has evolved over time to encompass multiple health dimensions and addresses the physical, mental, and spiritual components of a lifestyle to achieve the highest potential for well-being (Strohecker, 2005b). According to wellness author James Strohecker, health is one's greatest investment, asset and wealth, for wealth cannot be enjoyed without life and health (Strohecker, 2005a). Health is based on individuals' ability to maintain their overall wellness and is connected to their overall performance. Individual wellness continues to evolve, and its influence can be felt in communities, businesses, economies, and the planet as a whole (Cohen, 2010). Wellness and leadership share the potential to affect others negatively or positively. Wellness behaviors and concepts are individual but affect others. Similarly, leadership behaviors are multidimensional concepts with far-reaching capabilities to affect others positively or negatively.

One of the many definitions of leadership is the process by which an individual influences others toward the achievement of common goals (Northouse, 2010). Wellness has a role in providing developmental and coping strategies to thrive in an evolving environment (Edington, Schultz, Pitts, & Camilleri, 2015). The level of stress an individual experiences is proportional to the dynamic demands placed upon a leader.

Relationship building, conflict management, and decision making are frequently contributors to increased levels of leader stress (M. Campbell et al., 2007). The roles of leaders are diverse; thus, a key skill of a leader is the ability to adapt to dynamic conditions of the modern workplace (Stroecker, 2005b). Therefore, individual leader health is an important attribute that affects leader behavior and the ability to effectively lead. Nurturing personal leadership skills will enable leaders to implement techniques to bounce back from adversity and be the best they can be (Armellino, 2016). As the operational environment continues to evolve and increase in demands, expansion of leader health and wellness to meet challenges will continue to be a critical asset and skill for modern leaders (Edington et al., 2015).

Leader health is a critical component to provide exemplary leadership and has been researched extensively (Rivera-Kumpf, 2018; Rosen & Ross, 2014). The effects of stress on modern leaders have been well researched; modern leaders are asked to do more with less—less time and fewer resources (Babiak-Vazquez, 2016). Recurrent and routine demands of leaders are the starting points of chronic stress and are increasing in everyday life (Sallen et al., 2018). These factors increase leader stress levels that must be addressed by both leaders and the organizations in which they serve. A 2014 study conducted by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) indicated that 40% of American employees state very or extremely stressful job conditions (Richardson, 2017). Additionally, 75% of workers believe that compared to the previous generation, they endure more on the job stress (Richardson, 2017). At the time of this research (2022), the United States and the world were 2 years into the

COVID-19 pandemic, and the stress levels may be assumed to be significantly higher than these authors suggest.

Working in an uncertain and complex environment is becoming a normal context for 21st-century leadership. Leaders must adopt appropriate skill sets and perspectives to withstand stress and thrive not just survive (Elkington, Steege, Glick-Smith, & Breen, 2017). Leader self-care is a key step in mitigating negative consequences of stress to create a positive leadership environment and foster positive organizational growth in complex and challenging environments (Grise-Owens, Miller, Escobar-Ratliff, & George, 2018). Leader health is critical to provide a grounded basis from which a leader can operate to withstand environmental thunderstorms and not succumb to shock but instead become energized and thrive (Rosen, 2013).

Theoretical Foundations

Theoretical foundations help to create a base for the study and lead to the literature on grounded leadership as well as ultimately to the theoretical framework. The authors and their work in this section are seminal to the field of grounded leadership. The works of Halbert Dunn, John Travis, Donald Arnell, and Bill Hettler are forerunners to the grounded leadership theory of Rosen (2013), which is the framework for this study. This section additionally addresses the core concepts of social cognitive theory and the social ecological model and how they relate to leader wellness.

Psychology of Wellness

Halbert Dunn. Much of the foundational work for leader self-care is grounded in the wellness movement and was completed by Dr. Halbert Dunn in 1959. He built upon the World Health Organization's (WHO) definition of health as not merely the absence of

infirmity and disease but the complete state of mental, physical, and social well-being (Dunn, 1959). Dunn described health as a complex state of overlapping levels of wellness that must be recognized, explored, and incorporated into overall health to achieve high-level wellness (Dunn, 1959). This grounding can provide a basis from which a leader can understand the environment and adapt accordingly to maintain health. His work formed the groundwork for future work in the health and wellness field that was furthered by John Travis.

John Travis. Travis expanded upon Dunn's concept that the absence of illness is not synonymous with quality of life but the starting point to high-level wellness. He developed a tool to determine an individual's level of wellness known as the wellness inventory. The wellness inventory identified signs that led to symptoms and subsequent disability (Strohecker, 2019). Steps to wellness were awareness, education, and growth, and the overall goal was to achieve a higher level of wellness and quality of life regardless of the current state of physical health (Stará & Charvát, 2015). Travis's work was expanded in *Mapping Wellness*, a 1970s dissertation by Donald Ardell.

Donald Ardell. Ardell is credited with bringing wellness to the forefront of awareness to the general public and making it a household term (Miller, 2005). Ardell's wellness map was defined by the acronym REAL. R signifies a reasoned critical thinking way to evidence-based living (Ardell, 2019). In other words, it means utilizing evidence to inform personal life behaviors. E represents exuberance or the emotional component in which an individual seeks happiness, joy, meaning, and purpose of life; it is otherwise known as love (Ardell, 2019). A represents athleticism, the physical component of living that includes nutrition and diet to achieve wellness (Ardell, 2019). L stands for liberty or

the personal freedoms that it takes to live life and bring meaning to the individual (Ardell, 2019) and create opportunities to be the kind of person the individual intends to be (Hettler, 2015). Although Ardell did not endorse the spiritual dimension of wellness, he challenged the thought of wellness as quality existence rather than health (Stará & Charvát, 2015). His work in producing attention for wellness ideas paved the way for William Hettler.

Hettler's work integrated mind, body, and spirit to develop the whole person (DiMonda, 2005). He identified six dimensions focused on aspects of leader health self-care and concentrated on behaviors that would increase resilience (Rivera-Kumpf, 2018). In other words, leader awareness of their environmental interconnectedness within the six dimensions would produce a resilient and healthy leader capable of optimal living and performance (Babiak-Vazquez, 2016). The six dimensions of wellness discussed in Hettler's research were (a) physical, (b) intellectual, (c) occupational, (d) social, (e) emotional, and (f) spiritual (Babiak-Vazquez, 2016). These tenets were the root of additional research for the grounded leader framework enhanced by Rosen in his 2013 book, *Grounded: How Leaders Stay Rooted in an Uncertain World*. Rosen's grounded leadership model is further discussed in the theoretical framework.

Behavioral Health Theories

The basis of all of the wellness concepts authored by Dunn, Travis, Ardell, and Hettler were founded upon several theoretical models and illustrate how wellness can affect an individual's behavior. For the purpose of this study, two behavioral health theories are significant as they explore the relationship between environment and leader behavior. The social cognitive theory considers how leaders think is manifested in their

behaviors, and the social ecological theory considers the environment in which a leader operates and influences. Together, these two theories are significant to this study as leader beliefs manifest in behaviors, which in turn influence the environment in which a leader operates and impacts those around them.

Social ecological model. The social ecological model (SEM), developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner, offered a new approach to public health and considered both human and environmental factors to understand disease (J. Campbell, 2021). Consistent with the social cognitive theory that environmental changes produce can affect behavioral choices to retain wellness, the ecological perspective of the SEM added that health is an outcome of the person's environment fit and that physical and environmental conditions were interdependent (Grzywacz & Fuqua, 2000). SEM proved useful in understanding individual, interpersonal, community, and organizational interactions. In summary, SEM indicates that social environments are influenced and shaped by health behaviors. These behaviors are also relevant to how individual leaders interact with their environment and community and therefore leadership. Environment was also a consideration of social cognitive theory.

Social cognitive theory. In 1977, psychologist Albert Bandura founded the social cognitive theory (SCT), which sought to further previous research by describing the relationship between human development, adaptation, and the ensuing change that happens in individuals (Bandura, 2002). SCT provided a framework for analyzing psychological processes and explaining how behavior develops and is maintained and how it can be modified (Wulfert, 2019). SCT describes the process in which an individuals' behavioral motivations are influenced by social interactions and

environmental considerations (Schunk & Usher, 2019). The three main factors that describe the ability of a person to change health behavior are (a) self-efficacy, (b) goals, and (c) outcome expectancies. If individuals possess self-efficacy, they can change behaviors and effectively assert control over their health behavior even when faced with obstacles. A person can adopt new behaviors that will in turn cause changes in the environment and in the individual (International Labour Organization, 2019). Modern leaders require the ability to perform, adapt, and learn in a rapidly changing environment (Rahmadani et al., 2020). Therefore, SCT is relevant to this study as it identified the interdependence of behavior, thinking, and environment and how these factors influence each other (L. Wang, Wu, Liu, & Wan, 2021). In much the same way wellness comprises several dimensions and has advanced over time, leadership theory is also multifaceted and continues to evolve.

Theoretical Framework

Rosen expanded upon William Hettler's work by including subcomponents of each of the six dimensions (Rosen, 2013). In Rosen's *Grounded: How Leaders Stay Rooted in an Uncertain World*, he speaks to six dimensions of (a) physical health, (b) emotional health, (c) intellectual health, (d) social health, (e) vocational health, and (f) spiritual health (Rosen, 2013). The six dimensions are summarized in this chapter and discussed in depth in Chapter 2. According to Rosen, the relationship between leader identity and action are summarized in the following three points: (a) Who a leader is drives actions, (b) Who a leader is, is grounded in healthy roots, and (c) Healthy leaders foster healthy communities (Rosen, 2013). Rosen began the discussion of grounded leadership with physical health.

Physical Health

Physical health represents body-mind awareness and energy management to produce a peak performance lifestyle. Body-mind awareness refers to the interconnectedness of the mind and the body (Rosen, 2013). Synchronizing these two integrated systems assists in optimizing overall performance. Energy management is the ability to utilize physical or mental stress to recharge and expand capacity for additional energy storage (Heffes, 2003). Peak performance lifestyle combines multiple aspects of physical health including physical activity and eating healthy to aid in preventing and lowering risk for illness. The body and mind are interdependent, and the emotional aspect is also an important part of mental health.

Emotional Health

Emotional health includes self-awareness, positive emotions, and resilience. Self-awareness is a leader's ability to think clearly and prevent emotions from negatively affecting or clouding decision making and to be introspective and understand how he or she interacts with others (Rosen, 2013). Positive emotions describe how leaders utilize optimism and hope, grounded in reality, to achieve goals and see the best in others (Rosen, 2013). Resilience is a continuation of positive emotion that allows a leader to assess challenges or uncertainty and retain emotional flexibility to exercise problem-solving abilities to maximize positive outcomes (Rosen, 2013). Expanding mental capacity to deal with challenging and complex situations and prioritize action is also the intent of intellectual health.

Intellectual Health

Intellectual health represents deep curiosity, the ability of a leader to maintain an adaptive mindset and to utilize paradoxical thinking (Rosen, 2013). Deep curiosity is the intentional, conscious, and focused thought that allows leaders to seek out new knowledge and learn (Rosen, 2013). Curiosity is integrated with an adaptive mindset and the ability to retain agile thinking during uncertain times (Rosen, 2013). This agility allows a leader to consider new ideas and question assumptions while retaining deliberate, logical, and innovative decision making (Zhang, Waldman, Han, & Li, 2015). Paradoxical thinking is the opposite of deliberate logical thinking to consider opposites to achieve a balanced approach to leadership and decision making (Rosen, 2013). Considering internal thought processes with external factors is foundational to intellectual health, and social health is similar in that it describes considering others in addition to self.

Social Health

Social health comprises the abilities to be authentic, maintain mutually rewarding relationships, and nourish teams and communities. Authenticity describes leader self-awareness to know, be, and share oneself (Rosen, 2013). Authenticity is grounded in the following components: (a) creditability, being truthful to self and others; (b) dependability, upholding commitments and promises; (c) predictability, consistently upholding values and attitude; (d) valuing the common good or acting in the best interest of a group, team, or organization; and finally, (e) emotional safety, not abusing others' feelings, self-image, principles, or health (Rosen, 2013). Maintaining mutually rewarding relationships consists of (a) empathy, the cognitive and motional

understanding of fears, aspirations, frustrations, and concerns of others; (b) fairness, the ability to treat others with equity to generate cooperation and trust; (c) communication, expressing in written word or action and opening a dialogue that benefits both parties; and (d) appreciation, the ability to recognize and show gratitude for others (Rosen, 2013). All of these factors allow a leader to open dialogues and maintain a mutually beneficial relationship for others and the organization and ultimately generate positive results. Closely related to the generation of positive results through dedication and hard work is vocational health.

Vocational Health

Vocational health is a leader's capacity to have a meaningful calling and obtain personal mastery while maintaining the ability to succeed (Rosen, 2013). Meaningful calling is a leader's capacity to find inspiration and tap into passion (Dumulescu, Opre, & Ramona, 2015). It also allows identification of unique talent, skills, and abilities so that others may thrive (Kolodinsky, Ritchie, & Kuna, 2018). Personal mastery is the inner satisfaction of being able to grow, improve, and command knowledge or a particular skill (Rosen, 2013). Drive to succeed is the harmony of maximizing talent and effort and generating a positive environment to leave a legacy for the future of the organization (Rosen, 2013). Connecting with others is also a hallmark of spiritual health.

Spiritual Health

Spiritual health embodies a leader's ability to obtain a higher purpose while maintaining global connectedness and to cultivate a spirit of generosity (Rosen, 2013). Higher purpose is founded upon personal values and the utilization of personal talent, skills, and abilities and helping others to do the same while finding their why (Rosen,

2013). Global connectedness is a leader's ability to understand and appreciate culture, discover subordinate talents, and build a culture of mutual respect (Rosen, 2013). This culture of mutual respect is fostered with a spirit of generosity. Generosity describes the ability of a leader to demonstrate gratitude and humility that underscores personal and collective contributions to the organization (Rosen, 2013). Gratefulness assists leaders foster an environment of employee engagement and loyalty and can positively touch the lives of organizational members.

The operational environment in which modern leaders operate requires continual performance, adaptation, learning, and innovation to sustain a competitive advantage and achieve critical organizational goals (Rahmadani et al., 2020). According to Rosen (2013), holistic synergy across all six dimensions of health has the ability to result in high performance. For military organizations, high performance is at a premium as military leaders frequently work in high stress jobs and situations that could involve individual or team life and death decisions (Boykin, Allison, & Rice, 2020). The Army recognizes the necessity to develop leaders who can effectively employ critical thinking and operate under complex and uncertain conditions (Stafford & Thornhill, 2012). Army leaders and their ability to maintain health in the six dimensions and retain personal wellness to provide exemplary leadership are the focus of this study.

The National Guard

As a reserve component of the Army, The National Guard members perform duty 2 days a month and 2 weeks a year. They serve both locally within their communities and overseas (Bryan & Bryan, 2019). The part-time aspect of their service means that members must transition between military and civilian life and be available when called

upon by the state or federal government (Vest, 2014). A complex set of challenges that are unique to the National Guard face reserve component military members; for this reason, leadership strategies that foster healthy leader roots to withstand the challenges of the complex environment are critical.

Army National Guard Company Grade Officers

Company grade officers are first-line leaders who are responsible for the health, welfare, morale, and care of soldiers performing an overseas or domestic mission (U.S. Department of the Army, 2020c). They range in rank from second lieutenant to first lieutenant with the responsibility for 30-40 soldiers (U.S. Department of the Army, n.d.-a). Captains are the top rank in company grade leadership and are responsible for an Army unit or company of approximately 100-400 soldiers (U.S. Department of the Army, n.d.-a). Company grade officers are directly responsible for mission accomplishment as they are the first line of offense and defense during combat or domestic operations (U.S. Department of the Army, 2020c). Soldiers at company level are the ground troops who engage the enemy face-to-face; ultimately, they execute primary missions. National Guard company grade officers represent a unique and understudied population that must balance both military and career while navigating leadership challenges.

Statement of the Research Problem

The modern workplace environment requires leaders to do more with less while the leadership environment continues to change and expand in complexity, leading to chronic stress exposure. The complex leadership environment that National Guard leaders face is a result of the convergence of three important factors: (a) increased need for domestic civil support, (b) increased National Guard reliance for overseas missions,

and (c) the need to balance employer demands in civilian employment. All of these factors represent sources of stress, which if not properly addressed, can be detrimental to leaders' personal health and ultimately, the leadership they are able to provide to subordinates. National Guard leaders who lead troops on the front line of these important missions require the ability to learn, innovate, and problem solve in the most complex of environments (Stafford & Thornhill, 2012). Armed with automatic sets of consecutive actions, known as routines, can exemplify the adaptive function of learning a leader can conserve energy, increase perceptual effectiveness, and preserve resources for human behavior and performance (Heintzelman & King, 2019). In other words, National Guard leaders require routines that allow them to retain personal health and maintain personal effectiveness.

With increased civil support demands and limited resources, first responders have become overwhelmed by longer hours and long-term fatigue (Bransford, 2018). As a result, military forces must be available to respond to natural disasters as first responders exceed their capabilities (Bentley, 2012). Many Guard members live in the communities in which they serve, decreasing response time and making them a readily available asset to provide capabilities not found in local first responders as directed by state governors (NGB, n.d.; *Reserve Forces*, 2005). Within the past 3 years, National Guard soldiers have seen a steady increase in domestic activation. In 2018, Guard forces were activated 195 times for homeland response missions, and this trend has continued (NGB, 2020). In 2020 alone, the National Guard activated over 8.4 million days of active duty for domestic missions that included support for severe weather relief, wildfire response, and civil unrest support; over 18,000 service members supported the initial COVID-19

response with mitigation and logistics support (Ott, 2021; Winkie, 2020). In addition to their domestic mission, National Guard members also support overseas missions.

Along with the reserve and active-duty components of the Army, the National Guard represents more than 39% of the total Army's operational forces and is a key element of combat power for overseas missions (NGB, 2020). Between 2001 and 2007, over 70% of National Guard service members experienced an overseas deployment (Vest, 2014). Overseas, soldiers face high-stress and potentially life-threatening situations such as combat. The stress experienced by National Guard members is considered to be higher than that of their active-duty counterparts (Morgan, Brown, & Bray, 2018). High stress or traumatic experiences can lead to mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, or posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which can manifest in suicidal ideation and potentially, suicide. Post overseas deployment, National Guard soldiers report higher rates of psychiatric problems and suicide versus their active-duty counterparts (Hoopsick, Homish, Vest, Bartone, & Homish, 2021; Myers, 2019).

Frequent domestic emergency activations and increased overseas deployment operational tempo are additional contributing factors that escalate soldier stressors such as separation from family and prolonged departure from civilian employment, which can lead to financial and healthcare challenges (Russell, Kazman, Benedek, Ursano, & Russell, 2017). In the performance of prolonged military duty, reservists often lose income because of pay disparities between military and civilian employment (Russell et al., 2017). Whether in the performance of civilian or military employment, leaders face volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA; Bennett, 2017). At the

forefront of overseas combat missions or domestic response are company grade officers who lead soldiers in mission accomplishment.

Company grade officers are first-line leaders who are responsible for the health, welfare, morale, and care of soldiers. Since 2015, retention of these key leaders in the National Guard has progressively declined year after year (Director's Personnel Readiness Overview [DPRO], 2020). According to a 2015 report, less than 6% of National Guard soldiers will complete a service commitment of over 5 years (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2015). Declining retention was a signal that soldier health and wellness strategies were sorely needed, and the Army responded in 2008 with Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (Stephanie Smith, 2013).

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) is based on the Penn Resiliency Program; CSF taught cognitive behavioral techniques to promote "emotional fitness," defined as life satisfaction, positive mood, freedom from depression, optimism, active coping, character strengths, and personal resilience (Stephanie Smith, 2013). CSF operationalized psychological resilience in four dimensions: (a) emotional, (b) family, (c) social, and (d) spiritual (Steenkamp, Nash, & Litz, 2013). According to a meta-analysis completed in 2009, the effects of CSF have been inconsistent despite widespread implementation to over 1 million soldiers (Brunwasser, Gillham, & Kim, 2009; Eidelson, Pilisuk, & Soldz, 2011). At the time of this writing, there were no peer-reviewed published outcome data on CSF (Stephanie Smith, 2013, Steenkamp et al., 2013).

In 2020, the Army launched the Holistic Health and Fitness System (H2F) to cultivate soldier readiness. H2F is designed to assist soldiers maintain an adaptive posture by leveraging evidence-based practices to optimize individual performance while

preventing injury and disease (U.S. Department of the Army, 2020d). The overall H2F goal is to improve the Army's culture of health and fitness by addressing physical and nonphysical domains of sleep, nutrition, and spiritual readiness to bolster performance and enhance overall readiness (U.S. Department of the Army, 2020d). At the time of this writing, the H2F system was still in the beginning stages of implementation.

It is critical for military personnel to possess personal health strategies to positively cope with and counteract the unique challenges of the military. Strategies to prevent stress from becoming distress are relevant for National Guard leaders to retain personal health, remain grounded to provide exemplary military leadership, and ultimately provide exemplary leadership in the communities that they serve. It is imperative that company grade officers are armed with strategies that support grounded leadership.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed methods study was to identify and describe what exemplary California Army National Guard (CA ARNG) company grade officers do to maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health.

Research Questions

1. How do exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers rate their use of grounded leadership strategies in the six dimensions of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health on the Stay Grounded survey?

2. What strategies do exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers use to develop and maintain grounded leadership in the six dimensions of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health?

Significance of the Problem

Occupational stress is inevitable for modern leaders; how they cope with it to produce positive outcomes is key to effective leadership. Military members experience a wide range of stressors during performance of their duties (Bryan & Bryan, 2019; Hisey & Kotrlik, 2010; Naifeh et al., 2019). Acute stressors and daily conflicts can lead to extended periods of stress exposure. Allostatic load can negatively affect company grade officers and those they lead (Quick & Henderson, 2016). Allostatic load is defined as the cumulative burden of chronic stress and life events that exceeds the ability of the individual to cope (Guidi, Lucente, Sonino, & Fava, 2021). Approximately 12% of active service members met criteria for acute stress, anxiety, or a mood disorder (Stephanie Smith, 2013). Additionally, postdeployment health causes reintegration problems with family and communities which increases risk for ongoing or lifelong mental health conditions (Stephanie Smith, 2013; Steenkamp et al., 2013). These mental health risks if not treated or mitigated can result in PTSD or suicide. In the 2018 Defense Department Annual Suicide report, the National Guard's suicide rate was reported at 30.6 deaths per 100,000 service members (Myers, 2019). This figure is higher than reserve component and active-duty soldiers, signifying National Guard soldiers are at great risk for suicide. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to potential contributing stressors such as feelings of isolation (Starr & LeBlanc, 2020). From March 2020, the beginning of the pandemic, to August 2020, the suicide rate for the total Army force

which includes active-duty, reserve, and National Guard component soldiers, increased to 200 compared to 166 during the same 2019 prepandemic period (Starr & LeBlanc, 2020).

The unique problem of National Guard company grade officers is the fact that they have intermittent interaction with their soldiers. Reserve component leaders perform military duty once a month and 2 weeks a year. Conversely, active-duty leaders interact with their soldiers much more frequently, on a weekly or daily basis. (Myers, 2019).

This may be addressed with effective strategies to manage stress and utilize it to positively enhance personal well-being between interactions.

The Army National Guard (ARNG) is a critical component to national security and domestic safety. At 350,000 soldiers, the National Guard makes up a third of the Army's support capabilities and more than 50% of combat forces (*Reserve Forces*, 2005). Domestically ARNG supports civilian authorities, providing immediate support within the communities in which they serve to furnish shortfall capabilities when other agencies are unable during state natural disasters or civil unrest (*Reserve Forces*, 2005). The COVID-19 global pandemic and civil support response following social justice movements are examples of the National Guard's domestic support role. The nature of the immediacy and uncertainty of activations requires soldiers to maintain high readiness levels at all times. At the heart of maintaining readiness levels is maintaining personal health and wellness to foster the ability to adapt to crisis domestically or overseas. At the forefront of these important missions are company grade officers.

Effective health management programs help maintain health, reduce health risks and self-sufficiency and improve well-being for individuals, families, and communities (Rimer & Glanz, 2005). In turn, healthy leaders produce healthy communities (Rosen,

2013) producing positive benefits for National Guard leaders, their families, and communities that they serve. Military personnel responsible for training leaders will benefit from the results of this study as they prepare future leaders. This study has the ability to provide leaders insights into the world in which military leaders operate as well as strategies to maintain a healthy lifestyle to meet the demands of a turbulent and fast-moving environment and not just survive but thrive.

Definitions

The following section defines terms utilized in this study. The terms were developed collaboratively by a team of peer researchers studying components of health as strategies to provide exemplary leadership and remain grounded during uncertain times. The definitions are organized in six areas of health: physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual. These six roots affect leaders' health and affect what they do.

Theoretical Definitions

Physical. Physical health is an individual's mind-body awareness to minimize fatigue, maximize energy management, build immunity, and maintain resilience to stress while sustaining a peak physical performance lifestyle (Donatelle & Ketcham, 2017; Rosen, 2013).

Emotional. Emotional health is the self-awareness and controlled response to life events that promote resilience and self-assurance (Aguilar, 2018; Hattie, Myers, & Sweeney, 2004; Ulione, 1996; Y. Wang, Xie, & Cui, 2016).

Intellectual. Intellectual health is a deep curiosity to acquire new knowledge that stimulates learning, increases change adaptability and builds mental agility to generate

innovative solutions (Naz, Rehman, Katpar, & Hussain, 2014; Rosen, 2013; van Rensburg, Surujlal, & Dhurup, 2011).

Social. Social health is the authentic relationships individuals have based on principles of fairness, trustworthiness, empathy, and communication that guide mutually rewarding interactions (McLeroy, Gottlieb, & Heaney, 2002; Parry, 1998; Rosen, 2013).

Vocational. Vocational health is a leader's career or calling leading to personal satisfaction in work that is meaningful. It is the ambition that motivates leaders to search out more challenges and achievements in their field (Hutchins, 1969; Senge, 2010).

Spiritual. Spiritual health is the beliefs or values of an individual's innermost self that motivate action and inspire toward purposes that embody empathy and go beyond self. It is a commitment to one's value system as a source of well-being providing a profound sense of global connectedness (Chirico, 2016; Covey, 2013; Dehler & Welsh, 1994).

General Definitions

Exemplary. Someone set apart from peers in a supreme manner, suitable behavior, principles, or intentions that can be copied (Goodwin, Piazza, & Rozin, 2014).

Grounded. A deep connection to the authentic self with "a sense of being fully embodied, whole, centered and balanced in ourselves and our relationships" (Daniels, 2005, p. 290). In this study, the roots of being grounded are in physical health, emotional health, intellectual health, social health, vocational health, and spiritual health (Daniels, 2005; Rosen, 2013).

Company grade officers. Company grade officers are first-line leaders who are responsible for the health, welfare, morale, and care of soldiers performing a combat or

domestic mission. They range in rank from second lieutenant, first lieutenant, and captain. These ranks are consistent with the pay grades of O-1, O-2 and O-3. Lieutenants maintain responsibility for 30-40 soldiers. Captains are the top rank in company grade leadership and are responsible for an Army unit or company of approximately 100-400 soldiers. Company grade officers are assigned to lead soldiers in the 181 companies situated across California. Company grade officers represent approximately 5% or 742 of the total 14,000 CA ARNG soldiers (DPRO, 2020).

Delimitations

This study was delimited to 15 exemplary California National Guard company grade officers. For the purposes of this study, an exemplary company grade officer is a military leader who exhibits at least four of the seven following criteria:

1. Evidence of successful development of grounded leadership skill (physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual);
2. Evidence of leading a successful organization or unit;
3. A minimum of 5 years of experience in the field;
4. Articles, papers, or materials written, published, or presented at conferences or association meetings;
5. Recognition by his or her peers;
6. Membership in professional associations in his or her field; and
7. Participation in workshops and seminars in work/life balance.

Organization of the Study

This study was organized into five chapters, references, and appendices. Chapter I introduced wellness foundations, theoretical foundations of leadership, and a theoretical

framework that provides a wellness foundation to provide grounded leadership from Rosen's grounded leadership text (Rosen, 2013). Also discussed in Chapter 1 were the National Guard and the importance of wellness to company grade officers performing duty in an environment of uncertainty because of frequent call ups to support domestic emergency response and overseas wartime missions. Chapter II discusses research and literature in the areas of stress, wellness, and leadership, the relationship between leadership and health to grounded leadership behaviors, and resiliency. Chapter III describes the methodology utilized to collect and analyze data for this study. Chapter IV provides an analysis of the data collected to arrive to the conclusions and results of the research. Chapter V summarizes the study with findings, conclusions, implications for the larger military community, and recommendations to further the research in this leadership area.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Chapter II provides a review of the literature related to wellness and the strategies relevant to leaders dealing with stress in the complex modern environment. It describes the importance of strategies leaders utilize to cultivate and maintain personal wellness relevant to Army National Guard (ARNG) company grade officers navigating the operational environment. These strategies are essential for effectively managing stress to operate from a grounded basis that fosters exemplary leadership while balancing a civilian and military career. The chapter begins by providing an introduction and overview of the literature and theoretical foundational theories that promote ideas of stress and the importance of wellness to the National Guard as an organization and to National Guard company grade officers. This is followed by Rosen's grounded theoretical framework, which is utilized and examined in this study, followed by the body of literature that encompasses leadership and its relationship to wellness. The literature review explores leadership types and strategies available to company grade ARNG leaders to remain grounded despite the many challenges experienced by reserve component military leaders. The chapter concludes with a summary of the literature and the significance and importance of the study.

Introduction

Health and well-being are important for high-level performance in any profession. For soldiers, physical performance and mental acuity are at a high premium. Soldiers not only have a responsibility to protect their fellow soldier in life and death situations but also to serve their communities. However, in a recent study conducted with Army soldiers, poor sleep, lack of activity, and unhealthy eating were identified as challenges to

a soldier's personal readiness and health (Dyer, 2016). Although the literature surrounding concerning effective habit formation and routines to maintain personal health and wellness is widely researched, the strategies that company grade officers actually employ to retain personal health to mitigate stress and build a foundation from which to provide exemplary leadership remains a topic for further examination.

Environmental complexity, uncertainty, and interconnectedness have been identified as the greatest challenges facing modern organizational leaders globally (Bennett, 2017; Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2017). Army National Guard leaders must also maintain the ability to transition between civilian and military organizational cultures. The National Guard is a community-based organization that began in 1636 when the first American colonies organized militias to resist foreign aggression and defend newly formed colonies (Doubler & Listman, 2007). Since their initial beginning as a reserve force, the current Army Total Force Policy dictates that the National Guard be available 24/7, making them immediately available for domestic missions or to augment regular or active-duty Army forces (Vest, 2014). Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, the ARNG has taken a larger role in the Army's operational force with continuing missions overseas and increasing domestic missions. This time period has been defined by persistent conflict requiring the National Guard to transform from a strategic reserve to an operational force ready and responsive to meet national security challenges (Stubbs, 2013). The COVID-19 global pandemic of 2020 signified an activation of more troops than at any time since World War II (Horton, 2020). This increasing operational tempo has led to an always on-duty state for National Guard leaders and a potential for chronic stress exposure.

At the forefront of every mission are company grade officers, responsible for leading platoon-sized elements of approximately 12-100 ground troops. Company grade officers must meet the following basic requirements: a 4-year college degree, a secret security clearance, minimum score of 110 on the General Technical (GT) section of the Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB; U.S. Department of the Army, 1994), and height, weight, and physical fitness standards (U.S. Department of the Army, n.d.-b, n.d.-c). Company grade officers are the principal planners and administrative managers of line unit soldiers. Company grade officers include the following ranks and pay grades: second lieutenant/O-1, first lieutenant/O-2, and captain O-3. Second lieutenant, responsible for leading 12-40 soldiers, is the initial entry rank into the officer ranks. First lieutenants are more seasoned with 18-24 months of service, and captains have at least 5 years' time in service and are responsible for 100-200 soldiers. At the higher levels of leadership, captains are responsible for instruction at skill schools, influencing 300-1,000 soldiers (U. S. Department of the Army, n.d.-a). This influence can be widely felt through the organization; therefore, it is important for that influence to be positive and that all company grade officers operate from a positive foundation.

