

feels responsible. This soldier's guilt, sadness, and crying interfere with his ability to operate his radio.

These two cases help illustrate features commanders can use to identify pending psychiatric casualties. A commander should be alert for the following:

- Behavior that is unusual for the soldier in question—a normally "happy-go-lucky" type who becomes severely depressed, for example.
- A soldier who becomes less and less able to perform his duties, often despite an obvious willingness to do so.
- A steadily mounting sense of guilt or fear in a soldier.

In addition to these observations, there are clusters of symptoms that can help identify a combat psychiatric casualty. Although ultimately any behavior can be expressed by one of these soldiers, there are two relatively common presentations that can be remembered with the help of two acronyms—S-A-D and F-I-T-T-ful.

If a soldier is S-A-D then a Sleep disturbance with Anxiety and Depression will be apparent. On the other hand, if he is F-I-T-T-ful, he is Fearful, Irritable, Tense, and Tremulous. These symptoms, when added to duty impairment, complete the picture of a casualty.

Armed with these guidelines and groups of symptoms, what can be done at the unit level when a psychiatric casualty is identified? In other words, what can be done to reset the emotional circuit breakers?

Interventions are always made with the full expectation that recovery is possible with simple, but important, treatment. And much as unit members learn medical first aid, so must they also become proficient in emotional first aid. In fact, making sure all unit members are well versed in medical first aid is an important step toward emotional first aid. If a soldier is confident that he could save the life of a buddy—and that his buddy could save him—this confidence also contributes to his emotional well being. The unit medic should therefore be actively involved in teaching personnel both medical and emotional first aid.

RECOGNITION

Emotional first aid includes the "three R's"—recognition, reassurance, and relaxation.

Recognition involves being alert for any changes in behavior and duty performance that might suggest an impending problem. Recognition also involves identifying the specific concerns a soldier is struggling with. This could include guilt over the death of a close friend or just fear of being killed himself.

Reassurance involves using the powers of persuasion and suggestion that are attributed to the commander as an authority figure. The soldier needs to be assured that everyone gets scared in battle. Additionally, he needs to know that he is a

vital asset, that his behavior is to be expected in the situation, but that he is also expected to be a soldier—that even if he must leave the unit for treatment, he is expected to return to it, or to some other unit, and perform as a soldier again.

Reassurance also involves allowing a soldier to ventilate his fears, concerns, worries, losses, and guilt. A few minutes here may be enough to prevent an unnecessary evacuation.

The third "R" is relaxation. For an anxious soldier, a quick relaxation technique may allow other interventions to be more effective. A deep-breathing technique can be useful in which the soldier takes a slow, deep breath and holds it for a few seconds, then slowly, gently exhales. A few repetitions can be quite effective in reducing anxiety to a more manageable level. Relaxation can also be achieved from the comfort and understanding of a buddy in time of crisis.

In the final analysis, the identification, treatment, and prevention of psychiatric casualties in combat must be a shared responsibility of commanders and medical personnel alike. Through this cooperative effort they accomplish the most important mission—the preservation of manpower.

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One-Rope Bridge

SERGEANT FIRST CLASS GORDON L. ROTTMAN

For years, the accepted method of rigging a one-rope bridge has been to tie a figure-eight or butterfly knot about one-third of the rope's length from the near-shore end, hook a snaplink to the knot,

pass the rope around a tree, run it through the snaplink, and then run it back toward the tree, where a few men take up the slack and tie the rope off.

