DEVELOPING SITUATION AWARENESS CAPACITY FOR GREATER RESILIENCE TO STRESS IN HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

Center for Nursing Research (CNR) Seminar - September 26, 2014

Dr. Martha Batorski
About the Speaker

- Doctor of Education, Organization Change, Pepperdine University (2012)
  - Dissertation Research: “Developing Situation Awareness Capacity to Improve Executive Judgment and Decision Making Under Stress”
  - Population Studied: Emerging Leaders (Cadets and Civilian Leaders in Training), Norwich University (the Oldest Private Military College in US)

- Executive Director: Transcendental Meditation for Women Center – Las Vegas
  - TM for Nurses Project – www.tmwomenprofessionals.org/Nurses
  - Women’s Heart Health Project with Las Vegas Cardiologists - http://www.tmforwomenshearthealth.net

- Adjunct Professor, Roseman University of Health Sciences, MBA Program


- Executive management consultant with Accenture (Associate Partner), Grant Thornton (Director), Fujitsu Consulting (Director) – global management consulting firms for > 15 years.
Purpose of This Seminar

- Healthcare professionals and executives make daily decisions within an environment characterized by ambiguity/uncertainty; shifting and competing goals; high stakes; and incomplete or dynamically changing information or conditions.

- The field of Naturalistic Decision Making (NDM) and Human Factors has studied decision making under stress for over 40 years.

- 40+ years of research on Transcendental Meditation® has contributed to an increasingly relevant view of resilience by the military and healthcare professionals in dynamic environments.

- Until recently, there has been no focus on systematically developing the capacity for improved judgment and decision making under stress.

- Until now…This seminar introduces GRU to the research and technology to develop SA capacity.
### Seminar Agenda – 90 minutes

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At the End of This Seminar You Should Be Able to Answers These 3 Questions

- What is Situation Awareness, and what is the impact of stress on executive judgment and decision making in real-time, dynamic settings?

- How are other professions which require real-time, dynamic decision making under stress (including healthcare) developing improved capacity for resilience?

- What is Transcendental Meditation, and how is TM distinguished from other categories of meditation in developing resilience to stress?
Today’s Seminar: Out of Scope

- You will not learn how to practice Transcendental Meditation® today.

- Learning Transcendental Meditation, an evidence-based approach to developing resilience, requires a 7-step course
  - taught over 4 consecutive days by a Certified Teacher of TM
  - 1 to 1.5 hours each day

However, you will be provided with –

(1) FAQs at the end of this presentation, contact info for local resources, and

(2) a dedicated website: www.tmwomenprofessionals.com/Nurses
What’s In YOUR GRU Seminar Packet?

- Journal articles referenced in this seminar – (2)
- Meta-analysis (1989) on TM and Anxiety Summary
- American Heart Association Endorsement of TM
- Instructional Worksheet for Situation Awareness Activity
- Selected Reference List - TM Research (this is a living document and continually updated)
Credentials of Transcendental Meditation® in Healthcare

- Transcendental Meditation® (or TM) has been shown to improve the body’s resilience to stress.

- Stress impacts judgment and decision making (which we will get to shortly), but it also results in many stress-related illness such as heart disease. The National Institutes of Health has funded over $24 M in research grants on the study of TM and heart disease.

- TM is *only* meditation practice endorsed by the AHA
  - TM is the most widely researched meditation practice (> 360 published studies in peer-reviewed journal studies; > 600 studies from reputable research institutions; > 35 randomized control trials; 7 meta analyses
  - Dr. Suzanne Steinbaum (National Spokesperson, Go Red for Women) [http://tmforwomenshearthealth.org/#video=a6734Ys1ys](http://tmforwomenshearthealth.org/#video=a6734Ys1ys)
American Heart Association Endorsement

TM has been shown to reduce effects of stress in three areas, thereby reducing the risk of heart disease by 47%.