Self-care is a foundational element of positive leadership and can be expressed as wellness (Gustafson, 2016). Wellness is not a single aspect or dimension of health but a combination of several dimensions of wellness that affect how a leader acts and performs (Dunn, 1959). Theoretical foundations forming wellness began with Halbert Dunn who stated that wellness is a complete well-being that incorporates, mind, body, and the environment in which a leader operates (Dunn, 1959). High-level wellness is a leader's potential for high-level functioning (Stará & Charvát, 2015). Dunn's work was continued

by Travis, Ardell, and Hettler who expanded on wellness as the absence of illness as the starting point to wellness. Wellness concepts founded in sociology, psychology, and public policy could be applied beyond healthcare to a lifestyle beginning in an individual that could manifest outwardly to create an environment of high performance, resulting in a wellness lifestyle (DiMonda, 2005; Strohecker, 2005b). The overall intended result is a state of self-actualization on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, by which individuals could direct their energy on personal growth activities, having addressed their most basic survival needs (Maslow & Lewis, 1987). This would allow the individual to address more complex issues to achieve their highest potential for wellness or as Dunn described, high-level wellness (Strohecker, 2005b). In other words, leaders must first take care of themselves before they can take care of others.

High-level wellness is related to leadership because personal leader behaviors manifest in their leadership. Satisfying basic personal needs requirements can allow leaders to perform in a manner that fosters achievement of meaning in life for self and others, to not just survive but thrive (Heintzelman & King, 2019). Through personal excellence, a leader can achieve high-level professional performance (Loehr & Schwartz, 2017). Authentic or transformational leadership is the manners in which personal behaviors manifest in leadership to subordinates and for the community. Healthy leaders produce healthy communities (Rosen, 2013). For the purpose of this study, the dimensions of wellness that are reviewed are based on Rosen's 2013 book, *Grounded: How Leaders Stay Rooted in an Uncertain World*. The six dimensions of wellness that make up the theoretical framework are (a) physical, (b) emotional, (c) intellectual,

(d) social, (e) vocational, and (f) spiritual. Prior to addressing the framework, the literature related to theoretical foundations is addressed.

Theoretical Foundations

The origins of wellness have foundations in the ancient civilizations in Rome, Greece, and Asia. Hippocrates, a Greek philosopher, maintained that sickness and disease were a product of diet, lifestyle, and environment. As a physician, he was interested in preventing sickness instead of treating diseases (Global Wellness Institute, 2019). Traditional Chinese medicine is based on tenets of seeking harmony in life by applying a holistic approach to achieve health and well-being (Global Wellness Institute, 2019). This holistic approach is similar to that of Ayurveda, which originated in India and seeks harmony of mind, body, and spirit by examining the relationship between diet, work, leisure activities, relationships, and interactions with others on personal health (Morrison, 1995). Although the approaches and definitions of wellness varied across continents, environments, and time, they center on individual behaviors that are relevant to modern leaders.

Today's leadership environment is complex and dynamic, fueled by technological advancements and increasing complexities that require not only job skills but also personal skills to navigate the environment in which leaders operate (Rosen, 2013; Stricker et al., 2018). The difference between struggling and the potential to achieve grounded leadership is the ability of a leader to act creatively, think critically, and be a problem solver to develop tools to work through environmental stressors and not just survive but thrive (Burwell, 2018; Rosen, 2013; Vaughan, 2013). When stress exceeds the capabilities and resources of an individual to withstand, it becomes distress and

results in maladies and illnesses that negatively affect a leader's ability for self-care and subsequently, care for their subordinates (Rosen, 2013; Staniszewska, 2020).

Wellness Theoretical Foundations

Leaders can utilize wellness to mitigate stressors and create a grounded basis from which to operate (Rosen & Ross, 2014). Finding strategies to utilize stress as a source of energy can increase performance during times of high demand and retain personal health to maintain exemplary leadership (Päivi, Elina, & Mari, 2019). Who leaders are informs how they behave and the competencies they exhibit while leading others, which has an overall positive or negative impact on the missions and people they lead (Rosen, 2013). The 1946 World Health Organization (WHO) definition of health was the state of mental, physical, and social well-being (Dunn, 1959). This included the individual's life experiences, sociocultural factors, the realization of physical and spiritual potential, and self-esteem as well as the subjective perception of the individual's own health and well-being (Staniszewska, 2020). This definition of wellness was furthered by the work of Halbert Dunn.

High-Level Wellness: Halbert Dunn

Halbert Dunn bolstered the 1946 WHO wellness definition to state that health was not simply the absence of disease or illness but included the state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being (Dunn, 1959). His definition of high-level wellness included personal assumption of individual responsibility for health and greater environmental awareness (Terry & Ardell, 2015). Wellness was defined as a method of functioning that maximized an individual's potential. High level wellness included the following three components: (a) a direction progressing toward higher function potential;

(b) an ever-expanding tomorrow with an open mind, challenging the ability to live at a fuller potential; and (c) integration of the individual's mind, body and spirit and comprehensive whole being in the functioning process (Dunn, 1959). Wellness requires maintaining a continuum of balance and purposeful direction within the environment to function (Dunn, 1959).

Wellness, as defined by Dunn (1959), is a direction progressing toward an ever-higher potential of functioning. He related the components to a baseball pitcher who just works on his arm but neglects the rest of his fitness and body. To perform as a high-level athlete or to achieve optimal wellness in life, one must balance all components and strive to be a well-rounded individual (Dunn, 1959).

During the course of his work, Dunn (1959) described the importance of wellness was due to the fact that world events such as the post-World War II baby boom, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, the world was changing rapidly. Science was progressing, communication and travel speed were increasing, and medicine and public health were saving lives (Dunn, 1959). The potential for high-level wellness was dependent on individuals, families, and communities' ability to engage in preventative aspects in the fight against disease, disability, and social breakdown. To strive toward not just surviving but thriving, high-level wellness importance was significant and not exclusively individual but significant to the community as well.

According to Dunn (1959), environment played a key factor in an individual's ability to achieve wellness. Well-being is synchronizing all states, wellness of the body, mind, and the environment. For maximum wellness to be achieved, an environment that encourages an individual to live life to the very fullest is necessary (Dunn, 1959). Dunn

consolidated lectures he made in a 1961 book *High Level Wellness*, which became a seminal work for wellness researchers who followed. Dunn (1959) stated, “It’s a shrinking world. It is a crowded world. It is an older world. It is a world of mounting tensions” (pp. 786–787). Those words hold meaning in the current leader environment that is volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. Dunn’s work inspired others to pursue a deeper meaning of wellness and was expanded upon to include additional dimensions of well-being by John Travis and Don Ardell.

Wellness Model: John Travis

John Travis was a medical doctor who expanded upon the idea that the absence of illness does not equal quality of life, but it was the starting point of wellness (Body + Mind + Spirit, n.d.-a). Signs led to symptoms of disability and the steps along the way to wellness were awareness, education, and growth. The overall goal was to assist people to achieve higher levels of wellness and qualities of life than their current state of physical health (Global Wellness Summit, 2014). Travis founded a wellness clinic in Mills Valley, California and observed that while he was in a high wealth area in Marin County, the suicide rate was one of the highest in California. His conclusion was that money does not buy happiness or wellness (Global Wellness Summit, 2014).

Travis drew insight from Dr. Abraham Maslow’s concept of self-actualization; he conceived of a wellness continuum that would focus on inspiring people to be well instead of treating sick people (Body + Mind + Spirit, n.d.-a; see Figure 1). If individuals are ill, they can utilize the treatment paradigm, which includes medical interventions such as medicine, psychotherapy, or surgery to get to a neutral point where no discernable illness is present. Although individuals may not present with physical symptoms of

illness, they may still be unhappy with their lives, bored, depressed, tense, or anxious. Utilizing the wellness paradigm can assist an individual move to the right of the wellness continuum and achieve a higher level of wellness (Strohecker, 2019). According to Travis, the wellness paradigm is dependent on two important concepts: (a) the iceberg model and (b) the wellness energy system (Stará, & Charvát, 2015).

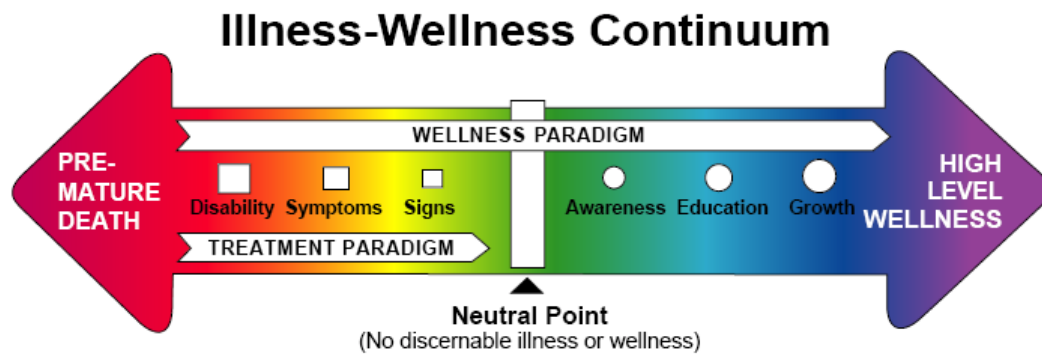


Figure 1. Illness wellness continuum. From “A New Vision of Wellness,” by J. Strohecker, p. 2, 2019 (<https://healthy.net/2019/09/24/a-new-vision-of-wellness/>).

According to Strohecker (2019), Travis’s iceberg model postulates that an individual’s state of health is a result of underlying levels of wellness as seen in Figure 2. The first level is how an individual safeguards against environmental hazards by engaging in physical exercise or relaxation to relieve stress. The second level is understanding what cultural, psychological, and motivational factors cause an individual to choose the lifestyle he or she leads. The deepest level is the spiritual, being, and meaning level, which manifests as the overall state of an individual’s health between disease or wellness (Strohecker, 2019).

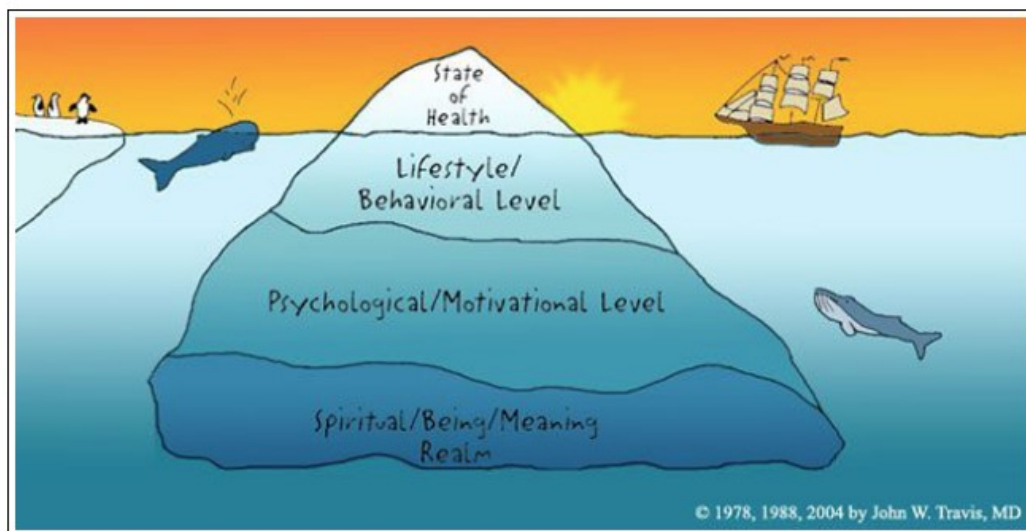


Figure 2. Iceberg model. “Wellness: Its Origins, Theories and Current Applications in the United States, by J. Stará, J. and M. Charvát, 2015, *Acta Salus Vitae*, 1(2), p. 86 (<https://www.muni.cz/en/research/publications/1174118>).

The wellness energy system, which forms the basis of the wellness inventory shown in Figure 3, is based upon 12 dimensions of how an individual interacts with the environment to take in energy, transform it, and return in into the environment (Strohecker, 2019). The wellness energy system and the following twelve dimensions form the basis of the wellness inventory, a wellness assessment tool. The 12 dimensions are the following:

1. Self-responsibility and love are the primary foundations for personal wellness and describe the ability to engage in self-care.
2. Breathing is an essential life process that allows for energy production. Mindful breathing can allow an individual to become more present by promoting relaxation, emotional calming, mental focus, and sensory awareness.

3. Sensing also allows for utilizing touching, seeing, smelling, hearing, and tasting to become more present by appreciating contact with the environment and relationships with others.
4. Eating, focusing on whole foods that fuel the primary source of metabolic energy, is consistent with self-care for physical, mental, and emotional health.
5. Moving signifies the balance between expressing life energy through physical activity and rest.
6. Feeling is emotion expressed as emotional intelligence and the state of self-awareness in relation to the environment.
7. Thinking is the power of mindfulness and making positive choices for well-being by engaging in positive thoughts and physical activities.
8. Playing and working is balancing work with play—creative, spontaneous activities that allow for personal recharging and the restoration of balance.
9. Communicating signifies an exchange between personally held realities, thoughts, and feelings and listening to others. Internal dialogue is also a key influencer of personal well-being.
10. Intimacy is building a foundation of trust to allow for authentic connections to others through appreciation, respect, and friendship.
11. Finding meaning is finding an answer to “Who am I?” and “Why am I here?”
Exploration of this dimension is key to finding meaning and importance in life.
12. Transcending is the dimension of faith, spirituality, and the connection to something greater than oneself. Within the final dimension, the other 11 dimensions find

synergy to allow for full engagement and to be fully present (Body + Mind + Spirit, n.d.).

John Travis is credited as being a father of the wellness movement, a title shared with Donald Ardell and William Hettler.

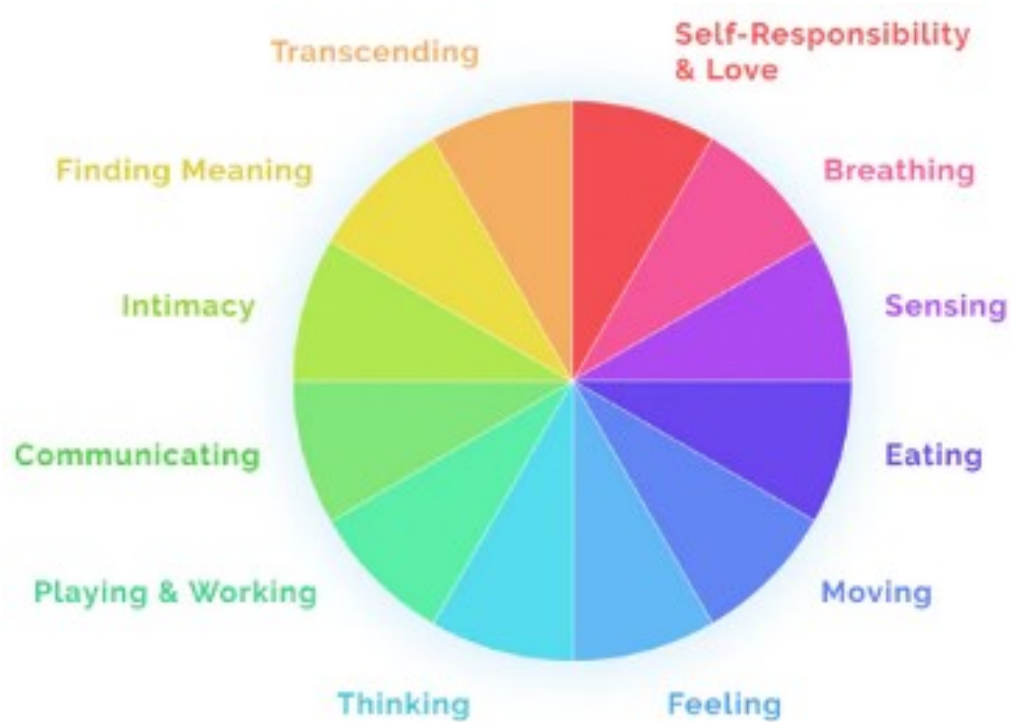


Figure 3. Twelve dimensions of wellness. From *The Wellness Inventory*, by Body + Mind + Spirit, p. 1, n.d.-b (<https://www.bodymindspirit.com/pages/12-dimensions-of-wellness-1>).

Donald Ardell

Donald Ardell cited the following three reasons for adopting a wellness lifestyle: (a) an individual is more likely to live longer, (b) drastically reduces chances for illness, and (c) richer quality of life (Hettler, 2015). Ardell further defined a wellness lifestyle by the acronym REAL as seen in Figure 4. REAL signified four dimensions of a positive

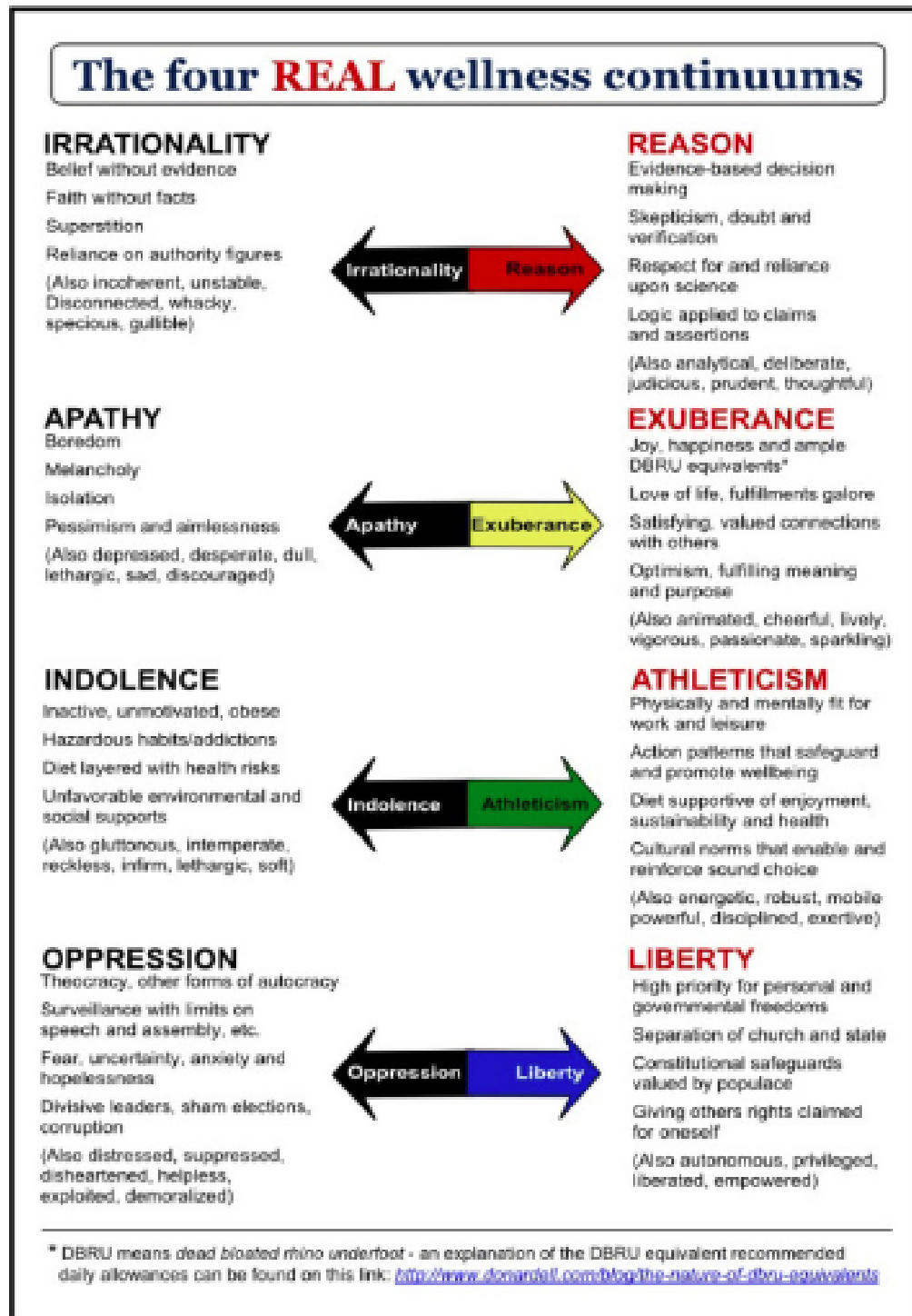


Figure 4. REAL wellness continuum. From “REAL Wellness,” by D. Ardell, p. 2, 2019 (<http://donardell.com/real-wellness>).

lifestyle continuum that promotes physical and mental well-being defined as the following:

R: Reason, critical thinking evidence-based living,

E: Exuberance, happiness, love, joy, meaning, and purpose

A: Athleticism and nutrition

L: Liberty, freedom, and living the way you want to live your life and to evolve to your best possible self (Ardell, 2019).

Ardell (2019) identified five basic areas of wellness to fully achieve balance:

(a) personal responsibility, not relying upon health care professionals or fate to achieve one's best possibilities for health and life; (b) well-balanced nutrition, to maintain optimal health and increase energy levels; (c) physical fitness, to pursue high levels of well-being and maintain optimal energy levels throughout the day; (d) stress management, the individual is the source for how stress in the environment is interpreted; building techniques and skills to utilize stress as a source of energy; and (e) environmental sensitivity, being self-aware to know what it takes to be a healthy person and create circumstances and foster an environment to move forward in a positive direction (Hettler, 2015).

Ardell also described two supporting areas fundamental to a wellness lifestyle:

(a) normative change and (b) utilizing personal wellness techniques (Hettler, 2015).

Normative change is the understanding of the extent to which personal habits and expectations shape the possibilities for an individual to achieve full-person aliveness or well-being (Terry & Ardell, 2015). Utilizing techniques to generate a personal wellness plan such as journaling allows identification of barriers or strategies to overcome

challenges, thereby enabling a higher potential for wellness. These techniques can increase commitment to the overall wellness plan and assist in identifying people who facilitate wellness goal achievement (Hettler, 2015). During the course of his research, Ardell met another researcher, Hettler, whose alternative health concepts and stress management systems celebrated personal responsibility for achieving wellness.

Six Dimensions of Health: William Hettler

As an Air Force veteran and medical doctor, William Hettler founded the National Wellness Institute (NWI) in 1977, a nonprofit organization that provided education and health promotion for healthcare professionals and eventually became part of university curriculums (Stará & Charvát, 2015). Hettler's work branched out into workplace wellness in the 1970s and included the concept of companies caring for their employees to reduce the cost of health insurance (Stará & Charvát, 2015). This concept manifested in wellness coaching, which aimed to arm people with tools that assist individuals achieve wellness. This program was designed to assist employee regarding awareness of their past in order to perceive what was happening inside their bodies and to visualize how to more effectively communicate and love and accept themselves (Hettler, 1976). Hettler described wellness as an active process whereby individuals achieve self-awareness and subsequently make choices toward achieving an increasingly successful existence. A successful existence also included finding the meaning of life (Hettler, 1976).

Hettler (1976) categorized wellness as being affected by the following six dimensions shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5. The six dimensions of wellness. From “The Six Dimensions of Wellness,” by W. Hettler, p. 1, 1976 (<https://nationalwellness.org/resources/six-dimensions-of-wellness/>).

1. Occupational, which is the ability to apply personal skill, talent, and values to work that is meaningful and rewarding.
2. Physical is a dimension that encompasses the need for physical activity and the relationship between healthy eating and performance and the mind-body connection. It also addresses the ability to build endurance to stave off illness and diseases.
3. Social addresses the interdependence between the individual, the environment, and the community. It encourages taking an active part in preserving the balance of nature to build a better environment and community.

4. Intellectual recognizes an individual's creativity, innovation, and knowledge to engage in problem solving and expand potential to positively contribute to others.
5. Spiritual involves searching out purpose or meaning in life, which assists in shaping an individual's world view and how they interact with others.
6. Emotional is the extent to which individuals recognize and accept their feelings to manifest a positive and enthusiastic attitude about life to form interdependent relationships based on mutual trust, respect, and commitment.

According to Hettler (1976), application of all six dimensions of wellness allows for self-awareness and understanding of how the dimensions are interconnected and how they contribute to healthy living. Rosen (2013) expanded on the six dimensions of wellness by describing their significance to leaders and the environment in which a leader operates. This relation is further discussed in the theoretical framework section of this chapter.

Behavioral Theoretical Models

Behavioral theoretical models seek to describe the factors that affect human behavior. The social ecological model was developed to enhance understanding of the relationship between social systems in the environment and their effects on human development (J. Campbell, 2021). Social cognitive theory provides a framework to explain how behavior develops and is maintained and to describe the processes that allow for behavior modification (Wulfert, 2019). For leaders it is relevant to understand the environment in which they operate, how the environment affects their leadership, and how their leadership affects the environment and those around them.

Social ecological model. Developed by psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner and published in 1979, the social ecological model (SEM) states that human development is dependent on social interaction and is useful in understanding what affects individual behavior (Breckenridge, 2019). The SEM can assist in developing multiple strategies throughout the framework levels to positively address problem areas to produce desired outcomes (J. Campbell, 2021). SEM is a framework of the following five socially organized and interrelated subsystems centered on the individual, as seen in Figure 6: (a) microsystem, (b) mesosystem, (c) exosystem, (d) macrosystem, and (e) chronosystem (J. Campbell, 2021).

The microsystem is first level of the framework and consists of the items that the individuals have direct contact and relationships with in their immediate environment. These relationships are critical to development as they have the ability to influence how the individual reacts to change beliefs and actions between self and others (J. Campbell, 2021; Guy-Evans, 2020). For leaders, microsystem relationships could consist of their family, peers, supervisors, or coworkers. Positive interactions can result in positive effects on the individual, whereas negative interactions could have detrimental effects (Guy-Evans, 2020).

The mesosystem contains the interactions between an individual's microsystems that are interconnected and influence each other (J. Campbell, 2021). If there are positive relationships between the microsystems, this can positively influence the individual. For example, if the individual's coworkers and supervisor have negative interactions, it can unfavorably impact the individual (Guy, 2020).

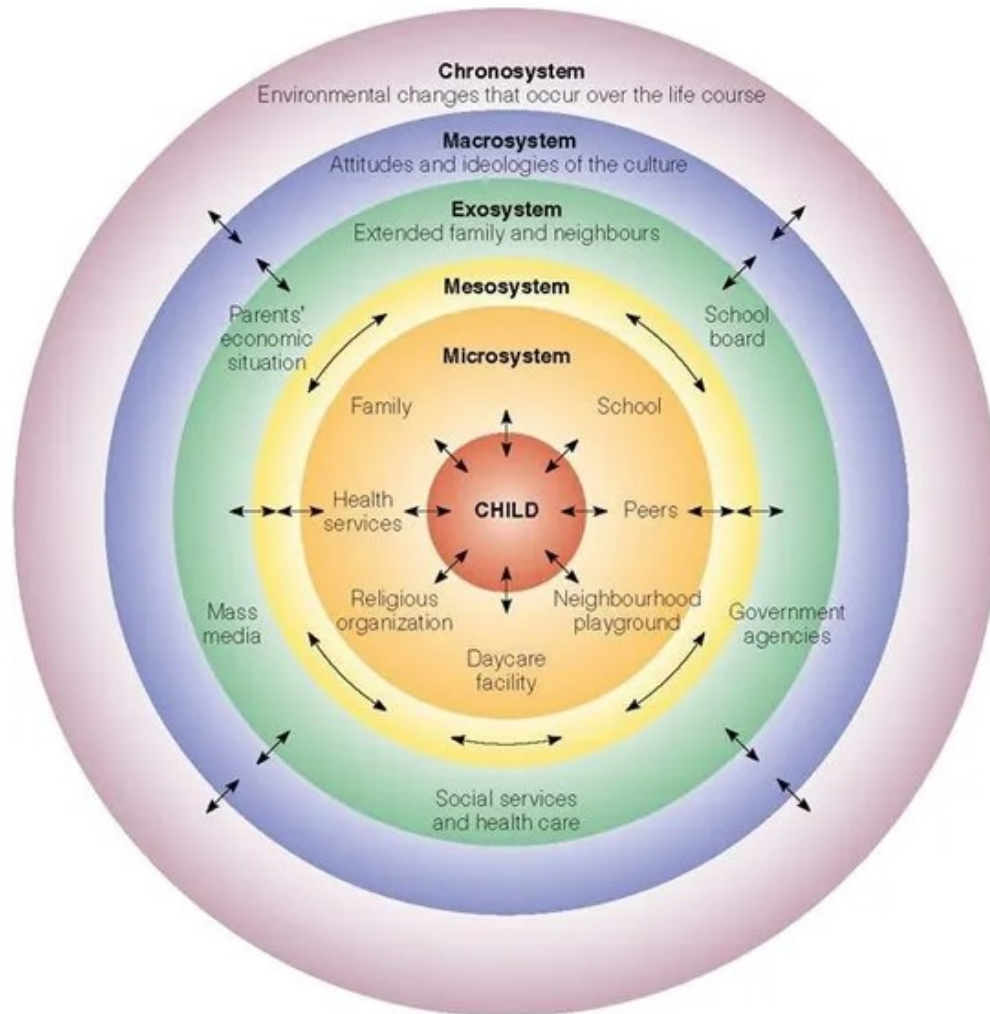


Figure 6. Bronfenbrenner's social ecological model. From "Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory," by O. Guy-Evans, 2020, *Simply Psychology*, p. 1 (<https://www.simplypsychology.org/Bronfenbrenner.html>).

The exosystem represents the informal and formal social structures that indirectly influence the individual's life by affecting one or more of the microsystems (Guy-Evans, 2020). For a leader, this could mean a coworker had a disagreement with the supervisor that caused an argument. That argument was a catalyst for a negative interaction between the peer and individual. This ultimately could result in a negative result in the individual's development (Guy-Evans, 2020).

The macrosystem represents the cultural aspects an individual's development such as ethnicity and socioeconomic status that shape the beliefs, perceptions, and world view of events that occur in life. Overall, the macrosystem is the established culture and society in which the individual exists and develops. It affects their life experience and how they develop; for example, a leader developing in the United States versus a third world country would have a different experience (Guy-Evans, 2020).

The chronosystem is the final system and illustrated as the outer ring in the SEM framework. It consists of environmental changes throughout an individual's life that influence development such as major transitions in life like graduating college, starting a new position, or getting married. It also includes nonnormative transitions in life and time such as a superior being fired or a change in public policy that affects the individual (J. Campbell, 2021; Guy-Evans, 2020). Overall, the significance of the SEM is that it addresses several environmental factors that directly impact an individual's development and behavior. Social cognitive theory also addresses environment by exploring the relationship between how individuals interact with the environment based on how individuals think and learn.

Social cognitive theory. Psychologist Albert Bandura developed social cognitive theory (SCT) in 1977, which was published in his book *Social Learning Theory* (Wulfert, 2019). SCT describes an ongoing process in which the following three components interact in a triangular relationship that they exert influence on each other as seen in Figure 7: (a) personal factors, (b) environmental factors, and (c) human behavior (Rimer & Glanz, 2005; L. Wang et al., 2021).

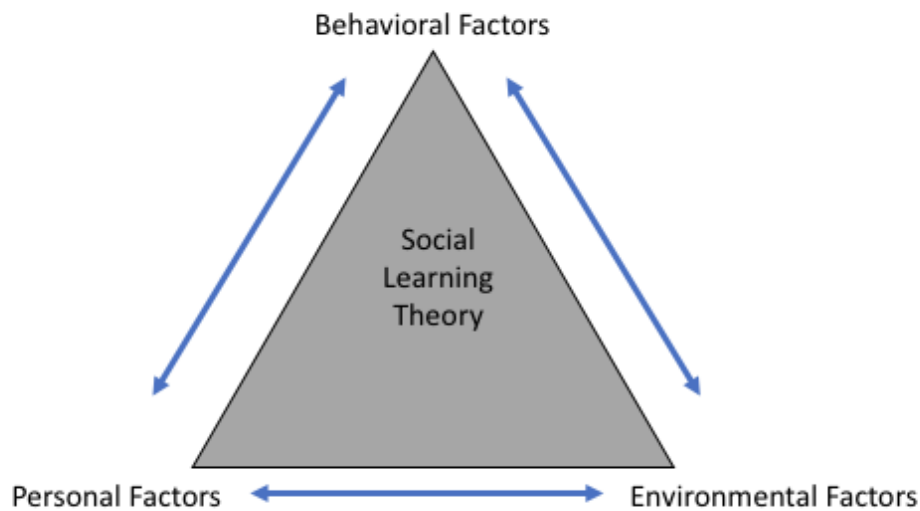


Figure 7. Albert Bandura’s social cognitive theory. Adapted from “Social Cognitive Theory of Organizational Management,” by R. Wood and A. Bandura, 1989, *Academy of Management Review*, 14(3), 361–384 (<https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.1989.4279067>).

Each of the factors affect each other and, through an individual’s self-regulatory processes, have the ability to affect behavior. Behavior can be affected by setting personal goals, creating cognitive strategies, and evaluating the effectiveness of the behavior (Wulfert, 2019). According to Bandura, the following three main factors affect an individual’s propensity to change behavior: (a) self-efficacy, (b) goals, and (c) outcome expectancies (Rimer & Glanz, 2005).

