

**CAPP 80-4**

**3 April 2020**

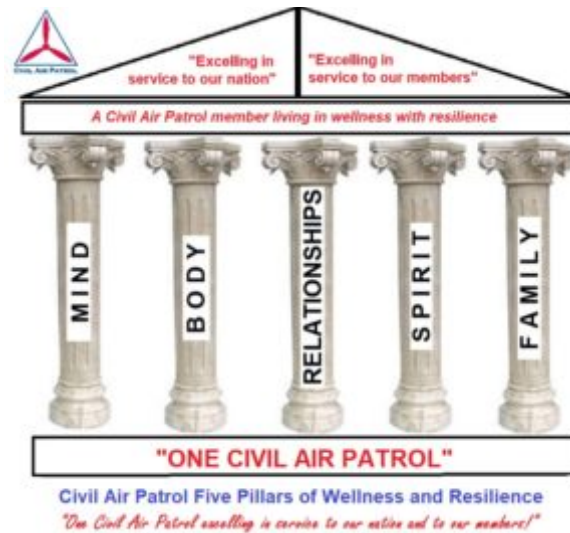
**WELLNESS AND RESILIENCE:**

**Handbook for the  
Five Pillars of Wellness and Resilience**



## INTRODUCTION

On 1 September 2018, as part of its support of National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, the Civil Air Patrol adopted the "Five-Pillars of Wellness and Resilience" to promote living in "wellness" and having good habits that allow all members to call on their particular sources of strength to gain and maintain resiliency during times of stress.



**The five pillars are the focus areas for the model of "Wellness and Resilience" for the Civil Air Patrol.**

In response to several events that came from personal crises, the National Commander created a task force with representatives from operations, cadet programs, the chaplaincy, health services, and the peer support program, to make suggestions that point the way towards "excelling in service to" the most important asset in the organization – its members.

At the national meeting in 2018, CAP's leadership adopted the **Five Pillars of Wellness and Resilience**, a comprehensive model to provide "personal excellence" in CAP and life.

***"The five pillars are Mind, Body, Relationships, Spirit, and Family. They represent the focus areas that contribute to our personal level of "wellness." This personal wellness enables us to operate at our best, sustaining us during times of stress and making us resilient to the difficulties of life. This helps us to be successful as CAP Volunteer Airmen."***  
***(Maj. Gen. Mark Smith)***

CAP membership is a diverse population that ranges in ages from 12 to 100 years old. To help define each pillar, four actions or "habits" will guide the member on the right path. While the basic habits in each pillar will be consistent throughout life, the emphases may change during different stages.

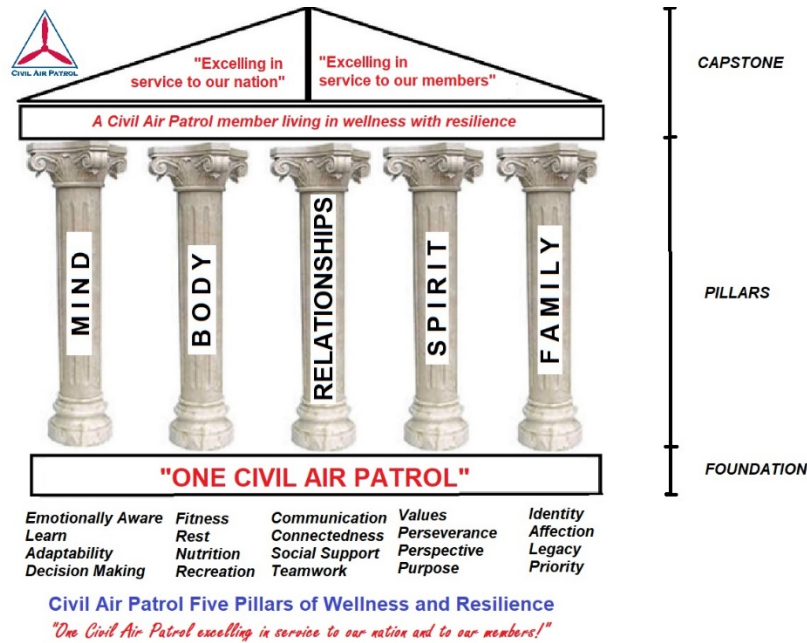
This handbook is intended to introduce CAP leaders, trainers and Auxiliary Airmen at all levels to the concept of the model, define its scope, and demonstrate some applications of the paradigm to support the membership. At the end of this document there is a discussion of how the Five Pillars model can support the four core values of Civil Air Patrol, which are important for the Pillar of Spirit.

