COMMON TRAINING

PHASE FOUR

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

SECTION 2

EO M409.02 – IDENTIFY ELEMENTS OF A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Total Time: 60 min

PREPARATION

PRE-LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Resources needed for the delivery of this lesson are listed in the lesson specification located in A-CR-CCP-604/PG-001, *Phase Four Qualification Standard and Plan*, Chapter 4. Specific uses for said resources are identified throughout the instructional guide within the TP for which they are required.

Review the lesson content and become familiar with the material prior to delivering the lesson.

Photocopy the Create a Positive Learning Environment Crossword Puzzle located at Attachment B for each cadet.

Ensure the different types of attention signals described in TP 3 are available for this EO.

PRE-LESSON ASSIGNMENT

Nil.

APPROACH

An interactive lecture was chosen for TPs 1 and 3 to provoke thought and stimulate the cadet's interest in the importance of a physically and emotionally safe learning environment and a well-managed classroom / training area.

A group discussion was chosen for TP 2 as it allows the cadets to interact with their peers and share their knowledge, experiences, opinions and feelings about stress management.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

Nil.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson the cadet shall have identified the importance of a physically and emotionally safe learning environment, discussed various techniques to manage stress and discussed classroom / training area management techniques.

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IMPORTANCE

It is important for the cadets to identify elements of a positive learning environment because it will provide them with specific instructional strategies for motivating and engaging the cadets, for conducting interesting lessons and for boosting the cadets' self-confidence and self-esteem.

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Teaching point 1 **Describe the importance of a physically and emotionally safe learning environment.**

Time: 15 min Method: Interactive Lecture



The cadets should be able to relate to sitting in a classroom trying to listen to an instructor who may have been knowledgeable about the subject but who was unable to engage them. Brainstorm with the cadets the reasons why they may have been unable to concentrate on the lesson. Draw out aspects of the environment such as lighting, ventilation, physical space, the instructor's attitude toward the group and the cadets' relationship with their peers. Explain that these are aspects of the learning environment that directly affect their ability to learn.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



"Everything we know or sense about the world comes to us, in one way or another, through the environment in which we live." (Bell, 2007, http://www.dialogueon learning.tc3.edu/model/environment/Introduction-grp.htm)

The learning environment includes the "physical environment" of the classroom or training area and the "emotional environment" that the cadets and instructor create in the classroom or training area. Aspects of the physical and emotional environment such as the lesson location, availability of resources, and cadets' level of stress and anxiety affect learning but are sometimes outside of the instructors' control. However, it is important that instructors try to minimize the effects of such hindrances to learning when they plan their lessons rather than simply know they exist and feel powerless to change them.

Physical Environment

The physical environment for cadet training will most likely change from training session to training session or even from lesson to lesson. Instructors fortunate enough to have a dedicated learning space will find it easier to create a stimulating physical environment, while others who are transient will find it more difficult. The first priority when considering the physical environment is safety. As a minimum standard the physical environment should have:

Adequate lighting. The connection between light and our emotions has long been recognized. Studies have also shown that learners perform better in brightly-lit learning environments than dimly-lit ones. It has also been shown that a learning environment with lots of natural light is more conducive to learning.

Good ventilation. It is important to be conscious of the temperature and air quality in a room because people are especially sensitive to these two elements. Cooler temperatures promote relaxation and receptivity while warmer temperatures promote acting out. If possible, open a window, turn on a fan or open a door to control temperature and air quality.

A colourful atmosphere. There is a connection between colour and moods and emotions. Warm colours (eg, red, orange, yellow) are exciting and may lead to acting out while cool colours (eg, blue, green, purple) are more relaxing. Researchers in brain-based learning suggest that the best colours for elements of the physical environment are yellow, light orange, beige or off-white. The cadets may react differently to the same colour depending on their emotional state. If cadets are feeling stressed, the colour red, for example, may bring out aggressive feelings but if they are relaxed, red can attract their attention.

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The physical environment can be improved by adding colourful, visually appealing posters, pictures or other graphic images to the walls. If an instructor lacks control over these elements they should ensure that learning aids (handouts, electronic presentations, transparencies or flip charts) are colourful.

Flexible seating arrangements. The instructor should set up a learning environment that allows cadets to move quietly to take part in small and whole group learning activities. Having the cadets move from large to small group interactions will provide variety help them learn new material more efficiently.

Movement. Cadets learn better if there is movement during a period of instruction. The brain needs glucose, oxygen and water to function properly. Even if the air quality is good, the cadets may still be oxygen deprived because of improper breathing patterns caused by stress and anxiety. Lack of oxygen to the brain negatively impacts its ability to process information; increasing the flow of oxygen to the brain can improve its ability to process information. Physical activity is an excellent way to increase oxygen flow to the brain. Instructors can accomplish this by beginning their classes with 30–60 seconds of stretching or deep breathing and by taking breathing breaks during longer lessons or when they notice that the cadets' attention is lagging.

Water is also important for good brain functioning. Instructors should encourage the cadets to drink beverages, preferably water or fruit juices during lessons.



The brain consumes twenty percent of the body's energy.



Organize the cadets into pairs and have them alternate as they explain to one another how adequate lighting, good ventilation, colourful atmosphere, flexible seating arrangements and movement affect learning. Circulate around the room to get a sense of how well the cadets are processing the information. After all cadets have participated and all elements have been explained, continue with the lesson.

