RW360™ | Be a Peacemaker
Transform Your Relationships™

Bringing Relational Wisdom Into the Military

rw360.org/sa-military

FREE DOWNLOAD

WIN THE NEXT WAR:
HOW TO BUILD A FORCE THAT CANNOT BE BROKEN
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Challenge

- The U.S. faces **peer adversaries** (Russia & China) and growing threats (Iran & DPRK).
- Tomorrow's wars will be won less by firepower and technology and more by **resilient, emotionally intelligent teams**.
- Millennials & Gen Z dominate today's force, yet many enter service with **relational skill gaps** (tech dependence, social isolation).
- These deficits drive **conflict, divorce, addiction, sexual assault, PTSD, and suicide—** directly weakening readiness and retention.

The Cost

- **21,000+ military divorces annually**.
- **$8,317 lost per divorcing service member per year** (absenteeism, lost focus, illness).
- **$175M+ annual cost to DoD** from divorce-related stress.
- **Strained families** = lower recruiting & retention, weakening the fighting force.

The Solution: Relational Wisdom Training

A values-based form of emotional intelligence tailored for the force.

- **Proactive –** Prevents trauma before it begins (suicide, assault, addiction, divorce).
- **Personal –** Daily, practical tools for peer-to-peer support (even over a beer after work).
- **Values-Driven –** Builds moral clarity and resilience with a worldview and core values.
- **Family-Friendly –** Extends to spouses & children, strengthening homes and boosting long-term service support.

The Benefits

- **Stronger marriages and families** reduce the 3% annual military divorce rate.
- **Healthier homes** = more focused, productive service members.
- **Proven ROI:** Corporate studies show **$1.50–$6.85 return per $1 invested** in relational wellness.
- **Greater resilience** in the **cognitive and relational domains** where adversaries cannot compete.

Bottom Line

Relational wisdom training builds warriors and families who are emotionally intelligent, resilient and united—reducing costs, strengthening retention, and multiplying combat readiness.

The U.S. military cannot afford to fight tomorrow's wars with yesterday's relational weaknesses.

RELATIONAL WISDOM® IN THE MILITARY

PDF with live links available at rw360.org/military

1. OVERVIEW

When military personnel seek out a chaplain or religious affairs personnel, it's often because of relational problems at home, in their unit or in their chain of command. These problems are often magnified by the fact that many individuals have never learned how to read and manage their own emotions or the emotions of the people around them. As a result, they are unaware of how emotions are clouding their judgment, aggravating misunderstandings and triggering decisions that reduce military readiness and resilience, damage family bonds and contribute to the incidence of conflict, divorce, alcohol and drug abuse, sexual assault, PTSD and suicide among military personnel.

Relational Wisdom is an enhanced form of emotional intelligence that can help military personnel navigate relational challenges, thereby strengthening combat readiness and resiliency as well as family bonds. When individuals are facing relational challenges, they can be encouraged to use relational wisdom skills to manage their emotions, read others accurately, avoid impulsive reactions, communicate constructively and resolve conflicts in a way that reduces stress and builds trust, respect and unit cohesiveness.

Better yet, chaplains, religious affairs personnel and other commanders can teach these relational principles ***proactively*** within their units, helping military personnel ***and their families*** to develop relational skills that enable them to ***get upstream of conflict*** and experience stronger and more productive relationships, both professionally and personally. These skills include self-awareness and self-discipline, empathy, communication, anger management, conflict resolution, interest-based negotiation and emotional resilience.

Please see Appendix 1 for a real-life example of how a chaplain and religious affairs airman teamed up to teach this material to over 200 officers and airmen on their base.

2. APPROVED FOR BUILDING STRONG AND READY TEAMS PROGRAM

Relational wisdom training has been used for over a decade in all branches of the U.S. military by chaplains and other personnel. In 2025, the U.S. Army approved this training for its Building Strong and Ready Teams program and the U.S. Air Force approved it for its Strong Bonds program. The U.S. Navy is currently evaluating this training for use in their Strong Bonds and CREDO Programs.