- Hypertension
- Heart attack
- Stroke

Summary of Policy Statement Issued by the American Heart Association

According to the American Heart Association, the Transcendental Meditation technique is the only meditation practice that has been shown to lower blood pressure.

According to the AHA,* “Because of many negative studies or mixed results and a paucity of available trials, all other meditation techniques [including Mindfulness] received a ‘Class III, no benefit, Level of Evidence C’ recommendation. Thus, other meditation techniques are not recommended in clinical practice to lower BP at this time.”

The AHA scientific statement also reported the finding that lower blood pressure through Transcendental Meditation practice is associated with substantially reduced rates of death, heart attack and stroke.

The AHA scientific statement concludes that alternative treatments that include the Transcendental Meditation technique are recommended for consideration in treatment plans for all individuals with blood pressure greater than 120/80 mm Hg.

The Data: Long-term Effects on Clinical Events for Hypertension, Heart Attacks, and Stroke

Let’s Get Started

- What is Situation Awareness (or SA), and what is the impact of stress on executive judgment and decision making in real-time, dynamic settings?
Objective 1: Define the Role of Situation Awareness in Real Time, Dynamic Decision Making Under Stress
Definitions of Situation Awareness

Situation Awareness

“... a constantly evolving picture of the state of the environment (Endsley, 2003).”

Decision Making

“... knowing what is going on so you can figure out what to do (Adam, 1993).”

Performance in Dynamic, Uncertain, and Complex Environments
Situation Awareness is a *State* that Supports Judgment and *Precedes* Decision Making

### Three Levels of SA

**S1: Perception**

**S2: Real-time Understanding (Sensemaking)**

**S3: Projection (of Future State)**

Two Definitions of Resilience Under Stress

“the capacity to absorb high levels of change while displaying minimal dysfunctional behavior” (Conner, 1995, p.6)

“to recover, learn from, and developmentally mature when confronted by chronic or crisis adversity” (Patterson, Goens, & Reed, 2009, p.8)


Characteristics of Real Time, Dynamic Decision Making Under Stress

- Finding: Characteristics common to both leadership and professionals today who work in dynamic settings
  - Ambiguity/uncertainty
  - Shifting and competing goals
  - High stakes
  - Incomplete or dynamically changing information or conditions
40 Years of High Quality Research Exists on SA Factors Which Have Been Studied Extensively (Endsley, Sandoval)

- **External Factors:**
  - Stress Workload, Interface Design, System Compatibility

- **Information Processing Factors (Individual):**
  - Cognitive Maps, Mental Models, Memory, Automaticity
  - Abilities, Experience, Training, Personality
  - Goals and Objectives, Preconceptions

- **Social Factors**
  - Values, Norms, Beliefs

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Factors That Impact SA (Sandoval, 2004), Building on the Work of Endsley, 1984

Reviewing the Affects of Stress on the Brain
How Stress Affects the Brain

- "The initial release of neurotransmitters and hormones into a leader’s system begins to affect major brain systems, particularly the Pre Frontal Cortex (PFC) and the amygdala.
- Too much stress “turns off” the PFC, resulting in a drop in IQ and ability to control the amygdala.
- Stress temporarily reduces IQ!
- At the same time, the increased stress “turns on” the amygdala creating an overly sensitive heightened state of emotion.
- A leader loses a significant ability to “control” his/her emotions, thus becoming not only temporarily cognitively impaired, but also less emotionally intelligent."

Applying the Concept of SA to Dynamic Decision Making

Objective 2: Identify the Symptoms of Impaired Situation Awareness
8 Ways Situation Awareness (SA) is Eroded

- Requisite Memory Trap
- Attention Tunneling/Regression
- Out-of-the-loop Syndrome
- Data Overload
- Misplaced Salience
- Complexity Creep
- Errant Mental Model
- Workload, Anxiety, Fatigue, and Other Stressors (WAFOS)
Stress Debilitates SA
Symptoms of Impaired SA: Attentional Tunneling/Regression
Requisite Memory Trap

What it is:

Short term memory unable to retain features of the current situation due to limited caching (e.g. 7 plus or minus 2 = Millers Law).

