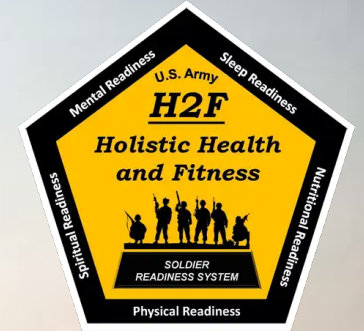


Spiritual Readiness

“Spiritual readiness includes the development of the personal qualities needed to sustain a person in times of stress, hardship, and tragedy. These qualities come from religious, philosophical, or human values and form the basis for character, disposition, decision making, and integrity.”

-FM 7-22





Spiritual Readiness

Spiritual readiness is the ability to endure and overcome times of stress, hardship, and tragedy by making meaning of life experiences. Individuals find meaning as they exercise beliefs, principles, ethics, and morals arising from religious, philosophical, and human values. Soldiers who successfully develop, sustain, and repair their state of being while facing adversity demonstrate spiritual readiness. Leaders who understand spiritual readiness can encourage personal spiritual readiness by creating a climate of mutual respect and dignity that promotes dialogue, fosters team cohesion, and enables healthy free exercise of religion or no religion. This approach enables collective and individual readiness.

Spiritual readiness strengthens as individuals identify their spiritual dimension—their purpose, core values, beliefs, identity, and life vision. The spiritual dimension draws on an individual's core religious, philosophical, or human values to develop an individual's sense of motivation, character, and integrity. The spiritual dimension defines the essence of a person by enabling one to build inner strength, make meaning of experiences, behave ethically, persevere through challenges, and be resilient when faced with adversity.

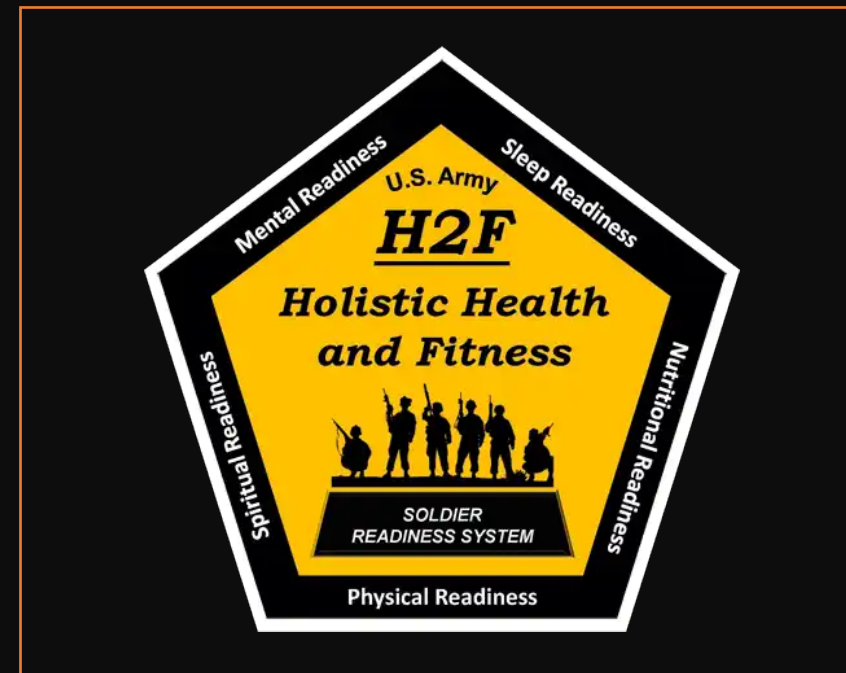


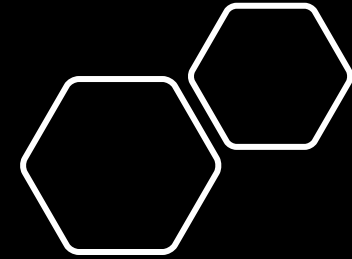
Spiritual readiness develops the personal qualities a person needs in times of stress, hardship, and tragedy. These qualities come from religious, philosophical, or human values and form the basis for character, disposition, decision making, and integrity. People develop their spiritual readiness from diverse value systems that stem from their religious, philosophical, and human values. The spiritual readiness domain is inclusive and universally vital to all personnel no matter their background, philosophy, or religion. It applies to both religious and non-religious persons and concepts. Leaders play an active role in creating and fostering a climate that encourages individual spiritual readiness according to their respective worldviews, while at the same time communicating respect and dignity for diversity in a pluralistic setting.