3. AVAILABLE IN FAITH-BASED AND VALUES-BASED FORMATS

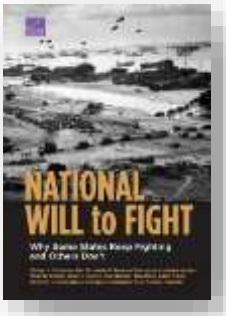
Relational wisdom training is available in two formats. Our faith-based (Christian) resources are being used for personal study and group teaching in churches across the denominational spectrum, as well in military chapels and Sunday school classes.

Our values-based (secular) resources are compatible with all worldviews and faiths and are consistent with the requirements of 10 USC §1789 (Chaplain-Led Programs: Authorized Support). Therefore, this training may often be paid for with funds available through the Office of the Chief of Chaplains.

4. CHALLENGES TO MILITARY READINESS AND RESILIENCE

Throughout its history, the U.S. military has recognized that it must contend not only with external enemies and threats, but also with internal weaknesses that undermine its ability to defend our nation.

a. Facing an Existential Challenge



The U.S. faces two technological and nuclear peer adversaries who are prepared to fight wars of attrition: Russia and the People's Republic of China (PRC). Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) are also growing in capability and capacity. To counter these threats, the U.S. and its Allies must capitalize on our unique Western advantages of values-driven ingenuity, innovation, initiative, interoperability and teamwork – all of which are in the ***cognitive domain*** and strengthen the single most important factor in war: ***the will to fight***.[1] Thus, the next war will not be won with the biggest gun or best technology but by the ***most emotionally intelligent and resilient force*** that understands and engages itself and its enemies through the lens of ***unifying core values***.

b. Undeveloped Recruits and Relational Deficiencies

Millennials dominate the Joint Force and Gen Z fills the lower ranks. Both generations are vulnerable to undeveloped character, morality and emotional resilience. They often enter military service without a defined worldview and with relational skill deficits due to technology-dependence, social media and social isolation. These deficits are often magnified by the fact that many individuals have never learned how to read and manage their own emotions or the emotions of the people around them (see Raising Emotionally Stunted Boys) or by the fact that their ascent in authority has impaired their capacity for empathy. As a result, military relationships and unit cohesion are often weakened by conflict, divorce, alcohol and drug abuse, sexual assault, PTSD and suicide.

c. Financial, Relational and Recruiting Costs

Relational skill deficits can trigger major financial consequences. The annual divorce rate in the U.S. military is over 21,000 divorces per year. According to one corporate study, the average cost to an organization for divorcing employees is $8,317 per employee per year due to reduced concentration, absenteeism, time off for court dates and reduced staff engagement. Couples going through divorce are also 240% more likely to experience depression, 34% more likely to experience serious heart trouble and 400% more likely to abuse alcohol. This data indicates that divorces may be costing the U.S. military over **$175M per year.** Relational stress on families also magnifies the challenge of recruiting and retaining dedicated personnel, which magnifies the expense of maintaining an effective fighting force.

As explained below, relational wisdom training is uniquely designed to overcome many of these potential weaknesses.

[1] The National Will to Fight: Why Some States Keep Fighting and Others Don't (Rand Corp. 2018).

5. BUILDING SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Dr. Lisa Miller, a consultant who is widely respected throughout the U.S. military, has shown that "When it comes to military resilience, the deepest source of renewal, revival and persistence is the ***spiritual core***…. If you want someone who persists and has grit and determination, build the spiritual core. That allows us to perform past our normal capacities when we are feeling tired and defeated and shattered."[2]

Dr. Miller points out that when one soldier's spiritual core is strengthened, it allows the entire team to be strengthened as well. "Our country is built on spiritual values…. In the deep DNA of the Army is the preservation of spiritual freedom — which builds purpose and persistence and teamwork."