Example:

• Situation Commander delegating short term info to staff in order to hold big picture of an unfolding event
WAFOS (Workload, Anxiety, Fatigue, and Other Stressors)

What it is:
A taxing of SA due to environmental conditions within which a decision maker must operate when one’s well being is at stake.

Example:
• Mandatory shifts on fire line (culture change from “heroics”)
• Continued exposure to smoke on fire line for wildland firefighter
Data Overload

What it is:
Information intake that quickly outpaces the ability of the decision maker’s sensory and cognitive system; when there are more data than can be processed by the human brain, leading to the person’s SA becoming outdated and containing gaps.

Example:
• 911 operators responding to peak calls on September 11 in NYC
Misplaced Salience

What it is:
Many pieces of information vying for one’s attention exceeding the decision maker’s capacity to seek out information relevant to his/her goals.

Example:
• Pilot operator error due to unfamiliarity with automation (Asiana Flight 214 crash, 2013)
Complexity Creep

What it is:
The inability of the decision maker to form sufficient internal representations of the features making up a system and how it works due to feature escalation.

Example:
- Escalating incident with additional real-time developments unfolding such as shifting wind conditions during a fire. Decision Maker rapidly assesses for relevance to unfolding incident.
Errant Mental Model

What it is:
A false or errant internal representation or ‘map’ making it difficult for a decision maker to detect cues and explain away conflicting cues to fit the mental model they have selected.

Example:
• “Friendly fire” on commercial aircraft (USS Vincennes)
• “Drop Your Tools” (Mann Gulch Fire, 1949)
Out-of-the-Loop Syndrome

What it is:
A gap in understanding on how a situation is performing and the state [of the elements of the situation] is supposed to be controlling. Often associated with automation, but not limited to automation.

Example:
- Missing information on an evolving situation due to a distraction.
Attentional Tunneling/Regression

What it is:
Fixating on a set of information to the exclusion of others (attentional tunneling); cognitive overload of the brain’s processing ability resulting in “forgetting” past training and automatic response not “kicking in” (regression).

Example:
• 911 first responders abandoning protocol on September 11, Katrina
• “Cocooning” to the tailboard (firefighter)
“The NTSB further concluded that the flight crew’s insufficient monitoring of airspeed indications during the approach resulted from expectancy, increased workload, fatigue, and automation reliance and that the Pilot Flying’s faulty mental model of the airplane’s automation logic led to his inadvertent deactivation of automatic airspeed control.

The flight crew’s mismanagement of the airplane’s vertical profile during the initial approach led to a period of increased workload that reduced the pilot monitoring’s awareness of the pilot flying’s actions around the time of the unintended deactivation of automatic airspeed control.


Multiple detractors of SA are often simultaneously at work.
Activity: Applying the Detractors of SA to judgment and decision making in the Healthcare Profession (5 min)

1) Find a partner; Identify who will share first
3) Review SA detractors (handout)
4) Brainstorm 4-5 examples that you have witnessed or experienced firsthand.
5) Select best example, frequency, and consequences
6) Switch roles and repeat
7) Share your results
Current Trends in SA Research

How are other professions which require real-time, dynamic decision making under stress (including healthcare) developing improved capacity for resilience?

Objective 3: Describe how SA has been measured and developed in professionals who make real-time decisions in dynamic settings
If Impaired Situation Awareness is the Problem, What is the Solution? The Missing Element of SA is Development of Consciousness.

Until Recently The Following Has Been True

- Leaders in dynamic settings are required to make decisions under uncertainty, and high stress.

- Chronic stress can significantly compromise leaders’ Situation Awareness (SA), judgment and decision making leading to errors.