Emotional Environment



"Learning occurs best in an environment that contains positive interpersonal relationships and interactions, comfort and order, and in which the learner feels appreciated, acknowledged, respected and validated." (Earl, 2003, p. 39)

Instructors have a responsibility to make their classrooms as emotionally safe as possible so that learning can take place. If the brain senses a threat, it will ignore all other information to deal effectively with the threat. The perception of threat causes a "fight or flight" response which causes the body to transfer blood from the frontal cortex, or thinking part of the brain, to the bottom and back of the brain to prepare for survival. Any time cadets experience a sense of danger, whether physical or emotional, their bodies and brains react with this "fight or flight" response.

To maximize learning, instructors must create an emotional environment of relaxed alertness that allows the cadets to risk saying a wrong answer or solving a problem incorrectly. This is an emotionally safe learning environment.

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Emotional safety is necessary for intellectual risk taking. (Earl, 2003, p. 103)

There are a number of strategies that can be used to achieve an emotionally safe learning environment. It is important for the instructor to:

Lead with a positive attitude. The cadets may have plenty of complications and negativity in their daily lives and will appreciate a positive environment with a positive and enthusiastic instructor. When instructors show interest in what they are teaching, the cadets will become interested as well.

Establish a friendly learning environment. The instructor should make it safe to learn by treating all cadets equally and respectfully and insisting that cadets treat one another in the same way. The instructor can build trust by keeping their word and by keeping information confidential if asked to do so. They should encourage the sharing of ideas, experiences and information and value the contribution of each learner. One simple thing that instructors can do is to be sensitive to the cadets' average attention span.



Use a maximum of one minute per year of age, as a guide, to get uninterrupted listening or active participation in an activity.

Make learning fun. The instructor should challenge the cadets with interesting activities that are not too easy or too difficult. They should try to challenge the cadets just beyond their present level of ability. If they are challenged too far beyond their level of ability, the cadets will give up but if they are challenged too little, they will become bored. Encourage the cadets to take risks and reward effort and energy as well as correctness. The instructor should listen empathetically by acknowledging nervousness, showing patience and being non-judgmental of the cadets' responses. In addition, the instructor should never single out cadets and always be attentive to those who seem isolated from the group. They should never use put-downs or sarcasm.



Instructors should keep the first challenge easy and the encouragement heavy and remember that they are students too but with the added responsibility of helping others learn.

Encourage supportiveness. The instructor should be supportive of the cadets and encourage them to be supportive of one another. Instructors can create a supportive environment by leading applause, thanking cadets for their input and rewarding effort.

Appeal to a variety of senses. The instructor should stimulate the cadets' senses in a variety of ways which will help them feel positive about the learning experience. As well, the instructor should be aware that the cadets will have different learning styles that should be catered to by using many different learning activities.

Provide feedback. The instructor's feedback should be specific and help the cadets compare their current progress to past performance rather than compare it to the performance of others. They should always be accurate and consistent and when they assign specific tasks to be done, they should tell the cadets that they will be coming back to check on their progress.



When providing feedback, the instructors should stress what is to be done rather than confuse the cadets by giving attention to what is not to be done.

Use encouragement. The instructor should use encouragement to boost the cadets' enthusiasm and self-esteem but must be careful not to confuse encouragement with reinforcement. Encouragement will make the cadets feel better but it will not improve their learning in the same way as providing specific feedback regarding

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a specific task. Instructors should be selective and provide encouragement when it is due to keep the cadets on track.



Instructors should encourage the cadets to look at incorrect responses or unsuccessful attempts at problem solving as research and not failure.

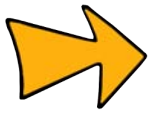
Communicate clear expectations and routines. A sense of safety comes from consistent and predictable behaviours on the part of the instructor. Instructors should not be too rigid but should develop consistent procedures for beginning lessons, getting the cadets' attention and handling disruptions and distractions. They should start every lesson by telling the cadets specifically what they will know or be able to do by the end of the lesson. They should conclude each lesson by reminding the cadets what they have learned or are able to do.

Provide processing time. Instructors should ensure that the cadets have enough time to process the information that they have just received. They should stop periodically during a lesson and allow the cadets to interact over new material which will help them store it in long-term memory for later recall. Instructors can use a variety of group or paired activities to enable the cadets to interact with one another. They can, for example, ask each cadet in a small group to successively respond to a question or comment on an idea. A variation of this type of interaction would be pairing cadets and having them respond alternately by listing one item of a series, by identifying a specific cause or effect of something or by providing a specific reason. The key is for the instructor to stop talking, ask a question, set a time limit and have the cadets interact in groups or pairs to process the information just presented.



Talking or lecturing beyond ten minutes is like pouring water into a glass that is already full.

Instructors must ensure, as much as possible, that the environment in which they instruct their lessons is learner friendly. The environment does affect learning and instructors must find ways to positively impact the learning environment for the cadets. The cadets should feel comfortable when giving answers, taking part in discussions and solving problems. Their incorrect responses to oral questions or attempts at solving a problem should not be put down or belittled but rather should be seen as the beginning of discovery.



Adult learners can overcome a poor learning environment because they are often self-motivated with a genuine interest in the subject or desire for personal gain. Cadets may not have a high degree of self-motivation so it is important to create a learning environment that will motivate them.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 1

Organize the cadets into pairs and have them alternately explain to one another two ways the instructor can establish a friendly learning environment, make learning fun and provide processing time.

Circulate around the room to get a sense of how well the cadets are processing the information. After all cadets have participated and the three items have been explained, continue with the lesson.

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Teaching point 2 **Conduct a group discussion on stress management techniques.**

Time: 15 min Method: Group Discussion

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE



The purpose of the group discussion is to draw the following information from the group using the tips for answering / facilitating discussion and the suggested questions provided.