What if a person is not religious? Can they still build their spiritual core? According to Miller, one can be spiritual without being religious, just the same as one can be spiritual while being religious. "Spirituality and religion can go hand in hand, but they are not the same thing. We have an innate capacity for spirituality. Religion is a guide and can help form us, but because we are naturally spiritual beings, we can be formed and guided without religion, too." Thus, building a spiritual core does not depend on advocating or adhering to a particular religion.

A spiritual core can have life and death implications, especially with soldiers struggling with depression, trauma or PTSD. As Dr. Miller stated in a presentation to top military chaplains, "Personal faith is the only factor scientifically proven to prevent suicide."[3]

As Dr. Miller's studies show, it is vital that emotional and relational skills training programs enable people to clarify and consistently live out their personal spirituality, however they may define it, in every area of their lives. Relational wisdom training is uniquely designed to promote the integration of relational skills with personal spirituality and personal values.

6. A FOUR-PRONGED SOLUTION

Relational wisdom is an enhanced, values-based form of emotional intelligence that capitalizes on Western cognitive strengths and counteracts the relational deficiencies described above.

- Relational wisdom training is **PROACTIVE,** deepening relational skills that ***prevent*** the trauma of suicide, sexual assault, alcohol and drug abuse, PTSD and divorce.
- This training is **PERSONAL** and can be used to equip every person in every unit with skills they can practice daily and apply in peer-to-peer counseling (even over a beer with a buddy after work) to help one another respond to relational crises wisely and constructively.
- This training is **VALUES-DRIVEN,** inspiring people to clarify their personal worldviews and spirituality, which give rise to core values that motivate growth and provide a moral compass for life.
- Finally, this training is **FAMILY-FRIENDLY,** being available to all military family members so they can develop skills that reduce conflict, prevent divorce and build healthy and resilient families that whole-heartedly support long-term military service.

---

[2] Building the Whole Soldier: The Role of Spirituality in Mental Health and Resilience

[3] The Spiritually Fit Soldier

7. Family and Financial Benefits

Teaching relational wisdom in military units can produce a double benefit. When service men and women take improved relational skills home, they can enjoy more stable marriages and better parenting relationships, thereby helping to reduce the military divorce rate of 3% or 21,000 troops per year.

These benefits are magnified when spouses and children improve their relational skills through the same training. Studies show that individuals who leave a peaceful home in the morning tend to be more focused and productive when they come to work (see Relational Wisdom Strengthens Both Families and Businesses). Conversely, when they leave a peaceful day at work, they go home with less stress and a greater ability to enjoy their families. Happy, stable families are more likely to support long-term military service.

These relational improvements can trigger major financial benefits. As one corporate study concluded:

> "When companies invest in the physical and relational wellness of their workers, returns on investment can range between $1.50 and $6.85 for every dollar spent on these types of programs." Relational Wellness: Corporate America's Business

8. Feature & Benefit Summary

The executive summary on page 2 of this ebooklet and this one-page summary statement, Deploying Our Most Powerful Weapon, may be used when presenting the features and benefits of relational wisdom training to base and unit commanders. The following studies provide additional supporting information.

9. Supporting Studies

The value of improved relational skills in a military setting is described in numerous articles.

a. Fifteen Ways that Relational Wisdom Builds Readiness and Resilience in the Military (RW360 Blog)

"Before being elected to Congress from Oklahoma, Lt. Col. (U.S. Army, Retired) Steve Russell led the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 4th infantry Division in Iraq. In 2003, his battalion occupied Tikrit, Saddam Hussein's hometown, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Steve's book, We Got Him: A Memoir of the Hunt and Capture of Saddam Hussein, provides numerous examples of the importance of relational skills in military commandership."

b. Emotional Intelligence and the Modern Military Advisor (2020)

"Security Force Assistance Brigades, outfitted with NCOs competent in EI, will be the global commanders in contested environments across all domains as the U.S. Army continues to set the standard for what a military commander must be, know, and do."

c. Emotional Intelligence: A Step on the Path to Developing "People First" Commanders