Bandura defined self-efficacy as people’s belief in their personal ability to achieve a desired outcome or goal (Wulfert, 2019). It is also a key motivating factor for goal accomplishment as self-efficacy allows for the perception of goal progress. Individuals with high self-efficacy believe that they have the ability to exert control over their environment, which leads to persistence or perseverance even when faced with challenges or external stressors (Yancey, 2019). As self-efficacy facilitates an individual to adopt new behaviors, to affect changes personally and in the environment (Rimer &

Glanz, 2005). Self-efficacy assists in goal setting and is a key motivational factor in goal achievement and behavior modification. Goals allow for self-evaluation on progress and allow an individual a sense of accomplishment, further self-efficacy, and the visualization of success (Schunk & Usher, 2019). Outcome expectancies are expressed in the hope that individual desires will be realized based upon behavior. Perception of progress furthers self-efficacy and motivation and positively affects behavior to remain true to personal values that further learning and goal attainment (Schunk & Usher, 2019).

A key focus of SCT is observational learning, which is an individual's ability to learn through modeling. According to Wood and Bandura (1989), observational learning can occur in two different ways: (a) direct experience or (b) observation of others (Wood & Bandura, 1989). Direct experience is an individual's own lived experience. Observation of others is watching others' behaviors, the energy expended, how they persist despite obstacles, and the results achieved. These observations either directly or indirectly affect individuals' own behaviors and guide their actions (Wulfert, 2019).

According to SCT, the three main factors that affect the likelihood that a person will change their health behavior even when faced with adversity are (a) self-efficacy, (b) goals, and (c) outcomes expectancies (Rimer & Glanz, 2005). A positive change for increasing personal health and wellness has the ability to influence others through subordinate observational learning. In other words, a leader modeling positive health behavior has the potential to positively shape a subordinate's behaviors for increasing personal wellness. Stress is an unavoidable environmental reality that leaders and employees will face in the modern workplace. The way a leader models coping strategies and behaviors is critical to successful leadership and workplace performance.

Stress Theories

The modern workplace is a complex, dynamic, and demanding environment in which stress is unavoidable and a natural part of life. Stress is the body's natural response to external stressors that provides a short boost of mental focus and physical energy to confront a perceived or actual threat (Ascher & Tonies, 2021), and by itself, it is not inherently negative. Short exposures to stress managed well can lead to adaptation, personal growth, and increased resilience or capacity to positively deal with additional environmental stressors (Ascher & Tonies, 2021). An individual's response to stress is independent of the stimulus (Staniszewska, 2020). In other words, two people can process the same experience or stressor very differently. According to a recent National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) report, 40% of Americans describe their job as "very or extremely stressful," and 75% believe that employees today contend with more on-the-job stress than their counterparts a generation ago (Richardson, 2017). A majority of employees do not know how to positively cope with stress (Holcomb, 2020).

The ability to identify unhealthy work stressors and perceive normal stress is important to balancing appropriate behaviors to achieve wellness (International Labour Organization, 2019). Chronic or excessive exposure to stress in daily routines, if perceived negatively or above healthy limits, can lead to medical, psychological, and behavioral distress (Burwell, 2018; Quick & Henderson, 2016). Exhaustion, depression, and burnout are the most common physical and psychological symptoms connected with chronic stress (Sallen et al., 2018). In addition to health problems, stress has also been

linked to negative societal costs such as absenteeism and loss of productivity (Päivi et al., 2019). WHO stated that stress is the epidemic of the 21st century (H. J. Campbell, 2017).

For employees without strategies to positively deal with stress in the dynamic work environment, lack of clarity and speed at which complexity increases in the workplace can lead to a feeling of helplessness, pessimism about what the future holds, and the ability to control it (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2017). Occupational stress is not a toxic condition that can be cured with treatment; it is a recurring condition that requires understanding and exploration of protection, prevention, and intervention measures (Quick & Henderson, 2016). As chronic exposure to workplace stressors continues, employees must develop tools to mitigate and work through the sense of overwhelming stress (Burwell, 2018).

Leadership Theories

A key resource in assisting employees develop strategies to positively cope with stress is workplace leaders. How they demonstrate their leadership is based on their leadership style. The following leadership theories are examined as relevant to this study: (a) authentic leadership theory: Authentic leaders understand their own internal values, beliefs, and priorities, and their behaviors are aligned with what they value and believe (Zimmer, 2021); (b) transformational leadership theory: Transformational leaders are self-aware and have the ability to influence positive changes for those they lead while achieving organizational goals (Chow, Mohd. Salleh, & Arif Ismail, 2017).

Authentic leadership. Authentic leadership theory has foundations in ancient Greece and the philosophy of “to thine own self be true” (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999; Petkeviciute, Barvydiene, & Surpikiene, 2018). It combines two qualities of leadership:

(a) a deep level of understanding and awareness of one's own personal beliefs, values, and priorities and (b) how those play out in contributing to values in individual behaviors. These beliefs and values are critical to a leader who is able to inspire trust by projecting a "what you see is what you get" leadership style (Zimmer, 2021).

Bruce Avolio is credited with the starting point of authentic leadership based on his work on full range leadership (Petkeviciute et al., 2018). Working with Fred Luthans's theories on positive organizational behavior, the combined result was the current version of authentic leadership theory (Caza & Jackson, 2011). Luthans and Avolio defined authentic leadership as a process that draws from both positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organizational context that results in greater leader self-regulated behaviors and self-awareness, which fosters positive self-development (Avolio, 1999).

Authentic leadership consists of the following four components: (a) self-awareness, the ability to be aware of one's values, goals, motives, and identity; (b) unbiased processing, understanding how personal biases affect how individuals process information and how they employ their skills in challenging situations to increase their learning potential; (c) authentic behavior, a leader's ability to remain true to core values that coincide with actions that influence subordinates; and (d) authentic relational orientation, transparency in action and the sharing of information about the motivations and rationale behind decision making in which a leader is open to giving and receiving feedback (Petkeviciute et al., 2018).

Authentic leadership is relevant to modern military leaders because individual behaviors affect how subordinates see their leaders. The variation in culture, upbringing,

and religious beliefs of Army leaders reflect the diverse values and beliefs and provide benefits to an organization performing missions domestically and around the world (U.S. Department of the Army, 2019). Leaders acting on their own personal beliefs and personal values and committing to their leadership have the ability to inspire trust in their subordinates and affect positive change (Khoshhal & Guraya, 2016). Inspiring others is a common thread between authentic and transformational leadership, which was a natural research progression for Avolio (Khoshhal & Guraya, 2016).

Transformational leadership. Avolio, along with Bernard Bass, is credited for the generation of transformational leadership theory (Folland, 2010). Transformational leadership is a style of leadership that emphasizes the ability of a leader to inspire and motivate others (Zimmer, 2021). Transformational leaders are able to change their organization by first understanding the environment in which they operate and work to realign organization culture to generate a new vision that incorporates shared assumptions, values, and norms (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders strive to integrate persistence, energy, creative insight, and emotional intelligence to shape the organizational culture to achieve organizational goals and challenge subordinates to creatively adopt an attitude of change and growth to move the organization forward versus simply achieving status quo (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

Transformational leadership comprises four components: (a) Idealized influence is the extent to which a leader provides mission vision, insight, and how subordinates view or regard their leader; (b) Inspirational motivation refers to the degree a leader can expand a follower's capacity to attain organizational and personal goals; (c) Intellectual stimulation is the ability of a leader to challenge followers to innovate and tap into their

creativity to engage solutions-based thinking to problem solve; and (d) Individualized consideration is a leader's ability to make a subordinate feel valued by listening to personal issues and offering support (Chan, Ang, Andleeb, Ahmad, & Zaman, 2019; Shafi, Zoya, Lei, Song, & Sarker, 2020).

Transformational leadership is highly adaptable, which is a key for military leaders who operate in an environment of volatility and uncertainty. Leadership rooted in the ability to think critically and apply thought and action in subordinates can lead to engaging the entire organization (Brown, Brown, & Nandedkar, 2019). Organizations aligned in strategy innovation and implementation are better able to achieve unity of effort and positive results (Wardhani, 2017). When the effectiveness of mission accomplishment is measured in terms of lives saved or lost, casualties or wounded, effective leadership and the ability to adapt, innovate, and retain personal health are paramount for military leaders. The evolution of personal health and leadership converged in grounded leadership, a theoretical framework introduced in 2013 by Rosen.

Theoretical Framework

Rosen's grounded leadership identified six dimensions of leadership that affect a leader's ability to provide exemplary leadership during difficult times and in turbulent environments as seen in Figure 8. The six dimensions of health are (a) physical, (b) emotional, (c) intellectual, (d) social, (e) vocational, and (f) spiritual. Rosen (2013) stated that the relationship between leader identity and action is summarized in the following three points: (a) Who a leader is drives actions, (b) Who a leader is, is grounded in healthy roots, and (c) healthy leaders foster healthy communities. The

manner in which leaders approach each of the six dimensions forms health enhancement strategies, which are the focus of this study related to military leaders.



Figure 8. Rosen’s grounded leader model. From “Grounded and Conscious: The New Leadership Imperative,” by B. Rosen & E. K. Swann, 2018, *People & Strategy*, 41(4), p. 21 (<https://healthycompanies.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/HRPS-41.4-Swann.pdf>).

Physical Health

According to Rosen (2013), the physical dimension shares previous definitions of wellness as not simply the absence of illness or disease but the presence of health. It signifies the foundation of a leader’s ability to provide exemplary leadership. Physical health allows a leader’s body to battle illness and heal and withstand stressors and

successfully adapt to increasing physical demands when necessary. Warning signs of declining physical health include insufficient energy and stamina, increased stress and unhappiness, inconsistent ability to think clearly, loss of work because of illness, decreased concentration and illness and ultimately lifestyle habits that undermine work capacity (Rosen, 2013). Body-mind awareness, energy management, and living a peak performance lifestyle are subcomponents of the physical dimension.

Body-mind awareness. Body-mind awareness was summarized by Renee Descartes, a 17th-century French philosopher who stated, “I think, therefore I am” (Thibaut, 2018). Descartes argued that the mind and body were two separate entities yet had a causal relation. Thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and attitudes have the ability to negatively or positively affect biological functioning. In other words, the mind can push an individual beyond his or her physical limits. Conversely, physical activities such as diet, exercise, and posture have a net negative or positive impact on an individual’s mental state (Hart, 2016). Integration of thoughts, feelings, and attitudes in a physical expression of a healthy self can allow a leader to actualize who they are and what they are doing to maximize potential and ability (Rosen, 2013). Dr. James Gordon, Founder of the Center for Mind-Body Medicine, stated, “The brain and peripheral nervous system, the endocrine and immune systems, all organs of the body and all the emotional responses we have, share a common chemical language and are constantly communicating with one another” (Hart, 2016, para. 8). The flow of electrical signals involved in consciousness, initiation of action, and movement is known as energy. Energy is self-regulating and receives input and feedback from the environment and

connects the mind and body (Rosen, 2013). Therefore, management of energy as a precious resource is key to maintaining health.

Energy management. To perform at a high level, soldiers require health and happiness as key aspects of managing and sustaining a high level of mental and physical energy (Loehr & Schwartz, 2017). Cofounder of the Johnson & Johnson Human Performance Institute and performance psychologist, Dr. Jim Loehr maintained that leaders are the stewards of organizational energy and how they effectively manage their personal energy impacts the focus, investment, and renewal of collective energy of those they lead. In other words, balancing energy and stressors enables the power to be fully engaged. In their book, *The Power of Full Engagement*, Loehr and Schwartz stated that stress exposure causes damage, but recovery brings repair. Exposure to stressors perceived positively has the ability to expand capacity and withstand stress, recover, and perform at a high level. Time is a finite resource; therefore, energy and not time is the fundamental currency of high performance (Loehr & Schwartz, 2017).

Peak performance lifestyle. Peak performance lifestyle is an individual's ability to design a personalized fitness plan to balance mental and physical energy, remain productive, and be resilient (Rosen, 2013). This requires a degree of self-regulation and dedication to engage in mental and physical routines that value stress to heighten energy levels during challenging times but not to the extent of reaching depletion. Physical balance means allowing time for sufficient sleep, a well-balanced diet, and physical activity for recovery (Rosen, 2013). In addition to health benefits, physical activity is positively associated with a higher level of life satisfaction and an individual's perceived health to improve corresponding mental health according to a 2017 study (Lera-López,

Ollo-López, & Sánchez-Santos, 2017). These personal routines also assist in maintaining emotional health.

Emotional Health

Emotional health involves the skill to balance mentality and thinking, responding to stressors, and modulating behavior in adaptation to dynamic environments.

Emotionally healthy leaders recognize that experiencing a wide range of positive and negative emotions is normal, and they seek balance between the two (Rosen, 2013).

Signs of declining emotional health include increased stress susceptibility, getting caught in negative thinking, isolation from a support network, defensiveness, and feeling victimized or powerless (Rosen, 2013). Emotions drive behavior either negatively or positively and are key in leader performance (Wyatt, 2021). The emotional dimension comprises self-awareness, positive emotions, and resilience.

Self-awareness. Psychologist and leading emotional intelligence researcher, Daniel Goleman identified self-awareness as the first component of emotional intelligence. Goleman further defined self-awareness as having a deep understanding of one's weaknesses, strengths, initiative and needs, which allows an individual to realize personal strengths and weaknesses (Goleman, Kaplan, David, & Eurich, 2018). They are able to clearly see who they are and how they fit into their environment (Eurich, 2017; Rosen, 2013). Self-awareness is the ability to genuinely perceive personal emotions and understand how tendencies or reactions impact others (Rosen, 2013). Self-aware leaders effectively engage in personal mindfulness, make time for personal relationships, live in the present, and stay away from counterproductive thoughts or negative self-talk, which

allows for increased life satisfaction (Rosen, 2013). Avoiding negative self-talk and attitudes is consistent with the second component of emotional health, positive emotions.

Positive emotions. Positive emotions affect both physical and social health and have an impact on leadership style (Rosen, 2013). Awareness of emotions allows leaders to stay in control of their thoughts to manage the decision-making process. (Rosen, 2013). They are markers of happiness or overall well-being contribute to future growth and success. Positive emotions include pleasant situational responses such as contentment, interest, joy and love (Cohn & Fredrickson, 2009). In the short-term, positive emotions can engage thought creativity, broaden attention, and ultimately behavior. Long-term effects of positive emotions can serve as a foundation for future health and happiness (Fredrickson & Cohn, 2008). Overall positive emotions can slow the body's natural stress response aid in decreasing recovery time or in other words, increase resilience.

Resilience. Psychological resilience is defined as the positive adaptation to maintain or regain health after experiencing a stressor or a significant threat to an individual's life or function (Herrman et al., 2011; Morgan et al., 2018). Stress is a normal part of life that serves by supplying a boost of mental focus and physical energy to confront a perceived or actual threat. Resiliency is about decreasing the negative interpretation of stress and positively restoring resources to prepare for the next challenge (Ascher & Tonies, 2021; Burwell, 2018). Dr. Jim Loehr described the measure of resilience as the amount of stress exposure and the speed at which recovery takes place (Loehr & Schwartz, 2017). Several studies indicate that resilience, physical health, and performance are closely related. Strength in one area has carry-over effects on another

with an overall positive affect on personal relationships and outlook on life and protection against negative mental issues such as burnout (Ascher & Tonies, 2021; U.S. Department of the Army, 2014a; Winston & Fage, 2019). Resilience, attitude, and mental acuity also overlap with the intellectual dimension of grounded leadership.

Intellectual Health

Intellectual health describes the mental capacity required to broaden thinking, analyze multifaceted issues, focus on key priorities, generate solutions to complex problems, and make sound decisions (Rosen & Ross, 2014). Symptoms of a leader with declining intellectual health include the inability to adapt to changing conditions and solve problems, lack of critical thinking, inability to make short or long-term decisions, and a decline in the ability to meaningfully apply skills and knowledge (Rosen, 2013). Intellectual health represents leader tools for learning to adapt and stay relevant in a dynamic environment (Rosen & Swann, 2018). Intellectually healthy leaders exhibit deep curiosity and an adaptive mindset and are able to engage in paradoxical thinking.

Deep curiosity. Curiosity is closely related to intelligence and has the potential to enhance learning (Pluck & Johnson, 2011). Although intelligence is a strong predictor of performance, curiosity can rival the influence of intelligence by fueling the pursuit of knowledge that may assist in future creative problem-solving processes (Hardy, Ness, & Mecca, 2017; von Stumm, Hell, & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2011). Studies conducted with leaders in Fortune 100 ranked companies showed that leaders with a sense of curiosity and constant learning have an easier time adapting to rapid change and have a better ability to retain information (Rosen & Ross, 2014). Deep curiosity is a key competency that can assist leaders to positively shape the way errors are viewed to enhance learning,

guide analysis, and improve performance while increasing stress tolerance (Kashdan et al., 2018; Ruiz-Alfonso & León, 2019; Vogl, Pekrun, Murayama, & Loderer, 2019).

Adaptive mindset. Mental agility, flexibility, openness, and the ability to expand capacity during challenges are at the core of an adaptive or growth mindset. Growth mindset leaders see life as a journey and adopt an attitude of seeking out new experiences to broaden their abilities and knowledge while remaining open to new ideas and change (Rosen, 2013). They seek to develop their talents through input from others and hard work, are grateful for teamwork and collaboration, and view mistakes as opportunities to innovate (Dweck, 2016; Kristjansson, 2016). Embracing an adaptive mindset has been shown to increase employee proactiveness and work engagement and ultimately produce positive results (Caniels, Semeijn, & Renders, 2018; Ibarra, Rattan, & Johnston, 2018).

Paradoxical thinking. The modern organizational operational environment is complex and ambiguous with competing priorities and contradictory demands that produce tension and pressure (Leung et al., 2018; Miron-Spektor, Ingram, Keller, Smith, & Lewis, 2018; Zhang et al., 2015). To succeed, leaders face situations in which they must simultaneously address divergent requirements or goals such as the need for certainty and flexibility or stability and change (Gaim & Wåhlin, 2016). Paradoxical thinking utilizes open mind thinking to reframe situations and view situations from different lenses. This allows seeing what is and what could be and finding solutions between tensions or extremes (Gaim & Wåhlin, 2016). Paradoxical thinkers are more likely to positively manage tensions and utilize them to fuel innovation and facilitate a positive attitude change in others (Hameiri, Nabet, Bar-Tal, & Halperin, 2018; Ingram, Lewis, Barton, & Gartner, 2016). Research also indicates that paradoxical thinking is

associated with increased adaptivity, proactivity, and proficiency (Zhang et al., 2015), all of which contribute to an organization's success and the ability to connect with others.

Connection to others is at the heart of any organization and the focus of social health.

Social Health

The ability to connect to others is a key leader skill as modern organizations increasingly become globally interconnected and structured around teams rather than individuals (Stewart, Astrove, Reeves, Crawford, & Solimeo, 2017; Stricker et al., 2018). Strong personal relationships are at the core of successful organizations and are essential for fostering trust and commitment (Rosen & Ross, 2014). Social health comprises the following three components that start internally and manifest externally: (a) authenticity, which enables the ability to connect others; (b) mutually rewarding relationships, which work together to benefit others; and (c) nourishing teams and communities (Rosen, 2013). According to Rosen, signals of declining social health include the inability or difficulty to build or participate in strong teams, build peer relationships, see others' viewpoints, lead or follow, and finally, to lack a desire for productive collaboration (Rosen, 2013).

Authenticity. Authenticity is summarized in the Socrates quote "Know thyself" and further clarified with "Be thyself" (Caza & Jackson, 2011). Authenticity describes an individual who has achieved self-understanding and self-acceptance and acts transparently consistent with their values rather than situational or societal pressure to build trust (Knoll, Meyer, Kroemer, & Schroeder-Abe, 2015; Rosen, 2013). Authentic leaders accept themselves for who they are, recognizing their strengths and shortcomings, which allows for sharing themselves with others openly, honestly, and sincerely (Fusco,

O’Riordan, & Palmer, 2015; Rosen, 2013). This vulnerability forms the basis of building trust, confidence, partnership, and strong personal connections (Rosen & Ross, 2014).

The following five qualities foster authenticity and social health: (a) credibility—words are consistent with action, (b) dependability—adherence to promises or commitments especially during difficult times, (c) predictability—consistency in values and behavior, (d) valuing the common good—balancing personal interests so that words and action are in the spirit of what is best for the collective or organization, and (e) emotional safety—taking into consideration and protecting others’ feelings, health, self-image, and principles (Rosen, 2013).

Mutually rewarding relationships. Because humans are social creatures by nature and depend on interaction to survive, technology has enabled increased social interaction, and working in partnerships is unavoidable in the workplace (Archer & Cameron, 2009; Rosen, 2013). Therefore, modern leaders have the ability and responsibility to enable and broker mutual beneficial relationships with stakeholders that create goodwill and trust (Archer & Cameron, 2009; Maak, 2007). Rosen (2013) identified the following four pillars to cultivate healthy relationships: (a) empathy—understanding the emotions and thought process that generate fears, frustrations, aspirations, and concerns of others; (b) fairness—to act in an evenhanded manner, free from bias and injustice and avoid taking advantage of others; (c) communication—ability to express with clarity and intent and listen to generate a common and shared understanding; and (d) appreciation—recognition, acknowledgement, and gratitude for others’ contributions. Leaders who practice these four attributes and those they interact

with experience a higher level of fulfillment, social health, and improved ability to avoid stressful situations (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009; Rosen, 2013).

Nourishing teams and communities. Humans are wired for connection, and this connection affects overall health (Martino, Pegg, & Frates, 2017). There is significant evidence that feeling connected and having social support have positive physiological and psychological effects such as a bolstered immune system, healthy weight maintenance, and an overall improved mental health state (Martino et al., 2017; Rosen, 2013). Performance researcher Dr. Jim Loehr, indicated that relationships can prompt positive emotions closely associated with the ideal performance state, namely a sense of safety and security (Loehr & Schwartz, 2001). Positive emotions stemming from a sense of community can also induce recovery and lead to an overall improvement in quality of life (Loehr & Schwartz, 2001; Rosen, 2013). Increasingly, contemporary organizations are structuring work groups around teams rather than individuals and empowering team members by equally distributing leadership responsibility (Stewart et al., 2017). Centre for Workplace Leadership researcher Dr. Thomas Maak stated that related to community, there is a sense of agreement that organizations and their leadership have both the potential and power to positively contribute to the global community (Maak, 2007).

Vocational Health

Vocational health describes how individuals pursue their passion meaningfully in their profession, and that is measured in their performance (Rosen, 2013). Failing vocational health can result in decreased energy at work, disengagement and boredom, failure to unify efforts with coworkers, a lack of long-term vision or purpose, and an overall decline in work performance. The following are the three components of

vocational health: (a) finding a meaningful calling, (b) developing personal mastery, and (c) driving to succeed (Rosen, 2013).

Meaningful calling. The modern work environment is rapidly changing. With increased competition, pressure for productivity, and work-life complexity, employee engagement has become a prominent issue for leaders and employees. Employees desire more than just a paycheck from work; they desire relevance and the opportunity to utilize their unique skill, talents, and abilities in moving the organization forward (Rosen, 2013). Three recent studies indicate that having a calling and finding meaning in work also have significant positive effects on career decisions, meaning of life, life satisfaction, and self-identity and overall, they are essential to career success (Dumulescu et al., 2015; Kolodinsky et al., 2018; Willemse & Deacon, 2015). Additional findings indicate that a sense of calling positively impacts work attitude, employee engagement, and perception of leader support (Dumulescu et al., 2015; Kolodinsky et al., 2018; Willemse & Deacon, 2015). Discovering purpose, passion, and career fulfillment allows individuals to inspire others to discover their own personal journey (Rosen, 2013). According to leadership researcher Simon Sinek, people don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it (Sinek, 2009). The ability to inspire others to action lies within the love of self that manifests in a collective love of the team and the greater organization and has the potential for producing positive results (Sinek, 2009). Finding meaning in life and career through a personal quest to continually learn leads to goal setting and growth, components of personal mastery.

Personal mastery. Personal mastery is the discipline of personal growth, continual self-improvement, and the satisfaction of mastering a skill or knowledge

(Rosen, 2013; Senge, 2010). Achieving personal mastery requires an individual to continually look introspectively to realize life lessons, accept personal responsibility for actions and results by not assigning blame to others, embrace the ability to learn, and find understanding by reflecting on lived experiences (Dhiman, 2011). The personal mastery components of self-actualization, self-improvement, and self-care enable individuals to recognize their full potential and form the foundation of a learning organization in which a leader can assist others reach their full potential (Senge, 2010). The influence of a leader engaging in personal mastery and becoming the best version of themselves can have profound effects on others and the organizations in which they serve by positively influencing organizational learning and innovation (García-Morales, Lloréns-Montes, & Verdú-Jover, 2007). Commitment to personal mastery and the adaptation required to engage in the learning process are also related to the drive to succeed.

Drive to succeed. Success is a subjective definition based upon values, upbringing, lived experiences, education, and personal views (Rosen, 2013). The drive to succeed is defined by a leader's perception of expanding personal horizons, enjoying the process or journey, constantly progressing forward while overcoming obstacles and challenges, and discovering new experiences (Rosen, 2013). Rosen indicated the following five steps can assist leaders in expanding their motivational capacity, find inspiration, and further develop vocational health:

1. Dedication to learning – demonstrate learning as a vital aspect by engaging and sharing learning opportunities with others.
2. Creation of a shared vision – expand personal visions of success to a common vision of shared understanding.

3. Promotion of outcome thinking – form realistic and concrete goals that include ways to achieve them.
4. Building a high-performance culture – Uphold and create high organizational standards of excellence and competence.
5. Celebrating success and finding balance – Balance celebrations of achievements with the reassessment of goals and the energy expenditures required to reach new goals (Rosen, 2013).

Constant reevaluation of personal and organization progress can assist in finding a balance of stress and renewal that is essential in sustaining a high level of motivation through a continuing journey (Rosen, 2013). Finding balance and connecting with others is also a key component of spiritual health.

Spiritual Health

Spiritual health has several interpretations, but a review of the literature reveals that spiritual health is a vital aspect of wellness (Hawks, Hull, Thalman, & Richins, 1995). It can be defined as a worldview that values individuals and embraces others in a global community; is a source of life fulfillment; and values beliefs in community, self, and wholeness in life. Spiritual health is a factor in well-being and has a basis in a higher power (Bensley, 1991; Rosen, 2013). Rosen (2013) suggested that spirituality is about experiencing the fullness of life connecting with others to positively affect in the global community. Neglecting spiritual health can lead to decline, which is signaled by the inability to handle adversity of life's ups and downs, distrust of self and others, difficulty feeling empathy and compassion for others, ignoring cultural differences, preoccupation

with personal needs and self, and incongruence between beliefs and actions (Rosen, 2013).

Higher purpose. Higher purpose has foundations in a higher being with the belief that living selflessly in the passionate pursuit of utilizing innate skills, talents, and abilities will achieve purposeful meaning in life (Rosen, 2013). Living with purpose and in alignment with personal values motivates individuals to achieve differing perspectives on life and how to assist others achieve meaning in life (Rosen, 2013). The result is the ability to achieve mindful clarity, withstand stressors, persevere to endure life challenges, and promote overall well-being (Pfund, Bono, & Hill, 2020).

Global connectedness. With increasing use of technology, speed of travel, and communication, the world has become globally interconnected. The global community is connected culturally, politically, and economically, and previous communication and trade barriers have been eliminated (Beechler & Javidan, 2007). To be competitive and achieve successful outcomes, leaders must address global changes, appreciate diversity, become culturally literate, and understand how to effectively connect with the global community (Black & Morrison, 2014; Rosen, 2013). Participating in the global community requires leaders to recognize their biases and make adjustments to successfully operate and thrive without regard to borders (Rosen, 2013).

Generosity of spirit. Exhibiting appreciation, gratitude, and a spirit of care is at the core of generosity of spirit. Exercising humility creates an atmosphere of loyalty and employee engagement and furthers an environment of mutual respect, fair treatment, gratitude, and acts of kindness (Rosen, 2013). Demonstrating acts of kindness and an

appreciation and genuine care for others is a component of healthy social responsibility that contributes to and builds trust with the global community (Rosen, 2013).

The U.S. Army National Guard

The Army National Guard (ARNG) has roots in the initial settlement of the American colonies. Citizens volunteered as soldiers to provide settlers local protection and law enforcement. During the American Revolution, the colonial militia provided the foundation for the Continental Army and was the source of troops for various military operations (Doubler & Listman, 2007). The Militia Act of 1903 formed the National Guard. It identified the NG as a reserve component of the United States Army and provisioned training and equipment (Parker, 1903). Militias would report to their state governor for duty for a period of 24 drills and 5 days field instruction during the calendar year (Parker, 1903). The act also placed the National Guard at the disposal of the federal government in times of emergency, and during time of war the president could muster the entire force into federal service at 24-hr notice (Parker, 1903). The National Guard remains a volunteer, community-based organization of citizen soldiers who train 2 weeks a year and a weekend a month to be ready for state or federal missions at home or overseas, and they are based in each of the fifty states and four territories. The National Guard motto is “Always Ready, Always There” (National Guard Bureau, n.d.).

The California Army National Guard

At over 13,000 soldiers, the California Army National Guard (CA ARNG) is home to the third largest force in the United States Army National Guard (Military OneSource, 2021). CA ARNG lineage can be traced back to the volunteer militias shortly after California (CA) established statehood in the 1850s, prior to the 1903

formation of the modern National Guard (CA ARNG, n.d.). The CA ARNG vision is a community land-based force maintained at the optimum level of preparedness and readiness for service to the state and nation (CA ARNG, n.d.). The CA ARNG mission is to organize, train, and equip resources as community-based land forces and, on order, mobilize to support state and or federal authorities (Cal Guard, n.d.). Throughout its history, CA ARNG members have served in a variety of engagements both domestically and overseas. CA ARNG continues to provide federal and state government a ready force, able to respond to both domestic and overseas emergencies or missions (Doubler & Listman, 2007).

Leadership in the California Army National Guard

Leadership in the military is based upon roles, responsibilities, and authority levels, each level assigned a corresponding rank. There are two leadership tracks, enlisted personnel who are noncommissioned officers (NCOs) and commissioned officers. Both have leadership responsibilities but differ in authority levels (U.S. Department of the Army 2020c).

At the ground level of leadership are NCOs, leading soldiers in execution of military missions and tasks. NCOs are responsible for teaching soldiers basic soldiering skills. They set the example as trainers, mentors, and advisors. They are referred to as the backbone of the Army (U.S. Department of the Army, 2020c).

Commissioned officers receive a commission from the president of the United States and have the ability to lead both officers and enlisted personnel (Bray, 2017). The constitution indicates that presidential commissioning is an extension of the president's executive power, one that he can be held accountable for as military officers execute

orders in defense of the nation (Morgan et al., 2018). Although all soldiers take an oath to support and defend the constitution, commissioned officers have additional legal requirements related to the constitution and therefore accountability (Bray, 2017). Officers can take command positions and lead enlisted personnel, other officers, and warrant officers.

At the highest rank of executive military leadership are Generals, who command responsibility of up to 40,000 soldiers, associated equipment, and taskings (U.S. Department of the Army, n.d.-a). At the next lower level of executive leadership and staff are field grade officers who possess the rank of colonel, lieutenant colonel, and major. They command responsibility of up to 3,200-300 soldiers, associated equipment, and taskings (U.S. Department of the Army, n.d.-a). At the ground level of tactical mission execution are company grade officers who range in the lowest officer ranks of captain, first lieutenant, and second lieutenant. They are responsible for 40-200 soldiers, associated equipment, and mission accomplishment (U.S. Department of the Army, n.d.-a).

The Company Grade Officer Operational Environment

Company grade officers are first-line leaders and organizational workhorses who are responsible for the care, welfare, and morale of soldiers performing missions (Army, n.d.). They are directly responsible for mission accomplishment as they plan, prepare, execute, and assess taskings (U.S. Department of the Army, 2020a). As the primary executor of commander intent and taskings planned at the general officer and field grade officer levels, company grade officers are exposed to a significant amount of environmental and occupational stress (Hagerman, Swain, & Yarnell, n.d.). They must

balance the needs of their soldiers under them with the mission demands of those in positions of higher authority and the resource constrained environments they operate in.

As reserve component leaders, National Guard company grade officers also must balance their associated stressors inherent in their civilian careers, family lives, and time constraints while managing the transition between civilian and military life (Vest, 2014; Naifeh et al., 2019). National Guard leaders living the motto “Always Ready, Always There” can find themselves in an always on call mindset, realizing that their leadership obligations are more than just 2 weeks a year and one weekend a month (Vest, 2014).