STRESS

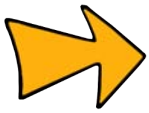
Stress is the body's reaction to a perception of a physical or emotional threat. The threat can be real or imagined; it is the perception of threat that triggers the stress response. During an acute stress response, the nervous system is activated automatically and the body experiences increased levels of cortisol, adrenalin and other hormones that produce an increased heart rate, quickened breathing rate and higher blood pressure. Blood is carried from the extremities to the big muscles preparing the body to fight or run away, which is commonly known as the "fight or flight" response. When the perceived threat is gone, our systems are designed to return to normal but this doesn't always happen because the threats can be frequent which causes constant anxiety.

Positive and negative stress are commonly labelled as eustress and distress respectively.

EUSTRESS

Eustress is described as good stress and is created naturally when we participate in exciting but safe activities or when we trick the body into releasing small amounts of cortisol into the bloodstream. This type of stress pushes a person to do better and reach goals. Situations that might produce eustress include:

- riding a roller coaster;
- successfully completing an activity; or
- passing a test.



The prefix 'eu' in the word eustress is taken from the word euphoria which means a feeling of well being.

DISTRESS

Distress is described as bad stress. This type of stress causes worry, anger or pain. Situations that might produce distress include:

- lack of sleep,
- accidents, or
- negative relationships with others.

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Stress affects individuals differently. A situation that causes eustress for one person may cause distress for another.

TECHNIQUES FOR CREATING POSITIVE STRESS

Positive stress releases a small amount of cortisol into the bloodstream which can help the cadets learn more easily by improving their memory function. The instructor should use techniques, such as those described below, to create positive stress.

Design activities that challenge cadets. The instructor should design activities that challenge the cadets just beyond their present level of ability to encourage interest and prevent boredom.

Use movement. Instructors should incorporate movement into every lesson because it increases oxygen flow to the brain, which helps the cadets learn better. The movement should occur naturally during the lesson when the cadets are forced to stand up to give responses or move around to engage in a learning or confirmation activity. It does not have to be long but should be frequent during a lesson, which can have a cumulative effect on the brain.

Use music. Music, in addition to being enjoyable, has health benefits because it helps the body to produce cortisol. Instructors should have a good selection of music that they regularly use during their lessons as background noise or as an attention signal to begin a lesson or transition from one activity to another.

Breathe Properly. Breathing is how oxygen gets into the bloodstream to be delivered to the rest of the body. As automatic as it is, cadets may not be breathing well and should practice deep breathing activities to help increase oxygen flow.



Conduct a deep breathing activity by having the cadets:

(1) lie on the floor on their back or sit in a comfortable position;

(2) place one hand on their upper chest and one hand on their belly just above their waist;

(3) breathe in slowly through their nose and feel the hand on their belly rise;

(4) breathe out slowly through their mouth and feel the hand on their belly gradually lower; and

(5) repeat steps three and four a few times.

If this activity is too disruptive or time consuming, simply encourage the cadets to take a few deep breaths periodically throughout a lesson to get more oxygen from the bloodstream to the brain, which will improve brain function.

TECHNIQUES FOR CONTROLLING NEGATIVE STRESS

If threats, or the perception of threats, are persistent, stress will become long term or chronic. The body can handle temporary or acute stress but not chronic stress and it may become ill. At the least, chronic stress impedes learning and must be prevented. In addition to using some of the techniques described above to create good stress, instructors should incorporate the following in their lessons to manage negative stress.



It is estimated that ninety percent of doctors' visits are for conditions in which stress, at least, plays a role.

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Inform cadets of expectations. Instructors must clarify their expectations and communicate them to the cadets. Be specific, when assigning tasks, about what cadets will be expected to do, how they will be assessed and how they will receive extra training if necessary. Develop routines for beginning a lesson, transitioning from one activity to another during a lesson, getting the cadets' attention, dealing with different types of learners and ending a lesson. Routines may be repetitive and the cadets may complain at first, but routines that are realistically developed and consistently applied will allow the cadets to predict what will happen, which will ease their stress.

Provide necessary resources. The instructor must clearly and specifically inform the cadets what is expected of them and ensure that the cadets have all the material they need to complete the learning activity. The cadets will have limited time to complete the activity and will become frustrated if they have to collect material or improvise on their own. The instructor must ensure that all necessary equipment and supplies are readily available in the learning environment.

Provide adequate time to accomplish the task. When determining the amount of time for a task a good rule to follow is to assign one minute for each year of age. If an activity is long it should be broken down into manageable tasks.

Incorporate physical activity. The instructor should ensure that cadets move during every class either naturally as part of an activity or artificially when they notice the cadets' attention lagging.

Provide time to process information. Give the cadets enough time during a task to interact with their peers, in some way or another, over the content to help move it into long-term memory. This can be accomplished in a number of ways such as group interactions or some form of paired sharing. The important thing is to prevent time from becoming a hindrance to learning.

Practice relaxation techniques. There are a number of relaxation techniques to control negative stress. The benefit of such techniques is that they trick the body into thinking that the threat is gone and the increased blood circulation carries more oxygen to the brain, which allows the body to relax.

GROUP DISCUSSION



TIPS FOR ANSWERING / FACILITATING DISCUSSION:

- Establish ground rules for discussion, eg, everyone should listen respectfully; don't interrupt; only one person speaks at a time; no one's ideas should be made fun of; you can disagree with ideas but not with the person; try to understand others as much as you hope they understand you; etc.
- Sit the group in a circle, making sure all cadets can be seen by everyone else.
- Ask questions that will provoke thought; in other words avoid questions with yes or no answers.
- Manage time by ensuring the cadets stay on topic.
- Listen and respond in a way that indicates you have heard and understood the cadet. This can be done by paraphrasing their ideas.
- Give the cadets time to respond to your questions.
- Ensure every cadet has an opportunity to participate. One option is to go around the group and have each cadet answer the question with a short answer. Cadets must also have the option to pass if they wish.
- Additional questions should be prepared ahead of time.