"Junior commanders can utilize emotional intelligence to better themselves, their Soldiers, and the Army as a whole. In the end, EI provides commanders the skills needed to genuinely care for their subordinates, promote trust, and form cohesive teams that invest in and value their people. "People First" must be more than a slogan for us. Emotional

intelligence provides a concrete solution that if correctly prioritized and altruistically implemented, can help manifest the positive change we need in our formations."

d. 'This Is My Squad': SMA Grinston Talks About His Push to Build Cohesive Units

"The new SMA wants to find and replicate the model of strong, cohesive units across the Army by focusing on the positive aspects of being a soldier. Doing so will hopefully address ongoing problems, including sexual harassment and assault, suicide prevention and domestic issues, while also building on Army readiness priorities like preparing soldiers for the new fitness test."

e. EI: Thoughts for Military Commanders (2017, The Field Grade Commander)

"At its core, emotional intelligence, or **EQ**, is a set of characteristics or traits possessed by effective and influential commanders. Emotionally intelligent commanders have a heightened awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and can adjust their commandership approach after reading group dynamics."

f. To Be Effective, The Corps' New "Toxic Commandership Test" Will Have to Be Marine-Proof (Dec. 2017)

"The Marine Corps announced a pilot program to start giving re-enlisting Marines emotional intelligence, or EQ, tests. The idea is that testing for emotional intelligence might give them a chance to remove toxic commanders before they infect units as noncommissioned officers."

g. Emotional Intelligence, Commandership and Resilience (2016)

"The Army has become smarter in the way it leads, educates and develops its commanders; especially as the concept of emotional intelligence evolves, transforming concepts of command and commandership and applying it diligently in order to improve commandership methods and techniques."

h. Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy in Military Commanders (2016)

"The study supported the hypothesis that the higher a commander's emotional intelligence, the higher the commander's self-efficacy."

i. How Emotional Intelligence Can Make a Difference (March 2011)

"The Army has recognized the need for mental resiliency beyond the battlefield—and not just for soldiers, but for all members of the Army family. The necessity for strengthening this vital behavior has become more significant because of the stress on the force of more than nine years of war."

j. Creating an Emotionally Intelligent Warrior (2011, Washington Post)

"The past 10 years and two wars have made clear that professionals working in today's complex, high-risk operating environments do not need more technical skills, but rather more sophisticated social skills to build their commandership capacity."

k. Emotional Intelligence and Army Commandership (March, 2007)

"Commanders who exhibit heightened levels of emotional intelligence may be more likely to engage in transformational commandership behaviors than those individuals who possess lower levels of emotional intelligence."

l. The 3 C's of Commandership (2008, Air Force Public Affairs)

"The importance of emotional intelligence is illustrated by the number of seminars constantly offered and attended by businesspeople and military commanders. Improving one's ability to interact in conflict management, negotiations, communications, consensus building and persuasion are just a few of the traits covered in these seminars."

10. Information on Relational Wisdom 360

For detailed information on the origins, resources, training and ministry partners and clients of RW360, see this Ministry Overview.

11. Course Developers and Trainers

Ken Sande is the founder of Peacemaker Ministries and Relational Wisdom 360. Trained as a mechanical engineer, lawyer and mediator, Ken has conciliated hundreds of family, business, church and legal conflicts. As president of RW360, he now focuses on teaching people how to build strong relationships and resolve conflict in the family, church and workplace. He teaches internationally and is the author of numerous books, articles, and training resources, including *The Peacemaker*, which have sold over 700,000 copies in twenty languages. He is a Certified Emotional Intelligence Instructor with Talent-Smart, a Certified Relational Wisdom Shepherd, Instructor, Coach and Conciliator, and has served on the Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee of the Montana Bar Association and as a Certified Professional Engineer and as an Editorial Advisor for Christianity Today.

