

SPIRITUAL FITNESS SCALE '7 X 7 INITIATIVE'

Align Programs & Services with an Evidence Base
Reliably Measure Spiritual Growth for Theists & Non-Theists
Demonstrate the Impact of Spiritual Growth on Total Readiness

Spirituality & Performance Research Team
Consortium for Health & Military Performance



How This Resource Book Can Help

This resource book is designed to provide Chaplains and Religious Programs Specialists with tables, diagrams, and clarifying comments to accompany the 7 short videos featured in the ‘SFS 7x7 Initiative.’

The following pages are organized in 7 sections, and each section will correspond with a particular video. During each video, the presenter will occasionally direct your attention to the pages in this book, so that an image or comment can serve to clarify or amplify the presenter’s message.

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SECTION 1:

DESIGNING A SCALE

TALKING POINTS

- How Does a Metrical Scale Differ from a Questionnaire?
- Should a Scale be Both Valid and Reliable?
- What is a Scale Alignment?
- Choosing the Items
- Winnowing
- Traits Emerging Through Factor Analysis

YOU MAY BE WONDERING...

What is CHAMP? The Consortium for Health & Military Performance is the DoD Center of Excellence for Human Performance Optimization (HPO), housed at the the Uniformed Services University for the Health Sciences (our nation's Military Medical School). CHAMP has an HPO research team dedicated to Spiritual Performance, which is led by a military chaplain researcher.

What exactly is HPO? Human Performance Optimization refers to the process of equipping and enabling individuals to reach their optimal state of readiness across every dimension of life (spiritual, psychological, social, physiological, etc.) for the tasks they must perform at home and at work. The '5 Pillars of Performance' supported by the Preservation of the Force & Family (POTFF) program is an HPO model.

What are the Domains Within HPO? The Human Performance paradigm contains three distinct focuses: readiness ('left of the bang'), resilience ('within the bang'), and recovery ('right of the bang'). HPO is aligned with the first of three: readiness. Spiritual Performance is 1 of the 5 Pillars of Performance in the POTFF model, and is a domain governed by chaplains.

Why Measure Spiritual Performance? Since an accurate scientific measure for spiritual growth has been developed, chaplains can now align programs and services with a strong evidence base, help their operators to compare their scores in 3 essential areas of spirituality to a large base of their peers, demonstrate concrete return-on-investment in their work to support spiritual readiness, and quantify the impact of spiritual growth on wider preparation for operations (including family preparation).

SFS Subscale	Items	Reliability
Personal Connection to a Higher Power (PCHP)	7	0.95 (Ω - USU) 0.97 (α - UTC)
Pursuing Meaning, Purpose, and Values (PMPV)	5	0.88 (Ω - USU) 0.93 (α - UTC)
Service and Sacrifice for the Greater Good (SSGG)	5	0.73 (Ω - USU) 0.87 (α - UTC)

Unique spirituality frameworks in the military performance domain...

- **Spiritual Fitness:** “the ability to adhere to beliefs, principles, or values needed to persevere and prevail in accomplishing missions” (CJCSI 3405.01, 2011).
- **Spiritual Performance:** “...[continuous contact] with core spiritual beliefs, values, awareness, relationships and experiences...which form the basis to promote healthy living, sound decision-making, [and] meaningful relational interaction...” (SOCOM-D 10-12, 2021).

SECTION 2:

FINDING CORE ATTRIBUTES

TALKING POINTS

- Personal Connection with God or a Higher Power (PCHP)
- The Pursuit of Meaning, Purpose and Values (PMPV)
- Service and Sacrifice for the Greater Good (SSGG)
- Balancing the Worldviews of Theists and Non-Theists in Baseline Profiling
- The Core Attributes and Traditional Chaplaincy

WHAT DO THE SCALE ITEMS LOOK LIKE?

SOCOM Spiritual Fitness Scale (SSFS)

Reflect on your attitudes, commitments, and beliefs and answer as accurately as possible.

