

## May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Brain health is as important as physical health. The brain influences our thoughts, feelings, and actions. Therefore, the state of our mental health can impact our ability to pay attention, how we make decisions, interact with our fellow Wingmen, family members, and cope with daily stressors.

Since 1949, May has been observed as Mental Health Awareness Month, a critical time to raise awareness and educate our Airmen and their family members about invisible wounds and other mental health conditions.

## Optimal Mental Health is Essential for Military Readiness

Optimal mental health is an important part of every Airman's readiness. It is one of the four pillars of Comprehensive Airman Fitness, along with physical, social, and spiritual fitness.

With intervention and treatment by a medical

professional, most mental health conditions

improve quickly without any negative career

impact. In fact, many careers have been

enhanced and even saved through therapy

due to improved mental health and

cognitive performance. Early treatment

is highly encouraged, it is never too

late to seek help. We, as Air Force

leaders, encourage and support fellow

Wingmen experiencing mental health

conditions so that they can go in, get

help, and get back to the fight.

With recent advancements in

technology, access to resources is

easier now more than ever. Innovators

have developed several mental health

apps that boost brain health and optimize

performance. The Center for BrainHealth® has

launched a new game-based app, [Brain](#)

[Performance Challenge](#), to help individuals maintain and

strengthen their cognitive abilities. This app offers an engaging way to introduce key brain

health concepts to your Wingmen. It gives Airmen a "snapshot" of their current brain health,

provides them with tips for boosting brain performance, and allows them to track their

improvement as they integrate these tips into their daily lives.

Check out the Brain Performance Challenge and other apps geared towards optimizing mental health under the 'Resources' section on the right panel.

## Help your Fellow Wingmen by Sharing Your Story

It is important for Airmen experiencing mental health conditions to know that they are not alone. Sharing your personal experiences with invisible wounds assists in the recovery of fellow Airmen, as well as provides encouragement to those individuals with similar experiences.

To learn more about how your fellow Airmen are sharing their experiences with invisible wounds, check out these real-life stories about their grit and resilience to life's challenges:

- [Capt. Joseph Siler: "Go In, Get Help, Get Back to the Fight"](#)
- [Maj. Gregory Harris: A Story of Resiliency](#)
- [A Day That Resonates](#)
- [Finding Healing through Helping Others](#)

If you are interested in sharing your story, please contact Ms. Ashley Wright (SAF/PA) at [ashley.m.wright52.civ@mail.mil](mailto:ashley.m.wright52.civ@mail.mil).

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# 1 in 5

adults in the U.S.

experience a

mental health

condition

Source: [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)

## Resources

The [VA Mobile App Store](#) offers more than 40 health-related apps for service members and health care providers. Below are a few featured apps that can help your Airmen better manage their health care and stay in touch with their medical providers.



[Moving Forward](#) provides on-the-go tools and teaches problem solving skills to overcome obstacles and deal with stress.



[Mindfulness Coach](#) is designed to help service members learn how to practice self-awareness using a gradual, self-guided training program.



[Brain Performance Challenge](#) brings brain training exercises to your Airmen's fingertips which enhances on-the-job training, focus, and task management.

## MILITARY ONE SOURCE

[Military OneSource](#) is a [one-stop shop](#) that connects Airmen with mental health information, providers, and resources that have been vetted by the DoD.

For local available resources, contact your Primary Care Provider or Installation Chaplain.