### **THE CAP FIVE PILLARS OF WELLNESS AND RESILIENCE**

The Civil Air Patrol Five Pillars of Wellness and Resilience model is visually simple to facilitate memorization and integration. All Airmen should be able to draw the model after their initial Wingman course or Level I training.

The model's graphic begins on the bottom where the **Foundation** is "One Civil Air Patrol." Membership in CAP brings everyone together. The **Five Pillars** lift the individual members to personal wellness, which is the best place to achieve "excellence." Four habits help target the member's attention and behaviors within each Pillar. When members live in wellness, the organization can carry the "**CAPstone**" of excellent service to the nation and fellow members.

The model created in 2018 uses the current national commander's credo for the organization under his leadership. That is, "One Civil Air Patrol, excelling in service to our nation and our members." While that statement is applicable in the model and the graphics of this handbook, in no way is the Five Pillars of Wellness and Resilience model dependent upon those particular words. The CAPstone missions can change with commanders, but the strengths of CAP members do not change. This handbook and the model graphics will evolve with individual leaders. The service of CAP membership is timeless.



The five pillars, five “systems,” that do the work and their defining habits are:

**MIND** – emotionally aware, learning, adaptability, and decision-making.

**BODY** – physical fitness, rest, nutrition and recreation.

**RELATIONSHIPS** – communications, connections, social support, and teamwork.

**SPIRIT** – values, perseverance, perspective, and purpose.

**FAMILY** – identity, affection, legacy, and priorities.

## FIVE PILLARS

### 1. Pillar of MIND

All Auxiliary Airmen are expected to look for their mental strengths during times of difficulties and stress. There are four key habits where individuals can grow towards resiliency.

**Emotional Awareness** is important to all members of CAP. Cadets need to know what they are feeling and practice responding correctly to those emotions. Seniors need to be aware of their feelings since they are important indicators of stress.

**Learning** is important. Being a lifelong learner is one of the most important factors to success in all endeavors. Civil Air Patrol cadets and seniors can experience and learn skills not available elsewhere. As a member ages, the knowledge that they acquire will allow them to understand

their situations, devise successful ways ahead, and provide information to use to serve others and themselves.

***“Man’s Flight Through Life is Sustained by the Power of His Knowledge.” – Austin Miller***

**Adaptability** supports a member during changing life situations. “Change,” any change whether good or bad, elicits a response and that is the very definition of stress. Having the ability to “let things go” when they are not in one’s control makes life better when in a stressful situation.

**Decision making** is an important skill for leadership in the dynamic world of emergency services and cadet programs. During stress and crisis, maintaining the ability to make decisions is essential. Making a decision, any decision, can begin the journey back to wellness.

## **2. Pillar of BODY:**

While every pillar in the model is a source of “personal strength,” it is the Pillar of Body that provides the literal strength to thrive.

**Fitness** achieved by exercise is important for stress reduction and to feel better about oneself.

***“Physical fitness is not only one of the most important keys to a healthy body, it is the basis of dynamic and creative intellectual activity.” -- John F. Kennedy***

**Rest** and sleep are critical. There are many experts that consider this the most important source of strength of all the emphasis areas.

**Nutrition** is critical for growth, aging and coping. Eat well.

**Recreation** (playtime) is important for everyone. Every member must be given, and must take, time for themselves.

## **3. Pillar of RELATIONSHIPS:**

CAP is people-based and depends on communication, connectedness, support, and teamwork. No one should be a loner. Social support is critical to all members. Everyone needs a “wingman.” This should be one of the first things “issued” to every new recruit, whether cadet or senior member, and retained for the entire time they are in Civil Air Patrol.

**Communication** can only happen when individuals reach out to others. The ability to share what is gleaned by personal emotional awareness is a critical skill.

***“Communication - the human connection - is the key to personal and career success.” -- Paul J. Meyer***

**Connectedness** is the ability to trust others in a way that lets them see our needs and concerns.

**Social support** is having at least one individual in their life that they know they can reach out to and receive attention and support when in a weak position or in a crisis.

**Teamwork** is the glue that allows the tasks and missions of the Civil Air Patrol to be accomplished in an efficient manner. There is no CAP mission that wouldn't achieve better results with additional eyes to watch and hands to help.