1. I know what my life is about.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

2. Human value and respect should be the greatest social value.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

3. I've been able to find a sense of meaning in my life.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

4. Looking at my life as a whole, things seem clear to me.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

5. I believe strongly in humanity and the power of people.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

6. I have a core set of beliefs, ethics, and values that give my life a sense of meaning and purpose.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

7. I often think about a "grand plan" or process that human beings are a part of.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

8. The greatest moral decision is doing the greatest good for human beings.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

9. Being of service to others is an important source of meaning in my life.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

10. I can find meaning and purpose in my everyday experiences.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

The next set of statements reflects commitment to God or a higher power. Even if you don't think of yourself as religious, try to answer as accurately as possible. If you believe a statement doesn't align with your belief system, then choose the option "The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views."

11. I believe in God or a higher power.

☐ Yes ☐ No

12. I feel God's love for me.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree
☐ The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views.

13. I look to God for strength, support, and guidance.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree
☐ The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views.

14. I feel God's presence.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree
☐ The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views.

15. I am grateful for all God has done for me.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree
☐ The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views.

16. God comforts and shelters me.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree
☐ The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views.

17. I've decided to place my life under God's direction.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree
☐ The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views.

18. Religious beliefs are what really lie behind my whole approach to life.

☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree
☐ The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views.

HOW DO THE 3 CORE ATTRIBUTES LINE UP WITH TRADITIONAL CHAPLAIN ROLES?

Subscale	Roles
Personal Connection to a Higher Power (PCHP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision/facilitation of religious ministry <p><i>in n=4,000+ baselining survey with SOF: >50% consider impactful</i></p>
Pursuing Meaning, Purpose, and Values (PMPV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moral leadership and advisement; character development Coaching on meaning-making, purpose <p><i>> 40/55% consider impactful</i></p>
Service and Sacrifice for the Greater Good (SSGG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support <i>esprit</i>; teambuilding; fostering unit cohesion/ corporate meaning Couple/family support Community relations; cultural sensitivity <p><i>> 46/60/?% consider impactful</i></p>

Baselining Survey

Underneath the 'roles' in each section below, there is information related to a baselining survey with active-duty service members that informed our work about chaplain roles...

...and which roles were perceived as impactful / most impactful in the lives of service members.

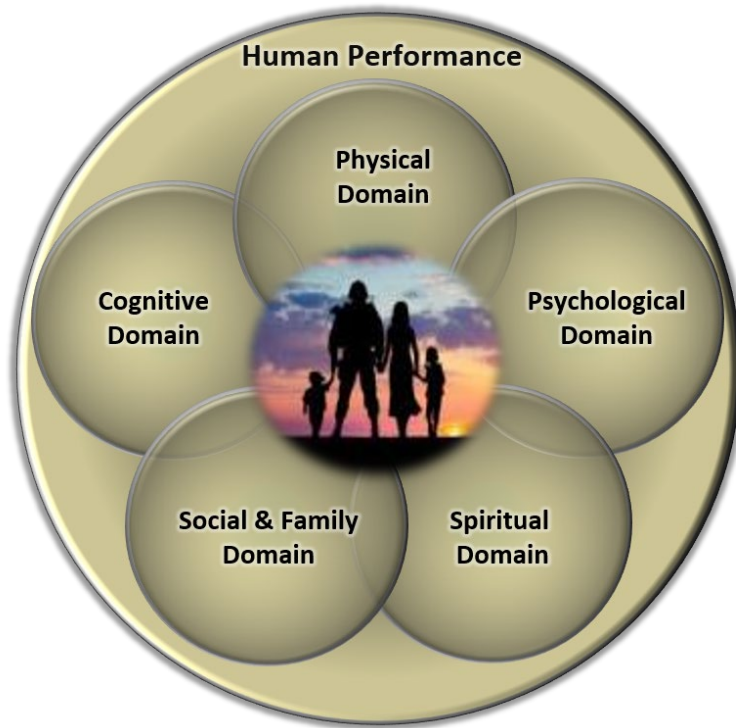
SECTION 3:

CORRELATIONS, AND INTRO TO SCORING

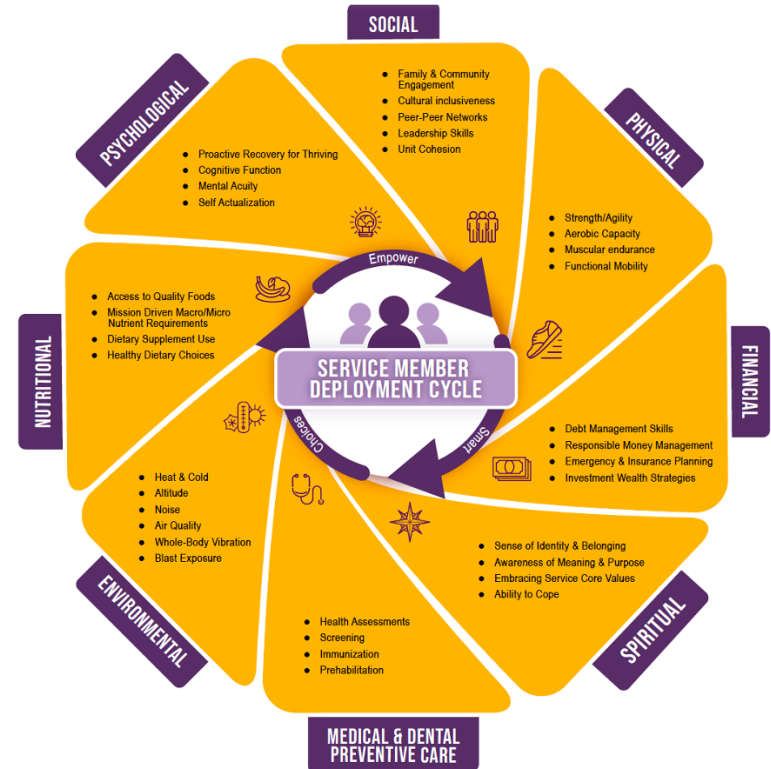
TALKING POINTS

- Owning Our Domain
- Correlations Between the 3 Core Attributes and Wider Wellness Traits
- Arrangement of Scales and Items
- Coding Likert Responses
- Recording the Mean of Each Subscale

USSOCOM POTFF READINESS MODEL



DOD TOTAL FORCE FITNESS READINESS MODEL



ADDING CORRELATIONS WITH THE 3 CORE ATTRIBUTES

Subscale	Roles	Select Correlations
Personal Connection to a Higher Power (PCHP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision/facilitation of religious ministry <p><i>in n=4,000+ baselining survey with SOF: >50% consider impactful</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religious coping ($r=0.65$) Gratitude ($r=0.54$) Stress-related growth ($r=0.43$) Family cohesion ($r=0.46$)
Pursuing Meaning, Purpose, and Values (PMPV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moral leadership and advisement; character development Coaching on meaning-making, purpose <p><i>> 40/55% consider impactful</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life-meaning ($r=0.78$) Resilience ($r=0.52$) Couple satisfaction ($r=0.42$) Perceived stress ($r= - 0.43$) Loneliness ($r= - 0.38$)
Service and Sacrifice for the Greater Good (SSGG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support <i>esprit</i>; teambuilding; fostering unit cohesion/ corporate meaning Couple/family support Community relations; cultural sensitivity <p><i>> 46/60/?% consider impactful</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adaptive reframing ($r=0.46$) Gratitude ($r=0.42$) Stress-related growth ($r=0.31$) Life-meaning ($r=0.35$) Familial Expressiveness ($r=0.27$)

AT-A-GLANCE PICTURE OF CORRELATIONS BETWEEN THE 3 CORE ATTRIBUTES AND WIDER WELLNESS

	PCHP	PMPV	SSGG
Behavior Health		+	
Quality of Life	+	++	+
Resilience	+	++	+
Openness		++	+
Social Support	+	++	+
Forgiveness	+	++	
Live Spiritual Values	++		+
Spiritual Coping	++	+	+
General Coping	+	+	+
++ = Mostly <u>strong</u> correlations; += Mostly <u>moderate</u> correlations			

PCHP = Personal Connection With A Higher Power

PMPV = Pursuit Of Meaning, Purpose & Values

SSGG = Service & Sacrifice For The Greater Good

ON SCORING (AN INTRODUCTION)

Scoring

For profiling, sub-scales should be scored by first coding the response options, such that:

- Strongly disagree = 1
- Disagree = 2
- Neutral = 3
- Agree = 4
- Strongly agree = 5