Dr. Rich Douglass is the Director of Strategic Initiative for Relational Wisdom 360. He served in the U.S. Air Force for 20 years (retiring O-5), during which time he flew F-16's and served as a senior instructor for F-16s and F-35s, as air and combat planning commander for missions in Iraq, Afghanistan and Horn of Africa, and as lead planner for Homeland Defense in the year 2040 at NORAD and USNORTHCOM. He holds a D.Min. in Global Leadership, is ordained by the Southern Baptist Convention, has served as a missionary and associate pastor, and is a Certified Relational Wisdom Shepherd, Instructor, Coach and Conciliator.

Ryan Ward has served as a pastor and as president of Montana Bible College, where he developed and taught the Biblical Peacemaking course, required for all bachelor's graduates at MBC. In both pastoral and college leadership roles, he put relational wisdom and peacemaking skills to work with people facing the challenges of life in the real world. As the leader of a college, he gained invaluable experience in organizational leadership with complex constituencies. He joined RW360 in 2025 and serves as Director of Academic and Church Initiatives. Ryan holds a Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies, Pastoral Emphasis, as well as an MA in Biblical and Theological Studies from Western Seminary, and is a Certified Relational Wisdom Shepherd, Instructor, Coach and Conciliator.

12. Proactive Training - Getting Upstream of Conflict

General George Washington, the father of our country and the U.S. military, wisely taught that "Offensive operations, often times, is the surest, if not the only means of defense." This wisdom principle applies to the relational realm. Thus, it is far better to provide proactive training that ***prevents*** ("gets upstream of") conflict, divorce, alcohol and drug addiction, sexual harassment and suicide than it is to seek to heal the trauma these relational crises bring upon entire families and military units.

Proactive training is most effective when it reaches ***every person*** in ***every unit*** and ***every family*** on a military base. Why? Because when servicemen and women experience relational tensions or conflict, they will often share their concerns with a friend or peer in their unit before turning to a chaplain or religious affairs personnel. If every person in a unit has been trained in the basic principles of relational wisdom and conflict resolution, they will be equipped to offer one another constructive, relationship-building advice rather than simply commiserating and inflaming emotional reactions that make relational crises worse.

Proactive training on a military base can take place in several ways:

a. Individual and Family Study

If you are currently serving in the military, you can take the initiative to pursue training in relational wisdom and conflict resolution today. You can use this form to obtain an automatic 50% scholarship to RW360's online courses in relational wisdom and relational peacemaking, which reduces the price to just $24.50 per course. We encourage you to share the resulting scholarship code with your spouse and teenagers so your entire family can learn and practice these skills together.

RW360 provides related resources for teaching peacemaking to younger children. This training is available in both a faith-based version (*The Young Peacemaker*) and a secular "values-based" version (*Peacemakers in Training*). We have also compiled a list of 150+ short "Relational Hero" video clips that illustrate inspirational relational skills that children can imitate in daily life.

These materials may be studied within individual families or Sunday school classes. To reach an even wider segment of children on a base, a few dedicated parents could lead a weekly study on this material where parents can learn the material, discuss practical applications and provide advice and encouragement on how to deal with challenging parenting situations. Additional resources and strategies for teaching younger children may be found here.

Multiple studies have shown these types of relational skills to improve job performance, career advancement and family stability. Moreover, when your teenagers add a "Certificate in Enhanced Emotional Intelligence" to their resumes, they will have an advantage when competing for scholarships and jobs after graduation (see EI for Teens and EI for College and Beyond).

You can extend these benefits to other members of your unit by inviting them to go through one or both courses with you. For example, several of you could agree to complete one lesson in one of the online courses each week on your own time and to then get together for lunch weekly to discuss what you are learning and how you can apply these concepts in your daily work lives. You could take the same approach with other couples or families in your sphere of friendships. Group study greatly enhances growth in these relational skills. Another study option is to host a weekly study in your home or in your unit using one of RW360's Group Study Sets.

b. Chaplain/Religious Affairs Personnel Initiated Training

Chaplains and other religious affairs personnel can play a key role in promoting and teaching relational wisdom and peacemaking throughout a military base. As you prepare for this role, remember that you "only get one chance to make a good first impression"

with a unit or base commander, so make sure that you are deeply familiar with these concepts, experienced in their use, fully prepared to explain why they are valuable in a military setting, and equipped to teach this material with clarity and confidence. Here are some practical ways to gain this kind of competence.