- SA research to date has defined the factors (descriptive), but not the means of systematically developing SA capacity (prescriptive).

**Research Question:**

Can leaders develop their capacity to improve executive judgment and decision making under stress?
SA is Developed in Training Programs and Measured in Simulation Sessions in the Field of Human Factors (1984 to present)

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<td>Education; Hands on Training; Simulation</td>
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<td>Errant Mental Model</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workload, Anxiety, Fatigue and Other Stressors</td>
<td>Education; Hands on Training; Simulation</td>
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Extensive and high quality SA Research has been conducted in the field of Human Factors and Naturalistic Decision Making (NDM) since the 1980s using these interventions with the following populations:

- Wildland firefighters
- Military
- First responders (police, fire & rescue, EMTs)
- Airline pilots
- Air Traffic Controllers
- Medical personnel (ER)
- Nurses
Proposal: *Add* The Systematic Development of Consciousness to Existing Interventions (over 600 studies exist on TM which may have a direct bearing on building resilience to SA Detractors)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Selected Studies Demonstrating Development of Consciousness through TM</th>
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<tr>
<td>Requisite Memory Trap</td>
<td>Education; Hands on Training; Simulation</td>
<td>Improved Use of Hidden Brain Reserves</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attention Tunneling/ Regression</td>
<td>Education; Hands on Training; Simulation</td>
<td>Improved Brainwave Coherence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Misplaced Salience</td>
<td>Education; Hands on Training; Simulation</td>
<td>Improved Perception and Memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Errant Mental Model</td>
<td>Education; Hands on Training; Simulation</td>
<td>Broader comprehension &amp; ability to focus</td>
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<td><em>Perceptual Motor Skills</em> (39: 1031–1034, 1974)</td>
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<td>Education; Hands on Training; Simulation</td>
<td>Decreased Anxiety</td>
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Objective 4: Define Transcendental Meditation™ and its Emerging Use in Developing SA Capacity in Leaders
Definition of Transcendental Meditation®

TM is a simple, easy-to-learn, natural, effortless, mental technique… practiced 15 – 20 minutes, morning and evening with eyes closed.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi
Founder of the Transcendental Meditation And Consciousness Based Health Programs
Focus: TM is An Evidence-Based Approach to Develop Capacity for Greater Resilience: Case 1 (Research on SA and Decision Making Using TM)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oIH0913lQe0
VIDEO – 5:12 min.
Methodology and Procedures: Study Sample

• Target sample: military and civilian emerging leaders (ages 18-22), N=40

• 4-year accredited military university, Northfield, VT

• The University President has launched a 2-year Building Resilience Program which includes training in the Transcendental Meditation program

• Initial TM Intervention Group: 38; Initial Control Group: 23 (Ending n=35: TM Group=18, Control Group=17); 83% Male, 17% Female

• Program oversight: Norwich University Center for Academic Excellence
Methodology and Procedures: Pre- and Post-Test of Three Variables

**Independent Variable:**

Transcendental Meditation Program  
(twice daily practice)

**Dependent Variables**

- **S1: Perception Capacity**  
  (Trail Making Part B Test)  
  Attention, Mental Flexibility

- **S2: Comprehension Capacity**  
  (Wisconsin Card Sort Test)  
  Executive Function, Real Time Problem Solving

- **SA: Projection Capacity**  
  (Constructive Thinking Inventory Test)  
  Emotions, as Pertains to Problem Solving
Methodology – Research Design

**PHASE 1**
Preparation

- Propose Research Design to Norwich University
- Obtain Organization Release
- Recruit Sample “Pool”
- Obtain Informed Consent From Subjects

**PHASE 2**
Pre-Test (SA Capacity)

- Perception Test (“Trail Making B”)
- Comprehension Test (“WCST”)
- Projection Test (“CTI”)

**PHASE 3**
Administer TM Instruction (Intervention)

- Provide TM Instruction to Treatment Group

**PHASE 4**
Intervention Trial Period

- Subjects Practice TM or Not (Control)

**PHASE 5**
Post-Test (SA Capacity)

- Perception Test (“Trail Making B”)
- Comprehension Test (“WCST”)
- Projection Test (“CTI”)

**PHASE 6**
Data Analysis

- Process & Analyze Data
- Post Analysis
Methodology and Procedures: Data Analysis

- Sample data and scores analyzed using SPSS statistical software for descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies, central tendencies, variance, and ranged to characterize the data).