#### **4. Pillar of SPIRIT:**

**Values** define what someone stands for. One of the most important things members can do is to create a set of values that they will commit to live by no matter what happens. These values should define what conduct and behaviors are most important to their self-identity and the foundation of their moral code of conduct. This is their "line in the sand."

**Perseverance**, which is sometimes referred to as “grit” is one of the most sought-after qualities by those looking for help and employees. “Don't give up!”

***“Life is not easy for any of us. But what of that? We must have perseverance and above all confidence in ourselves. We must believe that we are gifted for something and that this thing must be attained.” -- Marie Curie***

What's the member's **perspective**? When change happens in their life is it "the end" or "a new door is about to be opened?" Are hardships that they encounter "curses" or "chances to grow?" How members view the difficulty and stress, along with their willingness to reach out for help, can determine how successfully they weather the issue.

Find meaning and **purpose** to life. There are five questions to answer. These questions are called the “perennial questions” to a full life and they are:

***Who am I? Where did I come from? Where am I going? How shall I live? Why?***

## 5. Pillar of FAMILY:

As a volunteer organization with a large youth program, there is no pillar more important to the success of all the missions than the pillar of family. While the definition of “family” can be unique to every individual, it is critical that there exists a pillar that is the basis for nurturing.

For cadets as it is for all youth, “family” is the source of their values, culture and commitment to service. The cadet program only has its cadets for a few hours every week. For most cadets, family is where the youngest members go for most of their needs in all the pillars. For these cadets, having a robust partnership with cadet parents is critical to the success of this vital CAP mission. However, there are many testimonials of a cadet’s greatest impact being made by the CAP cadet program, and not their biological family. For the purposes of resilience and wellness, “family” is the group of people where one finds the most comfort, nurturing and emotional support.

CAP senior members have different perspectives on family. Like all responders, if one’s family is not taken care of first, there is degraded mission effectiveness. Without the support of families, the volunteer service would not get done. Every senior member needs to ensure that their priorities are to the family first so that they can serve effectively. Since emergency call outs can come at inconvenient times, there needs to be a history of positive experiences to allow an occasional event that mandates a sacrifice. All units need to acknowledge this critical support that makes missions possible.

It is through their families that Auxiliary Airmen get their first sense of an **identity** to something that is bigger than themselves.

Families are the wells of nurture and **affection** that comfort. Appropriate touch is still an important healer.

***“Family and friendships are two of the greatest facilitators of happiness.” -- John C. Maxwell***

In the generations that come before and that follow, there is a **legacy** established that goes beyond a single lifetime.

The relationship of a CAP member to their family can establish the **priorities** in life that allow the volunteer service that is the lifeblood for all CAP activities and missions.

## APPLICATIONS

### 1. Suicide Prevention:

During the national character development lessons of September 2018, the goal was to present the Five Pillars model to all cadets to provide a toolkit of resources that they can draw upon during times of stress and crisis. Each cadet was asked to discuss with their peers, ways in which the Civil Air Patrol or other activities in their life were providing for and supporting the emphasis areas for each of the five pillars. Cadets had to write down at least one new activity that they will commit to doing within each pillar. By sharing the new activity within a small peer group, cadets assume accountability for each other and are expected to “check in” periodically on their success.

### 2. Promote habits that lead to general wellness and health

There is an abundance of studies that document the success of focusing on “wellness” rather than recovery. The major benefits for CAP include:

- a. Promoting good behaviors in members, especially cadets who will gain “lifetime” benefits
- b. Decrease behaviors that are considered “risky” and support Drug Demand Reduction goals
- c. Decrease costs of health for membership
- d. Improve the available time for volunteer activities
- e. Allow members to be more productive while serving
- f. Build and maintain member and unit morale and teamwork

## CONCLUSION

The Five Pillars of Wellness and Resilience is a framework and model that is suggested for all members of the Civil Air Patrol. It is used to describe the skills needed to live in a position of personal excellence. It is while living in excellence that members are in the best place to be able to meet the demands of serving the missions of the organization, and able to withstand any stress in life.