Averaging

Each sub-scale should be averaged separately; after this, the sub-scales may be averaged together. *On the printable sheets, PMPV items are 1, 3, 4, 6, 10. SSGG items are 2, 5, 7, 8, 9.*

Conclusions across a sample, we will use percentile group scores from the initial SSFS data sets for standardization (n=1,696; see table). Movement to a higher percentile group category should be **significant quantitative growth in spiritual readiness**

Suggestions for Sequential Scaling by Group

Unit check-ins and check-outs; pre- and post- deployment batteries; annual stand-downs

Classifying Scores

The table on the right represents the scores of 1,696 people (these are taken from CHAMP’s initial data sets). An average score below the 30th percentile group category for any subscale could be considered a ‘lower score,’ indicating ample room for growth. Accordingly, an average score above the 30th percentile group category for any subscale could be considered a ‘higher score,’ indicating the need for a readiness focus on both maintenance and growth.

SSGG, percentile group	
10%	3.08
20%	3.44
30%	3.67
40%	3.85
50%	3.99
60%	4.14
70%	4.30
80%	4.51
90%	4.78

SECTION 4:

MORE SCORING BASICS

TALKING POINTS

- Practice for Scoring
- Should We Combine the Means?
- What Are 'Higher' and 'Lower' Scores?
- Bridging a Score to Individual Coaching
- Encouraging Respondents to Keep Records for Later Comparisons

ANOTHER LOOK AT THE SCALE SHEETS (FOR PRACTICE)

SOCOM Spiritual Fitness Scale (SSFS)

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14. I feel God's presence.

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☐ The assumptions behind this question aren't consistent with my world views.

PMPV items are 1, 3, 4, 6, 10.

MORE ON SCORING (PART B)

Change Scores

Change scores represent the difference between ‘before’ and ‘after’ scores on a test taken twice. If an operator scores a 3.85 on the SSGG subscale *before* deployment, and then scores a 3.44 on the SSGG subscale *after* deployment, his change score would be -0.41 (in which case, referring to the table to the right, he would have dipped 20 percentile points during the deployment).

Similarly, say that operator sits in on a chaplain-led character training over 3 weeks. He marks his ‘before training’ score on the PMPV scale at 3.91 and marks his ‘after training’ score on the PMPV scale at 4.51. His change score is +0.60, and this means he will have risen 30 percentile points.

Standards for Demonstrating Growth

Because there are statistical problems with using individual change scores to develop solid conclusions across a sample, we will once again use percentile group scores from the initial SSFS data sets for standardization (see the table to the left, which is the same as the one on page 10). Movement to a higher percentile group category should certainly be considered **significant quantitative growth in spiritual readiness**.

Suggestions for Sequential (Before-and-After) Scaling

Unit check-ins and check-outs; pre- and post-deployment batteries; annual stand-downs.

Conclusions across a sample, we will use percentile group scores from the initial SSFS data sets for standardization (n=1,696; see table). Movement to a higher percentile group category should be **significant quantitative growth in spiritual readiness**

Suggestions for Sequential Scaling by Group

Unit check-ins and check-outs; pre- and post- deployment batteries; annual stand-downs

10%	3.08
20%	3.44
30%	3.67
40%	3.85
50%	3.99
60%	4.14
70%	4.30
80%	4.51
90%	4.78

SECTION 5:

GROUP SCORING & SEQUENTIAL SCORING

TALKING POINTS

- Administration Advice, or How to Get the Best Scale Results
- Auditorium Example
- Pre/Post-Deployment (or Any Kind of Sequential) Scaling
- Finding the Change Score
- (Very Brief) Intro to Visualization

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.

PCHP, percentile group	Mean
10%	2.84
20%	3.30
30%	3.69
40%	3.95
50%	4.19
60%	4.50
70%	4.73
80%	4.89
90%	5.00

PMPV, percentile group	Mean
10%	2.69
20%	3.14
30%	3.46
40%	3.73
50%	3.91
60%	4.07
70%	4.26
80%	4.51
90%	4.82

SSGG, percentile group	Mean
10%	3.08
20%	3.44
30%	3.67
40%	3.85
50%	3.99
60%	4.14
70%	4.30
80%	4.51
90%	4.78