- Read the testimony from Chaplain Christopher Pitts in Appendix 1 to see how he and a religious affairs airman used these resources to teach relational wisdom to hundreds of officers and airmen on Malmstrom Air Force Base.
- Familiarize yourself with the benefits to this type of training by reading Relational Wisdom Strengthens Both Families and Businesses and Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Resolution, as well as the supporting studies in section 9 of this ebooklet.
- Familiarize yourself with RW360's training resources:

  Guiding People Through Conflict (ebooklet summarizing the key principles of peacemaking, coaching, mediation and arbitration)

Values-Based Summary Sheet	Faith-Based Summary Sheet
Values-Based Website	Faith-Based Website
Values-Based Study Guide	Faith-Based Study Guide
Values-Based Online Course	Faith-Based Online Course
Values-Based Group Study Set	Faith-Based Group Study Set

- Complete RW360's online courses for Relational Wisdom and Relational Peacemaking or use one of our small group study sets to teach these courses in your base chapel, a nearby church or a small group of friends or coworkers on base. The small group study sets contain videos that provide the actual teaching, so all you need to do is play the videos and then use the enclosed leader's guide and personal study notes to lead a discussion of the concepts.

  Note: All the content in the values-based (secular) course is contained within the faith-based course, so if you complete the faith-based course, you will be familiar with all the values-based content as well.
- To gain personal experience with these materials, invite your spouse and teenagers to join you in this training. In addition to deepening your understanding of these concepts, joint training can strengthen your family relationships, prepare your children for relational, academic, and job success, and provide you with personal application examples that increase your credibility when teaching this material to others.
- To gain greater mastery of these concepts and be qualified to teach these courses yourself (instead of using the videos in the group study sets) complete the training to become a ***Certified Relational Wisdom Military Instructor*** (see RW360's Academic Catalog). Better yet, arrange for RW360 to provide training to qualify your entire religious affairs team as Certified RW Military Instructors. The cost of this training can often be covered through one of the military's "strong bonds" programs.

- To further master these concepts, teach each of the courses once or twice using the teaching videos that are available in the group study sets. After gaining a thorough understanding of these concepts, you will be prepared to teach the material yourself, adding your own personal examples and adapting the concepts more fully to your military setting and any special issues that are present on your base.
- To build interest in this training, request a short meeting with unit commanders to introduce them to RW, share examples of how these concepts have benefitted you and your family, and use select resources listed in this ebooklet (possibly including the Executive Summary on page 2 and copies of Fifteen Ways that RW Builds Readiness and Resilience in the Military and Four Ways to Defeat Hijacking) to describe how this training could improve the readiness and resilience of the people in their units.
- If commanders seem open to exploring this training further, offer to make a 15-30 minute presentation on various elements of relational wisdom to their units using the values-based RW pamphlet and referring people to more detailed training online.
- Offer to teach regular seminars or retreats on relational wisdom and peacemaking. In some cases, it might be helpful to begin by offering a special executive seminar or retreat just for senior base commanders and possibly their spouses.
- If time constraints limit you to teaching shortened versions of RW360's courses, purchase Group Discount Coupons that you can give to personnel to encourage them to dig into these concepts more deeply on their own time, preferably with their families, so they can get the full benefit of the training.
- After introductory training, host review sessions where students can discuss practical questions or ways relational wisdom was applied in popular movies, and also invite coworkers to explore these concepts. To prime the pump on these conversations, prepare questions and hypothetical case studies that relate to your base.
- Use RW blog posts and videos of altruistic EI in staff meetings, newsletters, and other chapel communications to teach and reinforce relevant relational concepts. Many of these resources are available in both values-based and faith-based formats.
- Arrange small group studies for soldiers or couples on base using either the faith-based DVD set or the values-based DVD set (typically 60-90 minutes per lesson).
- Another way to spread this teaching is to "flip education" by arranging small group studies where soldiers or couples go through one of the online courses on their own time and then get together once a week as a group with a course moderator to discuss and apply what they are learning.
- Enhance group studies by using the discussion questions and case studies in Challenging Military Scenarios or, better yet, develop your own scenarios based on experiences from your own life or current events on your base.
- During weekly or monthly staff meetings, invite members of your team to describe how *someone else* on the team recently displayed noteworthy relational wisdom.