While this method is effective, it has

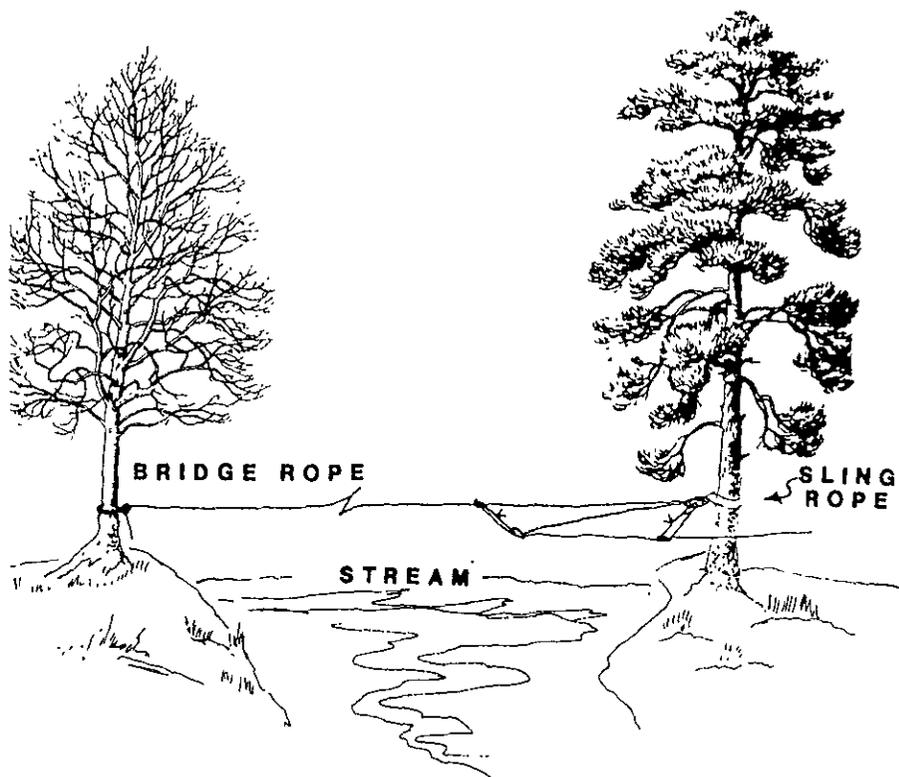
several inherent drawbacks. Foremost among them is that if the figure-eight or butterfly knot is not tied in the right position, the rope must be at least partially pulled back in, the knot untied, and then

TRAINING NOTES

re-tied in a new (and hopefully correct) position. Once the rope is weight loaded, the knot becomes difficult to untie. The type of knots used and this weight loading can also damage the rope. In addition, untying the secured rope from the tree before recovery can be somewhat time-consuming, as is the initial tie-off.

There is an alternative method that eliminates these problems, requires no special equipment, and is much faster to rig and recover. In effect, the knot and snaplink used in the accepted method constitutes a pulley; the alternative method uses three "pulleys," but it is still simple. The only equipment required is three snaplinks, a sling or "Swiss-seat" rope, and two approximately three-foot lengths of rope of a smaller diameter than the bridge rope. The ends of the three-foot ropes and the sling ropes are tied together with square knots, providing three separate looped ropes.

The bridge is constructed in the following manner: A man swims the rope across to the far side and ties it off. At the same time, the looped sling rope is passed around an anchor tree on the near side, and the looped ends are secured together with a snaplink. (This same method can also be used on the far-shore anchor tree to speed up the operation.) The near-shore anchor tree needs to be at least five meters (16 feet) from the water's edge. The bridge rope is passed through the snaplink and run back toward the water. Near the water's edge, one of the three-foot ropes is secured to the bridge rope with a prusik knot and a snaplink attached to the end of the loop. The square knot on the looped three-foot ropes needs to be positioned so as not to interfere with the tying of the prusik knot or the attachment of the snaplink. The running edge of the bridge rope is then passed through the second snaplink and run back toward the tree. In effect, the



bridge rope will now follow a "Z" pattern.

The second three-foot rope is secured to the running rope with a prusik knot, the third snaplink attached to it, and, once a couple of men have given a few good tugs to take up the slack, the third snaplink is snapped to the first snaplink on the sling rope. This effectively secures the rope as the two three-foot prusik ropes oppose each other, and the running end can now be dropped without being tied off. The two three-foot ropes can be slid on the bridge rope and their positions adjusted once they are secured.

A word of caution is in order here. The efficiency provided by the three "pulleys" can cause a rope to stretch too much and a well-used rope could even break when a load is placed on it. (It need not be as taut as a guitar string.) This added efficiency can also cause a poorly

rooted tree to pull out of a muddy stream bank. A manila rope is therefore the best suited for this type of bridge, because it does not stretch much.

In recovering the bridge, only the one snaplink on the sling rope needs to be unhooked and the entire rope system pulled across with the last man in tow.

This system can be rigged very rapidly. During an exercise, I once saw a five-man patrol (once the swimmer had crossed to the far shore) erect such a bridge, cross it, and recover the bridge and the last man in a total of one minute, 28 seconds.

Overall, this one-rope bridge is an improvement over the one constructed by the usual method.

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MOVING?

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