- Effects of independent variable (Transcendental Meditation practice) on the treatment and control group analyzed using ANOVA (analysis of variance) and ANCOVA (analysis of covariance) for differences between means of pre- and post-test scores using AVG TM PRACTICE as the covariate.

- Correlation matrices (Test of Between Subject Effects) computed for pre-test, post-test, and significance.
**Study Results**

Situation Awareness Capacity - **PERCEPTION**
(Trail Making B – ANCOVA Results; Avg. TM Practice Covariate)

![Graph showing pre-test and post-test data for TM and CONTROL groups with a p-value of .013.](image-url)
Study Results

Situation Awareness Capacity - **COMPREHENSION** (Wisconsin Card Sort Test) – ANOVA Results; CONTROLS (Pre-/Post)

Mean -Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Control-Pre</th>
<th>Control-Post</th>
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Study Results

Situation Awareness Capacity - **PROJECTION** (Constructive Thinking Inventory) – ANCOVA
Avg TM Practice Covariate – TM vs. CONTROL

![Bar chart showing mean responses for Global Constructive Thinking Pre-test and Post-test for TM and Control groups. The p-value is 0.047.](chart.png)

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Study Results

Situation Awareness Capacity – **PROJECTION** (Constructive Thinking Inventory) – ANCOVA Results; Avg TM Practice Covariate

Study Results

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Summary of Results

The Transcendental Meditation technique contributed to statistically significant improvement in Situation Awareness capacity in emerging leaders at Norwich University in two out of three measures in the 10-week study.
Objective 5: Describe the role of development of consciousness as a new factor in SA Models
1. Learning about and applying education, training, simulation (content) Situation Awareness is useful but insufficient in developing the capacity to improve executive judgment and decision making in emerging leaders.

2. Leaders must actively embrace a systematic program of personal development of their conscious capacity (the container) to build resilience to stress. The data suggests that TM is an efficacious and well-researched method for developing SA capacity (consciousness).
Development of Consciousness Has Been Added to the SA Model a a New Factor (Batorski, 2012)

Objective 6: Distinguish the key differences between the TM technique and other categories of meditation?
Meditation practices differ in procedure, EEG patterns, resulting neural imaging patterns and benefits.

- Thus, different meditation practices have different impacts on the brain.

Aren’t All Meditations the Same?

The Short Answer is NO

- The Transcendental Meditation technique does not involve concentration or contemplation. It's not guided meditation, watching your thoughts or focusing on your breath. *It's unique—in practice and results.*
TM’s EEG Signature is Characterized by Alpha Band, or Restful Alertness.
Alpha Coherence Maps

Eyes Open  Eyes Closed  TM Practice

EEG During the TM Technique is Coherent
Categories of Meditation/Practices by EEG Signature

**Definitions**

- **Focused Attention** *(Gamma & Beta\textsubscript{2} Band)*: voluntary control of attention and mental content

- **Open Monitoring** *(Theta Band)*: dispassionate, non involved observation of changing perceptions and/or thoughts

- **Automatic Self Transcendence** *(Alpha Band)*: attention is turned within and is alert but non directed—involves transcending perceptions and thoughts to reach a state of Self Awareness

**Meditation Practices**

- **Focused Attention**: Loving-kindness compassion; Qigong; Zen-3\textsuperscript{rd} ventricle; Diamond Way Buddhism

- **Open Monitoring**: Vipassana; ZaZen; Sahaja Yoga; Concentrative QiGong

- **Automatic Self Transcendence**: advanced practitioner (45 years) of Qi Gong
  - Transcendental Meditation® technique
Automatic Self Transcending - Recap

- TM is a practice of systematically going beyond mental activity—transcending thoughts until one arrives at the state of pure awareness: the body is resting deeply, and the mind is fully awake (restful alertness).