The operational tempo for the National Guard has increased to meet homeland and overseas demands and has reached activation levels not seen since World War II (Horton, 2020; Ott, 2021; *Reserve Forces*, 2005; St. Laurent, 2004; Winkie, 2020). In addition to the pressures they face in their personal or civilian professional careers, company grade officers are exposed to stressors stemming from prolonged separation from their families or support networks and financial hardships associated with overseas or domestic deployments (Bryan & Bryan, 2019; Hisey & Kotrlik, 2010; Naifeh et al., 2019). The relationship between stress and wellness has been well documented. If not handled appropriately, company grade officers risk declining health, wellness, and the ability to mitigate stress.

Army Holistic Health and Fitness

The Army recognized the environmental complexity of the environments in which soldiers operate and the need to adapt and initiate new approaches to increase soldier readiness and resilience (U.S. Department of the Army, 2020b). In 2020, the Army implemented the Holistic Health and Fitness (H2F) program, which is based on the

performance triad: (a) sleep, (b) activity, and (c) nutrition. These three areas relate to dimensions of dominance: (a) physical dominance, which includes setting smart goals, building strength and toughness, fueling for performance, utilizing dietary supplements and proper sleep hygiene; (b) cognitive dominance covers finding motivation, utilizing sleep to maintain mental edge, staying sharp and properly sustaining brain activities through nutrition; (c) emotional dominance, which includes seven steps to reach goals, shedding stress to stay balanced, how food and sleep affect mood; and (d) social, family, and spiritual dominance, which encompass a soldier's connection to the community to strengthen the nation, soldier influence on their families to eat a nutritionally, how faith can positively affect friends and family, and finally how sleep can positively affect relationships (U.S. Department of the Army, 2020d). While the H2F program is still in the initial stages of fielding, soldiers that have access to H2F facilities and resources at no cost, such as the active-duty component will be able to more fully utilize and benefit from the program (Brading, 2020). To fully realize the benefits of the H2F program will require adaptation for National Guard soldiers against competing training and mission requirements for them to be available for once-a-month duty time (Payne, 2020).

Summary

The literature review identified the relationship between wellness and a leader's ability to effectively perform in modern complex and volatile organizational environments. The review of the theoretical foundation literature examined the significance of environmental, behavioral, and motivational components of wellness and their impact on implementation of wellness strategies. Also discussed were negative factors of chronic stress exposure that impact an individual's well-being, overall health,

and ultimately capability to effectively lead. The literature also identified the fact that the relationship between a leader's ability to utilize stress mitigation and intervention measures was most effective when utilizing more than one health dimension to maximize overall health and enable application of effective leadership.

Review of the theoretical framework identified critical factors in developing and maintaining leader physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health. Similar to the theoretical foundations, and overlap of several of the dimensions was identified. Overall, successful leaders engage multiple dimensions of health and are able to apply their knowledge, skill and share with others to further their organizations.

ARNG leaders experience a number of stressors in the performance of their duty. Their ability to effectively mitigate stressors to maintain personal health is paramount to their leadership performance and building teams that can accomplish missions both domestically and overseas. With increasing demands and activations for National Guard members both overseas and domestically, leaders must engage in strategies that increase readiness and resilience to environmental stressors. This will allow for continued and meaningful performance personally for the teams and organizations in which they serve.

Although the Army has adopted the H2F program that realizes the importance of health and leadership performance, currently there is no research that indicates what strategies exemplary leaders actually utilize to cultivate their wellness. This gap in the research signifies an opportunity to identify what current company grade officers are doing in the complex operational environment to mitigate stress, maintain personal wellness, and provide exemplary leadership to their subordinates.

Identification of strategies exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers actually utilize to navigate the turbulence of the domestic and overseas environments and remain grounded to provide exemplary leadership has tremendous value for other leaders. Practical application of these strategies has the ability to assist Army company grade officers find balance and ways to increase their resilience and overall leader effectiveness. These strategies would serve as a model for other reserve organization leaders. This research can also contribute to the body of research related to the H2F program to identify potential adaptations for the reserve and National Guard components of the Army. Leaders in all military organizations face similar challenges regardless of branch. This research may also assist leaders in the larger military community find strategies to improve their overall health and share with their subordinates and the organizations they lead.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Overview

This chapter discusses the processes and research methodology utilized to conduct this study. Every effort was made to protect the identity of individual participants. Quantitative data were collected via survey with no accompanying identifiers, and qualitative interview data were collected and reported utilizing pseudonyms to ensure the participants remained anonymous. The study's purpose statement and research questions are followed by the qualitative research methodology, study population, and study sample. Qualitative instrumentation, along with a presentation of the study's validity, validation strategies, and reliability are then described. A description of the data collection and data analysis processes used in this research study follows. The chapter concludes with a description of the study's limitations followed by a brief chapter summary.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed methods study was to identify and describe what exemplary California Army National Guard (CA ARNG) company grade officers do to maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health.

Research Questions

1. How do exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers rate their use of grounded leadership strategies in the six dimensions of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health on the Stay Grounded survey?

2. What strategies do exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers use to develop and maintain grounded leadership in the six dimensions of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health?

Research Design

A research design is the procedures for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Research design is the structure of a research project. The main difference between research design and research methods is that research methods are the various processes, procedures, and tools used to collect and analyze data whereas research design is the overall structure of the research study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). There are two major research designs, qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative designs have many forms in different social and humanities disciplines.

Quantitative research design is the process of collecting and analyzing numerical data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). It can be utilized to find patterns and averages, test causal relationships, make predictions, and generalize results to wider populations (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Quantitative research differs from qualitative research because it involves collecting and analyzing nonnumerical data. The research design of this study combined both qualitative and quantitative data collection as a sequential explanatory mixed methods research design. The mixed methods sequential explanatory design comprises two phases: quantitative and qualitative. The qualitative data are collected and analyzed second in the sequence and help explain or elaborate the quantitative results obtained in the first phase (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

This study was designed as explanatory mixed methods, which utilizes qualitative and quantitative research procedures to draw conclusions on the research field of study. An explanatory sequential mixed methods design with a two-phase data collection was used for this study. In Phase 1, quantitative data were first collected to inform and build upon the second phase, qualitative data collection (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Patten & Newhart, 2018). This two-phase approach allows the researcher to analyze the results of quantitative data collection and then identify areas requiring further clarification in the second phase (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Utilizing interviews during the qualitative phase allowed the researcher to gain insight or additional context related to the data collected during the quantitative phase. The overall goal for a sequential explanatory mixed methods approach is to explore the relationships or connection of both data collection results (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

To answer the research questions, a team of seven peer researchers utilized qualitative instrumentation, quantitative instrumentation, and data analysis. The team of peer researchers developed the qualitative and quantitative interview and survey questions in joint effort with committee faculty. This integration of research methods combines the strengths of both methods to answer the research question.

Quantitative Research Method

Quantitative research seeks to identify patterns and relationships by reviewing objective measurements (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Quantitative research designs measure and describe phenomena by using numbers, statistics structure, and control (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Overall quantitative data are analyzed utilizing mathematically based methods and generalize findings to a larger population (McMillan

& Schumacher, 2010). For this study, the phenomena researched were the strategies exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers utilize to cultivate and maintain personal wellness to remain grounded and provide exceptional leadership. This was completed by utilizing a survey deployed from the Survey Monkey, a web-based platform. The peer research team constructed the survey collaboratively under the guidance of the faculty advisors and in alignment with the theoretical framework. The survey (Appendix A) directed the participants to rate themselves using a Likert scale on their self-perceived ranking of the six dimensions of health from which responses were recorded and tabulated.

Qualitative Research Method

Qualitative research is designed to gather data through means such as open-ended interview questions. These data are then analyzed to determine major and minor themes illustrated by participant responses (Patten & Newhart, 2018) from naturally occurring phenomena (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Qualitative research designs have the ability to provide insights on context, meaning of events, phenomena, or identities for those who experience them (Patten & Newhart, 2018). Overall, the qualitative design utilizes a variety of methods to achieve a deep understanding of the studied subject (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The researcher interviewed exemplary company grade officers to gather data and understand what strategies and practices they utilized to establish and cultivate personal wellness in the six dimensions of health. These interviews were completed virtually via Zoom, and artifacts such as calendar schedules, programs, journals, or written documentation that supported participant responses were also collected.

Population

A population is a group of individuals who conform to a specific criterion, and the intention is to summarize and generalize the results of the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The population for this study consisted of CA ARNG company grade officers. Company grade officers are first-line leaders who are responsible for the health, welfare, morale, and care of soldiers performing a combat or domestic mission. They range in rank from second lieutenant, first lieutenant, and captain. These ranks are consistent with the pay grades of O-1, O-2, and O-3. Lieutenants maintain responsibility for 30-40 soldiers. Captains are the top rank in company grade leadership and are responsible for an Army unit or company of approximately 100-400 soldiers. Company grade officers are assigned to lead soldiers in the 181 companies situated across California. Company grade officers represent approximately 5% or 742 of the total 14,000 CA ARNG soldiers (DPRO, 2020).

Target Population

A target population for a study is the entire set of individuals chosen from the overall population for which the study data are to be used to make inferences. The target population defines the overall population to which the findings can be generalized. For the purposes of research study, it is important that target populations are clearly identified (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Because of time or cost constraints, it is typically not feasible to study large groups (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Thus, population samples from within a larger group were chosen by the researcher (Patton, 2015). Approximately 121 CA ARNG company grade officers currently serving in the over 181 companies across California were identified as the target population.

Sample

The sample is defined as a group of study participants selected from the target population from whom the researcher intends to generalize (Patton, 2015). Sampling is a selection from “a group of individuals from whom data are collected” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 129). A sample is a subset of the target population representing the whole population according to Patton (2015) and Creswell (2003). When a quantitative approach is chosen by a researcher, the sample is generally random. The sample population for this study, however was criteria-based. Both the quantitative and qualitative approaches were utilized with purposeful sampling. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) defined purposeful sampling as when the researcher selects a sample that is representative of the population or that includes subjects with required characteristics.

Based on the criteria used for the exemplary company grade officers, purposeful sampling was chosen as the method of sample selection. Because CA ARNG company grade officers maintain concurrent civilian and military employment, participant time was limited and difficult to access. Therefore, convenience sampling was also utilized in addition to purposeful sampling. When convenience sampling is used, respondents are chosen based on their convenience and availability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Fifteen California Army National Guard company grade officers meeting the study criteria were selected for participation in the survey phase. The survey allowed participants to volunteer for the interview portion of the study. The first five participants available for the interview portion were selected for the qualitative portion of the study.

To meet the exemplary definition, the company grade officers met at least four of the following criteria:

1. Evidence of successful development of grounded leadership skill (physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual);
2. Evidence of leading a successful organization or unit;
3. Minimum of 5 years of experience in the field;
4. Articles, papers, or materials written, published, or presented at conferences or association meetings;
5. Recognition by his or her peers;
6. Membership in professional associations in his or her field; and
7. Participation in workshops and seminars in work/life balance.

Sample Selection Process

The following steps were utilized to determine which CA ARNG company grade officers met the exemplary leader study participation criteria:

1. The California Army National Guard Personnel Department (G1) provided a list of the approximate 121 current company grade officers serving in the 181 companies across California.
2. Commanders validated potential company grade officers under their command perceived as exemplary by identifying which officers met four of the following criteria:
 - a) Successful development of grounded leadership competency (physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual).

- b) Successfully leading a unit: Achieved a top-block rating (excels or highly qualified) on their Officer Evaluation Report.
 - c) Currently commands or commanded a platoon, company, or staff.
 - d) Recognition by superiors or peers.
 - e) Articles, papers, or materials written, published, or presented at conferences or association meetings.
 - f) Membership in professional associations in his or her field.
 - g) Participation in workshops and seminars in work-life balance.
3. The researcher contacted prospective candidates via telephone. The researcher did not utilize military email to avoid the perception that their participation was either formally or informally directed by their leadership or command.
 4. The researcher provided a brief introduction of the study and solicited voluntary participation.
 5. The first 15 participants who met the criteria and provided verbal agreement to participate were selected for the study sample.
 6. Interested participants provided an initial intent to participate via verbal commitment and their civilian email address.
 7. The researcher sent an email to the participants' provided civilian email address. Email contents included (a) invitation to participate (Appendix B), (b) research participant's bill of rights (Appendix C), (c) informed consent—interview form collected prior to the interview (Appendix D), and (d) interview questions (Appendix E).

8. The study participants received a link to the Survey Monkey to submit the Stay Grounded survey.
9. The last question on the Stay Grounded survey included a question to determine whether a respondent would be willing to participate in a follow-up Zoom interview with the researcher. The first five responders who responded affirmatively to this question were included in the interview portion of the study.
10. The researcher sent the selected five participants an email that provided interview scheduling information and a request to submit artifacts supporting the research study.
11. Based upon the participant's scheduling availability responses, the participant received a link to Microsoft Teams or Zoom meeting at the appropriate time.
12. The five selected participants were then sent an email confirming the interview time and date, conference link via Zoom or Microsoft Teams, and a copy of the interview questions.

Instrumentation

The quantitative survey instrument used structured questions in the form of scaled items that were explicitly based on Rosen's (2013) six dimensions of grounded leaders (physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health). The Likert scale survey was designed for subjects to determine where on the scale best reflects their beliefs or opinion about the statement. The questions were designed to provide a numeric rating where 6 = *agree strongly*, 5 = *agree moderately*, 4 = *agree slightly*, 3 = *disagree slightly*, 2 = *disagree moderately*, and 1 = *disagree strongly* regarding strategies company

grade officers used to stay grounded. Survey data collection was conducted through Survey Monkey.

The qualitative method for this study included a semistructured open-ended interview that was conducted utilizing online programs, Microsoft Teams or Zoom depending on computer security and interviewee accessibility of the program. The interviews built upon the information gathered in the quantitative portion to further explain and explore the data concerning the strategies exemplary company grade officers utilize to stay grounded. The use of a mixed methods study design neutralizes the weakness inherent in both qualitative and quantitative research methods by providing a more in-depth understanding of the data collected (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Quantitative Instrument—Survey

A quantitative instrument is utilized to collect numerical data, and when analyzed, it identifies themes within the findings. Questionnaires, tests, and surveys are common forms of quantitative instruments (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). When developed and correctly implemented, quantitative instruments have the ability to produce reliable and useful data to answer the study's research questions. A quantitative instrument used in this study was a survey.

The quantitative survey instrument was created by a team of seven peer researchers and experienced faculty. The survey was developed utilizing Rosen's (2013) six dimensions of health (physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health).

1. Each member of the team was assigned a variable to thoroughly research and develop a definition with references associated with each variable.

2. Each member's assigned definition was reviewed, refined, and approved by the team and experienced faculty.
3. Each member developed a set of survey questions and saved them in an item bank for analysis by the research team. For each variable key, words from the definitions were aligned with the variable.
4. Each member's proposed survey statements were reviewed, refined, and approved by the team and experienced faculty for validation
5. The team decided to use the Likert scale that would best fit the questions for validity of the study.
6. The team analyzed the survey and approved a total of 40 statements and an additional five demographic questions.
7. An attribute chart was created to categorize the approved survey statements into the associated variables.
8. The team then created an introduction to the research with a consent acknowledgement.
9. To ensure the survey statements were appropriately objective and answered the research questions, a team of expert faculty researchers were consulted to assess the validity of the survey.
10. The final survey created in Survey Monkey included the introduction of the research, consent acknowledgement, demographic questions, and survey statements. The survey instrument allowed exemplary leaders to identify their behaviors by rating their responses and strategies on a scale: 6 = *agree strongly*, 5 = *agree moderately*, 4

= *agree slightly*, 3 = *disagree slightly*, 2 = *disagree moderately*, and 1 = *disagree strongly* (see Appendix A).

11. After participants were identified, an email was sent with the link to access Survey Monkey, survey instructions, and a verification of receipt of consent to participate tab.

The seven peer researchers conducted a field test of the survey instrument then met to discuss the results and make adjustments that were indicated by participants in the study and team observations. After these items were revised, a final draft survey was created (see Appendix A). The data collected from the survey were then analyzed and used to triangulate the results from the qualitative data gathered during the interview (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Qualitative Instrument—Interview

Prior to the interview, an email invitation was sent that included (a) a formal invitation letter (Appendix B), (b) informed consent (Appendix D), and (c) rights of the participants (Appendix C). Participants were informed that the interview would be recorded and transcribed and that the researcher would take measures to protect confidentiality and privacy (see Appendix D). The interview was completed over a ZOOM or Microsoft Teams online meeting using semistructured questions designed in an open-ended format and specific in the intent to provide rich data for the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The 60-min interviews were completed by five of the participants after each company grade officer completed an online survey to support the collection of quantitative data.

Participants were presented with the interview questions and definitions without the prompts 24 hr before the interview to provide familiarity with the questions to refer to during the interview. The interviewer used additional prompt questions when participant responses were unclear or more information was needed. There was no deviation from the written interview script to ensure the collection of factual data.

After completion of the interviews, data gathered were transcribed into a written format. Participants were provided the opportunity to review the transcript for accuracy. The data obtained were then analyzed and encoded by the researcher using a qualitative analysis system known as NVIVO.

Data Collection

The following steps were utilized to collect data:

1. Interviews with participants who provided consent by returning the consent form were conducted online via Zoom or MS Teams teleconference that was acceptable to participants in a neutral and safe environment considering time and COVID-19 protocols.
2. Participants were given a coded pseudonym during the research collection, analysis, and reporting of results.
3. Only the researcher knew the participants' identity, and no identifiable information was included or shared in the study.
4. Participants names were not disclosed, and results were generalized to the overall sample.
5. All interview participants had the choice to not answer any questions.

6. Interviews were recorded digitally and upon conclusion reviewed by the participant for accuracy. A transcript of the interview was also provided to the participant for content accuracy review.
7. After verification, the transcript was verified and data were transcribed for coding via NVIVO.
8. Materials were shredded 3 years after study completion and approval.
9. All collected data were protected and secured on a password-protected computer.

Field-Testing

A field test was administered for the quantitative data upon completion of the survey questions the seven researchers and faculty created. Field-testing aims to ensure that an instrument that is developed could be used to precisely measure (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010) how exemplary company grade officers rate themselves as grounded based on six variables (Rosen, 2013). Three field-test participants were chosen who met the criteria for this study and who were not included as participants in the study. The survey link and a request to provide feedback were sent to each participant via email. The participant feedback on the survey was to understand whether the length of the survey was adequate and whether the instructions and questions were clear. Participants completed the survey and returned the feedback form in a written format through email (see Appendix F). Upon completion of the field study, the seven peer researchers reviewed the feedback from participants and the research expert report received. No changes were made to survey questions because the participants felt the questions were appropriate.

Additionally, a field-test interview was conducted to identify the strategies exemplary company grade officers use to stay grounded based on six variables (Rosen & Ross, 2014). Interviewing participants can be time-consuming, costly, and it is perhaps even more challenging to find willing participants (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). As a result, only one of the three participants who answered the survey questions was picked for the interview. The interview was conducted online via ZOOM or MS Teams teleconference at a physical site acceptable to the participant. Feedback was obtained from the field-test participant (see Appendix F). Feedback was also received from an observer who was present during the interview. The observer was chosen based on familiarity with the qualitative interview method (see Appendix G). Upon completion of the field-test interview, the researcher discussed the reflection questions with the observer to provide additional insight (see Appendix H). The purpose of the feedback from both the observer and participant was to identify the weaknesses and strengths, to determine whether length of interview time was appropriate and whether any questions required clarification, and to identify any revisions the researcher would need to make while performing the interview based on their personal performance. The seven peer researchers met and made the necessary adjustments based on feedback received. The interview questions in a final version were sent to faculty advisors, who then provided a final protocol for the interview.

Validity

Validity in a mixed methods approach requires the researcher to ensure that the results from the quantitative measure are valid and to discuss the validity of the qualitative findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The researchers need to have a method

that is considered appropriate and builds trust to assess what the research is studying. Validity is about the outcome or goal of the study that has trustworthiness, authenticity, and credibility (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). McMillan and Schumacher (2010) stated that validity is the “degree of similarity between the explanations of the phenomena and the realities of the world” (p. 330). In essence, validity is one of the strengths of qualitative research. It focuses on the assurance that the findings are valid from the point of view of the researcher, the participant, and the reader. Creswell and Creswell (2018) encouraged researchers in an explanatory sequential mixed methods study to pay attention to the quantitative portion of the study in particular because a lack of attention to validity in the quantitative section will negatively affect the validity of the qualitative section. Therefore, for this study, both the quantitative survey and qualitative interviews were field-tested. The researchers addressed the issue of validity by taking the following steps:

1. The seven peer researchers administered field-testing for both the quantitative survey and qualitative interview. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), field-testing is another method that can be used to ensure the validity of the instruments used in the study.
2. Additionally, the feedback from the participants and observers was obtained and discussed with peer researchers and experienced faculty to improve the validity of the study.
3. When conducting mixed methods research that is focused on analyzing qualitative data, the sample size should be between three to five participants. The smaller the sample size, the more valuable the information (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

4. Validity often includes the analysis of scores and how inferences can be derived from scores on a specific instrument. Validity in quantitative research is checked to determine whether the scores measure the material that they seek to measure (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Computer programs of NIVO, member checking, and triangulating of the data ensure there is strength in validity.
5. Internal validity is the effect the dependent variable may have on the independent variable (Patton, 2015). The selection of participants can lead to a threat of validity. Participants were purposefully selected through sampling to meet at least four of the seven exemplary leader criteria.

Reliability

Patten (2014) stated that a “test is reliable if it yields consistent results” (p. 83). Cronbach’s alpha (or coefficient alpha), developed by Lee Cronbach in 1951, measures reliability, or internal consistency. Reliability is how well a test measures what it should. Cronbach’s alpha is a measure of internal reliability. It measures (on a scale of 0 to 1) how consistently a set of items measures a particular construct. A commonly accepted rule is that an alpha of 0.7 (some say 0.6) indicates acceptable reliability. The composite score of the Cronbach alpha for the Grounded Leadership survey is .732, indicating that it is a reliable instrument.

Other researchers confirmed that “reliability reveals that the researcher approach is consistent across different projects” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 201). It was therefore important for this study that the instrument used by the researcher was considered reliable in the collection of data, the interpretation of data, and the accuracy of results. Roberts (2010) added that reliability is the extent to which the survey

consistently measures the data from one time to another. It is continually maintaining the same result over different forms of data collection. Therefore, to increase reliability, the seven peer researchers utilized an interview script and interview questions. The interview guide was used to ensure that each participant was asked the same questions:

1. Techniques employed by the researcher for this study that demonstrate reliability provided participants a written detailed account of the focus of the study.
2. The researcher strengthened reliability by ensuring that when the interviews are being conducted over ZOOM or MS Teams that field notes are taken from recording devices and then transcribed to digital and written files that were verified by participants.
3. A computer program NIVO was used for coding and identifying themes.
4. The use of intercoder is another method the peer researchers used to ensure reliability. Intercoder occurs when a third-party evaluator analyzes and codes the data and reaches the same conclusion as the researcher (Patton, 2015). Utilizing the method of intercoder whereby someone without knowledge of the study is used to verify the coding and ensuring that there is consistency in the coding for at least 80% of the time demonstrate strong qualitative reliability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).
5. The seven peer researchers conducted field tests and interview procedures with clear, organized interview questions, and an online survey was administered through the use of Survey Monkey.
6. Multiple methods of data collection of surveys, such as interviews, observations, and artifacts, were analyzed and triangulated to improve the reliability of the study.

External reliability is evident when another researcher replicates the study and produces the same findings and conclusions (Patton, 2015). For this study, it was difficult to attest to generalizability, especially when the qualitative study was in the form of an interview. External reliability is difficult to replicate when humans are interviewed because the behaviors and interactions of both participants and researchers are different during each interview.

Data Analysis

Creswell and Creswell (2018) stated data analysis is about interpreting the findings and result while ensuring that data does not mislead readers. This study was a sequential explanatory mixed methods study in which the researcher gathered data utilizing quantitative methods and qualitative methods. After the collection of data from both methods, the data were then analyzed.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative data for this study were obtained through an electronic database, Survey Monkey. Company grade officers who met the sample population criteria were provided the link and access to complete the survey through SurveyMonkey. The resulting data were gathered based on a 6-point Likert scale where 6 represents *agree strongly*, 5 represents *agree moderately*, 4 represents *agree slightly*, 3 represents *disagree slightly*, 2 represents *disagree moderately*, and 1 represents *disagree strongly*. The frequency distribution of the result provided information to answer Research Question 1: “How do exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers rate their use of grounded leadership strategies in the six dimensions of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health on the Stay Grounded survey?” According to McMillan

and Schumacher (2010), descriptive statistics are the essential means of summarizing data and are crucial for understanding the findings of quantitative research. The quantitative data that were collected were then placed in tables to illustrate standard deviations and means to enable comparative analysis. A standard deviation (or σ) is a measure of how dispersed the data are in relation to the mean. Low standard deviation means data are clustered around the mean, and high standard deviation indicates data are more spread out. The quantitative data were then utilized to further explore qualitative study findings.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis primarily entails classifying things, persons, and events and the properties that categorize them (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). For this study, a face-to-face interview of exemplary company grade officers was administered over ZOOM and Microsoft Teams via videoconference. To ensure information was captured adequately, the interviews were recorded and then organized and transcribed into raw data in a written format that was then provided to participants to verify that the researcher captured the information correctly. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative data analysis consists of the process of organizing, preparing, reading, and reviewing data prior to coding the data. The data were then coded utilizing NVivo, a qualitative data analysis computer software. This coded information was determined based on the six variables of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health, which aligned to the research questions of the study. Patton (2015) noted that the role of computer software in the process of analysis of data can make the process of coding faster. Utilizing NVivo allowed the researcher to elicit themes and frequencies from the

participants' responses. The system provided a digital format for sorting and organizing the data and tracking of frequency. Frequency tables are able to assist a researcher by organizing data values with frequency of occurrence and aid in the analysis of trends and key themes in corresponding categories of data (Patton, 2015). The researcher utilized data generated from the qualitative data analysis to identify key themes. As the various themes emerged, the data were then annotated and labeled to build descriptions, classifications, and interpretations based on the frequency table (Patton, 2015).

Intercoder Reliability

Intercoder reliability is the extent to which two or more individuals are in agreement about the codes they have individually rated (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Upon completion of data collection, a researcher transcribes, codes, and continues the process of validating the data. For this study, the researcher presented one of the five interviews to cross check for coding consistency and verifying the data. Independent coders in agreement for at least 80% of the time is considered good qualitative reliability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). To ensure reliability and consistency, this study utilized a peer researcher to evaluate the coding and themes of the data.

Limitations

Study limitations are constraints that are out of the control of the researchers but that could potentially affect the study outcome (Simon & Goes, 2013). Limitations are related to methodology and design and result in the researcher having to make informed decisions to not affect the outcome of the study (Simon, 2011).

Sample Size

This study was limited to California Army National Guard company grade officers who met the exemplary leader criteria. Additionally, the sample was limited to officers who had the ability and willingness to participate in the study. Small sample size signified a limitation as a smaller scale made it more difficult to identify commonalities and trends.

Time

Time was a limiting factor because of participants having time conflicts because of civilian full-time employment commitments in addition to military duty. During the study timeframe, California Army National Guard service members experienced a high rate of emergency activations because of civil unrest, wildfire, and COVID missions. Holidays during the study period were a contributing factor to time limitations.

Researcher as Instrument of the Study

Unique researcher characteristics have the potential to influence the collection of data in a qualitative study (Pezalla, Pettigrew, & Miller-Day, 2012). Thus, the researcher must identify personal values, assumptions, and biases prior to beginning the study to understand how these aspects could influence the data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). During the study timeframe, the researcher was an active member of the California Army National Guard serving in company grade officer duty positions at the state headquarters. Having previously served as a company commander and a military board member, the researcher was familiar with conducting interviews in a professional setting. To mitigate bias, the researcher collaborated with a peer-researcher team to field-test the qualitative interview portion of the research process.

Summary

This study utilized a mixed methods approach to incorporate the strengths of qualitative and quantitative methods. This technique allows for the presentation of data collected through interviews framed in context with supporting quantitative data (Patten & Newhart, 2018). This study was designed sequentially to gather quantitative data prior to qualitative data collection. A survey was utilized to identify health and leadership characteristics of company grade officers to provide grounded leadership in numerical data format. Interviews to identify the specific strategies exemplary company grade officers employed generated qualitative study data. The utilization of both approaches allowed the researcher to evaluate the relation of both sets of data to health and leadership.

This chapter outlined the following: (a) study purpose statement, (b) research questions, (c) research design, (d) population, (e) target population, (f) sample, and (g) sample criteria. The following were also discussed: quantitative and qualitative instruments utilized to collect data as well as collection and analysis of data. The study was conducted utilizing interviews as a qualitative method and surveys as well as quantitative methods. Limitations of the study concluded the chapter.

The purpose of this explanatory mixed methods study was to identify and describe what exemplary California Army National Guard (CA ARNG) company grade officers do to maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health. This study focused on company grade officers and was part of a thematic group of seven researchers, each studying the strategies employed by exemplary leaders to maintain grounded leadership despite tumultuous environments that modern leaders face.

This thematic group utilized the same methodology and instruments in different leadership populations. With the collaborative efforts of the peer researchers, the study produced common results for balanced leadership strategies that exemplary leaders utilize to maintain health and wellness in modern uncertain and complex environments. Chapter IV contains results of data collection, research findings, and qualitative and quantitative analysis. Chapter V contains significant findings of the study, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

Overview

This study utilized Bob Rosen's grounded leadership model framework and applied it to exemplary California Army National Guard (CA ARNG) company grade officers. In his 2013 book, *Grounded: How Leaders Stay Rooted in an Uncertain World*, Rosen indicated that who one is drives what one does. He asserted that quality leadership stems from who a person is inside, and maintaining healthy roots in the six dimensions of wellness enables individuals to reach their full potential and positively affect others and their organizations (Rosen, 2013). Rosen also discussed the challenges and complexities of the workforce and the potential negative impacts of stress if it is not mitigated or utilized appropriately (Rosen, 2013). In other words, individual health and wellness and how a leader approaches workplace stressors have the potential to significantly contribute to leader performance. This study identified and described what exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers do to stay grounded and maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed methods study was to identify and describe what exemplary California Army National Guard (CA ARNG) company grade officers do to maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health.

Research Questions

1. How do exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers rate their use of grounded leadership strategies in the six dimensions of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health on the Stay Grounded survey?
2. What strategies do exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers use to develop and maintain grounded leadership in the six dimensions of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health?

Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

This study utilized a sequential explanatory mixed methods approach to collect quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions. Quantitative data were first collected via an online survey. Qualitative data were subsequently collected via interviews and artifacts (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Patton 2015). In the first phase of the study, quantitative data collection allowed the researcher to analyze and inform the outcomes of qualitative data collected during the second phase (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Utilizing a sequential explanatory mixed methods approach allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of what exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers do to cultivate and maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health.

Quantitative Data

During the quantitative data collection process of this study, exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers rated their use grounded leadership strategies in physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health by completing a survey. The survey was developed collaboratively by a seven-member peer research team in joint

effort with committee faculty. Survey content was derived from the six dimensions of health theoretical framework described in Rosen's 2013 book *Grounded: How Leaders Stay Rooted in an Uncertain World* and utilized a Likert scale that participants completed online as shown in Appendix A. Participants received the following via email: (a) an invitation to participate (Appendix B), (b) informed consent (Appendix D), and (c) participant bill of rights (Appendix C), and (d) a link to the survey. The survey also collected the following demographic information: the participants' number of years of experience in their current field, number of years in their current position, gender, and ethnicity. All 16 participant responses were tabulated upon completion of the survey monkey survey and organized for further analysis. The survey also included a question on willingness of the participants to participate in the qualitative component of the study.

Qualitative Data

Qualitative data were collected by conducting interviews and collecting artifacts that provided further insight into the strategies exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers utilized to maintain health and wellness in the six dimensions of health. The first five participants who indicated willingness to participate in the qualitative portion of the study were sent an invitation to a civilian email address. The invitation included a brief description of the study and the context in which the interview data would be used. The email also included the interview questions, protocol to retain anonymity, participant rights, and approximate time it would take to complete the interview. These face-to-face interviews were semistructured, utilizing questions created by the team of peer researchers and committee faculty. The interviews were conducted virtually via Zoom meetings and were designed to further clarify data collected during the first phase of the

study. Upon completion of the interview, participants were requested to provide artifacts that supported their interview responses. Participants were also provided a transcript of the interview to review and validate interview accuracy. Participant validated interview transcripts and artifacts were then organized into tables to identify themes and their frequencies.