**Persuit of Meaning,
Purpose & Values
(PMPV)**

Questions: 1|3|4|6|10

Score: _____

Adaptive Reframing
Familial Expressiveness
Social Support
Openness

**Service & Sacrifice for the
Greater Good
(SSGG)**

Questions: 2|5|7|8|9

Score: _____

Quality of Life
Resilience
Couple Satisfaction
Loneliness (-)

**Personal Connection with
A Higher Power
(PCHP)**

Questions: 11|12|13|14|15|16|17

Score: _____

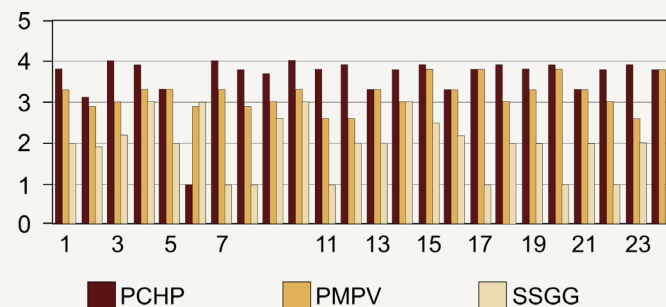
Coping
Gratitude
Stress-Related Growth
Family Cohesion

STORING AND VISUALIZING DATA ABOUT CHANGE

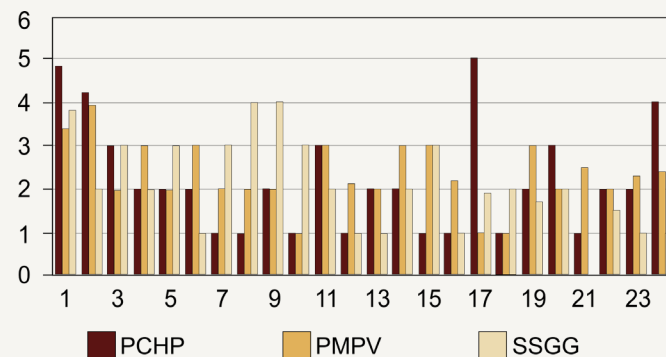
INPUTTING AND STORING SFS SCORES

- Refrain from collecting PII unless you have a secure data management plan that is pre-approved by your leadership (!)
- Even without PII, group pre-and-post deployment scores can be analyzed for trends, and so too can check-in and check-out scores, by year or quarter.
- Anyone can learn to transform simple spreadsheet entries to colorful charts in MS Excel (see [support.microsoft.com's create-a-chart-from-start-to-finish tutorial](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/create-a-chart-from-start-to-finish-tutorial)). Charts grab the attention of leaders and help them value your work.
- Operators and other members can be encouraged to keep snapshots of their scores on their phones, for later before-and-after comparisons or to set up coaching sessions.
- CHAMP suggests that, whenever possible, the SFS be administered by a chaplain, in a relational setting (ensures the highest quality of responses).

SAMPLE CHARTS FROM UNIT PRE- AND- POST- DEPLOYMENT SFS PROFILES



Pre/Post-Deployment Scores
Team Z



PCHP = Personal Connection With A Higher Power
PMPV = Pursuit Of Meaning, Purpose & Values
SSGG = Service & Sacrifice For The Greater Good



SECTION 6:

SCORING BY SUBSCALE & INTRODUCING A QUALITATIVE TOOL

TALKING POINTS

- Isolated Scoring by Subscale
- Creating and Using ‘Hasty Sheets’ with Groups and Individuals
- Introducing the ‘Grid,’ or the SPCG
- The Importance of Qualitative and Quantitative Interface

HASTY SCORING SHEETS BY SUBSCALE

WHEN SHOULD I USE A HASTY SHEET?

- When trying to capture growth related to a specific program (for instance, you might use a PMPV Hasty Sheet at the end of an ethics training, or an SSGG Hasty Sheet at the end of a training on trust/team-building).
- When trying to capture growth related to a specific coaching/counseling topic (you might use a PCHP Hasty Sheet after a few weeks of coaching with a member on a topic related to Divine forgiveness).

HOW DO I USE A HASTY SHEET?

- Select a single subscale which best captures the focus of the coaching session or program offering.
- Extend to a 10-point, top-and-bottom 'continuum' format without descriptors (see example to the right). 'Change scores' in the 10-point format are divided by 2, to compare with scores in the 5-point format.
- Respondents hastily mark 'before' and 'after' scores for each question.

