

# Thinking Skills Newsletter

March 2014

## This month:

A range of techniques deriving from Cognitive Behavioural Hypnotherapy are being reviewed and assessed for potential value for enhancing thinking skills, in particular creative problem solving. Karen Carr is taking a Diploma in these techniques and the Thinking Skills Programme will research and provide guidance on their use. Some techniques may help reduce negative effects of thinking under stress. Other techniques may allow a greater ability to think flexibly, taking different perspectives and reducing preconceptions.

We completed the 2 day course on individual and organizational thinking to DCTS, with good feedback and we are developing it further. We plan to make this more widely available so if anyone would like to attend or have it delivered to their organization then please get in touch.

A Defence Thinking Skills Congress has been proposed, to be held at the Defence Academy in early July. The idea is to share experiences, problems, ideas and best practice through a combination of presentations, panels and displays. There is an initial limit of 50 people, if anyone is interested in attending or would like more information, please get in touch.

## Current Issues:

Resilience has become a popular topic within defence recently. Psychological, or personal, resilience can be described as an individual's ability to properly adapt to stress and adversity. Resilience is important because it is difficult to do a job well and to focus on it if you have an adverse reaction to stress, or other unforeseen negative changes. The mission statement of The Joint Stress and Resilience Centre (JSARC) is 'Psychological Fitness – as important to the Armed Forces as physical fitness', and the importance of personal resilience is being recognized more widely, as evidenced by the Defence Academy's two resilience masterclasses at Main Building. The Thinking Skills Programme aims to draw upon and supplement resilience techniques, recognising the two-way relationship between stress and effective thinking. Early planning is underway for an experimental study to measure problem solving performance under stress with and without resilience techniques. If anyone would like to get involved, please get in touch.

## Book corner

**Steadman, A. (2011). Neuroscience for combat leaders: A brain-based approach to leading on the modern battlefield. *Military Review-English Edition*, 91(3), 50.**

"...succeeding in combat is a measure of how well the brain copes with dangerous situations and performs tasks that ensure survival"

Major Alex Burt sent us this paper, which uses neuroscience to show why resilience is useful for combat leaders

If you would like to read this paper or have any questions about the programme, please contact:

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## Brain Teaser

If you say my name I'll no longer exist. What am I?

Answer to February's brain teaser:

Holes!