Population

A population is a group of individuals who conform to a specific criterion; the intention is to summarize and generalize the results of the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The population for this study consisted of CA ARNG company grade officers. At the time this study was conducted, there were approximately 742 CA ARNG company grade officers actively serving in the CA ARNG. Company grade officers are first line leaders who are responsible for the health, welfare, morale, and care of soldiers performing a combat or domestic mission and represent approximately 5% of the total 14,000 CA ARNG soldiers (DPRO, 2020). Company grade officers range in rank from second lieutenant, first lieutenant, and captain. These ranks are consistent with the pay grades of O-1, O-2, and O-3. Lieutenants maintain responsibility for 30-40 soldiers. Captains are the top rank in company grade leadership and are responsible for an Army unit or company of approximately 100-400 soldiers.

Sample

The sample is defined as a group of study participants selected from the target population the researcher intends to generalize (Patton, 2015). One hundred twenty-one company grade officers serving in the 181 companies across California were the target population for this study. Purposeful sampling was utilized to identify participants from

the target population who were likely to be knowledgeable about the phenomenon of interest (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). For this study, the phenomena of interest were strategies exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers utilize to cultivate and maintain health and wellness in the six dimensions of health. Company grade officers perceived as exemplary by demonstrating grounded leadership practices to maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health were the target population. Sampling is a selection from “a group of individuals from whom data are collected” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 129). A sample is a subset of the target population representing the whole population according to Patton (2015) and Creswell (2003). For this study, the sample size was 16 exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers, all of whom participated in the quantitative portion by completing the survey. To obtain the 15 participants to participate in the study, more than 15 were invited to participate. As a result, 16 participants completed the survey and were included in the study data. A total of 12 indicated willingness to participate in the interview portion of the study; of those 12 participants, the first five who indicated willingness to participate and had availability were selected for the qualitative phase of the study.

The exemplary company grade officers who participated in the study met at least four of the following criteria:

1. Evidence of successful development of grounded leadership skill (physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual);
2. Evidence of leading a successful organization or unit;
3. Minimum of 5 years of experience in the field;

4. Articles, papers, or materials written, published, or presented at conferences or association meetings;
5. Recognition by his or her peers;
6. Membership in professional associations in his or her field; and
7. Participation in workshops and seminars in work/life balance.

Demographic Data

As part of the quantitative data collection process, participants were asked to specify their gender, race, knowledge, and experience. Next, the demographic data are discussed as a whole and not represented as individual responses to ensure the anonymity of the participants.

The gender diversity of the participants is displayed in Table 1. Of the 16 participants, 81.3% were male and 18.8% were female.

Table 1

Survey Demographics: Gender

Gender	Participants	Percentage of sample
Male	$n = 13$	81.3%
Female	$n = 3$	18.8%

Note. The sample percentages add up to more than 100% because of rounding to the nearest 10th.

Participant race diversity is displayed in Figure 9. Approximately 69% of participants identified as White or Caucasian, 13% identified as Hispanic or Latin, 12% identified as Asian or Asian American, and 6% identified as multiracial.

Participants were asked to provide their years of experience in the current field to verify they met preestablished study criteria. As shown in Table 2, participants reported

experience in their current field ranges from 5 to 24 years, with most participants reporting their experience falling within the 6-10 years range. On average, participants reported 11.9 years of total experience in their current field. Notably, one participant reported 24 years of experience in their current field.

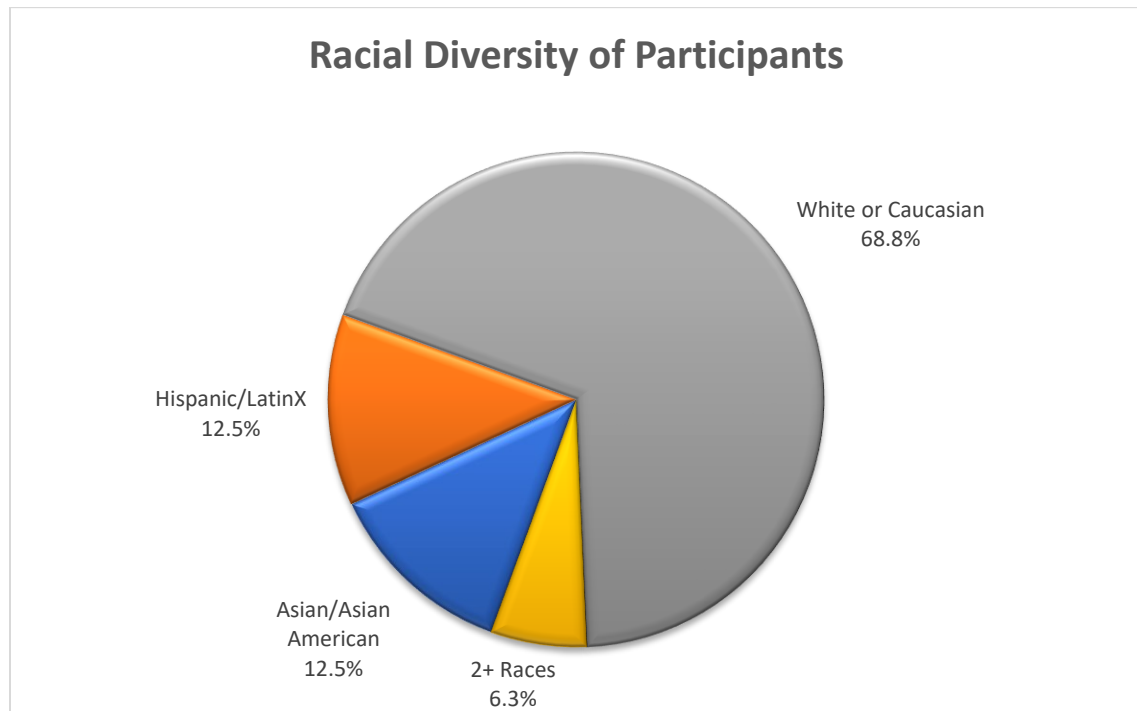


Figure 9. Survey demographics: Racial diversity.

Table 2

Survey Demographics: Years of Experience in the Current Field

Years of experience	# of responses (<i>n</i>)	Percentage of sample
<= 5 years	2	12.5%
6-10 years	5	31.3%
11-15 years	4	25.0%
16-20 years	4	25.0%
21-25 years	1	6.3%
Total responses	16	

Note. The sample percentages add up to more than 100% because of rounding to the nearest 10th.

Participants also reported their years of experience in their current position. As shown in Table 3, 81.3% of the participants reported working in their current job for 1 to 2 years. On average, participants reported an average of 2.2 years of total experience in their current position.

Table 3

Survey Demographics: Years in the Current Position

Years in position	# of responses (<i>n</i>)	Percentage of sample
< 1 years	1	6.3%
1-2 years	13	81.3%
2.1-5 years	1	6.3%
> 5 years	1	6.3%
Total responses	16	

Note. The sample percentages add up to more than 100% because of rounding to the nearest 10th.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Data for this mixed method study were collected via a quantitative survey and qualitative interview, and artifacts allowed for result triangulation. The section that follows presents quantitative data, and the quantitative data are presented in descriptive narratives. To answer Research Question 1, quantitative data were collected via electronic survey from the 16 participants. This information was analyzed by the mean (average value of the data) and the standard deviation (dispersion of the data point relative to the mean) for each question. Next, qualitative data were gathered from the five interview participants and were utilized to answer Research Question 2. These data were analyzed by NVivo, a coding program, to identify common themes.

Quantitative Data for Research Question 1

Research Question 1: *How do exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers rate their use of grounded leadership strategies in the six dimensions of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health on the Stay Grounded survey?* The participants completed the Stay Grounded survey, which contains 40 statements (five for each of the six areas of health and 10 for grounded). The participants were asked to rate their use of grounded leadership strategies using the Likert scale. The Likert scale was rated as follows: 1 (*disagree strongly*), 2 (*disagree moderately*), 3 (*disagree slightly*), 4 (*agree slightly*), 5 (*agree moderately*), and 6 (*agree strongly*). Sixteen participants answered a 40-statement survey to provide 640 responses to answer Research Question 1. The responses were converted to their corresponding numeric values and were used to calculate the mean and standard deviation for review. The mean was calculated by adding the sum of all the responses and dividing it by the number of participants to gauge the expected average value of the responses. A high mean value suggests the participants have a high affinity or *agree strongly* with the statement. In contrast, a low mean value signifies low affinity or *disagree strongly* to the statement. Next, standard deviation, the measure of variation or dispersion of data, is analyzed to assess the distribution of the data points in relation to the mean (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). A low standard deviation denotes that the participants generally agree whereas a high standard deviation indicates disagreements in responses. Analyzing the mean and standard deviation can provide insights into what strategies these high-performing leaders use.

Stay Grounded Survey General Overview

For this study, grounded health was defined as a deep connection to the authentic self with “a sense of being fully embodied, whole, centered and balanced in ourselves and our relationships” (Daniels, 2005, p. 290). The roots of being grounded are built on the six dimensions of health: physical, emotional, intellectual, vocational, social, vocational, and spiritual (Rosen, 2013). By sustaining healthy roots, grounded leaders are more likely to sustain performance over time and remain resilient to stressors (Carucci, 2017; Rosen, 2013). Table 4 displays the results of the Stay Grounded survey.

Table 4 summarizes the CA ARNG company grade officer responses on the grounded survey questions. The table also shows the mean and the standard deviation of each section. In general, the participants rated themselves above average on all seven areas, with the mean ranging from 5.61 to 4.63 out of the highest possible rating of 6. Intellectual health was ranked highest at 5.61, followed by spiritual health at 5.29. Physical health and emotional health were rated lowest among all the sections at 4.63 and 4.89, respectively. However, these two sections’ ratings are still considered high as their mean values fall between *agree moderately* and *agree slightly*. A standard deviation review indicated that emotional health and physical health sections had the highest at 1.18 and 1.14. In contrast, intellectual and spiritual health had the lowest standard deviations of 0.63 and 0.86. The participants’ ratings for emotional and physical health were more varied and suggested that the participants may utilize different strategies to strengthen their roots in these two sections. Conversely, participants appeared to use a more similar

Table 4

Survey Results of the Stay Grounded Survey

Area	Agree strongly		Agree moderately		Agree slightly		Disagree slightly		Disagree moderately		Disagree strongly		M	SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Physical	23	29%	18	23%	29	36%	7	9%	2	3%	1	1%	4.63	1.14
Emotional	26	33%	34	43%	12	15%	4	5%	1	1%	3	4%	4.89	1.18
Intellectual	55	69%	19	24%	6	8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	5.61	0.63
Social	32	40%	35	44%	8	10%	2	3%	2	3%	1	1%	5.13	1.01
Vocational	41	51%	23	29%	8	10%	6	8%	1	1%	1	1%	5.18	1.10
Spiritual	39	49%	29	36%	9	11%	2	3%	1	1%	0	0%	5.29	0.86
Grounded	76	48%	53	33%	23	14%	6	4%	1	1%	1	1%	5.21	0.94
Total	292		211		95		27		8		7			

Note. 16 participants X 40 statements = 640 responses.

approach to enhance their intellectual and spiritual health, as suggested by the low standard deviation values. Overall, the participants provided high ratings for their use of Rosen's six dimensions of health.

Physical health. For this study, physical health is defined as an individual's mind-body awareness to minimize fatigue, maximize energy management, build immunity, and maintain resilience to stress while sustaining a peak physical performance lifestyle (Donatelle & Ketcham, 2017; Rosen, 2014). In addition, the team created five survey statements that convey the qualities of physical health for the participants to rate themselves. Table 5 shows the data collected for physical health.

Physical health had the lowest overall mean (4.63) of all the survey sections, which falls within the range of *agree moderately* and *agree slightly*. Of the five statements, "maintain a nutritious diet" had the highest mean of 5.00, followed by "exercise daily" and "take time to relax" with a mean of 4.69. The "think consciously about mind-body connectedness" statement had the lowest mean at 4.19. Physical health was the only section with four survey statements with a mean below 5.0.

The standard deviation for the physical health statements was 1.14 with 10 disagree responses, the highest number of disagreements in all survey statements. Physical health also had the highest number of *agree slightly* responses at 36%. The statement "think consciously about mind-body connectedness" had the highest standard deviation (1.42) of the physical health section. This standard deviation value is consistent with having four disagree responses to the statement. "Exercise daily" and "take time to relax" had the lowest physical health standard deviation at 0.95, with participants generally agreeing to the statements.

Table 5

Survey Results for Physical Health

Statement	Agree strongly		Agree moderately		Agree slightly		Disagree slightly		Disagree moderately		Disagree strongly		M	SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Exercise daily	3	18.75%	7	43.75%	4	25.00%	2	12.50%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4.69	0.95
Sleep 7-9 hours daily	6	37.50%	1	6.25%	6	37.50%	2	12.50%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	4.56	1.31
Maintain a nutritious diet	7	43.75%	2	12.50%	7	43.75%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.00	0.97
Take time to relax	4	25.00%	4	25.00%	7	43.75%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4.69	0.95
Think consciously about mind-body connectedness	3	18.75%	4	25.00%	5	31.25%	2	12.50%	1	6.25%	1	6.25%	4.19	1.42
Total	23		18		29		7		2		2			

Note. 16 participants X 5 statements = 80 responses.

Emotional health. Emotional health as defined for this study is the self-awareness and controlled response to life events that promote resilience and self-assurance (Aguilar, 2018; Hattie et al., 2004; Ullione, 1996; Y. Wang et al., 2016). In addition, the team created five survey statements that convey the qualities of emotional health for the participants to rate themselves. Table 6 shows the data collected for emotional health.

Emotional health received the second-lowest mean (4.89) out of the seven survey sections, which falls between the *agree moderately* and *agree slightly* rating range. The statement “treat others with compassion” had a mean of 5.44, followed by the statement “remain calm when interacting with others who display strong emotions” with a mean of 5.19. Conversely, the statement “talk openly about my emotions” had a mean of 4.06, which was the lowest mean of all the statements in the survey.

Overall, the standard deviation for the emotional health section (1.18) was the highest compared to other survey areas. As such, emotional health was the only section that had three statements with the standard deviation value of over 1.00: “talk openly about my emotions” (1.57), “my colleague at work offers supportive feedback” (1.15), and “remain calm when interacting with others who display strong emotions (1.05). Notably, the statement “talk openly about my emotions” had the highest standard deviation of all the statements in the survey.

Table 6

Survey Results for Emotional Health

Statement	Agree strongly		Agree moderately		Agree slightly		Disagree slightly		Disagree moderately		Disagree strongly		M	SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Talk openly about my emotions	2	12.50%	6	37.50%	4	25.00%	1	6.25%	1	6.25%	2	12.50%	4.06	1.57
My colleague at work offers supportive feedback	2	12.50%	9	56.25%	4	25.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	6.25%	4.63	1.15
Remain calm when interacting with other who display strong emotions	8	50.00%	5	31.25%	1	6.25%	2	12.50%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.19	1.05
Treat others with compassion	8	50.00%	7	43.75%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.44	0.63
Feel comfortable around others	6	37.50%	7	43.75%	2	12.50%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.13	0.89
Total	26		34		12		4		1		3			

Note. 16 participants X 5 statements = 80 responses.

Intellectual health. In this study, intellectual health is defined as a deep curiosity to acquire new knowledge that stimulates learning, increases change adaptability, and builds mental agility to generate innovative solutions (Naz et al., 2014; Rosen, 2013; van Rensburg et al., 2011). In addition, the team created five survey statements that convey the qualities of intellectual health for the participants to rate themselves. Table 7 shows the data collected for intellectual health.

The intellectual health had a mean of 5.61, the highest overall rating of all survey sections where all five statements received ratings over 5.0. Intellectual health also had the highest number of *agree strongly* responses at 69%. In addition, three statements from this section had the highest mean of all the survey: “logical in my approach to problem solving” (5.81), “ability to challenge yourself to see all sides of an issue” (5.69), and “ask questions to explore new learning” (5.69). The results suggested that the participants felt strongly about the intellectual health statements compared to other survey statements.

In addition to receiving the highest overall mean, the social health section attained the lowest overall standard deviation (0.63) compared to other survey areas. In particular, the statement “logical in my approach to problem solving” had a standard deviation of 0.40, the lowest variation rating in all survey statements. Statements “develop your own ideas” and “expose yourself to new ideas different from your own” had the highest standard deviation (.73) of the intellectual health section. Notably, all five intellectual health statements had standard deviations values of less than 0.75, and intellectual health was the only section where participants agreed, with varying levels, to all the statements.

Table 7

Survey Results for Intellectual Health

Statement	Agree strongly		Agree moderately		Agree slightly		Disagree slightly		Disagree moderately		Disagree strongly		M	SD
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Ability to challenge yourself to see all sides of an issue	12	75.00%	3	18.75%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.69	.60
Develop your own ideas	9	56.25%	5	31.25%	2	12.50%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.44	0.73
Expose yourself to new ideas different to your own	9	56.25%	5	31.25%	2	12.50%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.44	0.73
Ask questions to explore new learning	12	75.00%	3	18.75%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.69	0.60
Logical in my approach to problem solving	13	81.25%	3	18.75%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.81	0.40
Total	55		19		6		0		0		0			

Note. 16 participants X 5 statements = 80 responses.

Social health. Social health for this study is defined as the authentic relationships individuals have based on principles of fairness, trustworthiness, empathy, and communication that guide mutually rewarding interactions (McLeroy et al., 2002; Parry, 1998; Rosen, 2013). In addition, the team created five survey statements that convey the qualities of social health for the participants to rate themselves. Table 8 shows the data collected for social health.

The social health section had a mean of 5.13 with participants agreeing, to varying levels, to most of the statements. The statements “demonstrate interest in other people” and “show forgiveness that creates humility” had the highest social health mean of 5.25. The statement “make decisions without bias” had the lowest social health mean of 4.81.

Overall, the social health section had a standard deviation of 1.01 with participants. The statement “make decision without bias” had the highest social health standard deviation of 1.47 with one *disagree moderately* and one *disagree strongly* rating. Conversely, the statement “demonstrate interest in other people” had a standard deviation of 0.68 with all participants agreeing, in varying levels, to the statement.

Table 8

Survey Results for Social Health

Statement	Agree strongly		Agree moderately		Agree slightly		Disagree slightly		Disagree moderately		Disagree strongly		M	SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Have mutually rewarding relationships	6	37.50%	8	50.00%	1	6.25%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.19	0.83
Practice active listening	5	31.25%	9	56.25%	1	6.25%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.13	0.81
Show forgiveness that creates humility	9	56.25%	4	25.00%	2	12.50%	0	0.00%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	5.25	1.13
Make decisions without bias	6	37.50%	6	37.50%	2	12.50%	0	0.00%	1	6.25%	1	6.25%	4.81	1.47
Demonstrate interest in other people	6	37.50%	8	50.00%	2	12.50%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.25	0.68
Total	32		35		8		2		2		1			

Note. 16 participants X 5 statements = 80 responses

Vocational health. Vocational health is a leader's career or calling leading to personal satisfaction in work that is meaningful. It is the ambition that motivates a leader to search out more challenges and achievements in their field (Hutchins, 1969; Senge, 2010). In addition, the team created five survey statements that convey the qualities of vocational health for the participants to rate themselves. Table 9 shows the data collected for vocational health.

Vocational health had an overall mean of 5.18. The statement "accomplishment of important goals is satisfying" had the highest vocational health mean of 5.50, followed by the statement "challenge provides opportunity for contributing in a meaningful way" with the mean of 5.44. On the other hand, the statement "work ignites passion for my chosen vocation" had a mean of 4.38 and was the only statement with a mean lower than 5.00 in the vocational health section.

The standard deviation for vocational health was 1.10, the third-highest variation rating of all survey sections. The statement "work ignites passion for my chosen vocation" had a standard deviation of 1.50 with three participants disagreeing, with varying levels, to the statement. The statement "challenge provides opportunity of contributing in a meaningful way" had the lowest vocational health standard deviation of 0.81.

Table 9

Survey Results for Vocational Health

Statement	Agree strongly		Agree moderately		Agree slightly		Disagree slightly		Disagree moderately		Disagree strongly		M	SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Work ignites passion for my chosen vocation	4	25.00%	5	31.25%	3	18.75%	2	12.50%	1	6.25%	1	6.25%	4.38	1.50
Accomplishment of important goals is satisfying	11	68.75%	3	18.75%	1	6.25%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.50	0.89
Challenge provides opportunity of contributing in a meaningful way	9	56.25%	6	37.50%	0	0.00%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.44	0.81
Maintain an ambitious attitude that leads to achievement	7	43.75%	6	37.50%	2	12.50%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.19	0.91
Keep confidence in middle of setbacks	10	62.50%	3	18.75%	2	12.50%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.38	0.96
Total	41		23		8		6		1		1			

Note. 16 participants X 5 statements = 80 responses.

Spiritual health. Spiritual health is defined as the values of an individual's innermost self that motivate action and inspire toward purposes that embody empathy and go beyond self. In addition, it is a commitment to one's value system as a source of well-being, providing a profound sense of global connectedness (Chirico, 2016; Covey, 2013; Dehler & Welsh, 1994). In addition, the team created five survey statements that convey the qualities of spiritual health for the participants to rate themselves. Table 10 shows the data collected for spiritual health.

The spiritual health section had a mean of 5.29, the highest mean of all survey sections. The statement, "respect others regardless of differences" had the most elevated spiritual health mean of 5.69, with 75% of participants *agree strongly* to the statement. Conversely, the statement "follow values that create balance in life" had the lowest spiritual health mean of 4.88, with 25% of participants *agree strongly* to the statement.

Spiritual health received the second-lowest standard deviation (0.86) out of all seven survey sections. The statement "aware of the feelings of others" had the highest spiritual health standard deviation of 1.09 with one participant *disagree moderately* to the statement. The statements with low standard deviations were "respect others regardless of differences" (0.60) and "make others feel appreciated" (0.63).

Table 10

Survey Results for Spiritual Health

Statement	Agree strongly		Agree moderately		Agree slightly		Disagree slightly		Disagree moderately		Disagree strongly		M	SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Follow values that create balance in life	4	25.00%	7	43.75%	4	25.00%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4.88	0.89
Respect others regardless of differences	12	75.00%	3	18.75%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.69	0.60
Make others feel appreciated	9	56.25%	6	37.50%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.50	0.63
Maintain a world view that is service focused	7	43.75%	7	43.75%	1	6.25%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.25	0.86
Aware of the feelings of others	7	43.75%	6	37.50%	2	12.50%	0	0.00%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	5.13	1.09
Total	39		29		9		2		1		0			

Note. 16 participants X 5 statements = 80 responses.

Grounded. For this study, being grounded is defined as a deep connection to the authentic self with a “sense of being fully embodied, whole, centered, and balanced in ourselves and our relationships.” Such existence entails being rooted in physical health, emotional health, intellectual health, social health, vocational health, and spiritual health (Daniels, 2005; Rosen, 2013). In addition, the team created ten survey statements that describe the qualities of being grounded for the participants to rate themselves. Table 11 shows the data collected for grounded qualities.

The grounded section had a mean of 5.21, with 95% of the responses agreeing to the statements at varying levels. The statement “adaptable to sudden change” had the highest grounded mean of 5.69, followed by the statement “stay focused on what really matters” with a mean of 5.38. In contrast, the statement “take time to reflect” had the lowest grounded mean at 4.63. Notably, the section had nine statements with a mean rating over 5.0.

The grounded section had a standard deviation of 0.86, the second-lowest variation of the seven areas of the survey. The statement “take time to reflect” had the highest grounded standard deviation of 1.50 with 25% of participants disagreeing with the statement. Conversely, the statement “adaptable to sudden change” had a standard deviation of 0.48 with all participants *agree strongly* or *agree moderately* to the statement. Overall, the grounded section had three statements with a standard deviation of 1.00 or higher and seven statements with less than 1.00.

Table 11

Survey Results for Grounded Survey

Statement	Agree strongly		Agree moderately		Agree slightly		Disagree slightly		Disagree moderately		Disagree strongly		M	SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Conscious of what's going on with other people	6	37.50%	8	50.00%	2	12.50%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.25	0.68
Maintain a strong support system	7	43.75%	5	31.25%	3	18.75%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.13	0.96
Stay focused on what really matters	9	56.25%	4	25.00%	3	18.75%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.38	0.81
Stay true to values	9	56.25%	3	18.75%	3	18.75%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.25	1.00
Courage to take action	7	43.75%	5	31.25%	4	25.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.19	0.83
Adaptable to sudden change	11	68.75%	5	31.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.69	0.48
Ability to control emotions to channel in productive ways	6	37.50%	8	50.00%	2	12.50%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.25	0.68
Contribute to others without expecting something in return	8	50.00%	4	25.00%	3	18.75%	0	0.00%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	5.13	1.15
Take time to reflect	6	37.50%	4	25.00%	2	12.50%	3	18.75%	0	0.00%	1	6.25%	4.63	1.50
Build positive relationships by accepting people	7	43.75%	7	43.75%	1	6.25%	1	6.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5.25	0.86
Total	76		53		23		6		1		1			

Note. 16 participants X 10 statements = 160 responses.

Qualitative Data for Research Question 2

Research Question 2: *What strategies do exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers use to develop and maintain grounded leadership in the six dimensions of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health?*

The primary qualitative instrument to answer this question was a post-survey interview. This interview provided additional insight and detail into the participants' practices for each of the six dimensions of health. Two interview questions were developed and utilized in this study for each of Rosen's (2013) six health dimensions. These 12 open-ended questions were designed to foster a dialogue with exemplary company grade officers to gain a deeper understanding of the strategies they utilized to cultivate and maintain grounded leadership. The interviews with five exemplary company grade officers were conducted virtually via the video conference application, Zoom. The researcher also collected artifacts, which included certificates, pictures, awards, writings, or schedules that supported and allowed for triangulation of the qualitative data, from the participants. Interview transcripts and artifacts collected from the participants were coded into themes utilizing NVivo, a software application to assist in organizing qualitative data.

Table 12 summarizes the qualitative data collected from this phase of research. The interview and artifactual data are organized in columns by the health dimension, followed by the number of themes, number of interviews coded, number of artifacts coded, frequency of references for each theme and totals.

Table 12

All Areas, Themes, and Codes

Area	Theme	Interviews coded	Artifacts coded	Interview frequency	Artifact frequency	Total frequency	% of frequency
Physical	3	5	12	33	12	45	10.32%
Emotional	2	5	4	50	4	54	12.39%
Intellectual	2	5	14	35	23	58	13.30%
Social	2	5	27	65	36	101	23.17%
Vocational	2	5	24	70	33	103	23.62%
Spiritual	2	5	26	22	15	37	17.20%
Total	13	N/A	N/A	299	123	398	100.00%

Note. The qualitative data analysis resulted in a total frequency of 436. The number of interviews and artifacts coded are not totaled (represented as N/A) but are determined by counting which artifact or interviews were coded in any particular health area. There was a total of five interviews and 42 artifacts assessed for the qualitative data analysis.

The researcher coded a total of five interviews and evaluated 42 artifacts. These codes along with supporting data were grouped into themes. Each theme corresponded to one of Rosen's (2013) six health dimensions. Three themes emerged from the data for the physical health dimension. Two themes were identified for the emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health dimensions. A summary of themes and their quantities in each dimension is shown in Figure 10.

The researcher also identified theme rate of occurrence in the interviews and artifacts associated with each of the six health dimensions. There can be multiple instances of a theme in an interview or artifact; frequency is the count of a theme's occurrence. The vocational health theme occurred 103 times during interviews and was identified 33 times in artifactual data. The vocational health theme occurred 23.62% of the time and was identified as having the highest frequency, and physical had the lowest

frequency at 10.32%. A summary of frequency of codes by health dimension is illustrated in Figure 11.

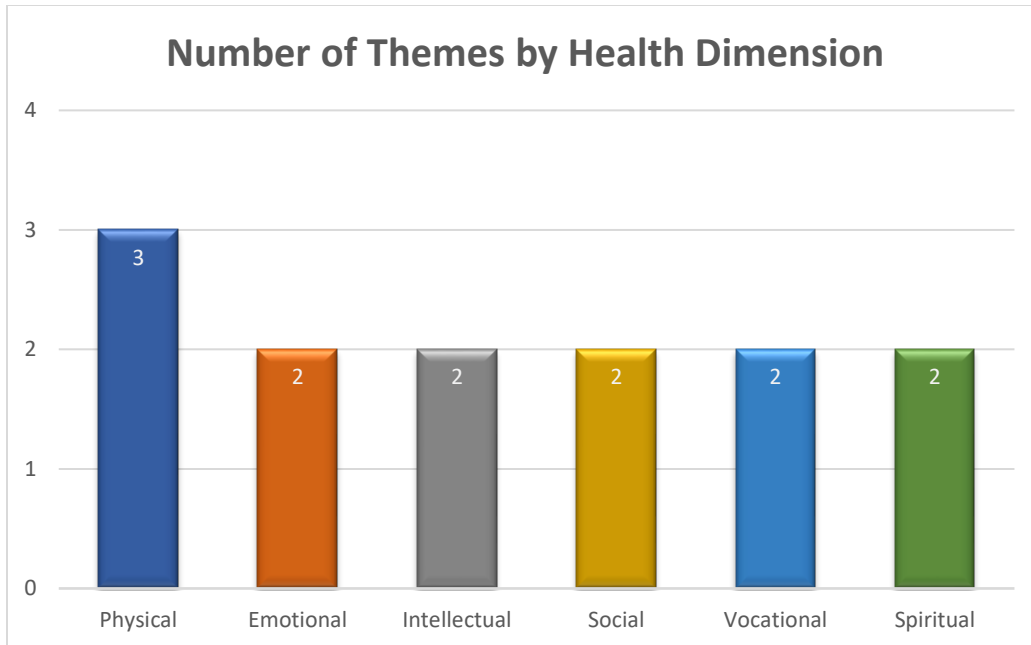


Figure 10. Number of themes by health dimension.

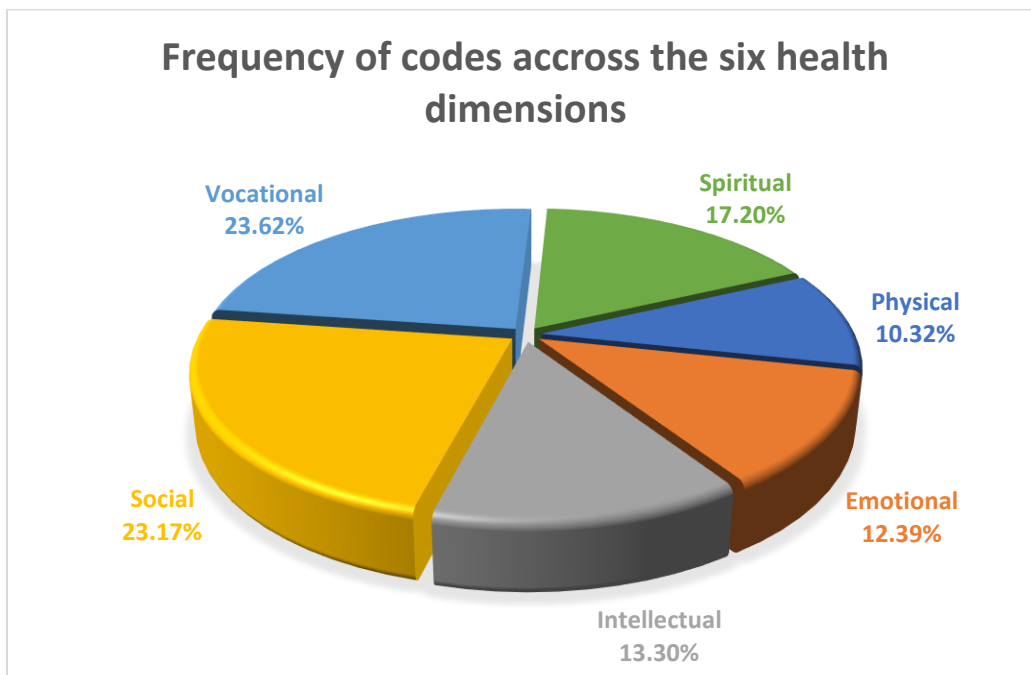


Figure 11. Frequency of codes across the six health dimensions.

Physical Health Data

The study identified physical health as an individual's mind–body awareness to minimize fatigue, maximize energy management, build immunity, and maintain resilience to stress while sustaining a peak physical performance lifestyle (Donatelle & Ketcham, 2017; Rosen, 2013). Regular physical health routines are associated with positive outcomes such as resilience to stress, resistance to ailments such as cardiovascular disease, psychiatric disorders and are associated with general individual well-being (Childs & de Wit, 2014; Rosen, 2013). This study identified 45 total frequency counts and three themes for the physical health dimension based on the five interviews and 12 coded artifacts. The three themes were (a) physical activity or exercise, (b) identify sources of renewal, and (c) nutrition. Table 13 summarizes the physical health data results.