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SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

Q1. What is stress?

Q2. How does breathing deeply help create positive stress?

Q3. What are five things instructors can do to control negative stress?

Q4. How can practicing relaxation techniques help control negative stress?

Q5. How does music create positive stress?



Other questions and answers will develop throughout the group discussion. The group discussion should not be limited to only those suggested.



Reinforce those answers given and comments made during the group discussion, ensuring the teaching point has been covered.



If time allows, conduct an activity where the cadets will practice one of the relaxation exercises described in Attachment A.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 2

The cadets' participation in the group discussion will serve as the confirmation of this TP.

Teaching point 3 **Identify classroom / training area management techniques.**

Time: 20 min Method: Interactive Lecture

The classroom / training area for cadets may vary from session to session or even lesson to lesson depending on the type of training being conducted and the space available at the unit. Even if the instructor has the luxury of a dedicated space, it is important that they develop a classroom / training area management plan that will maximize the time available for a lesson. A management plan will prevent the instructor from wasting time getting the cadets' attention, transitioning from one activity to another, handling distractions and dealing with different types of learners.

A management plan should include the following but can be more detailed.

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ATTENTION SIGNALS



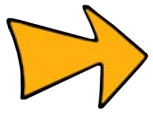
Attention signals will work only if the cadets know what to do upon hearing or seeing the signal and the instructor has a positive expectation of success. If you do it, but do not actually expect the cadets to give you their attention, most likely they will not.

The instructor may find it useful to use an attention signal which immediately captures the cadets' attention when beginning a lesson, giving instructions, passing on information or transitioning from one activity to another. The attention signal should be both auditory and visual and the cadets should be taught to stop talking, stop working and establish eye contact immediately upon hearing and seeing the signal. Such an approach, when it becomes entrenched into the lesson's routine, will prevent the instructor from becoming frustrated and will help establish a calm tone for the lesson. The attention signal should be used consistently whenever there is a need to get the cadets' attention. The following attention signals may be used:

- **Raising a hand.** The instructor can simply raise their hand or raise their hand and say, "high five." Immediately upon hearing the phrase "high five" and seeing the instructor's hand go up the cadets should stop talking or moving, look at the instructor, raise their hand and repeat the phrase "high five" and keep their hand raised until the group is ready.
- **Flicking the light switch.** Immediately upon seeing the lights go on and off, the cadets should stop talking or moving and look at the instructor until the group is ready. An accompanying verbal command may include "high five" or some other phrase.
- **Sounding a bell, playing a musical tone or playing part of a song.** Immediately upon hearing the bell, musical tone or part of a song, the cadets should stop talking or moving and look at the instructor until the group is ready.
- **Clapping a rhythm.** The instructor claps a rhythm (dut, dut, dut, dut, dut). Immediately upon hearing the clapped rhythm the cadets should stop talking or moving, clap either a responding rhythm (dut, dut) or repeat the rhythm the instructor clapped and then look at the instructor until the group is ready.
- **Whistling.** Immediately upon hearing the whistle the cadets should to stop talking or moving and look at the instructor until the group is ready.



Use one of the attention signals and have the cadets respond with the appropriate behaviour or play the chorus from the song "Respect", have the cadets repeat "R-E-S-P-E-C-T" when they hear it and look at the instructor until the group is ready.



This is not an exhaustive list of attention signals. Some of the signals described above may be too childish for some groups. When deciding on a signal, consider the age, experience and maturity level of the group. Additional research of attention signals and experimenting with the group may help find one that works.

CORRECTING BEHAVIOUR

Instructors must be able to resolve disagreements, draw attention to the merits of differing opinions and maintain control of the classroom. They should prepare ahead of time and have a contingency plan for a range of behaviours similar to those listed below:

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LEARNER BEHAVIOUR	SOLUTIONS
Quick Learner The cadet who consistently grasps concepts quickly and finishes work first could become disruptive if they begin to feel bored and unchallenged.	Provide this cadet with more advanced work. Ask this cadet to help others who require help. Have extra work prepared that reinforces the lesson.
Quiet Learner The cadet who rarely participates because they are shy, afraid, self-conscious or introverted.	Determine the cadet's interest and make it a topic for a group discussion. Discreetly encourage them to speak on the topic during the discussion asking questions that require short answers but occasionally ask more detailed questions.
Helpful Learner The cadet who is eager to help and agrees with everything the instructor says.	If the cadet is truly a generous person, explain in private that their behaviour is appreciated but could be misinterpreted by the group. If the cadet is trying to gain the favour of the instructor, advise the whole group that only merit will be rewarded.
Monopolizer The cadet who is always ready to express their views and can end up monopolizing the lesson.	Pose questions to this cadet that require only brief "yes" or "no" answers.
Critical Learner The cadet who consistently finds fault with the content or method of instruction.	Listen to the cadet's problems and satisfy them, if possible. If not possible, admit there are areas to be improved and ask for suggestions and solutions. Advise the cadet that you would be happy to discuss these issues after the lesson.
Know It All The cadet who considers themselves an authority on any topic being discussed and disrupts the class.	Determine if the cadet is knowledgeable or simply trying to get attention. Allow the cadet to answer some questions but allow other cadets to respond as well.
Distracter The cadet who attempts to get the group off topic. The cadet may do this to avoid revealing that they have not completed the assigned work or to avoid a difficult subject.	Recognize the types of questions that appear to relate to the lesson but will actually veer off topic. Acknowledge that the question does not relate to the topic but offer to discuss it after the lesson.