(See AR 600-63 for more on spirituality.)



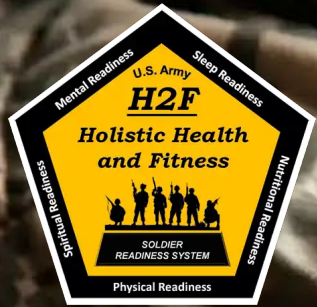
• Spirituality is often described as a sense of connection that gives meaning and purpose to a person's life. It is unique to each individual. The spiritual dimension applies to all people, whether religious and non-religious. Identifying one's purpose, core values, beliefs, identity, and life vision defines the spiritual dimension. These elements, which define the essence of a person, enable one to build inner strength, make meaning of experiences, behave ethically, persevere through challenges, and be resilient when faced with adversity. An individual's spirituality draws upon parts of personal, philosophical, psychological, and religious teachings or beliefs, and forms the basis of their character. (See AR 350-53 for more on spirituality.) Understanding the general spiritual readiness enables leaders to encourage personal spiritual readiness in a climate where mutual respect and dignity encourage dialogue, foster team cohesion, and enable healthy free exercise of religion or no religion by all personnel. This approach enables and supports collective and individual readiness as Soldiers endure challenging and stressful conditions in training or operational environments.





People enhance their spiritual readiness through reflection and practice of a lifestyle based on the personal qualities they need during times of stress, hardship, and tragedy. When their actions deviate from their stated values, then they may experience inner conflict. Those struggling for integrity and congruity often only find inner peace after overcoming the struggle. They develop spiritual readiness by studying, connecting with, and understanding the value systems that mold their personal qualities. As their spiritual readiness grows, they become a leader of character and build the resilience necessary to navigate crises.





FREE EXERCISE AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY CONCERNS

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution begins “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...” This clause is a constitutional bedrock providing grounding for religious support and spiritual readiness. The Army values Soldiers’ rights to observe tenets of their respective religions, or to observe no religion at all. Free exercise of religion supports the Army mission of sustaining Soldiers’ short- and long-term readiness, building ethical and moral strength, and motivating Soldiers to meet present and future challenges.



ARMY CHAPLAINS

CHAPLAIN SECTION OR UNIT MINISTRY TEAM

Chaplains and religious affairs specialists are assigned to units down to the battalion level. Called a chaplain section above brigade and the UMT at the brigade and below, chaplains and religious affairs specialists have specific training and education. They support command requirements to facilitate free exercise of religion and

**Serving all Soldiers
regardless of faith**



to provide spiritual assistance for all assigned, attached, or authorized personnel. The chaplain section or UMT advises the commander on broad issues regarding religion, morals, ethics, and morale. A key aspect of this advisement is the ability to conduct research and provide advice and resources on spiritual and religious practices. (See FM 1-05 and ATP 1-05.04 for details on religious advisement.)

THE CHAPLAIN CORPS ROLE IN SPIRITUAL READINESS

UMTs and chaplain sections support and advise on spiritual readiness development for both religious and non-religious personnel. Chaplains represent particular faith traditions as religious leaders while serving the spiritual needs of their assigned units' Soldiers. Chaplains unable to perform specific religious support needs due to their own religious commitments provide supplemental religious or spiritual leaders and resources to meet those needs.

Spiritual readiness development involves improving one's spiritual posture to sustaining one's self through all aspects of life. The improvement process is generally self-directed and informed by religious, philosophical, or human values forming the basis for character, disposition, decision-making and integrity. While individuals approach spiritual readiness from both non-religious and religious perspectives, both categories creates similar comparative practices.