Table 13

Physical Health Themes

Physical theme	Interviews coded	Artifacts coded	Interview frequency	Artifact frequency	Total frequency	% of frequency
Physical activity or exercise	5	8	14	8	22	48.89%
Identify sources of renewal	5	3	11	3	14	31.11%
Nutrition	3	1	8	1	9	20.00%
Total	N/A	N/A	33	12	45	100.00%

Note. Total frequency of physical health = 45. The number of interviews and artifacts coded are not totaled in the table and are represented as N/A as each theme may have used the same interview or artifact in the coding of the theme. There was a total of five interviews and 12 artifacts assessed for area physical health.

Physical activity or exercise. Physical activity or exercise was identified as a theme 22 times and coding for a total of 48.89% of the overall coded data for the physical dimension of health. Physical activity or exercise was a theme that was identified in all five interviews and included outdoor activities such as bicycling, running, fishing, camping, hiking, and rock climbing. Indoor activities included weight lifting, swimming, and volleyball. Varying frequency of workouts from daily to weekly were identified and increased proportionally to stressors.

Participant 2 indicated frequency of activity: “I try to work out in the gym nearly every day.” Participant 3 stated varieties of exercise:

So it goes from running, basically waking up in the morning and getting a mile or two under my belt and depending on my goals I’m adjusting that left and right but also keeping it versatile so I’m working a lot of different muscle groups, so it goes from swimming to running to weightlifting.

Participant 4 also indicated exercise frequency and engaging in different physical activities:

Every morning I wake up at 4:30 and I go hiking. Cows Mountain, which is a mountain near my house at least three times a week on other days I do strength, training, and cardio, and I like to be outside in nature camping hiking and I play volleyball.

Participant 5 also discussed the importance of weekly physical activity and variation of activities:

At least weekly usually on a weekend I’ll try to get out and biking this maintain some kind of cardio. That and then walking. I do a lot of walking also just

outside especially recently with kids pushing. Pushing strollers has been things we often do, strolling walk four miles or for the kids in the backpack four miles.

Participants also discussed how physical activity assists them deal with stressors.

Participant 2 stated how exercise assists in the mitigation of stress:

It takes me away basically from my own thoughts, that stressful sense. And this is how I at least do with it physically because by stepping outside of it, then I'm able to either focus on my workout, focus on my run, just focus on me, what I need to do physically to continue to move myself forward, which helps relieve some of my stress. Because I discover if I'm not being active, I start to then, I don't know if ruminate is the correct process, but I just start to kind of dwell on whatever that stress is in my life on the physical side of it.

Participant 3 also indicated exercise as a mitigator for stress:

So my go to is basically exercise in the morning, so that's just basic thing that. I do in order to reduce a lot of the stress that I guess that I accumulates over the week, but not only that, but I also try to make it fun on the weekends I'm working through those exercises.

Identify sources of renewal. The theme find sources of renewal had a total of 14 coded frequency counts, which represented 31.11% of the coded data for the area of physical health. Identify sources of renewal codes were derived from five interviews and three artifacts. Participants indicated the following strategies to identify sources of renewal: identifying environments that foster renewal and scheduling time for renewal.

Participant 1 discussed finding environments that foster relaxation and scheduling time to renew energy stores: "Most of the stuff, probably 2 to 3 days a week, I'm doing

something that has absolutely no cellphone service. And, for me, that's where I get my only ability to fully focus in and fill the well." Participant 1 also added context on finding an appropriate environment and eliminating distractions:

The trips that I go on, the outdoor activities that I do, a lot of them are solo. And for that reason, I have a distraction from the outside world. I have a satellite phone that I take with me but a lot of the stuff that I do is outside of cellular service.

Participant 4 also discussed activities as a source of renewal and healing:

So usually in the mornings I meditate for about 30 minutes. I journal on a daily basis. I write down everything that I need to get accomplished for the day. I also receive body healing in the form of different modalities, such as massage cupping and sometimes astrology as well.

Participant 2 discussed knowing when to engage in recentering and renewal activities:

When I am stressed and uncertain, I want to go work out and I want to go run. I actually have a drive to do that then, because it's a constant that gives me the ability to almost meditate and focus on other things in life because it takes me away from the computer.

Nutrition. Nutrition represented 20% of participant responses in the physical health dimension with a total frequency of 9 derived from three interviews and one artifact. Maintaining awareness of how nutrition plays a role in performance was noted in this health area.

Participant 2 noted the importance of getting appropriate nutrients at an appropriate time:

My routine is basically I do 16 hours of fasting, 8 hours of a time window for eating. So, it's noon to 8:00 PM that I have a window of eating and don't limit myself on what actually I can eat during that time. I just still make smart choices, smart healthy choices, and I don't go pounding tubs of ice cream or anything during that 8 hours but eat the nutrients that I need. I focus on getting actually a lot of vegetables and a lot of whole grains during that time and protein as well.

Participant 3 indicated the importance of diet variety and incorporation into a routine:

The nutrition aspect, ideally, it would be food prep, but I do see that I get kind of bored by Wednesday eating the same thing so I've actually gone from eating a good breakfast or coffee in the morning, having something to snack on that's either like a lean bar some kind of protein and a lighter one to lunch. Again, if I can't food prep, I try to make some nutritious choices when it comes down to fish or vegetables, but my go to recently has been Fit Bowls in these cardboard boxes which are made of veggies down to cauliflower rice. It gives me my protein and basically the nutrition that I need in order to get home and actually cook something that's nutritious to add to that.

Participant 5 discussed the importance of diet choices in relation to physical health:

It changes, the inclination towards eating habits. Maybe I wasn't into junk food or something like that. That's more of a mental discipline aspect, I need to focus

on this right now, I need to stay healthy and focus because if I make bad decisions, it's just going to compound going down the road to make everything worse.

Emotional Health Data

The study defined emotional health as the self-awareness and controlled response to life events that promote resilience and self-assurance (Aguilar, 2018; Hattie et al., 2004; Ulione, 1996; Wang et al., 2016). Emotional health has the ability to assist leaders to respond appropriately and adapt to dynamic environments (Rosen, 2013). Grounded leaders have the ability to recognize positive and negative emotions and their role in driving performance (Rosen 2013; Wyatt, 2021). Fifty-four total occurrences in three themes were identified for emotional health, which represented 12.39% of overall qualitative data collected and are summarized in Table 14. Two themes emerged from the data that company grade officers employ to maintain their emotional health: (a) emotional self-awareness and (b) foster positive emotions.

Table 14

Emotional Health Themes

Emotional theme	Interviews coded	Artifacts coded	Interview frequency	Artifact frequency	Total frequency	% of frequency
Emotional self-awareness	5	1	21	1	22	40.74%
Foster positive emotions	5	3	29	3	32	59.26%
Total	N/A	N/A	50	4	54	100.00%

Note. Total frequency of emotional health = 54. The number of interviews and artifacts coded are not totaled in the table and are represented as N/A as each theme may have used the same interview or artifact in the coding of the theme. There was a total of five interviews and four artifacts assessed for the area of emotional health.

Emotional self-awareness. Emotional self-awareness represented 40.74% of the total coded areas of emotional health. The themes for emotional self-awareness were derived from data in five interviews and one artifact. Participants discussed the following strategies to promote emotional health and mitigate stress: utilizing humor, discussion with trusted partners, breathing exercises, self-reflection, and gaining context.

Participant 1 indicated the use of self-reflection and humor as a strategy to maintain emotional health:

So, levity's big for me, I always try to maintain an environment where anything can be turned into a joke, right? For me, my mental compass is, if I'm in an environment, which happens often, it's not like I'm not immune to it, but if I find myself in an environment where I'm no longer joking around. No matter how serious it is, then that's usually a trigger point for me to do self-reflection and be like, okay, I've gone off the deep end in this scenario because I'm not joking around. So then, that'll trigger self-reflection and that'll tell me, okay, I need to adjust, left, right or whatever, to get back to that point of levity, to be in a better space.

Participant 4 also discussed self-reflection to remain in control of the decision-making process and treat others with compassion:

I'm usually calm during difficult situations, I tend to remain calm I'm usually aware of my emotions, I acknowledge it and I accept it. I think about the situation and if it's something that I can conduct research on then I'll look into it.

With regard to self-reflection, Participant 4 added, “Sometimes, if I feel like I’m starting to get angry or something I will shut the door and just try to calm myself down and just close my eyes and relax a little bit.”

Participant 2 discussed utilizing trusted partners and journaling to shift a negative narrative:

So in that moment I would say my emotional health was shaken in a little bit, but then I worked with my wife to kind of discuss the pros and cons of things, to work through it and then how to come to realization of it being a positive thing and how to shift the narrative. So that’s how I feel like when my emotional health does take a dip, I’m able to help bring it back to where it needs to be in a positive mindset so I can actually handle stress and handle situations as it arises appropriately. I’ll take some time typically to journal out things that I’m grateful for to keep me focused on what’s positive. That way I kind of have a good positive start, I’m not just reacting to everything that comes my way throughout the day.

Participant 5 also discussed finding comfort and problem solving with a trusted partner:

Emotionally my wife and I are team, so we’ve got to be on the same page. We don’t wait for somebody to become a problem before we discuss it. If something is like slightly out of the norm that’s a trigger for both of us to sit down and be like hey, just going to bring us up for this problem, here’s what I’m dealing with and that we can help each other out and keep an eye on each other that’s like the one emotional aspect.

Participant 3 discussed taking the time to breathe and gain context to modulate behaviors to appropriately interact with others:

I think the main thing for me is just the breathing piece and recognizing what's urgent what's an emergency and what can be worked through so usually and stressful times, people have the tendency to kind of ramp up and go. Get that adrenaline going and most time it's not needed, so I think a clear picture. As far as what's going on and how to assess. Your assessment makes a big difference and then kind of working through those emotions seeing what can be controlled or can't be controlled and how you could adjust fire.

Foster positive emotions. The theme foster positive emotions had a total of 32 coded frequency counts, which represented 59.26% of the coded data for the area of emotional health. Foster positive emotion codes were derived from five interviews and three artifacts. Participants indicated the following strategies to foster positive emotions: practicing compassion, maintaining a support network, and fostering an environment that others enjoy.

Participant 1 discussed the importance of prioritizing others' desires to create an environment that fosters compassion regardless of rank or position:

Above all, both subordinates under me, my peers next to me and even my leadership above me, I make it a point. And whether they offer it up or not, I try to understand what drains them and what fills their well at the same time. And if I can, I'm going to do something that I know is filling their well.

Participant 2 discussed how maintaining a support network assists in promoting positive emotions and remaining resilient during stressful times:

I think it ties a little bit back into the physical health situation too, of physically feeling good about myself and also just having a good stable family life, good support network around. Keeping those things healthy for me, promotes the emotional resilience when difficult situations do arise and that I do have the confidence to handle them.

Participant 3 discussed fostering positive emotions by creating an environment that makes others feel comfortable: “I’m keeping my personal space clean calm and welcoming I play relaxing music in my office and I like candles and just have relaxing smells.” Participant 3 added context on how the environment and humor can foster positive emotions:

Anybody that comes into my office that you know have, you could tell that they’re angry, I would just crack a joke, or you know just say something to the have them calm down a little bit and they usually enjoy the smells coming out of my office.

Intellectual Health Data

Intellectual health is defined as a deep curiosity to acquire new knowledge that stimulates learning, increases change adaptability, and builds mental agility to generate innovative solutions (Naz et al., 2014; Rosen, 2013; van Rensburg et al., 2011). Intellectual health strategies assist in creating a flexible mindset that allows for adaptability, which is an important skill in a complex and dynamic modern operational environment (Rosen, 2013). This study identified 58 total frequency counts for the two intellectual health themes: (a) deep curiosity and growth mindset and (b) adaptability/flexibility. These themes were derived from five interviews and

included 14 artifacts. Four of the five participants had obtained or were pursuing advanced degrees or certificates. They identified the desire to seek out creative and intellectual challenges and found benefit in continual learning. Overall, intellectual health represented 13.30% of the total data collected for the six health dimensions as shown in Table 15.

Table 15

Intellectual Health Themes

Intellectual theme	Interviews coded	Artifacts coded	Interview frequency	Artifact frequency	Total frequency	% of frequency
Deep curiosity/growth mindset	5	7	16	10	26	44.83%
Adaptability/flexibility	5	7	19	13	32	55.17%
Total	N/A	N/A	35	23	58	100.00%

Note. Total frequency of intellectual health = 58. The number of interviews and artifacts coded are not totaled in the table and are represented as N/A as each theme may have used the same interview or artifact in the coding of the theme. There was a total of five interviews and 14 artifacts assessed for area intellectual health.

Deep curiosity and growth mindset. The theme deep curiosity and growth mindset was derived from the five interviews and seven artifacts. It represented 44.83% of the coded area for intellectual health with a frequency count of 26. Participants related the importance of seeking out professional and personal educational opportunities, stimulating learning via audiobooks or podcasts, and achieving different perspectives by reading biographies or articles.

Participant 1 stated the following with regard to seeking out educational opportunities and maintaining interest and asking questions to explore new learning:

I'm going to grad school as well, and then I'm learning a lot of backend data architecture stuff. I took on a lot of the development stuff like the projects in the backend and that right now is keeping me interested. It's not about the role; it's how much can I grow in that role? I'm saying, if I'm bored of what I'm doing, I will find something to work on that I think is beneficial.

Participant 1 added context for determining where to focus energy: "Find something that you're genuinely curious in. Understand where your curiosity comes from and then, apply a lot of mental energy to that."

Participant 2 shared ways in which learning was utilized as a way to achieve different perspectives:

I like to listen to a lot of audio books and podcasts. And the reason I bring that up is because they really foster my curiosity. Because I'll listen to a podcast and I'll hear something in there that's one of their references and then that gets me curious about that reference.

Participant 2 also indicated how audiobooks help stimulate questions that can assist identifying new learning opportunities and improve change adaptability:

I'll follow up with reading articles that stimulate what's going on, because currently right now we have issues over in Ukraine and Russia, which then stimulates my curiosity to then understand what is the historical tension there? What is the drive behind these current events that are occurring? I feel like it gets me in a much better understanding and knowledge to what's happening currently. Then that also helps me adapt to change because I have a better understanding of where things have come from and just grounded a little bit more, I would say.

Participant 3 discussed how learning adds tools to achieve different perspectives and foster continual learning:

I add any course that could be relevant to my career to my progress even to my mental health, like the lean six Sigma that's that doesn't really add anything to the career path, but it does add tools which I could utilize in different aspects of my life. I really like institutional school just because it gives you a different perspective on a lot of different topics that you would normally not dive into so that I get a lot of recommendations for books, so I do drive quite a bit so a lot of online books audio books. I think it just goes back to that knowledge base so even though I'm driving for hours and I go through one book. Even if it's a sentence or a lesson learn or something that I can pick out and put in my toolbox, I think that's what stimulates that continuous learning piece and getting better and refining.

Participant 4 discussed how continual learning advances improvement:

“Intellectual effects stability, I like adjusting and learning about new HR systems and functions and databases. I like to analyze data and then come up with conclusions and recommendations for improvement.”

Participant 5 summarized how reading biographies assisted in achieving different perspectives, identifying learning opportunities, and applying processes to solve problems:

Stephen Ambrose—his biography of Eisenhower was one that was really helpful. It was kind of interesting to see Eisenhower go from being a Kansas farm-raised kid to being the Supreme Allied Commander United States and then President

United States and how did he adapt to changes and where did he focus his energies and how he split time to manage. It led to thought processes on my staff management, how to best work with staff, how to communicate with staff effectively across cultural differences, where my gaps are. I just like bouncing back and forth comparing like what did Eisenhower do and how like how would I have responded to that.

Adaptability and flexibility. Thirty-two total frequency counts for the theme of adaptability and flexibility represented 55.17% of the intellectual health coded data. This theme was derived from five interviews and seven artifacts in this health area.

Participants discussed the following strategies to remain adaptable and flexible: keeping open minded, identifying processes to achieve new perspectives for problem solving, and seek out extremes to find realistic outcomes.

Participant 2 discussed the importance of being open minded to discover potential solutions:

By not having any rigidity, honestly, in my mind about stuff. I don't feel like I grasp or hold onto anything as not being a solution. I really like to explore every possible solution out there when things are presented as problems.

Participant 2 also added,

I think the right way to approach is being open-minded to different things and new ideas because at the end of the day, change is constant and we have to figure out how to take the current situations and use them and adapt them to achieve our desired outcome and be flexible.

Participant 3 also discussed the benefits of being open-minded: “Being open minded at being given that opportunity and giving them that opportunity to listen to differences and processes and things that can be better.” Participant 3 also added identifying processes with others to achieve new perspectives for problem solving:

I think that flexibility might come from everybody else’s opinion so everybody has a way of 30 things being better. Even things that should be done, not done, things that work didn’t work, and I might not always have eyes on what those processes are. I depend on other people in order to do add knowledge to what’s already been created, and I think that’s where my flexibility kind of comes, because I do try those things out to see what works better.

Participant 4 had a similar statement regarding working with others and assessing the situation for context to inform the problem-solving process:

I think about the situation and if it’s something that I can conduct research on then I’ll look into it. Depending on what the situation is, other times I have friends or senior leadership that I can call for mentorship or guidance in the situation. I like to take action on insights solve complex problems and share my challenges and ask for support and celebrate small wins.

Participant 5 discussed the fact that seeking out extremes helps identify realistic outcomes:

When I’m catastrophizing, I say, ok what is the worst thing that could happen, what was the best going to happen, whereas the real middle the road and push for on that.” Participant 5 expanded on how utilizing extremes allows for finding realistic outcomes. “It’s where you use what’s the best what’s the worst possible

thing that could happen as a result of this [situation] where you take it to the absolute absurd, like everybody dies in a nuclear explosion kind of craziness. Then what's the best possible thing that happens, like I get promoted to six star general and supreme commander of everything because they recognize my genius. So what's the realistic middle of the road here? So I take it to absurd on both ends and then that helps me get back to, okay this is realistic.

Social Health Data

Social health as defined by this study is the authentic relationships individuals have based on principles of fairness, trustworthiness, empathy, and communication that guide mutually rewarding interactions (McLeroy et al., 2002; Parry, 1998; Rosen, 2013).

According to Rosen, leaders have the ability to nourish their communities through relationships (Rosen, 2013). This starts inwardly at the individual level as authenticity, grows to mutually rewarding relationships, and culminates in team and community support (Rosen, 2013). Social health codes were identified by 101 frequency counts in five interviews and 27 artifacts as illustrated in Table 16. The following two themes arose from the data: (a) seek authentic relationships and (b) practice mutually beneficial communication. Social health data attributed to 13.30% frequency, which was the second highest of the overall qualitative data collected.

Seek authentic relationships. The theme seek authentic relationships represented 55.45% frequency counts for the area of social health that were derived from five interviews and 19 artifacts. Strategies that were identified for seeking authentic relationships included getting to know subordinates on a deeper level to foster teamwork

and camaraderie, having sit-down conversations about goals to personally connect with others, and assisting others to contribute to the overall community.

Table 16

Social Health Themes

Social themes	Interviews coded	Artifacts coded	Interview frequency	Artifact frequency	Total frequency	% of frequency
Seek authentic relationships	5	19	30	26	56	55.45%
Practice mutually beneficial communication	5	8	35	10	45	44.55%
Total	N/A	N/A	65	36	101	100.00%

Note. Total frequency of social health = 101. The number of interviews and artifacts coded are not totaled in the table and are represented as N/A as each theme may have used the same interview or artifact in the coding of the theme. There was a total of five interviews and 27 artifacts assessed for area social health.

Participant 1 stated how important interacting with subordinates was to foster a genuine sense of caring for others and camaraderie:

To me it's always like building a good team, like the camaraderie for me is definitely most important and all roles I've ever had both like civilian, military, I've enjoyed roles and I wanted to stay in roles when I had a good team. So that for me is holds more weight than the actual job or the mission itself.

Participant 1 also added the importance of demonstrating interest in others to understand their desires and capabilities: "It's important for me to know what your strengths are, what your weaknesses are, what you do."

Participant 2 also related the importance of interacting with others to understand them on a personal level and remain connected:

I want actual interactions with people that are genuine and I go out of my way to have those interaction and ask them how they're doing, how's their family doing, get to know them on a personal level and have a better understanding of what they like to do in life. And I feel like that keeps my connectedness there to people, to others.

Participant 2 indicated that using sit-down conversations allows for building and maintaining relationships:

Having those sit-down conversations with people where there are genuine conversations, we're interested in what they have to say, get to know them and their family and building that relationship, because relationships are not automatic. Just because you work with someone doesn't mean you have a relationship with them. You have to build relationships and you have to maintain relationships.

Participant 3 stated how seeking authentic relationships helps build a team atmosphere and how it can assist during stressful situations:

I'm so happy having a good team, so your team will either make you or break you and depending on those relationships that you have with your team that could either sustain you and pull you forward or can let you down. You could fail so the work that we put into your team and relationships, I think that's key also in going into anything that stressful.

Participant 3 also discussed how relationships are important to a well-functioning organization: "Teamwork is definitely a big piece of this organization because it's like

the human body, if one parts not functioning the entire, entire body can't function together our can't function well.”

Participant 5 discussed how genuine care for others and setting realistic expectations fosters an environment of high performance:

I take time to get to know them to know what they're doing and their families, how their families are doing. I also talk to them about my family and let them know that I'm also a human. But we can tend to dehumanize each other and see each other as job descriptions rather than as people.

Participant 5 added how setting realistic expectations can affect and build team trust:

So building trust is one of those things. That you can't wait for someone else to be the initiator. If I want a trusting team, I give trust to my guys, and that ties back to the environment. I have no interest in zero defects environment zero defects environment is fake it doesn't exist everyone makes mistakes everyone fails.

Participant 4 discussed how fostering genuine relationships can provide support from which to operate and in turn assist others:

I keep my circle pretty small like there's certain individuals that I reach out to on a daily basis. That I if I feel down or I feel sad or, if I have questions like they are my go-to people that I reach out to. I'm willing to help anyone that asks us for help, like when it comes to career progression educational promotions awards and take care of those that do not have the same resources that I do.

Participant 4 added that it is also personally rewarding: “It means a lot when I see my soldiers get promoted or see someone that I could help.”

Practice mutually beneficial communication. Practice mutually beneficial communication represented 58 coded frequency counts and was the highest percentage of the social health coded data at 57.43%. The data were derived from five interviews and 25 artifacts. The strategies identified for practice mutually beneficial communication included matching actions with words, practicing transparency, seeking counsel/partnering to problem solve. Participant 2 discussed candidness, matching words with actions to foster trust:

If I say something, I do it, or always at least be open and candid with people, especially from the trust side. I feel like words and actions go together with trust because at the end of the day, you can say whatever you want, but if you don't action it, no one's going to trust you.

Participant 2 further clarified,

If you say something, you action it differently, no one's going to trust you. So you have to have your actions follow up with your words and you have to be candid with people about what you intend to do, to show how it's mutually beneficial and helpful for everyone around in the organization or in your life.

Participant 4 also discussed the importance of being true to word to effectively communicate and build trust:

People have to trust you and be open and willing to work on relationships so some of the ways is being true to your word and following through with your actions effectively communicating with others and remind yourself that it takes time to build an earn trust and taking the time to make decisions and think before acting

too quickly so I'm just making sure that, like whatever you're saying you also action and following up with it and that's how you build trust with people.

Participant 4 also shared how active listening assisted in connecting and supporting others:

I do that by simply reaching out to see how everyone is doing, and if they need anything I'm active listener, who recognizes various connection needs usually if I haven't heard from somebody, I'll send them a message through text email or through messenger just to keep in touch to see how they're doing and check up on them.

Participant 3 discussed the importance of clear and mutually beneficial communication:

But I think communication is one of those things that it's needed and the more communication that's had, I think the beneficial it's beneficial to everybody and you have to communicate I think that's one of the things on even if you're saying the same thing three different ways, as long as that message is clear, and it goes across with what you're trying to say. It's just one of those it's like it's the fundamental key to a lot of things.

Participant 3 discussed the importance of remaining transparent, especially when experiencing challenges or conflict. Participant 3 stated, "Communication is hard for me has gotten harder, I think, over the years but, again, it goes back to caring and just transparency and fairness." Participant 3 further elaborated on transparency: "Just knowing making everything transparent I think that's also promotes a lot of trust."

Participant 1 also discussed transparency and remaining genuine:

I just like a 110% transparency. I'm not good at lying because the disingenuousness has like a certain smell to it and I can smell it on myself and then it's all bad after that. So I'd just rather be transparent.

Participant 5 discussed how building trust can cultivate positive communication during conflict:

Make sure that my guys are in a position where they can come to me if they have a problem, and they can talk to me, and they know that it's not a zero defects environment. If they make a mistake, that's fine. I'd rather hear about it from them if they need help with something they can tell me, that's what I hope to cultivate.

Participant 5 also discussed empathy as a building block for trust:

So if I don't hear about mistakes and failure, that means that stuff's getting hidden from me, so the only way that I can combat, that is to trust my guys give them stuff that they can do and then trust them to do it, and if they fail at it don't crush them for it.

Several participants discussed seeking counsel and partnering to problem solve.

Participant 2 stated,

I do that by keeping, I feel like, a very good peer group around me, people that I value their opinions, I value basically what they would do, how they would handle situations so that I know I have sounding boards, I have people of confidence I can go to that can work things through when they become extremely difficult situations.

Participant 2 also added, “Something I think of too is you are who you surround yourself with.”

Participant 2 also discussed the responsibility of both parties when seeking counsel or mentorship:

Mentors are not always coming to you to give you advice. Sometimes you got to go to them to get advice, and to me, that’s part of that social health as well too, is having someone that you can look up to and get advice from on how to guide you through your stuff.

Participant 5 also discussed the value of seeking counsel as a practice of mutually beneficial communication: “Seeking out the counsel of people that I respect, just giving advice and counsel from those guys that I can trust and rely on is huge.”

Participant 3 discussed the partnering aspect of getting through hard times: “It’s understanding being prepared and what you’re doing but also leaning on those people that know more than you or can lead you or advise you in those aspects that you’re having difficulty with.”

Vocational Health Data

This study identified vocational health as a leaders’ career or calling leading to personal satisfaction in work that is meaningful. It is the ambition that motivates leaders to search out more challenges and achievements in their field (Hutchins, 1969; Senge, 2010). Rosen (2013) indicated that leaders who are grounded in vocational health are highly engaged in their profession, assist others find their purpose, know their strengths, are able to assist others find a foundation from which to operate, and are deeply motivated to achieve their highest levels of performance. A total of 103 frequency counts

was identified for vocational health, which was derived from five interviews and 24 artifacts. The two themes identified for vocational health were (a) identifying the why to provide for meaningful work and (b) clarity of purpose that provides motivation.

Vocational health represented 23.62% of the total frequency counts and was notably the highest of all of the six health dimensions as shown in Table 17.

Table 17

Vocational Health Themes

Vocational theme	Interviews coded	Artifacts coded	Interview frequency	Artifact frequency	Total frequency	% of frequency
Identifying the why to provide for meaningful work	5	7	26	8	34	33.01%
Clarity of purpose that provides motivation	5	17	44	25	69	66.99%
Total	N/A	N/A	70	33	103	100.00%

Note. Total frequency of vocational health = 103. The number of interviews and artifacts coded are not totaled in the table and are represented as N/A as each theme may have used the same interview or artifact in the coding of the theme. There was a total of five interviews and 24 artifacts assessed for vocational health.

Identifying the “why” to provide for meaningful work. The theme identifying the “why” to provide for meaningful work represented 33.01% of the total frequency for the area of vocational health and was derived from five interviews and seven artifacts. Participants discussed goals and priorities as strategies to identify their motivation or why to provide for meaningful work.

Participant 1 discussed why finding the why is important to provide opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way:

It's understanding the why to the what. And just maintaining, always understanding why we're doing what we're doing. I think that is the only way for me to truly grow creatively and intellectually, because anything that I do that someone else is dictating that I do it, already takes a little bit of the importance away of it, for me.

Participant 1 added the following context:

But I think there's a distinct difference between being in that position because your job depends on it or because your boss dictates it or whatever, versus choosing, 100% free will, choosing to put yourself in a scenario that's challenging for you.

Participant 5 stated focusing on the why to provide for meaningful work: "Staying focused on why I got into something in the first place is kind of the key cornerstone for me there. And I try to avoid doing things that I find meaningless." Participant 5 also discussed the why to seek new challenges:

That kind of comes back to the same base level for me where it's - Why am I doing what I'm doing. If I can't convince myself that what I'm doing is meaningful and I'm not going to convince myself to pursue greater challenges in that field at all, usually just cut that off and move on to something else.

Participant 2 discussed the importance of challenges to provide for meaningful work: "If I do not seek out new challenges vocational in my career, then I'll stagnate and I will not move forward in my career." Participant 2 also added the following regarding continually moving forward with his team:

I look at what we do then as I, I say we because I like to think of ourselves as a collective leadership group here, but I definitely try to continue to move the ball forward on our department here and how to bring meaning to what everyone is doing during the nonstressful times and how their positions on the team add value to what we're doing overall.

Participant 4 also stated challenges provide for opportunity to improve and avoid stagnancy.

I also alter my everyday routine if I feel stagnant like I like to seek out new experiences. I find myself getting bored if things are mundane so if it's something that is out of my comfort zone, I like to challenge myself and take positions that I'm not used to so then I can improve.

Clarity of purpose that provides motivation and satisfaction. The theme clarity of purpose that provides motivation was the highest in the area of vocational health with 37.93%, representing 44 of the total frequency counts and was derived from five interviews and 17 artifacts. The strategies for clarity of purpose that provides motivation and satisfaction were goal setting and creating a shared vision through active partnership.

Participant 1 stated the importance of identifying personal priorities and those of others to achieve a clear purpose:

I always just try to focus on what I want the outcome to be and I prioritize those things. So, I don't try to get caught up in something that's not my priority. I just fully try to understand, pinpoint the exact outcome that I desire of that scenario.

With regard to the priorities of others, Participant 1 stated, “If I’m working for that person or if that person is in charge of me, then it’s about putting that priority first.”

Participant 4 also provided insight on clear focus and how creating a shared mindset can provide for motivation: “I focus on things that are within my control and then I accept change and open to new challenges.” Participant 4 added, “I just surround myself around people who want to improve themselves and work well with other people, so I think just maintaining the relationships and then the friendships keeps me going.”

Participant 3 discussed how having a clear sense of purpose and established goals allows for enduring motivation during stressful times:

You know it’s very hard to be motivated to do certain things when there’s a lot of challenges, and when there’s a lot of stuff on your plate, but I think establishing goals and maintaining a structured foundation. To where it’s not wavering and the what you believe in and what got you started in that place in the first in the first place.

Participant 3 also discussed stress as an indicator to seek clear purpose and unify others to achieve a shared vision:

During stressful situations, I think it’s just really stepping back and assessing. What is required, you get a lot of verbiage, a lot of people. Trying to manipulate different things of information or, but I think it’s just kind of stepping outside of that seeing what the intent is and trying to meet that and then going back and talking to those different individuals and seeing whether those are actually the ideas are the goals are trying to meet.

Participant 5 discussed how having a clear sense of purpose could assist others keep on track during difficult times:

So I spent a good bit of time in reflection and contemplation on why am I going to do what I'm going to do today. And then that way when everything goes wrong, and things are just are just like okay this, this was a failure, this this plan, did not work. I'm not tempted to just throw it away out of hand it's like there was some reason that I had to start this project. That's some kind of value and then, if the cost outweighs the value, then all that I'll abandon that project but nine times out of 10 it's I'm going to push through and get the value out of this that I originally saw you know it's kind of crummy right now.

Participant 2 provided this insight on personal mastery and how working with others to find their passion and purpose results in motivation:

I'd say the other side is personal growth and education and just general leadership growth. Those things I actually like moving forward. I like mentoring people. I like bringing positive energy and helping people find their passions. That's easy for me to start on and to find that motivation.

Spiritual Health Data

This study defined spiritual health as the beliefs or values of an individual's innermost self that motivate action and inspire toward purposes that embody empathy and go beyond self. It is a commitment to one's value system as a source of well-being providing a profound sense of global connectedness (Chirico, 2016; Covey, 2013; Dehler & Welsh, 1994). Spiritually healthy leaders have the ability to foster an environment of connectedness to the community and assist others to clearly identify personally defined

values that can assist others to remain grounded during stressful times (Rosen, 2013).

There were 75 total codes in recorded in the two themes of (a) foster an environment of mutual respect and (b) purpose beyond self. The spiritual health data represented 17.20% frequency, which was the third highest of the six areas of health as shown in Table 18.

Table 18

Spiritual Health Themes

Spiritual themes	Interviews coded	Artifacts coded	Interview frequency	Artifact frequency	Total frequency	% of frequency
Foster environment of mutual respect	5	12	24	14	38	50.67%
Purpose beyond self	5	14	22	15	37	49.33%
Total	N/A	N/A	46	29	75	100.00%

Note. Total frequency of spiritual health = 75. The number of interviews and artifacts coded are not totaled in the table and are represented as N/A as each theme may have used the same interview or artifact in the coding of the theme. There was a total of five interviews and 26 artifacts assessed for area spiritual health.