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Organize the cadets into pairs and have them alternately describe to one another the different types of learners. Circulate around the room to get a sense of how well the cadets are processing the information. After all cadets have participated and the different types of learners have been described, continue with the lesson.

PROVIDING POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

Deal with inappropriate academic performance and / or behaviour by emphasizing what is expected of the cadet rather than concentrating on what the cadet did wrong. The feedback should be:

- accurate,
- age-appropriate,
- specific, and
- consistent with the instructor's personal style.

It is extremely frustrating for cadets to be advised that their performance is unsatisfactory but to not know why. Instructors must:

- specifically and clearly identify what aspect of a performance is incorrect; and
- specifically and clearly identify what the cadet must do differently.

The cadets should also be asked to identify their own mistakes and explain why they made the error. In addition, the cadets should also be given the opportunity to:

- explain how to perform the task correctly; and
- practice the correct procedure.

ENGAGING THE CADET

Cadets are engaged when they are moving around or working in groups to manipulate information physically and mentally. Instructors can enhance learning by engaging in activities such as those described below.

Jigsaw worksheets. Instead of having cadets complete a worksheet individually, break them into small groups and assign a portion of the worksheet to each group. Each group must complete its assigned portion of the worksheet and use a poster or some other presentation aid to present the information to the whole group.

Graphics. Have the cadets create graphic organizers such as webs or mobiles to summarize information.

Creative writing. Have the cadets create rhymes, poems or songs to summarize information. If you are teaching terminology, symbols or similar information, have the cadets write a fairy tale or children's story using the information.

Create a chart. The instructor should type chronological information using a large font and cut it up into strips. Organize the cadets into pairs or small groups and give each pair or group an envelope with the strips of information and have them work together to place the information in the correct order and paste it on a sheet of chart paper or bristol board. Time the activity for fun.

Information chain. Have each cadet write one fact that they have learned during the class on a piece of coloured paper if possible. Have the class line up in front of the room and invite the first cadet to read their slip then fold it into a link and staple it. Invite the next student to read a fact and attach it to the chain and continue in this fashion until all cadets have created a link.

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Scavenger hunt. Teach identification lessons such as parts of a rifle or parts of a tackle by planting clues around the room and having cadets engage in a scavenger hunt. The clues may be actual items or pictures of items. When cadets find an actual item or some representation of it, they must describe the item to the group.

Road trip. Create a road trip. Place stop signs around the room containing information describing what the cadet must do. The cadets will travel to each place, complete the activity and have their passport stamped.



Organize the cadets into pairs and have them alternately explain to one another the different ways instructors can engage cadets. Circulate around the room to get a sense of how well the cadets are processing the information. After all cadets have participated and all activities have been explained, continue with the lesson.

MANAGING DISTRACTIONS

The best way for instructors to manage distractions is to prevent them from occurring by engaging the cadets in learning. Use attention signals to get the cadets' attention at the beginning of a lesson, while conducting an activity during a lesson and when transitioning from one activity to another. Instructors can prevent distractions by developing and consistently using routines that help cadets to predict the instructor's behaviour. Disruptions often occur when the cadets move from one activity to another during a lesson. Instructors should structure transitions by answering the following questions:

- Can the cadets talk during transitions?
- How can the cadets get the instructor's attention during a transition?
- What is the purpose of the transition?
- Can the cadets move during the transition?
- What is the desired behaviour during a transition?

Once a procedure has been established, the instructor should teach the cadets the structure through direct instruction and patient practice until the group responds appropriately. A possible approach to teaching transitions could include:

- calling the cadets to attention with the attention signal;
- numbering the cadets and assigning each number a specific task;
- informing the cadets of the rules regarding talking and moving around the room;
- informing the cadets of the procedure for getting the instructor's attention; and
- informing the cadets of the time permitted for the transition.



Instructors should encourage the cadets either individually or collectively when they may not expect it. Such encouragement may be particularly rewarding and will be considered genuine because it is attached to past behaviour and not necessarily designed to provoke further activity from the cadet.

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CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 3

QUESTIONS:

Q1. What is an attention signal?

Q2. Identify one solution for dealing with cadets who get finished before others and become disruptive.

Q3. Identify two questions instructors should answer to structure transitions.

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. An attention signal is a visual or auditory signal that immediately captures the cadets' attention when the instructor begins a class, gives instructions, passes on information or transitions from one activity to another.

A2. Solutions include:

- providing the cadet with more advanced work;
- asking the cadet to help others; or
- having extra work prepared that reinforces the lesson.

A3. Can the cadets talk during transitions?
How can the cadets get the instructor's attention during a transition?
What is the purpose of the transition?
Can the cadets move during the transition?
What is the desired behaviour during a transition?

END OF LESSON CONFIRMATION

Have the cadets complete the Create a Positive Learning Environment Crossword Puzzle located at Attachment B.

Review answers using the Create a Positive Learning Environment Crossword Puzzle Answer Key located at Attachment C.

CONCLUSION

HOMEWORK / READING / PRACTICE

Nil.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

This EO is assessed IAW A-CR-CCP-604/PG-001, *Phase Four Qualification Standard and Plan*, Chapter 3, Annex B, 409 PC.

CLOSING STATEMENT

Creating a positive learning environment requires planning and work by instructors. A safe, respectful and positive learning environment is more than a boost to self-confidence and self-esteem or a way to make learning fun—it is the cadet's right and an excellent way to make them want to learn.

