



Resilience Tactical Pause (RTP) Fragmentary Order (FRAGO) 01/ Playbook (11 December 2019)

Background: The initial Resilience Tactical Pause (RTP) across the AF was successful in increasing connections and driving feedback from Airmen. The team at HAF A1Z in coordination with the Invisible Wounds Initiative (IWI) team performed an initial analysis on over 12,300 responses. In order to continue building trust and confidence in leadership, leaders at all levels must work hard to connect with every officer, enlisted, and civilian Airman. To do this we must accelerate the RTP campaign in addition to seeking out ways to further develop connectedness both in and out of the workplace.

Intent: This playbook provides suggested tools and resources to execute FRAGO 01 to the RTP. This is not a down day; this is leaders' time to connect in a more persistent and personal way in higher volume while utilizing your respective MAJCOM program (e.g. Operation GRIT), this RTP Playbook, or any combination of these. The purpose of the RTP remains to strengthen meaningful connection between Airmen, reinforce the Squadron as the beating heart of the Air Force, and break down barriers and stigmas to care across our Air Force family in order to optimize performance. Suggested tools and resources are provided and should be tailored as needed to meet your unit's and teammates' requirements. We are encouraging you to make meaningful connections, be yourself, and share your story of what makes you who you are... for example, your values, faith, beliefs or philosophies. Encourage your teammates to do the same.

Work with your local staff judge advocate if you have questions about how to keep these conversations within constitutional bounds. "Leaders at all levels must balance constitutional protections for their own free exercise of religion, including individual expressions of religious beliefs, and the constitutional prohibition against governmental establishment of religion. They must ensure their words and actions cannot reasonably be construed to be officially endorsing or disapproving of, or extending preferential treatment for any faith, belief, or absence of belief." (AFI 1-1, paragraph 2.12)

Care should be taken to ensure facilitators (Command Team members, Supervisors, Team Leads, MRTs, VPIs) and participants do not promote or describe these group discussions and events as training. Also, outcomes of RTP small group discussions, interpersonal connections, identification of potential solutions, and feedback directly conveyed to facilitators should be given to Command Teams for action.

Consider establishing a Resilience team within the unit to focus on breaking down barriers, creating strong connections, and building a culture strengthened by the pillars of CAF. This Resilience team may also plan Resilience events and community mobilization initiatives with help from other base resources. This team could also serve as a conduit to support your Community Action Team (CAT) and Community Action Board (CAB) events in order to fix issues at the installation level or up channel issues to the MAJCOM and/or HAF as required.

Plan:¹

- The RTP is a continuing effort to build connectedness, reinforce squadrons as the heartbeat of the Air Force, break down barriers to seeking help, and drive feedback from Airmen. The foundation of RTP is treating every military and civilian Airman and their families with dignity, respect and compassion.
- The theme of the next RTP is ‘Purpose and Meaning’ under the Spiritual domain of Comprehensive Airman Fitness (CAF). Moving forward, Command Teams, Supervisors and Team Leaders may use the provided materials, including “Unit Implementation Guide for Preparing for the Holidays” and “Small Group Discussions Tool” to assist in incorporating this theme into the RTP.
- Leaders’ messages and themes should be nested in senior echelon’s overall objectives supporting the RTP.
 - Based on original RTP feedback, groups should be kept small (8-20 Airmen).
 - Discussions should be focused on 1) connection, 2) building resilience skills, and 3) fostering the Total Force Airmen identity. Facilitators will be supported with discussion topics and tools from the Office of the Air Force Chief of Chaplains, Airmanship Working Group (AWG), USAFE-AFAFRICA, and the Resilience Program. Current materials support building Airman Identity (Airmanship), small group discussion (Operation GRIT Check-Six Tools), packaged resilience facilitators guides (Resilience Quick Grips) and the “AF Small Groups – Unit Implementation Guide” and “Preparing for the Holidays Discussion Tool”. AF/A1Z has provided these tools and materials (and more) for facilitators (Command Team members, Supervisors, Team Leads, MRTs, VPIs) via the AF Resilience website: www.resilience.af.mil/RTP/
 - Command Team messaging should focus on positive promotion of protective factors and healthy behaviors that increase connection, decrease barriers to seeking help, and build resilient Airmen (e.g., our Airman Identity, being good Wingmen, engaging in appropriate self-care such as exercise and ensuring sufficient sleep, seeking help early and often through resources like the Chain of Command, Airman & Family Readiness, Military Family Life Counselors [MFLCs], Mental Health, and Religious Support Teams).

Implementation:

- Unit Command Teams will continue to choose timing of the RTP engagements based on operational risk management decisions that mitigate risk to force and mission. Unit Commanders have been empowered to make hard decisions, like changing sortie generation or temporary gate closures for example, in order to facilitate RTP momentum. Units will make this their own...personalize it and stay on it.
- It is recommended that existing helping resources (e.g. Religious Support Teams, Mental Health Clinic personnel, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocates, Family Advocacy Program personnel, Military and Family Life Counselors) are made available during at the time of Wing Commander messages and small group discussions. RTP is a continuing opportunity to reduce stigma associated with seeking help. **Leaders are therefore encouraged to stress the importance of asking for help and reinforce the local resources available.**

¹ Support contractor personnel may be encouraged to attend RTP sessions, to the extent allowed under the contract, so long as no conflict of interest or appearance of favoritism is created, and the government and contractor supervisors agree that this is an appropriate use of the contractor's time under the contract. Since our support contractor personnel often work side-by-side with Airmen, contractor personnel are valuable resiliency Wingmen. Please consult with your servicing legal and contracting offices for specific guidance.