Foster an environment of mutual respect. The theme foster an environment of mutual respect had a total of 38 frequency counts, which represented 50.67% of the spiritual health data and was derived from five interviews and 12 artifacts. The strategies for identifying personally defined values that participants discussed were practicing compassion and care for others.

Participant 1 discussed how practicing compassion, care, and respect for others can lead to adjusting work priorities to meet their needs:

I realize, okay, maybe tonight is this person’s anniversary or you’re missing a soccer game or even if it’s the season finale of their favorite show. And like it’s a big deal for your family and then I truly try to analyze like okay, maybe it’s for

my metric that I end this since night, or maybe it has a whole, there's other things relying upon this one thing getting done, but is it worth destroying my team's mental and spiritual health for this one thing? And then most of the times I would do whatever I can to prioritize their spiritual health over the individual thing that I need, or I'm asking.

Participant 1 also added,

I see that someone is burnt out and no longer functioning at a level that is even worth putting work forward, then I go back to my initial intent to "Hey, you need to maintain your spiritual health before you can go forward.

Participant 3 discussed treating others with respect regardless of differences:

Everybody has different challenges everybody has different strengths, but giving everybody, the same opportunities, I think that's what for me that's what fairness is the same opportunities with the same information. Just overall it's, I think without biases down to the rewards to the punishments to anything.

Participant 2 discussed a situation in which fostering an environment of respect assisted generate innovative solutions:

It was an innovative solution that he came up with and I was very happy in a way because I guess myself and other leaders here have fostered a climate where we want individuals to come up with these intellectual ideas.

Participant 3 also discussed how fostering an environment of respect and gratitude can help others achieve. Participant 3 provided context on valuing others' interests to find engagement during austere conditions such as field operations:

There's some things I just don't care about, but other people do. An example to that is my noncommissioned officer on charge (NCOIC) cares a lot about tents. She's very happy when she finds the tent to operate out of and she's very happy when we're able to find a tent in which we could put on a trailer and drive out to the field so just that fundamental piece of just being hey I'm going to be in the field, this is what we're going to operate out of this it's an exciting thing for her.

Participant 4 also added how supporting others helps others achieve: "And just really promote that and be their biggest cheerleader. I've always learned that if you're always your subordinates' cheerleaders you always believe that they can, you support them."

Participant 4 stated the importance of self-care to foster an environment of encouragement and understanding:

As a leader it's important to take care of yourself physically, spiritually, emotionally, and mentally, so I can continue to help others and come from a place of understanding. If you are not able to take care of yourself, how are you going to take care of others? It's important to foster an environment that reflects your beliefs and values and implement. To continue to encourage people to keep moving forward and do better.

Purpose beyond self. The theme purpose beyond self had a total of 37 frequency counts for 49.33% of the spiritual health data and was derived from five interviews and 14 artifacts. Participants discussed the following strategies: assisting others find meaning in life, volunteering, and making others feel appreciated.

Participant 1 shared how prioritizing others' spiritual health over individual needs makes others feel valued:

I think I make it a personal goal of mine to always let people know that spiritual health is the thing that's most important to me. I actively make it a point to know that it is important to me. And then most of the times I would do whatever I can to prioritize their spiritual health over the individual thing that I need, or I'm asking.

Participant 2 also discussed how making others feel appreciated is positive for self and others and fosters community engagement:

Community is, to me, those that you choose to be around and those that are a small niche of people that are in your life, other family members, friends, neighbors, et cetera. And that the beliefs I have are that I work with my family and my friends to have good, positive, real relationships that are good for not only us, but for everyone else around us.

Participant 2 also added how helping others assists in finding purpose beyond self:

That's where I find my purpose beyond self is that I'm able to either help a neighbor with, just had a neighbor put their dog down. So just being there for them, taking them a bottle of wine or something and just hanging out, to moving things for people if they need a little extra hand here and there, to even working with my kids to raise them right and what I believe is right in the world.

Participant 3 discussed volunteering and faith as a way to practice values, stay connected to others: "I am pretty grounded in my faith; I do volunteer and I attend church regularly every Sunday. I think that internally is my time to relax but my support system also when I step away from the uniform."

Participant 3 also shared texting or sending cards to show appreciation and remain connected to others:

It's really hard for me to just make time to go shopping for gift and wrap it neatly I think you implicitly make that time and schedule that time there's no other way to kind of maintain that connectedness other than just continuous effort to do so. Just remembering them and being part of text groups or I'm sending them cards, even if they're like 99 cents cards and I have their addresses saved on my contact. I can't be there for everything, but I at least try to remember key life moments.

Participant 5 discussed the importance and value of community over individual:

None of what we do is done for me and individually it's done in community. And so you come together and help each other out and as part of the purpose of the Community established so it's living life with other people would be how to describe it.

Grounded Strategies Compiled

Research Question 2 sought to identify strategies that exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers utilize to develop and maintain grounded leadership in the six dimensions of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health. A total of 40 grounded strategies in 13 themes was identified from the five interviews and 42 artifacts. All of the strategies exemplary company grade leaders utilized that were identified from the five interviews in this study are compiled in Table 19.

Table 19

Qualitative Analysis: Compiled Grounded Strategies

Health dimension	Theme	Strategy
Physical	Physical activity/ exercise	1- Engage in routine physical activity. 2- Utilize exercise to mitigate stressors
	Identify sources of renewal	1- Identify environments that foster relaxation. 2- Schedule time to renew energy stores
	Nutrition	1- Fasting. 2 - Incorporating healthy meals into routine. 3- Making healthy diet choices
Emotional	Emotional self- awareness	1- Utilizing humor. 2- Discussion with trusted partners. 3- Breathing exercises. 4- Self-reflection. 5- Gaining context.
	Foster positive emotions	1- Practicing compassion. 2- Maintaining a support network. 3- Create an environment of comfort.
Intellectual	Deep curiosity/ growth mindset	1- Seeking out professional and personal educational opportunities. 2- Stimulate learning via audiobooks or podcasts. 3- Achieve different perspectives and learning opportunities by reading biographies or articles.
	Adaptability/ flexibility	1- Keeping open-minded. 2- Identify processes to achieve new perspectives for problem solving. 3- Seek out extremes to find realistic outcomes.
Social	Seek authentic relationships	1- Foster camaraderie and teamwork by identifying strengths. 2- Utilizing sit-down conversations to personally connect. 3- Assisting others to contribute to the overall community.
	Practice mutually beneficial communication	1- Practice Transparency. 2- Match actions with words. 3- Seeking counsel / Partnering to problem solve.

Table 19 (continued)

Health dimension	Theme	Strategy
Vocational	Identifying why to provide for meaningful work	1- Asking the why to remain grounded. 2- Seek out new challenges
	Clarity of purpose that provides motivation	1- Identify priorities. 2- Creating a shared vision and goals
Spiritual	Foster an environment of mutual respect	1- Recognize others needs and practice compassion and care. 2- Treat others fairly. 3- Show gratitude and support. 4- Encourage others.
	Purpose beyond self	1- Prioritizing other's needs. 2- Assisting others/volunteering. 3- Communicate appreciation.

Note. Compilation of grounded strategies = 38.

Summary

The purpose of this explanatory mixed method study was to identify and describe what exemplary California Army National Guard (CA ARNG) company grade officers do to maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health. Chapter IV provided an analysis and presentation of the data collected through an explanatory sequential mixed methods study. The presentation and analysis of the data first presented the results of the data collected during the first phase of quantitative data survey instrument. Phase 2 of the study included the qualitative data that were collected via the interview instrument and utilized artifacts to triangulate the data. Utilizing a two-phase approach of data collection allowed the researcher to analyze the quantitative data results and then substantiate outcomes through qualitative data collection (Creswell &

Creswell, 2018). Chapter V presents major findings, unexpected findings, conclusions, implications for actions, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

Chapter V provides a brief overview of the study and includes the purpose statement, research questions, methodology, population, and sample. Chapter V also provides the study's major findings, unexpected findings, conclusions, implications for action, and recommendations for future study. The chapter concludes with remarks and reflections by the researcher.

This study applied Rosen's (2013) grounded leader framework to exemplary California Army National Guard (CA ARNG) company grade officers. Rosen's grounded leader model incorporates six dimensions of health that affect a leader's ability to provide exemplary leadership during difficult times and in turbulent environments. Synergy across these dimensions has the ability to result in high leader performance (Rosen, 2013). Rosen indicated that who a leader is informs how they behave and the competencies they exhibit while leading others, which has an overall positive or negative net impact on the missions and people they lead (Rosen, 2013). The objective of this study was to identify and describe what CA ARNG company grade officers do to stay grounded and maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed methods study was to identify and describe what exemplary California Army National Guard (CA ARNG) Company Grade Officers do to maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health.

Research Questions

1. How do exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers rate their use of grounded leadership strategies in the six dimensions of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health on the Stay Grounded survey?
2. What strategies do exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers use to develop and maintain grounded leadership in the six dimensions of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health?

Methodology

This study used an explanatory sequential mixed methods design in two phases to collect both the quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions. In the first phase, quantitative data were collected via an electronic survey. In the second phase, qualitative data were collected via interviews and artifacts. This two-phase approach allowed for the researcher to analyze the results of quantitative data collected in Phase 1 and identify areas requiring clarification or context in the second phase, qualitative data collection (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

During the quantitative portion of the study, CA ARNG company grade officers rated their use of grounded leadership strategies in the six dimensions of health via an online survey (Appendix A). Participants rated their use of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health strategies via a Likert scale.

During the qualitative portion of the study, the researcher conducted virtual interviews via Zoom. The semistructured interview utilized open-ended questions (Appendix E). Artifacts that supported participant answers were also collected to provide further context and clarify the strategies exemplary company grade officers use to

cultivate and maintain balance in the six dimensions of health. Examples of collected artifacts included awards, evaluations, pictures, workout logs, reading lists, and lesson plans.

Population

For this study, the population was CA ARNG company grade officers. At the time this study was completed, there were 742 CA ARNG company grade officers, who represented 5% of the overall CA ARNG population of 14,000 (DPRO, 2020). Company grade officers are first-line leaders who are responsible for the health, welfare, morale, and care of soldiers performing a combat or domestic mission (U.S. Department of the Army, n.d.-a). They range in rank from second lieutenant, first lieutenant, and captain. These ranks are consistent with the pay grades of O-1, O-2, and O-3. Lieutenants maintain responsibility for 30-40 soldiers (U.S. Department of the Army, n.d.-a). Captains are the top rank in company grade leadership and are responsible for an Army unit or company of approximately 100-400 soldiers (U.S. Department of the Army, n.d.-a). Company grade officers are assigned to lead soldiers in the 181 companies situated across California (DPRO, 2020).

Sample

The sample is defined as a group of study participants selected from the target population from whom the researcher intends to generalize (Patton, 2015). The target for the population was 121 company grade officers. A nonprobability sample approach was utilized to purposefully sample target participants who were identified as meeting the criteria of an exemplary leader. Participants selected for this study were CA ARNG company grade officers who were identified by a commander as exemplary and who

modeled practices to maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health. For the purposes of this study, an exemplary company grade officer is a military leader who exhibits at least four of the seven following criteria:

1. Evidence of successful development of grounded leadership skill (physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual);
2. Evidence of leading a successful organization or unit;
3. A minimum of 5 years of experience in the field;
4. Articles, papers, or materials written, published, or presented at conferences or association meetings;
5. Recognition by his or her peers;
6. Membership in professional associations in his or her field; and
7. Participation in workshops and seminars in work/life balance.

The participants selected for the study met the criteria by exhibiting evidence of successful development of grounded leadership skill in the six dimensions of health, successfully leading a military unit, peer recognition, and years of experience in their professional field. The sample size was 16 CA ARNG company grade officers, all of whom participated in the quantitative portion of the study. Twelve of the participants identified their willingness to participate in an interview, and the first five were selected for the qualitative portion of the study. The sample of 16 quantitative participants and five qualitative participants met the established criteria and provided sufficient data to draw meaningful conclusions as discussed in Chapter III.

Major Findings

The quantitative and qualitative data collected along with the literature review were reviewed and analyzed to determine major findings. Major findings are organized by Rosen's (2013) health dimensions. The six components of grounded leadership are presented in the following order of grounded health dimensions: physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual.

Finding 1

Exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers practice activities that renew their physical health energy sources.

Rosen (2013) indicated that physical health is a critical component to adapt and withstand the rigors and stress of the modern dynamic operational environment. A key aspect of maintaining personal physical health is the ability to expand the capacity to withstand stress and remain resilient for healing and energy renewal (Loehr & Schwartz, 2017). This study found that exemplary company grade officers identify and engage in routines that provide renewal of energy such as physical activities, relaxation activities, and maintaining a healthy diet. In a review of the quantitative physical health data collected in the Stay Grounded survey, participants exhibited highest agreement on the statements of "exercise daily" with a mean of 4.69, "take time to relax" with a mean of 4.69, and "maintain a nutritious diet" with a mean of 5.0. In the review of the collected qualitative data, the following three themes arose: (a) physical activity or exercise, (b) identify sources of renewal, and (c) nutrition.

All five interview participants discussed physical activity with a total frequency count of 22, which represented 48.89% of the total data collected for this health

dimension. Activities included a variety of indoor and outdoor activities. Outdoor activities discussed were bicycling, running, fishing, camping, hiking, and rock climbing; indoor activities included weightlifting, swimming, and volleyball. Strategies included engaging in routine physical activity and utilizing exercise to mitigate stress.

All five interview participants also discussed identifying sources of renewal that overlapped physical activities such as outdoor trips where no cellular service was available, meditation, journaling, massaging, or cupping. Sources of renewal had a frequency of 14 or 31.11% of the total data collected for physical health. Strategies included identifying environments that foster relaxation and scheduling time to renew energy stores.

Nutrition was mentioned by three of the five interview participants and had a frequency of 9 or 20% of the physical health data. Participants discussed the role of nutrition in performance in physical health to maintain focus and retain health. Strategies included incorporating healthy meals into routine by meal prepping and making healthy diet choices by selecting nutrient-dense foods.

Finding 2

Exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers practice behaviors that foster an environment of positive emotions.

Rosen (2013) stated that leaders who foster positive emotions utilize optimism and hope grounded in reality to achieve goals and see the best in others. Experiencing a wide range of positive and negative emotions is normal in dynamic and stressful environments. This study found that exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers engage in behaviors that foster positive emotions and act compassionately. In the

quantitative data set, the statement treat others with compassion had the lowest standard deviation of .63 and 50% strongly agree responses, which signified the highest agreement of all participants in the area of emotional health. This was also congruent with the qualitative theme of foster positive emotions, which had a total frequency of 32 or 59.26% of the coded data for emotional health. Leaders' ability to modulate in their environment was consistent with the emotional self-awareness theme, which had a total of 22 frequencies and 40.74%.

The literature indicates that the ability to balance thinking and modulate behavior to respond appropriately is a key aspect of maintaining emotional health (Leban, 2003; Rosen, 2013). Positive emotions can assist in building routines of thought and action that contribute to and enhance future success (Cohn & Fredrickson, 2009). Strategies exemplary company grade officers utilized to foster an environment of positive emotions included using humor to break tense situations, breathing exercises to retain self-awareness and control, self-reflection to identify emotional state, and creating an environment of comfort by utilizing aromatherapy and relaxing music.

Finding 3

Exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers seek opportunities that allow them to achieve different perspectives for problem solving.

Intellectual health represents deep curiosity and a leader's ability to maintain an adaptive mindset and utilize paradoxical thinking to problem solve (Rosen, 2013). The quantitative portion of the study found highest agreement in logical approach to problem solving with a standard deviation of .40 and an 81.25% strongly agree responses. This was the lowest standard deviation of all recorded responses for any health category or

question, signifying a high level of agreement in intellectual health strategies. The statements logical approach to problem solving and ability to challenge yourself to see all sides of an issue had a 75% strongly agree response rate and a .60 standard deviation, signifying high agreement of all participants in the area of intellectual health. Notably, these statements had the highest level of agreement of all exemplary company grade officer study participants in all health areas. The theme adaptability and flexibility had a frequency of 32, which signified a 55.17% occurrence rate. The theme deep curiosity and growth mindset had a frequency of 26 and represented 44.83% of the intellectual health dimension.

A review of the literature found that intellectually healthy leaders have the ability to expand mental capacity to broaden thinking and analyze multifaceted issues, focus priorities, generate solutions to complex problems, and practice sound decision-making (Rosen & Ross, 2014). Application of intellectual health practices allows leaders to learn and adapt to dynamic environments (Rosen & Swann, 2018). This study identified the following strategies exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers utilize to maintain their intellectual health: seeking out professional or personal educational opportunities, the use of audiobooks or podcasts to stimulate learning, reading biographies to achieve new perspectives, identifying processes to achieve new perspectives for problem solving, and exploring extremes to discover realistic outcomes.

Finding 4

Exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers use effective communication practices to meaningfully connect with others.

Social health comprises the abilities to practice authenticity, maintain mutually rewarding relationships, and nourish teams and communities (Rosen, 2013). These factors allow a leader to open dialogues, maintain mutually beneficial relationships with others, and generate solutions to further common goals (Rosen, 2013). The statement demonstrate interest in other people had a standard deviation of .68 and 87.50% responses for the agree strongly/moderately categories, which signified a level of agreement in this area of social health. The second highest level of agreement in this area was the statement practice active listening at .81 standard deviation and 87.50% strongly/moderately agree responses. The theme seek authentic relationships and practice mutually beneficial communication had frequencies of 56 and 45 respectively, collectively totaling 101 for the area of social health. Notably, this was the second highest of all qualitative data.

The ability to connect with others is a key leader skill as modern organizations become globally interconnected and structured around teams rather than individuals (Stewart et al., 2017; Stricker et al., 2018). Strategies exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers employed to maintain social health included fostering camaraderie and teamwork by identifying strengths, utilizing sit down conversations to connect with others, practicing transparency of communication, matching words with actions, and seeking counseling or partnership to problem solve.

Finding 5

Exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers foster a positive environment that prioritizes meaningful achievement.

Rosen (2013) stated that vocational health is a leader's ability to achieve meaningful calling and obtain personal mastery while maintaining the ability to achieve goals and succeed. Vocationally healthy leaders are able to tap into passion and match skills and abilities to avoid boredom and stagnancy by fostering a positive environment that provides for meaningful work (Dumulescu et al., 2015; Kolodinsky et al., 2018). The highest of agreement in the quantitative data set was .81 standard deviation and 93.75% strongly/moderately agree responses with the statement challenge provides an opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way. The second highest agreement of vocational health strategies was the statement accomplishment of goals is satisfying with a .89 standard deviation and 87.50% strongly/moderately agree responses. The theme clarity of purpose that provides motivation had a frequency of 69, the highest of any area of the themes identified for the six dimensions of health. Identifying the "why" to provide for meaningful work represented 33.01% of the intellectual health themes. Together, these two themes represented 103 total frequencies, notably the highest in all of the areas for the six dimensions of health.

Vocational health indicates how individuals pursue their passion that is measured in their performance (Rosen, 2013). The leader quality of intellectual health is vital to leaders because it is linked to performance and meaningful achievement, the ability to maintain competitiveness through continual self-improvement and the creation of a shared vision to build a high-performance culture (Rosen, 2013). This study identified the following strategies exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers use to maintain their vocational health: actively seek out new challenges, identify priorities, create a shared vision and goals, and ask "why" to remain achieve clarity of purpose.

Finding 6

Exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers are appreciative of others and find ways to show others they care.

Rosen (2013) indicated that spiritual health embodies a leader's ability to obtain a higher purpose while maintaining global connectedness and cultivating a spirit of generosity. Spiritually healthy leaders maintain mutual respect, gratitude, humility, and appreciation for others around them that allow them to remain grounded (Rosen, 2013). The spiritual health strategies had the second and third lowest standard deviation of all categories, representing a high level of agreement of participants with the two statements respect others regardless of differences and make others feel appreciated. These two statements had a .60 and .63 standard deviation and 93.75% strongly/moderately agree responses respectively. The two themes of foster an environment of mutual respect and purpose beyond self had a frequency of 38 and 37 respectively, representing a 17.20% total of all six dimensions.

A review of the literature revealed that spiritual health is a vital aspect of wellness (Hawks et al., 1995). Maintaining spiritual health allows a leader to assist others to achieve meaning in life by aligning purpose with goals, retain flexibility to recognize bias, make adjustments, and engage the community to show appreciation and connectedness (Rosen, 2013). Exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers utilized the following strategies to maintain their spiritual health: treat others fairly, show gratitude and support, assist others/volunteer, communicate appreciation, encourage others, and prioritize others' needs.

Unexpected Findings

The following section presents unexpected findings that were observations, results, or findings that the researcher did not anticipate. The review of the qualitative and quantitative data collected via the survey, interviews, artifacts, and literature resulted in the unexpected findings that follow. During the analysis of the collected data, the researcher identified three unexpected findings.

Unexpected Finding 1

Exemplary company grade officers exhibited a high variance of physical health strategies.

The physical dimension was the lowest ranked of all six health dimensions in terms of agreement on grounded health strategies. This was an unexpected finding because the Army places a high emphasis on physical fitness as a foundation for soldier readiness, which starts at initial entry training or boot camp. Soldiers are required to complete an annual physical fitness assessment (U.S. Department of the Army, 2017a). Notably, at the time this study was conducted, the requirement for an annual physical fitness assessment was put on hold because of transitioning to a new Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT; Secretary of the Army, 2020).

The physical health statement “sleep 7-9 hours daily” had the second highest level of disagreement. Although sleep is part of Army doctrine as a component of soldier readiness, it was also not mentioned in any of the interviews. Described in Army Field Manual 7-22, Holistic Health and Fitness, sleep “sustains brain and physical health, cognition, the immune system and recovery after physical activity” (H2F; U.S. Department of the Army, 2020b, p. 121). This finding suggests that sleep is not a

strategy that is prioritized by company grade officers to realize full benefit of maintaining their physical health.

Unexpected Finding 2

Exemplary company grade officers stated an overlap of several of the dimensions in the qualitative interviews portion of the study that did not specifically correlate with the survey questions in the quantitative portion of the study.

Although several interview participants indicated a relationship between physical activity and emotional state or intellectual health during the qualitative data collection, this connection was not apparent in the quantitative portion of the study. The physical health statement in the collection of quantitative data that had the highest level of disagreement was think consciously about mind-body connectedness. This was further reinforced with the statement take time to relax which had a high level of agreement, while the statement take time to reflect had a high level of disagreement. This suggests that company grade officers are not fully recognizing the relationship between physical health activities and other health dimensions to achieve their fullest potential for high performance. Rosen (2013) stated that “high performance is a result of holistic synergy among all six types of health” (p. 301).

Unexpected Finding 3

Strategies to retain health among exemplary company grade officers varied greatly in the area of emotional health.

The area of emotional health had the highest number of disagree statements of all of the six areas of health. Rosen (2013) indicated that strategies to retain emotional health include self-awareness, positive emotions, and resilience and that declining

emotional health can result in clouded decision-making. Talk openly about emotions had the highest level of disagreement in the quantitative data set among all six health categories, signifying that company grade officers may not have fully developed a sense of positive vulnerability. Vulnerability is largely dependent on the temperament and character of an individual and can be a source of stress if not handled in a positive manner (Staniszewska, 2020). The statement “make decisions without bias” also had a high level of disagreement among study participants. Overall, emotional health had the second lowest frequency in all of the qualitative data. These data signify that company grade officers are still developing aspects of their emotional health such as vulnerability to avoid perceived stress and retain emotional health at this time in their military career.

Conclusions

Conclusion 1

Exemplary company grade officers who mitigate stress by engaging in activities that renew their physical energy have increased ability to withstand stressors.

Based on the analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data contained in this research and review of the literature, it is concluded that exemplary company grade officers mitigate stress by engaging in activities that renew their physical energy. Energy is regulated from the feedback and input from the environment (Hart, 2016). Balancing physical energy output with renewal allows for expansion of energy stores to withstand greater challenges (Heffes, 2003; Loehr, 2005). Diet, sleep, and physical activity are activities that can assist leaders renew their energy stores and affect physical wellness (Loehr, 2005; U.S. Department of Army, 2020; Stará & Charvát, 2015).

Participants in this study discussed utilizing physical activities such as bicycling, hiking, and rock climbing to mitigate stress. Cupping, massage therapy, and spending time in environments that foster renewal were discussed as strategies to contribute to energy renewal. Nutrition was also discussed as a way to modulate physical energy, with making healthy diet choices becoming more critical during stressful times. Notably, although the literature discussed sleep as a way to replenish energy stores, exemplary CA ARNG company grade officers did not mention sleep routines in the qualitative portion of the study. This is further discussed in implications and recommendations for further research. It can be concluded that stress exposure and energy usage/renewal share a directly proportional relationship. Increased stress exposure requires an increased need for renewal and strategies to bring about that renewal. Greater ability to engage in renewal will allow for increased resistance to stress.

Conclusion 2

Exemplary company grade officers who mitigate stress and lead with a positive outlook will build the trust and confidence of followers.

A review of the literature revealed that the emotional health is an important aspect of overall health and leader success. According to Leban (2003), “To be successful leaders need a behavioral repertoire and the ability to select the right role for the situation. To do this, leaders need both cognitive and behavioral complexity and flexibility” (Leban, 2003, p. 8; Rosen, 2013). In a review of the literature and the data collected in this study, it is concluded that company grade officers modulate their behaviors to mitigate stressors.

Exemplary company grade officers discussed the strategies of humor, self-reflection, gaining context, maintaining a support network to foster an environment of comfort to understand their emotional state and modulate behaviors to maintain emotional health. These strategies allowed them to foster positive emotions and retain grounded leadership during stressful periods, which is a critical aspect of gaining subordinate trust and building leader confidence. The overall outcome allowed exemplary company grade officers to treat others compassionately and with respect, which overlapped with other health dimensions. It is concluded that exemplary company grade officers who mitigate stress and lead with a positive outlook will build the trust and confidence of followers.

Conclusion 3

Exemplary company grade officers who embrace constant learning will be more successful problem solvers.

The literature indicates that as competing priorities and stressors present obstacles, leaders must find innovative ways to remain flexible and adapt to the environment (Miron-Spektor et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2015). Study participants stated a high level of agreement in all grounded statements during the quantitative portion of the study in adaptability to sudden change. This was further reinforced in the qualitative portion of the study with the theme adaptability/flexibility. Adaptability to sudden change and flexibility are key components in engaging in solutions-based thinking to problem solve.

Strategies exemplary company grade officers utilized to maintain intellectual health were stimulating learning opportunities by seeking out professional and personal

educational opportunities and listening to audiobooks or podcasts or reading biographies. This allowed them to remain open-minded, identify processes for problem solving, and seek out realistic outcomes. It can be concluded that exemplary company grade officers who embrace constant learning will be more successful problem solvers.

Conclusion 4

Exemplary company grade officers who practice effective communication will build and maintain genuine and meaningful relationships.

The literature indicated that humans are prewired to connect to others, which in turn affects overall health (Martino et al., 2017; Rosen, 2013). Positive relationships have the ability to overlap with emotional health by prompting positive emotions that increases the ability to perform at a high level (Loehr & Schwartz, 2001). In-depth analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data collected during the course of the study found a high agreement in demonstrating an interest in others and seeking out authentic relationships by using mutually beneficial and effective communication practices.

Strategies that exemplary company grade officers utilized to retain social health included practicing transparency, matching words with action, using sit-down conversations to connect with others, and partnering to problem solve. These strategies allowed company grade officers to demonstrate genuine interest in others and actively listen to further effective communication. Exemplary company grade officers who demonstrate effective communication practices will build and maintain genuine and meaningful relationships.

Conclusion 5

Exemplary company grade officers who build a positive culture will have a positive influence on mission readiness.

A review of the literature found that leaders who identify and assign tasks that align with unique talents, skills, and abilities enable others to thrive. A leader's health is connected to their overall performance, and the influence of individual wellness can be felt in communities (Cohen, 2010; Rosen, 2014). Finding meaning in work is essential to success and a positive relationship between attitude and positive engagement (Dumulescu et al., 2015; Kolodinsky et al., 2018; Willemse & Deacon, 2015). This study identified a high level of agreement in the statement that challenges provide an opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way and maintain an ambitious attitude that leads to achievement.

Key strategies that exemplary company grade officers utilized to build a positive culture and positively influence mission readiness included seeking out challenges and asking why to remain grounded. These strategies allowed exemplary company grade officers to provide for meaningful work and impart a clear purpose to bolster motivation. It is concluded that exemplary company grade officers who build a positive culture will have a positive influence on mission readiness.

Conclusion 6

Exemplary company grade officers who build a positive work climate will instill a sense of mutual respect and discipline within units.

The literature indicated that valuing and embracing others is a source of life fulfillment and wholeness in life (Bensley, 1991; Rosen, 2013). Additionally, spiritual

health is a vital aspect of wellness (Hawks et al., 1995; Rosen, 2013). This study found that quantitative spiritual health was the second highest agreement of all health areas. The second highest agreement of all health areas was found in the statements make others feel appreciated and respect others regardless of differences.

Strategies that exemplary company grade officers utilized to build a positive work climate included recognizing the needs of others, showing gratitude, practicing support and care, treating others fairly, and encouraging others. These actions allowed exemplary company grade officers to foster an environment of mutual respect. It is concluded that exemplary company grade officers who build a positive work climate will instill a sense of mutual respect and discipline within units.

Conclusion 7

Exemplary company grade officers who develop shared beliefs and values will unite a unit motivated to succeed.

The literature regarding shared beliefs and providing unity of purpose shared commonalities with vocational and spiritual health. A review of the literature showed that unifying coworker efforts and creating a shared vision or purpose are positive vocational health practices (Rosen, 2013). Spiritual health literature has indicated that connecting with others to experience fullness in life can have a positive effect on the global community (Hawks et al., 1995; Rosen, 2013). This study found a high level of agreement with the vocational health statement that accomplishment of important goals is satisfying. Study participants shared a high level of agreement with the spiritual health statements maintain a world view that is service focused and follows values that create balance in life.

Leaders developed shared beliefs and values with others by utilizing the following strategies: creating a shared vision and goals, assisting others and volunteering, and communicating appreciation. These actions allowed leaders to demonstrate a purpose beyond self and maintain a clear purpose that provided motivation. It is concluded that exemplary company grade officers who develop shared beliefs and values will unite a unit motivated to succeed.

Implications for Action

Implication 1

Enhance distribution methods to educate company grade officers on strategies to maintain physical health and renew energy sources that are specific to CA ARNG leaders.

At the time of this writing, the Army H2F program is in the initial stages of implementation (H2F; U.S. Department of the Army, 2020). In Phase 1, H2F will be implemented with soldiers who have contact with an active-duty component such as initial entry training, advanced individual training, or through primary military education (PME; FM 7-22). Reserve and National Guard components will develop training in the sustainment phase of the H2F implementation but will not have as much access to programs as active-duty members because H2F facilities are located primarily on active-duty posts. Recommend creation of H2F material distribution methods such as virtual or mobile platforms that will allow National Guard or reserve component members will be required to realize full benefit from the H2F program. Emphasis on sleep as a critical component of physical health and a source of renewal for high performance is recommended.

Implication 2

Create a health and wellness unit and address issues specific to the CA ARNG.

Teams will guest speak across the state to accomplish mandatory training objectives.

CA ARNG members represent a diverse community of professionals who possess a wide range of skill sets, ability, expertise, and insight on health and wellness strategies. At the time of this writing, CA ARNG members are competing at the highest levels. Examples include marathon racing, biathlon, cross-fit, Mixed Martial Arts (MMA), and shooting competitions. Creation of a health and wellness unit to leverage key insights from current CA ARNG subject matter experts is recommended. This study found that exemplary company grade officers may not fully recognize the relationship between health dimensions to achieve their fullest potential for high performance. Rosen (2013) stated that “high performance is a result of holistic synergy among all six types of health” (p. 301). The Army has revised doctrine to be a holistic health and fitness approach to wellness, which includes five dimensions: (a) physical readiness, (b) mental readiness, (c) spiritual readiness, (d) nutritional readiness, and (e) sleep readiness (H2F; U.S. Department of the Army, 2020). Previously, these dimensions were considered separate and not part of a performance system. However, as the program is still in the initial stages of implementation at the time of this writing, it is recommended that CA ARNG utilize current subject matter experts within its ranks to create a health and wellness team who would visit specific units that were experiencing difficulty in one or more performance areas. They would specifically address the integration of all health areas such as the relationship between intellectual, physical, and emotional health, or mind-body connection for company grade officers. It is recommended that the health and

wellness team integrate briefs count as credit toward the unit mandatory annual physical readiness training brief and the biennial resilience training brief requirements (U.S. Department of the Army, 2017b). Consolidating these topics in one brief will reinforce the integrated nature of the dimensions of health in Army terms and fulfill mandatory training requirements so the brief is not perceived as another training requirement added to an already full training schedule. It is recommended the team be an initial touch point, proponent, and resource for wellness that is also incorporated with daily resources such as podcast, social media, or networking sites that are available to soldiers as a comprehensive wellness system.