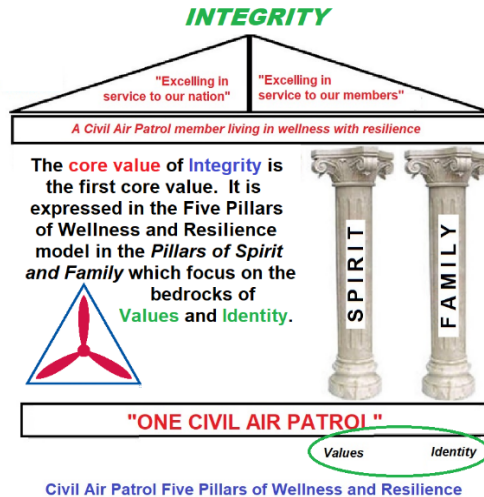
All Auxiliary Airmen of CAP should be able to recite the five pillars: Mind, Body, Relationships, Spirit, and Family. Every member should be able to perform a “self-check” that determines their fitness in each pillar. It is critical that every member knows where and how to get assistance if there is an area in their life that cannot be the source of strength during a crisis.

Only when every member is strong and resilient, is the organization in a position to truly be, “One Civil Air Patrol, excelling in service our nation and to our members.”



## FIVE PILLARS AND THE CAP CORE VALUES

The four core values of Civil Air Patrol are also expressed in the Five Pillars model.



***Integrity is found in the Pillars of Spirit and Family***

**Integrity** is the first core value. It is having a solid bedrock of personal standards that define the conduct and behaviors for every activity and relationship in Civil Air Patrol and in life. This core value is shown in the Pillars of Spirit and Family which focus on personal values and identity.



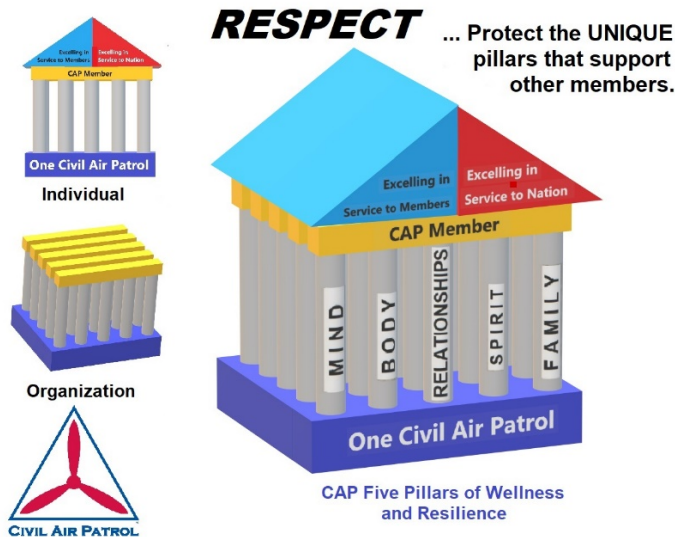
***Volunteer Service is found in the Pillar of Spirit.***

**Volunteer Service** is another core value of CAP. This value finds its home in the Pillar of Spirit which focuses on Values and Purpose. Service is the reason that men and women with courage and patriotism created CAP in 1941.



***Excellence is living with all five pillars strong in all areas of emphasis***

**Excellence** is the third core value. It is a quality that every member can achieve when they are firmly supported by all five pillars in their life. When every individual is fully supported, Civil Air Patrol members together are best able to hold up and carry the missions of the organization.



***Individual members have their own pillars – respect is guarding them***

**Respect** is a core value of CAP. That value is summarized in this diagram of the new "Five Pillars of Wellness and Resilience" which shows the focus areas that provide well-being to all members. When someone's pillars are threatened, there is a loss of that person's mental, physical, social, spiritual and familial strengths. We must guard our words and actions to not damage another person's pillars. This is respect.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

### **Pillars of Wellness**

Psychological Health Program  
National Guard Bureau

<https://www.jointservicesupport.org/PHP/Wellness.aspx>

### **Eleven Skills**

Wingman Online – Comprehensive Fitness Training  
United States Air Force

<http://www.wingmanonline.org/Training/11-Skills>

### **Resiliency**

Civil Air Patrol - Operations

<https://www.gocivilairpatrol.com/programs/emergency-services/critical-incident-stress-management-cism--resiliency>

### **Spiritual Resiliency**

Civil Air Patrol – Chaplain Corps

<https://capchaplain.com/resiliency/>

### **Five Pillars of Wellness and Resilience**

Civil Air Patrol

<https://capchaplain.com/resources/wellness/>

**For more information on this project, contact:**

**5Pillars@hc.cap.gov**