VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE

# The Standard.

*Set The Standard. The Rest Will Fall In Line.*

A Publication of the VMI Cadet Peer Educators

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## Be sure to Catch Your ZZZzzz's!

You are sitting in class and you think you are fully engaged, when all of a sudden you start blinking a lot. You can hear the teacher talking, but you slowly start seeing the inside of your eyelids –not the board! Your head starts to bob and the next thing you know you are out cold! Think about it, how much sleep are you really getting? Perhaps you're not necessarily sleeping because you're bored to death in class, but rather you are sleep deprived. Sleep hygiene plays a vital role in health, as well as your success as a Keydet.

As a VMI cadet, you may believe it is hard to find time to sleep due to your demanding schedule. It is recommended that the average person should get seven to nine hours of sleep daily! Lack of sleep can really take its toll on the body.

Sleep is very beneficial for healthy bodies. Getting sufficient amounts of sleep helps relieve stress and puts the mind at ease. If a person lacks sleep, it can completely affect their mood. Sleep deprivation can cause anger, frustration, and depression. Lack of sleep can cause forgetfulness, as well as can induce sleep disorders. Eye twitching and weight gain are other negative effects of not getting enough sleep. People tend to overeat when they do not get enough sleep. What type of food is most likely available at two o' clock in the morning? – junk food! How can we PT by eating all that junk? **How can we PT being tired in general?**

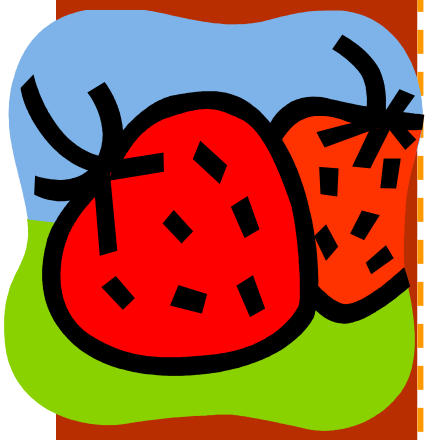
There are two types of tired: there is "physical exhaustion" which comes from physical excursion, and there is "exhaustion" resulting from a lack of sleep. These two can be intertwined. If you are tired from a lack of sleep, this will affect the rate at which your body becomes "physically exhausted." Essentially one can cause the other.

**Being at such a demanding college means we need to find time for ourselves as well as our studies and military duties. Taking care of ourselves includes being sure we get enough sleep.**

There will always be the opportunity to get rest, but it is up to YOU to be able to take advantage of that time. If you are finding it hard to get sleep throughout the semester, try taking small naps (max of 20 minutes) in between classes. Also, take advantage of the weekends if you really need the sleep! If you find that you are lacking sleep throughout the week, try getting ahead on homework in order to hit the hay before taps, or directly at that time. Sleep hygiene is very important to our health and sleep deprivation can have seriously negative consequences.

## What is CPE? By Mary Schriver

The Cadet Peer Educators (CPE) are a group of current VMI Cadets who have been trained and certified through a nationally recognized organization, the Bacchus Network™. The Bacchus Network offers a certified Peer Education program. It is a university and community based network focusing on health and safety. The mission of the Bacchus Network™ is to actively promote healthy and safe lifestyle decisions regarding alcohol abuse, tobacco use, illegal drug use, unhealthy sexual practices and other high-risk behaviors. **Cadet Peer Educators organize programs and events throughout the year to raise awareness of different issues to the Corps, particularly concerning mental health and healthy decisions.** CPEs



**Did you know…**

**Strawberries are the Only fruit with seeds On the outside!**

"In order to make it through VMI, stress management is key!"

# What Is CPE Contd.

serve as effective role models by promoting Corps wide knowledge and skills in health and wellness topics. CPE members will also inform fellow cadets about resources available to them on Post.

**This year each company was assigned a CPE member to be their CPE representative.** This is to help with communication between the Corps of cadets and the CPE group. (See Fig.1)

The mission of CPE is not to tell the CORPS what is right and wrong, but rather **equip cadets with the tools they need to make healthy life decisions throughout their cadetship and their lives after VMI.**

[Fig. 1 is a list of the CPE members and the different companies they represent.]

| CPE Member: | |
|---|---|
| Sammy Alpert | A |
| Kayla Johnson | B |
| Heather Haag | C |
| Jordan Bailey | D |
| Alexis Wissinger | E |
| Mary Schriver | F |
| Molly Andoe | G |
| Tyler Brickles | H |
| Jonathon Hampton | Bd |

# Stress Management By Molly Andoe

Now that classes are in full swing the work will soon start to pile up. Professors are assigning projects and beginning to test our knowledge. **The effects of these demands paired with VMI duties can easily become overwhelming and increase our stress levels.**

In order to make it through VMI, stress management is key! With as many responsibilities and expectations that are placed upon us, we are still expected to maintain efficiency. Tools to manage the amount of stress we experience at the Institute are vital to our over-all performance.

Three tools within the corps that are effective and help improve our time management are **preparation**, **communication**, and **fitness**. Preparation is the foundation of good time management when being assigned a new task, the first thing to do is develop a plan. A solid outline for the task can relieve a lot of unnecessary stress, allowing you to focus on your other tasks. **Once you have made a plan, the next step is to put it into action**. This means that procrastination should not be a repeated occurrence. It only leads to higher stress levels.

The next tool is **communication**. An advantage of a small school like VMI is that many cadets take the same courses and have similar assignments. Try collaborating with other cadets in your classes on how they are managing assignments on top of their other duties. This is another efficient way to relieve stress. They may be able to help find something in your schedule that you can improve on, or they can advise you on some of the tools that help them through the heavy workload.

The final tool for stress management is to **exercise**. Fitness and health at VMI should already be incorporated into our daily lives. Therefore, when things begin to overwhelm you, one of the best things to do is to go for a short run or a quick lift at the gym. **Supplementing exercise with a healthy diet can also help in reducing stress.** Maintaining a healthy lifestyle allows your body to focus during stressful times, which are inevitable here at VMI. The endorphins that are released during a good workout can create a more *stable and positive mindset* for the tasks ahead.

## Stress at VMI is manageable:

Preparation, communication, and fitness are three easy ways to lighten your stress load. Try to practice these before the stressors of the VMI lifestyle begin to pile up. This will hopefully keep your workload and stress levels from spiraling out of control.