For Additional Tools and Resources, visit: www.resilience.af.mil

- Speakers may be brought in to share stories of resilience and/or provide an example of help-seeking behavior. Feedback from initial RTP highly encourages the use of local Airmen. Some potential speakers may include:²
 - Wounded Warrior Ambassadors: Warriors and caregivers who have gone through the Ambassador Workshop are prepared to share their stories of being resilient. Contact the Ambassador Program at:
 - Tel: 210-565-0731
 - Email: AFPC.DPFW.AmbassadorWorkflow@us.af.mil
 - Installation Resources: There are likely Airmen on your installation who are willing to share positive stories of being resilient; identify and enable them to craft their message of resilience. It is recommended that Wings avoid stories of tragedy and/or regret. The message should ultimately be one of resilience and effective help seeking. There are many sources of information on the installation, and you are encouraged to find resources off your installation as well.
 - External Speakers (e.g., celebrity or athlete):² With guidance from your local legal office, units may be able to invite speakers who fall into this category. Please contact your installation legal office for guidance and assistance in selecting and contacting any speaker not already affiliated with the Federal government.

Small Group Facilitator Selection: Creating connections with others is an important protective factor, so a key aspect of the RTP small group discussions is the selection of facilitators who are adept at building connections during the discussions. The facilitators should be selected by leadership and should be Airmen who are well-respected by their peers, have a positive influence, and have some experience leading group discussions. Potential facilitators may include unit Master Resilience Trainers (MRTs). **Remember, these events are NOT training**, but an opportunity for our small group facilitators to create an environment of connectedness. Command Teams should provide guidance on how to best set up the small group discussions for their units. Leaders should meet with facilitators to discuss any unit specific concerns, questions, or topic areas for the groups, and then follow up with the facilitators to learn from any feedback they received during the sessions.

Small Group Facilitator Instructions: Small group facilitators are an essential part of the effectiveness of the RTP. Their role is to build connections among the Airmen and gather feedback to identify issues and areas for improvement within unit resilience culture to enhance Airmen well-being and performance.

- **Facilitation Resources:** Use available facilitation resources prior to, during, and after the small group discussions. In addition to your on-base personnel and peers, seek out online videos or websites that can assist in small group facilitation, enhancement of active listening skills, and building connections. Consider the following publicly-available resources:³

- <https://web.stanford.edu/group/resed/resed/staffresources/RM/training/facilguide.html>
- <https://coachingforleaders.com/facilitate-great-conversations/>

² Invitational travel *may* be an option for speakers who are not civilian or uniformed members of a Service. Please work with your DTS approving official and your local legal office for guidance.

³ The appearance of hyperlinks does not constitute endorsement by the U.S. Air Force of non-U.S. Government sites or the information, products, or services contained therein. AF/A1Z does not exercise editorial control over all of the information that you may find at these locations.

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- www.brown.edu/sheridan/teaching-learning-resources/teaching-resources/classroom-practices/learning-contexts/discussions/tips
 - www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/active-listening.html
- **Group Organization:** Consider group size and member selection that will encourage conversation, respects mission requirements, and value Airmen’s time. Ideal group size is 8-20 Airmen.
 - **Preparation:** Prepare beforehand and start on time. Select a comfortable space, be welcoming and positive, and explain the “why” of the RTP (provided above in the “Intent” section and further defined by commanders).
 - **Getting Started:** It is recommended you start with introductions and by sharing a favorite (e.g., movie, TV show, food, etc.) to increase comfort in speaking and sharing in the group.
 - **Encourage Conversation:** This is not a training or focus group. The facilitator sets the tone for how the discussion will go. The facilitator should talk less than 20% of the time and limit sharing of their own opinions. Encourage everyone to participate by asking quieter Airmen to share what they are thinking. Do not let one person monopolize the conversation. Actively listen to the members and ask clarifying questions. If members start complaining, ask them to provide potential solutions.
 - **Airmen in Distress:** RTP discussions might distress some Airmen. Such responses *must not be ignored or dismissed* by leadership or the small group facilitators. If someone becomes distressed (possibly after sharing a personal tragedy) during the discussion, respond with empathy and be ready to provide connection to local resources. If you are concerned someone might be having thoughts of suicide, pull them aside and ask them about it directly. Ensure Airmen who need help are escorted to leadership, Mental Health, or the Religious Support Team using the principles of Ask, Care, Escort (ACE).
 - **Providing Feedback:** Gathering feedback from Airmen is critical to the success of the RTP small group discussions continuing throughout the AF. Command Teams should develop local feedback methods for Airmen to be able to convey (either openly or anonymously) work stressors and suggestions to help mitigate those stressors and any other problem areas. Facilitators are encouraged to take notes (or request the assistance of a wingman in doing so) during the small group discussions, and to then bring information, suggestions, and solutions to leadership for action.

RTP Playbook Success: Each unit executes immediate Holiday engagements to ensure every officer, enlisted and civilian Airman has a plan and establishes contingency plans for when teammates become disconnected. Units then transition to more decisive actions to build meaningful connections, strengthen the squadron as the heartbeat of the Air Force, and break down barriers and stigmas to care across our Air Force family in order to optimize performance with an emphasis on the spiritual CAF domain.

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