Implication 3

Create podcasts/audiobooks that discusses the role of health dimensions related to grounded leadership and long-term high performance. Incorporate with a forum for discussion via social media or networking sites such as LinkedIn.

In this study, company grade officers identified podcasts and audiobooks as a strategy to seek out new learning opportunities and maintain their intellectual health. Studies conducted on the effectiveness of podcasts indicated that students were more receptive to learning material in the form of podcasts than in a traditional lecture or textbook and that they provide enduring accessible information (Evans, 2008; Milligan, 2020). Podcasts have the added benefit of being readily available to CA ARNG members on their mobile device, allowing them the convenience and flexibility of how, when, and where they access the learning material (Milligan, 2020). It is recommended to create a podcast featuring interviews with Senior CA ARNG leaders sharing lessons learned and practices they developed throughout their career that sustained performance to achieve

longevity in the dynamic military environment. Guest speakers of relevance to the military community or exemplary leaders at all levels within the organization would further expand on aspects of health dimensions and share strategies to retain grounded leadership. It is recommended that these podcasts be run by student leaders interested in wellness strategies at the lowest leadership levels. Student-run podcasts have the added benefit of promoting personal and professional identity formation as they interview and learn more about wellness from exemplary leaders. This educational tool could assist in human capital development, which is also in alignment with the Army learning concept's leader development process to further organizational learning (U.S. Department of the Army, 2017b). It is recommended that the podcasts be incorporated with the existing CA ARNG social media presence or networking sites to provide forums for discussion and further contact with CA ARNG members.

Implication 4

Provide mentor sessions by assigning mentors specific to military branch or specialty. Provide opportunities for in-person, location-based sessions to foster relationships.

Company grade officers come from a wide range of civilian occupations and experience. They must balance their professional and military careers. It is recommended partnering company grade officers with field grade officer mentors to allow sharing of lived experiences and successful leadership practices to retain grounded leadership in the dynamic operational environment that reserve component leaders navigate. Shared field grade leader experiences allow for lessons learned and provide company grade officers a point of contact for advice or perspective for problem solving.

Branch, occupational specialty, or location-based mentorship assignments are recommended to facilitate the transfer of tacit knowledge and providing opportunity for company grade officers to receive support, guidance, and fostering of long-term relationships. According to the Army Learning Concept for 2020-2040, “Human capital is essential to the Army’s future success” (U.S. Department of the Army, 2017b, p. 29). The concept also indicates that a train-coach-mentor approach is critical to set the conditions for future learning, develop human capital effectively, and achieve Army goals (U.S. Department of the Army, 2017b). Mentorship is critical to the Army as a learning organization that prioritizes personal development in all leader aspects starting with leading by teaching personal health. According to the U.S. Army Learning Concept, “Leaders teach, and teachers lead” (U.S. Department of the Army, 2017b, p. 29).

Implication 5

Relate dimensions of health learning to promotion opportunities, additional pay incentives or provide broadening assignments to achieve different organizational perspectives.

Reservists often experience stressors associated with time away from civilian employment and loss of income because of pay disparities between military and civilian deployment (Russell et al., 2017). Taking the time to learn about health promotion strategies may be perceived as an additional military time commitment or added training to an already full schedule. It is recommended that dimensions of health education be presented as paid education that provides job translatable civilian employment skills, potential for long-term military career advancement, and the opportunity to serve as a trainer in a health and wellness unit as a broadening assignment. Dimensions of health

education would allow CA ARNG leaders to network with other health-conscious leaders to increase leader effectiveness across the organization and achieve different organizational perspectives. The goal is to realize the synergy between personal wellness and community wellness by creating a culture of wellness across the organization.

Recommendations for Further Research

Recommendation 1: Phenomenological Study to Determine the Relationship Between Sleep Habits and Performance of Exemplary Leaders During High Operational Tempo Periods

A phenomenological study could explore the sleep habits of exemplary company grade officers during high operational tempo periods of a domestic civil support operation. This study could provide insight into what sleep habits exemplary company grade officers employ during periods of increased work demands and uncertainty. Examining the similarities and differences of exemplary leaders in differing environments and their ability to adapt their sleep habits could provide deeper understanding of the role of sleep and performance with company grade officers.

Recommendation 2: Mixed Methods Study to Determine Strategies Exemplary Military Leaders Utilize for Growing Capability to Develop Vulnerability

A mixed methods study to explore the strategies exemplary military leaders utilize for growing capability to develop vulnerability or the ability to portray openness and approachability to subordinates would provide insight into emotional health practices of exemplary military leaders. The study design would utilize a survey for the quantitative data collection tool; interviews and artifacts would provide qualitative data. Vulnerability for military leaders may be perceived as weakness. Balancing vulnerability

to maintain emotional health is a key aspect of cultivating and maintaining overall leader health and fostering a positive relationship with subordinates.

Recommendation 3: Thematic Meta-Analysis

A meta-analysis on the different exemplary leaders of the grounded thematic studies using Rosen's framework of grounded leadership could investigate commonalities and differences between each of the exemplary populations. The insights from this study could be utilized to determine generalized applicability to other leader populations.

Recommendation 4: Replication Study With Noncommissioned Officers

Noncommissioned officers (NCOs) are the principal advisors to officers (U.S. Department of the Army, 2020c). At each stage of command throughout their career, officers work in a team with a senior enlisted advisor. A replication study with NCOs would provide deeper understanding on the strategies NCOs utilize to retain personal health and grounded leadership. This study could provide the ability to investigate the synergistic effects of grounded leadership in a team environment.

Recommendation 5: Longitudinal Study With Officer Candidates

A longitudinal study with officer candidates would determine baseline leader strategies to maintain grounded leadership as a new leader coming into the CA ARNG. It would follow officer candidates through their commissioning as a CA ARNG company grade officer through their journey as a field grade officer and provide data points on how or whether their strategies changed throughout their career.

Recommendation 6: Replication Study With Exemplary Army National Guard (ARNG) Company Grade Officers From Other States

The environments and challenges National Guard officers face vary from state to state. A replication study exploring the strategies company grade officers utilize in different states would provide insight on how environment affects grounded leadership strategies. It would also provide valuable information on the effects of cultural differences, appointed leadership, and state priorities based on economics and political factors.

Concluding Remarks and Reflections

We don't rise to the level of our expectations, we fall to our level of training.

—Archilochus

Modern leaders operate in a demanding, dynamic, and complex environment. They are exposed to and must battle persistent stressors as expectations rise and resources shrink. Practicing preformed routines to maintain health provides leaders a foundation to stand firm against the inevitable waves of daily stress and come out energized and ready for the next wave. The review of the literature and analysis of the data from this study support the importance of developing and practicing strategies to retain a basis from which to provide grounded leadership.

CA ARNG company grade officers are the tip of the spear as first line leaders leading domestic and overseas missions. In addition to military missions, they must also meet the demands of important life missions such as relationships with family and friends and the mission to maintain a productive civilian career. The result is waves of stressors that compete for a leader's precious resources of time, money, and energy. This study

identified strategies that renew physical energy health sources, foster positive emotions, and engage in meaningful relationships can mitigate the negative effects of stress and retain personal health. This study also indicated that CA ARNG leaders who show appreciation and broaden learning and perspectives will practice exemplary leadership in the communities they serve. Exploring and investigating the strategies that exemplary company grade officers utilize was meaningful and worthwhile.

During the course of this study, the CA ARNG experienced a high level of activations for domestic operations because of California wildfires and the COVID-19 pandemic. I also experienced two position changes in my military and civilian careers. The volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environment was unfolding daily, and adjusting to COVID protocols meant finding new ways to engage with support networks and friends. This underscores the importance of grounded strategies to maintain health and wellness.

During the course of writing the dissertation, it was important to remember the roots of why this journey was undertaken in the first place. I chose the thematic as it merged two passions, leadership and strategies that leaders use to be effective. I have family members who serve in the military, and during difficult times, I reflect on the question: “Am I being a leader my family members would follow?” The reality for military members is that the military is a portion of their family. Military members often spend extended periods of time with their unit or on mission more than their home of record. Home and community are where you build them. This study reflected that company grade officers have a strong sense of community and deeply care for others.

As I reflect on my conversations with the exemplary company grade officers in this study, I am deeply appreciative for their participation and the leadership they provide to our military family, knowing that they could also lead my immediate family on mission in harm's way. This work has the potential to contribute to leaders in the effort to serve others, for people are the organization's most important asset.

The dissertation journey has reinforced that knowledge without application is useless. In navigating the demands of work, school, family, and unanticipated life events, I realized that there is no perfect formula or balance. Knowing a strategy to maintain health and wellness is far easier than employing that strategy in daily life. For example, knowing that running is a good strategy for retaining physical health is important but getting up in the morning at 5am to get miles in is far more difficult.

As a runner, my go-to stress mitigator is running. It allows me to receive physical health benefit while nourishing intellectual health by running with an audiobook. By running in races, I am able to join the larger running community to nourish the social and spiritual leadership root. During the lockdowns because of COVID-19, races were shut down, and the motivation I gained from looking forward to races was lost.

A dissertation is a daunting journey, and mine was not without unforeseen challenges and life circumstances. My preferred method of communication is in-person communication to pick up on nonverbal cues and body language. However, because of the global pandemic, in-person interactions were limited. The dissertation journey reinforced to me the key learning point of seeing the positive through adversity, maintaining a positive attitude, and recognizing the importance of adaptability and flexibility. As soldiers adapted to the pandemic, participants became more familiar with

videoconference and collaboration technologies such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom. Seen as a positive, I was able to interact with study participants in a mutually convenient manner. As a result, I will strive toward seeing challenges as opportunities to adapt and generate thoughtful solutions.

Reflecting on my learning journey through the dissertation experience, I realized that first, I prioritize immediate action or short-term results rather than stepping back and seeing the larger goal or overall impacts to health. For example, I would routinely run and eat candy bars during the day and rationalize that I earned it by running that morning. Too much of a good thing can be bad and can lead to overuse injuries such as plantar fasciitis or unhealthy weight gain. Second, all health dimensions must be developed. Overusing a muscle can lead to injury, which then affects the rest of the body. The same is true for the integration of all of the six health dimensions; they are all interconnected. What affects one has the ability to affect other health dimensions. Last, there is no such thing as a perfect balance. There are ups and downs in life, and expecting that a leader will be perfect in all six strategies is something to aspire to but not realistic. In practice, exemplary leaders employ a variety of methods to retain their personal health.

In summary, this study showed that exemplary company grade officers employ strategies that allow them to renew their energy, achieve different perspectives for problem solving, and genuinely value and connect with others. These practices allow them to actively seek out new challenges and rapidly adapt to new environments. As a result of this journey, I will adopt strategies identified in this study to enhance and grow new leadership roots.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Study Survey

Grounded Leadership FT

The success of any organization depends in large part on the quality of leadership in the organization. In today's turbulent economic and social environment, it is imperative that leaders remain grounded. Grounded leaders are truly up to the task of meeting today's wide-ranging challenges. Grounded leaders inspire people to do good work, not just work hard. Most importantly, they possess the invaluable ability to unite people around visions, both grand and sustainable. For purposes of this study, grounded leaders are explored from the view of Bob Rosen's six principles from his book *Grounded: How Leaders Stay Rooted in an Uncertain World*. This survey is intended to solicit the expert perceptions of leaders regarding strategies used to implement these six principles in their work as a leader. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

PURPOSE OF STUDY: You are being asked to participate in a thematic research study conducted by Greg Montanio, Christopher Schoenwandt, Audrey Dangfuw, Martha Godinez, Penny Shreve, Cancy McArn and Vicki Hou, doctoral students from Brandman University. The purpose of this explanatory mixed method study is to identify and describe what exemplary leaders do to maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational and spiritual health.

I understand that:

- a) There are minimal risks associated with participating in this research. I understand that the Investigators will protect my confidentiality by keeping the identifying codes and research materials in a locked file drawer that is available only to the researchers.
- b) The possible benefit of this study to me is that my input may help add to the research regarding the strategies leaders utilize to remain grounded in turbulent times.
- c) If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact the researcher using the information provided in the invitation to participate.
- d) My participation in this research study is voluntary. I may decide to not participate in the study and I can withdraw at any time. I can also decide not to answer particular questions during the interview if I so choose. I understand that I may refuse to participate or may withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. In addition, the Investigator may stop the study at any time.
- e) No information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent and that all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the use of the data is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained. I understand that if I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may write or call the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Brandman University, at 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 341-7641.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this form and the "Research Participant's Bill of Rights." I have read the above and understand it and hereby consent to the procedure(s) set forth.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below.

Clicking on the "agree" button indicates that you have read the informed consent and the information in this document and that you voluntarily agree to participate.

If you do not wish to participate in this electronic survey, you may decline participation by clicking on the "disagree" button. The survey will not open for responses unless you select agree to participate.

- AGREE. I acknowledge receipt of the complete "Informed Consent" packet and "Bill of Rights." I have read the materials and give my consent to participate in this study.
- DISAGREE: I do not wish to participate in this electronic survey.

Demographics

* Please choose the pass code provided to you by the researcher from the drop down list.

Please indicate your gender.

Please indicate the number of years of experience in your current field.

Please indicate the number of years in your current position.

Please indicate the ethnicity(s) with which you identify. (Mark all that apply)

African American/Black

Hispanic or LatinX

American Indian/Alaska Native

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

Asian/Asian American

White or Caucasian

Filipino

Grounded Leadership FT

Directions: For purposes of this research, a grounded leader is defined as an individual who is firmly rooted during uncertain times by incorporating the six principles: Physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational and/or spiritual health.

6 = Agree Strongly

5 = Agree Moderately

4 = Agree Slightly

3 = Disagree Slightly

2 = Disagree Moderately

1 = Disagree Strongly

Listed below are the strategies that research suggests that leaders practice to maintain groundedness in organizations. Using the following descriptions, to what degree do the strategies reflect your own ability to stay grounded.

* Physical Health is an individual's mind body awareness to minimize fatigue, maximize energy management, build immunity, and maintain resilience to stress, while sustaining a peak physical performance lifestyle (Donatelle & Ketcham, 2017; Rosen, 2014).

	Agree Strongly	Agree Moderately	Agree Slightly	Disagree Slightly	Disagree Moderately	Disagree Strongly
Exercise daily.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sleep 7-9 hours daily.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintain a nutritious diet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Take time to relax.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Think consciously about mind-body connectedness.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Grounded Leadership FT

Directions: For purposes of this research, a grounded leader is defined as an individual who is firmly rooted during uncertain times by incorporating the six principles: Physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational and/or spiritual health.

- 6 = Agree Strongly
- 5 = Agree Moderately
- 4 = Agree Slightly
- 3 = Disagree Slightly
- 2 = Disagree Moderately
- 1 = Disagree Strongly

Listed below are the strategies that research suggests that leaders practice to maintain groundedness in organizations. Using the following descriptions, to what degree do the strategies reflect your own ability to stay grounded.

* Physical Health is an individual's mind body awareness to minimize fatigue, maximize energy management, build immunity, and maintain resilience to stress, while sustaining a peak physical performance lifestyle (Donatelle & Ketcham, 2017; Rosen, 2014).

	Agree Strongly	Agree Moderately	Agree Slightly	Disagree Slightly	Disagree Moderately	Disagree Strongly
Exercise daily.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sleep 7-9 hours daily.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintain a nutritious diet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Take time to relax.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Think consciously about mind-body connectedness.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* Vocational health is a leaders' career or calling leading to personal satisfaction in work that is meaningful. It is the ambition that motivates a leader to search out more challenges and achievements in their field (Senge 1990, Hutchins 1969, Yunus 2014).

	Agree Strongly	Agree Moderately	Agree Slightly	Disagree Slightly	Disagree Moderately	Disagree Strongly
Work ignites passion for my chosen vocation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accomplishment of important goals is satisfying.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Challenge provides opportunity for contributing in a meaningful way.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintain an ambitious attitude that leads to achievement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Keep confidence in middle of setbacks.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* Spiritual health is the values of an individual's innermost self that motivate action and inspires toward purposes that embody empathy and go beyond self. It is a commitment to one's value system as a source of well-being providing a profound sense of global connectedness (Dehler & Welsh, 1994; Chirico, 2016; Covey, 1989; Uni, 2019).

	Agree Strongly	Agree Moderately	Agree Slightly	Disagree Slightly	Disagree Moderately	Disagree Strongly
Follow values that create balance in life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Respect others regardless of differences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Make others feel appreciated.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintain a world view that is service focused.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aware of the feelings of others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* **Social health** is the authentic relationships individuals have based on principles of fairness, trustworthiness, empathy and communication that guide mutually rewarding interactions (Mderoy, Gottlieb, & Heaney, 2002; Pastor, 1998; Parry, 1998; Rosen, 2014).

	Agree Strongly	Agree Moderately	Agree Slightly	Disagree Slightly	Disagree Moderately	Disagree Strongly
Have mutually rewarding relationships.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Practice active listening.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Show forgiveness that creates humility.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Make decisions without bias.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrate interest in other people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* **Grounded** is a deep connection to the authentic self with “a sense of being fully embodied, whole, centered and balanced in ourselves and our relationships.” In this study the roots of being GROUNDED are in physical health, emotional health, intellectual health, social health, vocational health, and spiritual health (Rosen, 2013; Daniels, 2005).

	Agree Strongly	Agree Moderately	Agree Slightly	Disagree Slightly	Disagree Moderately	Disagree Strongly
Conscious of what's going on with other people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintain a strong support system.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stay focused on what really matters.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stay true to values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Courage to take action.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adaptable to sudden change.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ability to control emotions to channel in productive ways.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contribute to others without expecting something in return.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Take time to reflect.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Build positive relationships by accepting people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Thank you for your participation. If you are willing to participate in a follow up interview to be conducted on Zoom please check the box and provide your contact information. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

* I am willing to participate in an interview.

Yes

No

APPENDIX B

Invitation to Participate

DATE: 12/31/2021

Sir/Ma'am,

My name is Greg Montano and I am a Doctoral Candidate in the School of Education at University of Massachusetts Global and a Captain (O-3) in the California Army National Guard. I am participating in a thematic dissertation with six other researchers. This letter serves as an invitation for you to participate in a research study.

PURPOSE: You are being asked to participate in a thematic research study conducted by Greg Montano, Christopher Schenck, Audrey Danzou, Penny Shreve, Martha Godinez, Cacey McAn and Vicky Hou, doctoral students from University of Massachusetts Global. The purpose of this explanatory mixed method study is to identify and describe what exemplary leaders do to maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health. By participating in this study, you agree to be considered for a one on one interview. The one on one interview will last approximately 60 minutes conducted via a Zoom conference.

PROCEDURES: If you choose to participate in this study, you will be invited to participate in a questionnaire and a 60 minute, one on one interview conducted on Zoom. I will ask a series of questions designed to allow you to share your experience as an exemplary Company Grade Officer in the California Army National Guard. The survey is intended to solicit the expert perceptions of leaders regarding their use of health strategies in the six dimensions of health. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The interview is designed to specifically explore and identify what it is that you, as an exemplary leader, do to cultivate and maintain a healthy balance of wellness and effective leadership practice. The interviews will be audio recorded for transcriptions purposes.

RISKS, INCONVENIENCES, AND DISCOMFORTS: There are no major risks to your participation in this research study. The interview will be at a time and place, which is convenient for you.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS: There are no major benefits to you for participating; nonetheless, a potential benefit may be that you will have an opportunity to identify strategies to best cultivate overall wellness and leadership effectiveness during stressful and chaotic operating environments. The information for this study is intended to inform researchers and leaders of strategies used by exemplary leaders to develop and maintain grounded leadership in their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health.

ANONYMITY: If you agree to participate in the survey and interview, you can be assured that it will be completely confidential. No names will be attached to any notes or records from the survey or interview. All information will remain in locked files, accessible only to the researchers. No employer will have access to the interview information. You will be free to stop the survey or interview and withdraw from the study at any time. You are also encouraged to ask any questions that will help you understand how this study will be performed and/or how it will affect you. Feel free to contact the principal investigator, Keith Larick by email or by phone at to answer any questions or concerns you may have. If you have questions, comments or concerns about the study or your rights as a participant, you may write or call the office of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, University of Massachusetts Global at 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA. 92618, 949.341.7641.

Sincerely,

Greg Montano
Doctoral Candidate, Ed.D.

Email:
Phone:

APPENDIX C

Bill of Rights



UMASS GLOBAL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD Research

Participant's Bill of Rights

Any person who is requested to consent to participate as a subject in an experiment, or who is requested to consent on behalf of another, has the following rights:

1. To be told what the study is attempting to discover.
2. To be told what will happen in the study and whether any of the procedures, drugs or devices are different from what would be used in standard practice.
3. To be told about the risks, side effects or discomforts of the things that may happen to him/her.
4. To be told if he/she can expect any benefit from participating and, if so, what the benefits might be.
5. To be told what other choices he/she has and how they may be better or worse than being in the study.
6. To be allowed to ask any questions concerning the study both before agreeing to be involved and during the course of the study.
7. To be told what sort of medical treatment is available if any complications arise.
8. To refuse to participate at all before or after the study is started without any adverse effects.
9. To receive a copy of the signed and dated consent form.
10. To be free of pressures when considering whether he/she wishes to agree to be in the study.

If at any time you have questions regarding a research study, you should ask the researchers to answer them. You also may contact the UMASS GLOBAL Institutional Review Board, which is concerned with the protection of volunteers in research projects. The UMass Global Institutional Review Board may be contacted either by telephoning the Office of Academic Affairs at (949) 341-9937 or by writing to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, UMASS GLOBAL, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA, 92618.

APPENDIX D

Informed Consent – Interview

INFORMATION ABOUT: *Exemplary leaders: How do exemplary leaders rate their use of grounded leadership strategies in the six dimensions of physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health on the Stay Grounded survey?*

RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR: **Greg Montanio**

PURPOSE OF STUDY: You are being asked to participate in a research study by Greg Montanio a doctoral candidate from the School of Education at University of Massachusetts Global. I am part of a research team examining the roots of healthy leadership using Bob Rosen’s premise that exemplary leaders grounded in strategies that cultivate balance in the six dimensions of health are better equipped to facilitate effective and sustainable leadership during times of uncertainty. The study seeks to identify and describe what exemplary leaders do to maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health based on the six dimensions of Rosen’s healthy leader model. This interview is to specifically explore what it is that you, as an exemplary leader, do to cultivate and maintain a healthy balance of wellness and effective leadership practices.

The interview(s) will last approximately 45-60 minutes and will be conducted in a one-on-one interview setting.

I understand that:

- a) There are minimal risks associated with participating in this research. I understand that the investigator will protect my confidentiality by keeping the identifying codes and research materials in a locked file drawer that is available to the researcher.
- b) I understand that the interview will be audio recorded. The recording will be available only to the researcher. The audio recordings will be used to capture the interview dialogue as a text document and to ensure the accuracy of the information collected during the interview. All information will be identifier-redacted, and my confidentiality will be maintained. Upon completion of the study, all recordings will be destroyed. All other data and consents will be securely stored for three years after completion of data collection and confidentially shredded or fully deleted.
- c) The possible benefit of this study to me is that my input may help add to the research regarding exemplary leaders, how they stay grounded especially in high stress environments. The findings will be available to me at the conclusion of the study and will provide new insights about this study in which I participated. I understand that I will not be compensated for my participation.
- d) If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at xxxxx@xxxxx.xxx or by phone at xxx.xxx.xxxx, or (Chair Advisor) Dr. Keith Larick at xxxxx@xxxxx.xxx or Dr. Cindy Petersen (Committee Member) at xxxxx@xxxxx.xxx.
- e) My participation in this research study is voluntary. I may decide to not participate in the study, and I can withdraw at any time. I can also decide not to answer particular questions during the interview if I so choose. I understand that I may refuse to participate or may withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. Also, the investigator may stop the study at any time.
- f) No information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent and that all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the

use of the data is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained. I understand that if I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may write or call the office of the Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs, University of Massachusetts, at 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 341-7641. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this form and the “research Participant’s Bill of Rights.” I have read the above and understand it and hereby consent to the procedure(s) set forth.

Signature of Participant

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date: _____

APPENDIX E

Grounded Leadership Interview Protocol

My name is Greg Montanio I am a Captain in the California Army National Guard with eleven years total service with the military and I am a doctoral candidate at University of Massachusetts Global in the area of Organizational Leadership. I am a part of a research team examining the roots of healthy leadership using Bob Rosen's premise that exemplary leaders grounded in strategies that cultivate balance in the six dimensions of health are better equipped to facilitate effective and sustainable leadership during times of uncertainty. The study seeks to identify and describe what exemplary leaders do to maintain their physical, emotional, intellectual, social, vocational, and spiritual health based on the six dimensions of Rosen's healthy leader model. This interview is to specifically explore what it is that "YOU DO" personally and professionally to develop and maintain your health and how YOU cultivate a healthy balance of wellness that constitutes who you are as a leader.

Our team is conducting approximately 35 interviews with leaders like yourself. The information you, and others, give will provide a clearer picture of the thoughts and behaviors that exemplary leaders use to create and maintain the roots of healthy leadership.

Incidentally, even though it appears a bit awkward, I will be reading most of what I say. The reason for this to guarantee, as much as possible, that my interviews with all participating exemplary leaders will be conducted in the same manner.

Informed Consent

I want to remind you any information that is obtained in connection to this study will remain confidential. All of the data will be reported without reference to any individual(s) or any institution(s). For ease of our discussion and accuracy, I will record our conversation as indicated in the Informed Consent sent to you via email. I will have the recording transcribed to a Word document and will send it to you via electronic mail so that you can check to make sure that I have accurately captured your thoughts and ideas. The digital recording will be erased following the review and approval of the transcription.

Did you receive the Informed Consent and Brandman Bill of Rights I sent you via email? Do you have any questions or need clarification about either document? If not, would you please sign the hard copy of the IRB requirements for me to collect, or you can scan it to me.

We have scheduled an hour for the interview. At any point during the interview, you may ask that I skip a particular question or stop the interview altogether. For ease of our discussion and accuracy, I will record our conversation as indicated in the Informed Consent.

Do you have any questions before we begin? Okay, let's get started, and thanks so much for your time and responses.

Important Note for the Interviewer: To ensure validity and reliability, please ask each question for every interview participant.

Interview Questions

For this study **Physical Health** is an individual's mind-body awareness to minimize fatigue, maximize energy management, build immunity, and maintain resilience to stress, while sustaining a peak physical performance lifestyle (Donatelle & Ketcham, 2017; Rosen, 2013).

1. What do you do to maximize your energy and enhance your resilience to stress to sustain your physical performance?
2. How do you sustain your mind-body awareness and physical performance during times of stress and uncertainty?

For this study **Emotional Health** is the self-awareness and controlled response to life events that promote resilience and self-assurance (Aguilar, 2018; Hattie, Myers, & Sweeney, 2004; Ulione, 1996; Wang, Xie, & Cui, 2016).

3. When encountering difficult situations, what practices do you utilize to recognize your emotional state in order to react accordingly?
4. What do you do to promote emotional resilience, confidence, and positive interactions during stressful situations?

For this study **Intellectual Health** is a deep curiosity to acquire new knowledge that stimulates learning, increases change adaptability and builds mental agility to generate innovative solutions (Naz, Rehman, Katpar, & Hussain, 2014; Rosen, 2013; van Rensburg, Surujlal, & Dhurup, 2011).

5. How do you foster your curiosity and acquire new knowledge that stimulates your ability to adapt to change?
6. How do you maintain your intellectual flexibility to generate innovative solutions?

For this study **Vocational Health** is a leaders' career or calling leading to personal satisfaction in work that is meaningful. It is the ambition that motivates a leader to search out more challenges and achievements in their field (Hutchins 1969).

7. How do you ensure your work remains meaningful to you during challenging times?
8. How do you maintain your motivation to seek out new challenges and achievements in your field or profession?

For this study **Spiritual Health** is the beliefs or values of an individual's innermost self that motivate action and inspire toward purposes that embody empathy and go beyond self. It is a commitment to one's value system as a source of well-being providing a profound sense of global connectedness (Chirico, 2016; Covey, 2013; Dehler & Welsh, 1994).

9. As a leader, how do you maintain and apply your beliefs or values internally and externally towards a purpose beyond self?

10. How do you develop and maintain your sense of connectedness to others?

For this study Social Health is the authentic relationships individuals have based on principles of fairness, trustworthiness, empathy, and communication that guide mutually rewarding interactions (McLeroy, Gottlieb, & Heaney, 2002; Parry, 1998; Rosen, 2013).

11. How do you develop and nurture authentic relationships within your organization, team, or personal life?

12. What do you do to build and maintain trust and mutually beneficial communication with others?

Additional prompts can be used at any point that you feel that the answer was not sufficient in detail. You may not use or ask any of them but they are listed here to be used if needed.

1. "What did you mean by ..."
2. "Do you have more to add?"
3. "Would you expand upon that a bit?"
4. "Why do think that was the case?"
5. "Could you please tell me more about ..."
6. "Can you share an example of..."
7. "Can you give me an example of how..."
8. "How did you feel about that?"
9. "Why do you think that strategy was so effective?"
10. "Can you expand on that?"

APPENDIX F

Field Test Participant Feedback Questions

While conducting the interview you should take notes of their clarification request or comments about not being clear about the question. After you complete the interview ask your field test interviewee the following clarifying questions. **Try not to make it another interview; just have a friendly conversation.** Either script or record their feedback so you can compare with the other two members of your team to develop your feedback report on how to improve the interview questions.

1. How did you feel about the interview? Do you think you had ample opportunities to describe what you do as a leader when working with your team or staff?

2. Did you feel the amount of time for the interview was ok?

3. Were the questions by and large clear or were there places where you were uncertain what was being asked?

4. Can you recall any words or terms being asked about during the interview that were confusing?

5. And finally, did I appear comfortable during the interview... (I'm pretty new at this)?

APPENDIX G

Field Test Observer Feedback

Field Test – Observer Feedback

Conducting interviews is a learned skill set based on experience and feedback. Gaining valuable insight about interview skills and affect with the interview will support the collection of data gathering when interviewing actual participant. As the interview observer you should reflect on the questions below after the interview is finished. You should provide independent feedback at the conclusion of the interview field test. As observer you should take notes that will assist the interviewer to be successful in improving their interview skills.

1. How long did the interview take?

Did the time seem appropriate? Yes No

2. Did the interviewer communicate in a receptive, cordial, and encouraging manner?

Yes No

3. Was the introduction of the interview friendly with the use of commonly understood language? Yes No

4. How did the interviewee feel during the interview?

5. Was the interviewer prepared and relaxed during the interview? Yes No

6. Did the interviewee understand the interview questions or did they require clarification?

Yes No

7. What parts of the interview went smoothly and why?

8. What parts of the interview seem to struggle and why do you think that was the case?

9. Did the interviewer maintain objectivity and not interject value judgements or lead the interviewee? Yes No

10. Did the interviewer take opportunity to discuss or request artifacts that support the data gathered from the interview? Yes No

11. If you were to change any part of the interview, what would that part be and how would you suggest changing it?

12. What suggestions do you have for improving the overall process?

APPENDIX H

Interview Feedback Reflection Questions

Conducting interviews is a learned skill set/experience. Gaining valuable insight about your interview skills and affect with the interview will support your data gathering when interviewing the actual participants. As the researcher you should reflect on the questions below after completing the interview. You should also discuss the following reflection questions with your 'observer' after completing the interview field test. The questions are written from your prospective as the interviewer. However, you can verbalize your thoughts with the observer and they can add valuable insight from their observation.

1. How long did the interview take? ____ Did the time seem to be appropriate?

2. How did you feel during the interview? Comfortable? Nervous?

3. Going into it, did you feel prepared to conduct the interview? Is there something you could have done to be better prepared?

4. What parts of the interview went the most smoothly and why do you think that was the case?

5. What parts of the interview seemed to struggle and why do you think that was the case?

6. If you were to change any part of the interview, what would that part be and how would you change it?

7. What suggestions do you have for improving the overall process?

APPENDIX I
CITI CERTIFICATE



Completion Date 13-May-2019
Expiration Date N/A
Record ID 31569419

This is to certify that:

GREGORY MONTANIO

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Human Subjects Research (Curriculum Group)
Social-Behavioral-Educational Researchers (Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic (Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Brandman University



Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wc24b8ed7-6326-45fc-880a-3e7f7dda500e-31569419