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INSTRUCTOR NOTES / REMARKS

Nil.

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RELAXATION EXERCISES

Rag Doll

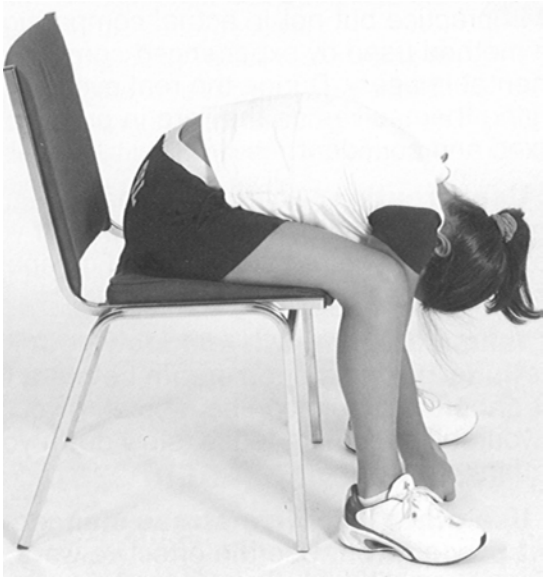
1. Sit in a chair (or stand) with feet apart.

2. Stretch the arms and trunk upward and inhale.

3. Exhale and drop the body forward. Let the trunk, head and arms dangle between the legs, keeping the muscles relaxed (as illustrated in Figure 1).

4. Remain in this position for 10–15 seconds.

5. Slowly roll up, one vertebrae at a time.



Note. From Fitness for Life: Updated Fifth Edition (p. 300), by C. Corbin, & R. Lindsey, 2007, Windsor, ON: Human Kinetics. Copyright 2007 by The Cooper Institute.

Figure A-1 Rag Doll

Neck Roll

1. Sit in a chair or on the floor with legs crossed.

2. Keeping the head and chin tucked, inhale and slowly turn the head as far left as possible (as illustrated in Figure 2).

3. Exhale and turn the head to the centre.

4. Repeat steps 2–3 for the right side.

5. Repeat steps 2–4 three times, trying to turn further each time to feel the stretch in the neck.

6. Drop the chin to the chest and inhale while slowly rolling the head in a semicircle to the left shoulder and exhale while slowly rolling the head back to the centre.

7. Repeat step 6 for the right side.

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Do not roll the head backward or in a full circle.

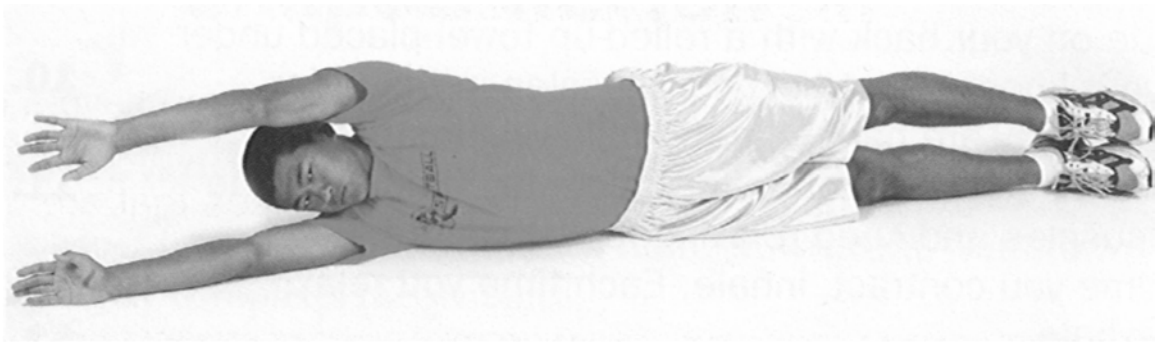


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Figure A-2 Neck Roll

Body Board

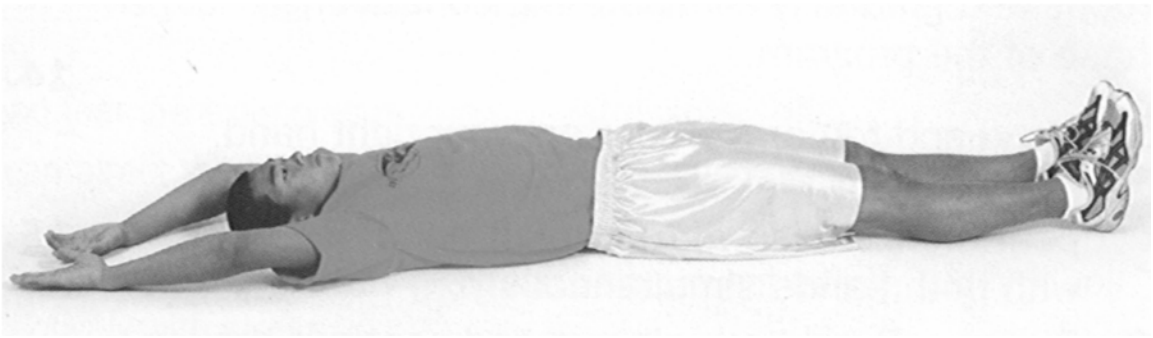
1. Lie on the right side with arms over the head (as illustrated in Figure 3).
2. Inhale and stiffen the body like a wooden board.
3. Exhale and relax the muscles and collapse.
4. Let the body fall without trying to control the direction (as illustrated in Figure 4).
5. Lie still for ten seconds.
6. Repeat steps 1–5 for the left side.