GENERAL SPIRITUAL READINESS PRACTICES

Informed leaders understand the requirements for time, space, materiel, and other conditions required to support spiritual readiness practices within particular organizations. Individual spiritual readiness obligations can vary widely. Leaders consult with a chaplain or UMT to regarding these practices.

SERVICE AND CHARITY

Most spiritual traditions emphasize service to others for the sake of both charity and understanding one's relationship to other human beings and the transcendent. This might involve serving in a homeless shelter, conducting work projects in the local community, visiting the hospital, donating funds or material goods, or helping people in the unit in need.

HOSPITALITY

Hospitality refers to generously receiving and providing a sustaining environment for family, neighbors and strangers. It is a spiritual readiness practice in many traditions. In practicing hospitality, a guest receives anything from water and shade to lodging, clothing, and food. Closely related to service and charity, this spiritual readiness practice is more intimate in nature since providing hospitality is in person and generally involves engaged social interaction between the host and guest. Many traditions view the practice as a mark of heightened spiritual maturity as it involves vulnerability of the host and investment in another's well-being and basic sustenance. The practice of hospitality towards those considered the most vulnerable in society includes the orphaned, widowed, homeless, injured, physically handicapped, and prisoners.



JOURNALING

Many people use journaling as a spiritual readiness practice. Journaling often involves an individual maintaining a written record of thoughts, prayers, feelings, beliefs, and reflection on life, philosophy, or other matters. The journal is either handwritten or digitally recorded. Usually the journal is a private document not intended for disclosure. Journals might also have recorded thoughts and words with no particular association or logic, often referred to as free journaling. Free journaling releases one's mind to enable focused reflection. Journaling is a means of incorporating cognitive, spiritual, and physical activities as part of an integrated approach to spiritual readiness. Authors might review their journals to gain perspective on life.

MEDITATION

Meditation is the practice of contemplation and reflection by an individual or group. It generally requires few external distractions. For this reason, ensuring a dedicated space away from ongoing training or operations is preferable to facilitate individuals' ability to practice this spiritual readiness activity.



RELIGIOUS SPIRITUAL READINESS PRACTICES

10-22. Individuals who practice certain spiritual resiliency disciplines tend to identify with a specific religious group. Paragraphs 10-23 and 1-24 cover the more common disciplines.

SACRAMENTS, RITES, AND ORDINANCES

Some religious traditions practice a sacramental understanding that imparts common objects with divine significance. Often, these traditions follow a rite or ordered pattern when observing sacraments. Those people with a sacramental understanding often view the objects as sacred or consecrated. Leaders and Soldiers treat those items according to the rites, rituals, or laws of the respective religious tradition. Alongside sacraments and rites are practices by some religious traditions of ordinances. While similar in manner, believers do not treat the ordinances as sacred or consecrated. Even so, all people treat those items with appropriate dignity and respect. The practice of sacraments, rites, and ordinances requires specific materials to satisfy that group's religious requirements. Successful free exercise might require leaders to use appropriated funds to facilitate these spiritual readiness practices.