SAMPLE SUBSCALE HASTY SCORING SHEET (PMPV)

I know what my life is about.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

I have been able to find a sense of meaning in my life.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

Looking at my life as a whole, things seem clear to me.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

I have a core of beliefs and values that give my life meaning and a sense of purpose.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

I am able to find meaning and purpose in my everyday experiences.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9-----10

USING THE GRID

- We've had success using the Grid as a group SFS profiling tool *without needing to pass out the scale sheets*. Here's how it works...
- Pass out a printed copy of the Grid (see the table to the right). Ask the members of the group to turn the page over to the blank side, and number 1-17.
- Slowly ask Questions 1-10, directing the members to answer each Q on a Scale from 1-10. Once that's done, have the members get out their phones, average their scores for 1, 3, 4, 6 and 10 (those are the PMPV items). Discuss the meaning of the PMPV subscale, and why it is important.
- When you've explained PMPV, have them average 2, 5, 7, 8 and 9 (the SSGG items). Discuss the importance of the SSGG subscale.
- Last, have them score and average the PCHP subscale, and talk about its importance.
- Finally, have them flip the sheet back over to the side with the Grid, ask them to input their scores under each trait on the left-most column (dividing by 2, so they will have a number from 1-5!), and then ask them to fill out the other columns.
- Once this is complete, they can take a photo for later review, and pass in the sheets to you.

SSFS QUALITATIVE COMPANION TOOL: SPIRITUALITY & PERFORMANCE COACHING GRID (SPCG)

Scales	Notes on Commitment & Connection Related to the 3 Core Attributes			Goals to Maintain or Strengthen Spiritual Commitments
	How has my commitment to this attribute changed in the past 6-18 months?	Which Factors might help me strengthen my commitment to this attribute?	Which factors might threaten my ability to maintain commitment to this attribute?	
PMPV				
SSGG				
PCHP				

PMPV = Pursuit Of Meaning, Purpose & Values

SSGG = Service & Sacrifice For The Greater Good

PCHP = Personal Connection With A Higher Power

SECTION 7:

SPIRITUAL READINESS PROGRAM PLANNING

TALKING POINTS

- Consider Current Programs and Services Through the Lens of the Core Attributes
- Consider Enterprise Priorities; Articulate E-B Spiritual Intersections with Leaders
- Don't Be Afraid of Employing Focus Groups During Pre-Assessment
- A Word on Sampling
- Launch Initiatives With Clear Value Propositions (Quantified Growth in E-B Attributes)
- Measure Growth to Demonstrate Return on Investment
- Use Correlations to Show Impact in the Overlapping Areas of Performance.

GETTING STARTED

- Consider your current programming and services in light of the 3 Core Attributes.
- Align your work with the 3 Core Attributes, and articulate to key leaders that your work is orientation to a clear evidence base.
- Find ways to include metrics in your work, i.e. around deployment cycles, intake and out-take, etc.
- Work creatively with your IT colleagues to develop tools that allow you (and your leaders) to picture data and keep track of trends.
- Consider current enterprise needs which intersect with the Core Attributes.
- Recruit samples within your population to provide input on your programs and services on a regular basis. This can work for pre-assessment (before developing programs) and also for continuous assessment. Consider a 90-minute lunch/focus-group format – and provide lunch if possible! Even a 7 or 8% sample of your total population can provide very powerful input.

EVIDENCE-BASED SPIRITUAL PERFORMANCE PROGRAM LIFE-CYCLE



INTERESTED IN FURTHER INFORMATION?

Contact: HPRC@usuhs.edu

Alexander DW, Deuster P. Aligning and Assessing Core Attributes of Spiritual Fitness for Optimizing Human Performance.

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Alexander DW, Abulhawa Z, Kazman J. The SOCOM Spiritual Fitness Scale: Measuring "Vertical" and "Horizontal" Spirituality in the Human Performance Domain.

J Pastoral Care Counsel. 2020; 74(4): 269-279.

Alexander DW. Applications of the SOCOM Spiritual Fitness Scale: Program Development and Tailored Coaching for Optimized Performance.

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