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Figure A-3 Body Board Start Position

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Figure A-4 Body Board Finish Position

Jaw Stretch

1. Sit in a chair or on the floor with head up and arms and shoulders relaxed.
2. Open mouth as wide as possible and inhale.
3. Relax and exhale slowly.
4. Shift the jaw to the right as far as possible and hold for three seconds (as illustrated in Figure 5).
5. Repeat step 4 for the left side.
6. Repeat steps 4–5 ten times.



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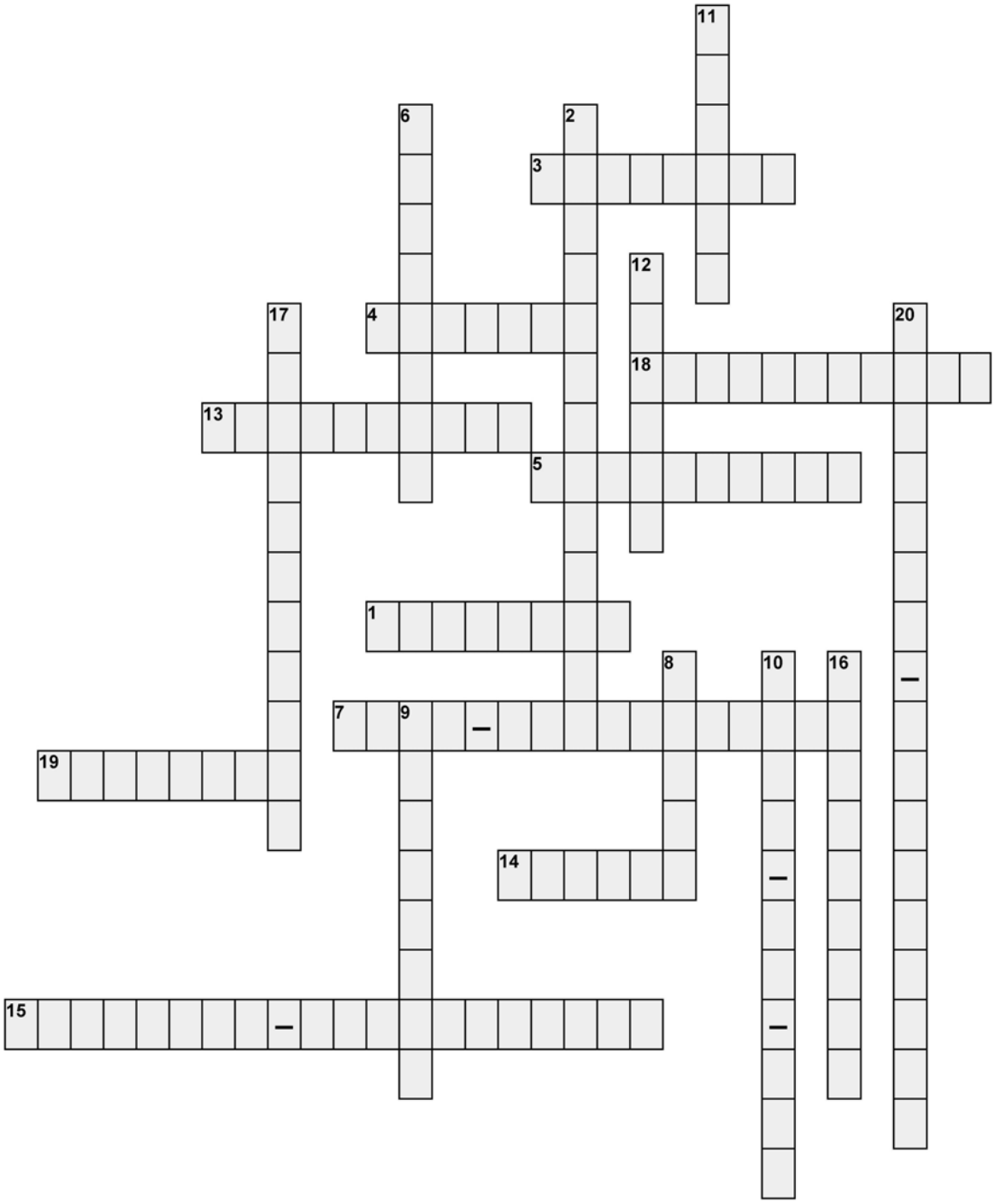
Figure A-5 Jaw Stretch

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CREATE A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Word List

physical environment, relaxation, movement, brain, stress, relaxed alertness, memorable, past performance, predict, processing, eustress, distress, cortisol, visual, know it all, specific, self-esteem, quiet learner, emotionally, oxygen

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Clues

Across:

1. Furniture should be arranged to allow for _____.

3. Positive stress is called _____.

4. Using consistent routines will help cadets _____ instructor behaviour.

5. Cooler temperatures lead to this _____.

7. Feedback should help cadets compare current progress with _____.

13. Moving information from working memory to long term memory is called _____ information.

14. Deep breathing helps get _____ into the blood stream.

15. The place where a lesson takes place is _____.

18. Reinforcement boosts learning but encouragement boosts _____.

19. Music and movement help the body to produce _____.

Down:

2. The cadet who rarely participates is called a _____.

6. Negative stress is called _____.

8. 20% of the body's energy is consumed by the _____.