- Arrange study groups for spouses on your base to discuss the unique relational challenges in their lives and those of their children.
- Expand your skills by pursuing training to become a ***Certified RW Military Chaplain™***. You can build on this training by pursuing advanced training and certification in RW coaching and conciliation to expand your skills and enhance your **post-military career opportunities** in pastoral ministry or professional training, consulting, coaching or conciliation work (see RW360 Academic Catalog).

c. Unit Commander Initiated Training

- Unit commanders can also play a key role in bringing relational wisdom and conflict resolution training to the servicemen and women in their commands, either by supporting chaplains and religious affairs personnel as they offer the training services described in the previous section or by initiating and carrying out many of these training activities themselves. As 1 Timothy 4:15 teaches, personal example is one of the most effective teaching strategies the world has ever known: "Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress."
- One of the best ways to begin this type of training is to offer to lead your direct reports or executive team through one of RW360's values-based courses on relational wisdom and peacemaking. You could use the teaching videos from one of our small group study sets or, better yet, encourage each person in the group to complete one of the online course lessons their own time each week and then get together for coffee or lunch weekly to discuss what you are learning and how these concepts apply not only to the people in your unit but also to your personal friendships and families.
- If this training goes well, you could use this same strategy to have other commanders in your unit lead similar training groups for everyone in your command.

13. Responding to Current Conflict and Relational Challenges

RW360's training resources can also be used to assist people who are currently struggling with conflict or other relational challenges, such as marital breakdown, parenting trials, or conflicts within a military unit. For example …

- Read Guiding People Through Conflict to see practical examples of how to apply the key principles of conflict coaching, mediation and arbitration to actual conflicts.
- When relational difficulties surface during a personal conversation or counseling, apply the principles in Seven Steps to Empathy to build understanding and trust.
- Use the Values-Based RW Pamphlet to introduce counselees to relational wisdom and to explain how these concepts to improve their emotional intelligence and conflict resolution skills, which can strengthen their relationships. Mention that relational wisdom training is available in a values-based version compatible with all worldviews and faiths, and a faith-based version designed for Christians. Then encourage them to take advantage of the appropriate online course on the RW Academy.

- Another approach is to encourage individuals in conflict to join a small group study in a chapel or on base so they can learn and discuss these concepts with other people.
- When helping professing Christians who are involved in conflict, you could provide them with copies of the Faith-Based RW Pamphlet, the Transformed Pamphlet, *The Peacemaker*, *Peacemaking for Families* or *The Young Peacemaker* books and recommend specific chapters or assign questions in *The Peacemaker: Personal Application Workbook*.
- Address specific presenting issues (anger, rejection, a lack of empathy or forgiveness, etc.) by providing people with relevant RW articles or blog posts.
- Encourage people to download the RW360 App for quick access to key principles.
- To encourage counselees' growth, offer to meet with them every week for a few months to discuss ways they can apply these concepts in their current situation.
- To improve your ability to use RW'360's resources in counseling settings, pursue RW Life Coaching and Conflict Coaching Training.

APPENDIX 1

TEACHING RELATIONAL WISDOM AT MALMSTROM AIR FORCE BASE

CAPTAIN CHRISTOPHER PITTS, USAF

In 2022, I learned that RW360 had developed a program for teaching an enhanced form of emotional intelligence called "relational wisdom," which complemented its highly respected conflict resolution (peacemaking) training. I immediately saw how useful this training could be in a military context, so I arranged a presentation for our Mission Support Group leaders to introduce them to the relational wisdom concept.