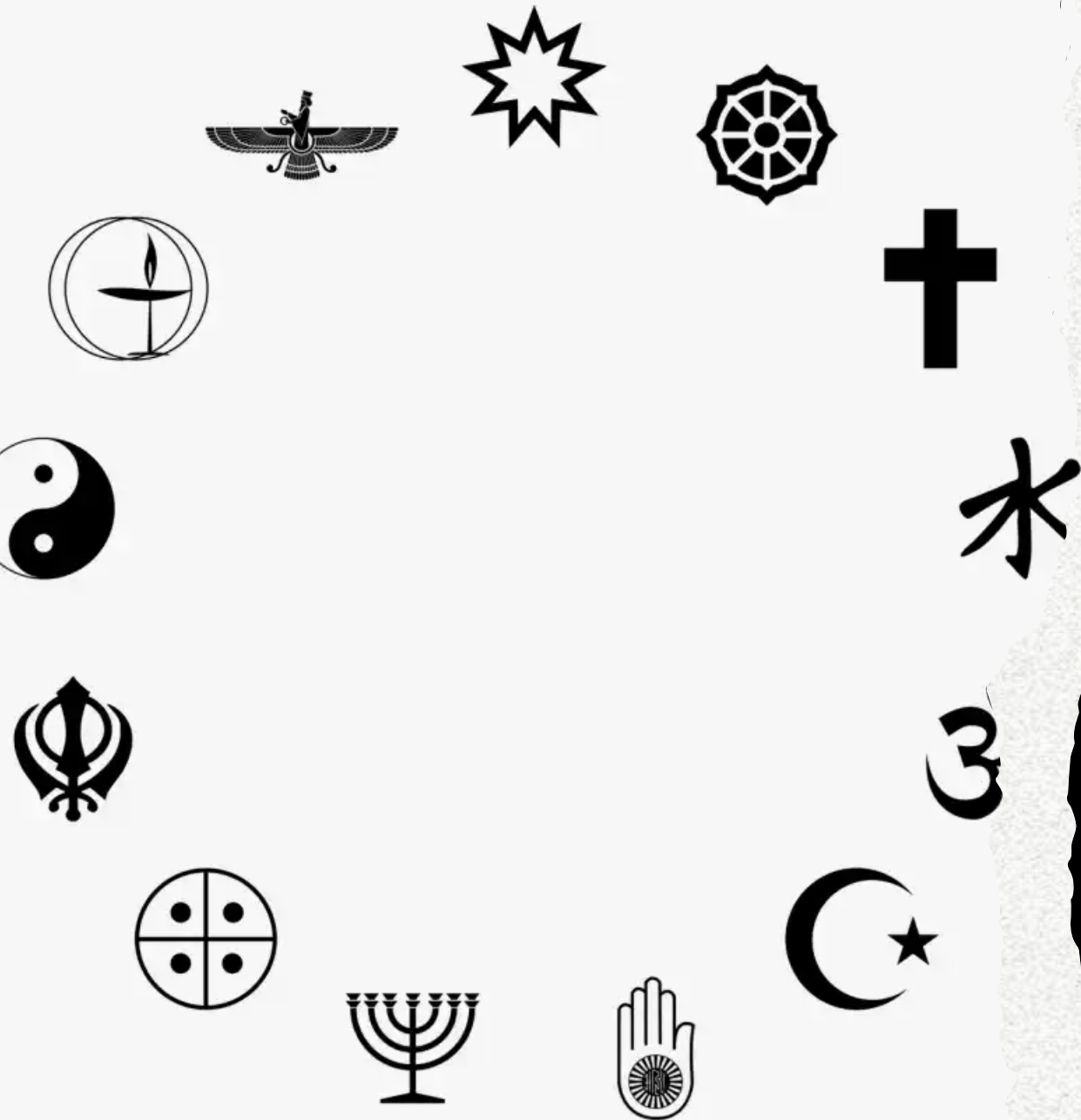
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ADVISOR OR OFFICE

Religion is a category covered under the Equal Opportunity Program of the Army. As such, equal opportunity representatives and advisors can assist leaders and individuals with facilitating spiritual readiness without discrimination. The equal opportunity advisor or officer can advise on various religious or spiritual practices as well as indicators of a healthy climate in which leaders emphasize spiritual readiness without creating adversarial or unhealthy conditions within a unit.

ARMY FIT WEBSITE

The Army currently maintains the Army Fit website (<https://armyfit.army.mil>) that provides resources for teams, leaders, and individuals. The resources cover five dimensions: physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and family. There are articles under the spiritual dimension that provide insights into various spiritual readiness practices as well as discussions of potential obstacles or challenges an individual might experience in the exercise of a particular spiritual readiness practice.





Summary

Spiritual readiness is a vital domain in the H2F System, and it directly impacts the resiliency of individuals and organizations. Encouraging Soldiers to connect and reflect on the worldview or value system that informs their core beliefs, principles, ethics, and morals can empower them to endure and overcome stress, hardship, and tragedy. Leaders have a responsibility to support spiritual readiness practices and create a climate where dignity and respect guide the process. Understanding common spiritual readiness practices enables leaders to support individual spiritual readiness development, sustainment, maintenance, and repair.

(All references from FM 7-22)



Health and Holistic Fitness section on Physical Readiness.