9. Feedback should be accurate, age-appropriate, consistent and _____.

10. Cadets who think they are authorities on any topic are called _____.

11. Fight or flight is the body's response to _____.

12. Attention signals should be both auditory and _____.

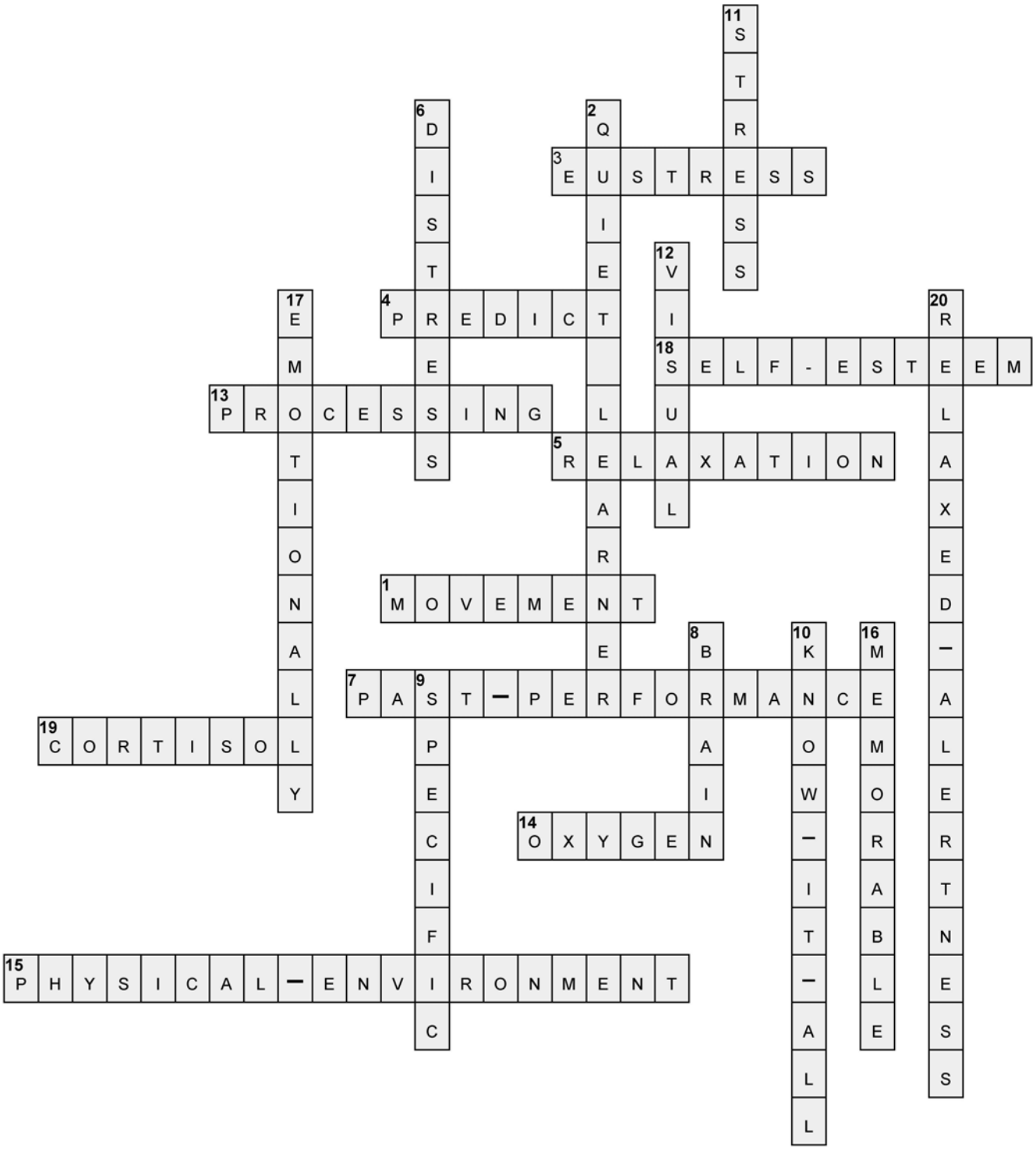
16. When our senses are stimulated the learning experience will become more _____.

17. When cadets feel comfortable and relaxed the environment is said to be _____ safe.

20. To maximize learning the emotional environment should create _____.

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CREATE A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT ANSWER KEY



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CREATE A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT ANSWER KEY (CONT'D)

Clues

Across:

1. Furniture should be arranged to allow for _____. (MOVEMENT)

3. Positive stress is called _____. (EUSTRESS)

4. Using consistent routines will help cadets _____ instructor behaviour. (PREDICT)

5. Cooler temperatures lead to this _____. (RELAXATION)

7. Feedback should help cadets compare current progress with _____. (PAST PERFORMANCE)

13. Moving information from working memory to long term memory is called _____. (INFORMATION PROCESSING)

14. Deep breathing helps get _____ into the blood stream. (OXYGEN)

15. The place where a lesson takes place is _____. (PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT)

18. Reinforcement boosts learning but encouragement boosts _____. (SELF-ESTEEM)

19. Music and movement help the body to produce _____. (CORTISOL)

Down:

2. The cadet who rarely participates is called a _____. (QUIET LEARNER)

6. Negative stress is called _____. (DISTRESS)

8. 20% of the body's energy is consumed by the _____. (BRAIN)

9. Feedback should be accurate, age-appropriate, consistent and _____. (SPECIFIC)

10. Cadets who think they are authorities on any topic are called _____. (KNOW IT ALL)

11. Fight or flight is the body's response to _____. (STRESS)

12. Attention signals should be both auditory and _____. (VISUAL)

16. When our senses are stimulated the learning experience will become more _____. (MEMORABLE)

17. When cadets feel comfortable and relaxed the environment is said to be _____ safe. (EMOTIONALLY)

20. To maximize learning the emotional environment should create _____. (RELAXED ALERTNESS)

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