One commander initially told me he had no interest in attending. I told him if he had no one in his unit with relationship issues, then of course he had no need to attend, but if he did have any issues, then this might be helpful to his unit. After giving this some thought, he decided to attend, along with representatives from all the units on base, as well as our group commander himself.

Right after the presentation, two squadron commanders approached me and said they wanted to utilize the curriculum immediately. Apparently, we had some relational challenges on base!

I teamed up with a Religious Affairs Airman to do initial pilot training for our RED HORSE (Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers) Squadron. The feedback was uniformly positive and led to the commander requiring attendance for all squadron members. We focused on hosting classes for individual flights or shops to keep peers together and typically taught no more than 30 attendees at a time.

We were unable to get approval for the normal eight hours of training, so we developed a four-hour presentation that provided a high-level overview of the first four lessons and then focused primarily on the last four lessons that present the relational wisdom acrostics. We

also taught "Lunch-n-Learns" on specific acrostics for groups that could not attend the four-hour programs.[4]

Within two years, we taught over 200 members across five squadrons. In follow-up surveys, attendees gave the training a relevancy rating of 8.4/10 and reported a 60% increase in knowledge after the classes. Personal feedback confirmed the value of this training. For example, one Airman came up to me after a class and told me how he wished it had been offered sooner, because he recognized how it may have helped him avoid his divorce.

But the classes were just the beginning of an ongoing learning process. Many Airmen who attended the training later asked to set up counseling appointments to talk through pressing relational challenges. Some commented on how they didn't realize the connection between values and behaviors.

During counseling, I often use the relational wisdom pamphlet to suggest ways Airmen could apply the concepts in their families or in their units. If a couple was having issues with seeking forgiveness and offering forgiveness, it was easy to refer them to the "Seven A's of Confession" and the "Four Promises of Forgiveness" and ask them to practice these skills during the week. This was a great way to get a resource into their hands and provide practical homework for the next time we met.

Through this training and these practical applications, RW360's concepts became institutionalized at Malmstrom AFB in several ways. First, the relational wisdom language itself became institutionalized. One squadron commander told me he used the concepts to mentor his Commander's Support Staff. After many references to the content, a bit tongue-in-cheek, he said they might say to one another, "Hey! What would RW360 say about that?"

Second, the Prevention Office incorporated these concepts into their Comprehensive Integrated Primary Prevention plan. This plan establishes goals for the year to reduce violent risk factors. Courses that support these goals were identified, including RW360, and regularly offered to wing leadership.

Third, facilitators beyond myself began to teach and apply these concepts, including other Chaplains, Religious Affairs Airmen and unit Resilience Trainers.

In addition to these practical relational and readiness benefits, relational wisdom training is is a must-have for the Chaplain Corps because of its emphasis on spirituality. Many helping agencies can teach emotional intelligence, but only the Chaplain Corps has responsibility for the spiritual pillar. RW360 helped our team at Malmstrom AFB bolster this vital pillar by encouraging officers and Airmen to think deeply about and clarify their personal values and use the power of their values to strengthen their spiritual core and develop behaviors that improved their work performance and family stability. Relational wisdom was a critical part

[4] When it is not possible to teach the entire 8-lesson course, RW360 suggests that students be offered scholarship codes to the full online course so they can study this material more deeply on their own time. These scholarship codes can be shared with spouses and older children so families can study and grow together.

of my ministry at Malmstrom, and I fully expect to implement this life-changing training with each new assignment.

___

For additional details on our use of this training at Malmstrom, please see this Memorandum for Office of Chief of Chaplains

If you have any questions about our training strategy, please feel free to email me.

Chaplain Christopher Pitts (Capt, USAF)

christopher.pitts.8@us.af.mil

Version 4.1 – January 20, 2026