- Rather than floating on the surface of the active mind (“gotta-gotta-gotta”), the mind automatically experiences the quieter depths of settled thinking to inner silence, leaving the technique altogether (no focus or concentration required).
Total Brain Coherence Results in Improved Cognitive Functioning
The TM Technique Increases IQ

Mean IQ Score (Cattell's Culture-Fair Intelligence Test)

1985 1987

The TM Technique Improves Academic Performance

Change in grade point average

Controls | Transcendental Meditation
---|---
0.125 | 0.75

P = .0003

A statistical meta-analysis of 146 independent study results found that the Transcendental Meditation Program is significantly more effective in reducing trait anxiety than procedures of concentration or contemplation, or other techniques.

Reference:

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Improved Physiological Functioning Results in Greater Resilience

Decreased Hospital Admissions Rate in All Categories of Disease

- Childbirth
- Intestinal
- Nose, Throat, Lung
- Heart
- Genital & Urinary
- Injuries
- Tumors
- Bones & Muscle
- Ill-Defined Condition

Admissions/1000 Members

- Other Groups
- TM

$p < .00001$

Psychosomatic Medicine. 1987; 49:493-507
Reflect and Discuss (2 min).

Question: What are the three types of categories of meditation practices, and how does the TM technique differ from other categories of meditation?

One answer: (1) Focused attention, open monitoring, and automatic self transcending. (2) TM is associated with Alpha brainwave frequency. There is no concentration or contemplation involved in TM, nor is any effort required. The EEG signature of TM is Total Brain Coherence. This coherence is the physiological basis for improved cognitive skills.

What additional information did you learn?
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A Vision for Healthcare Professionals – Case 2

Transcendental Meditation®

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXJu14UP5qk
VIDEO – 7: 21 min.
Thank you for your attention!

Please follow up with Josephine Ruffin (Augusta), at JRuffin@TM.org for more info.
Q: I already exercise to release stress. Is this comparable to the benefits of TM?

A: A complementary approach is always a good idea to maintain wellness. Transcendental Meditation provides the body and mind with a unique level of deep rest, deeper than the deepest part of deep sleep. It is therefore recommended the “and” vs. “or” approach -- incorporate TM twice daily into an individual’s lifestyle to build resilience by ensuring the body is neutralizing stress faster than it is taken stress in.
FAQs

Q: Can I learn TM from a book?

A: No. Transcendental Meditation is easily learned from a Certified Instructor. It is taught systematically throughout the world. Since individuals learn at their own rate, having a certified instructor ensures the practice is taught properly for maximum effectiveness. There are 7 steps to learn TM.

1. Step 1: Introductory talk on the research and benefits of TM
2. Step 2: Preparatory talk addresses how TM works, where it comes from, how it differs from other categories of meditation and requirements to learn TM.
3. Step 3: Personal interview with a Certified TM Teacher to address specific questions and to identify the date and time to learn (allow approximately 1 hr).
4. Steps 4 through 7: Three consecutive 1.5 hour classes to verify and validate correct experience (effortlessness of the practice) and build upon the previous day’s knowledge.
5. A lifetime benefit of visiting any TM Center worldwide for ongoing verification of experience and advanced lectures are included in the TM course.
FAQs

Q: Can I get CNE’s for learning TM?

A: We have submitting our application several months ago, and are awaiting final approval from the American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA) for Continuing Nurse Education (CNE) units for both instruction in the TM program and advanced courses. Stay tuned!
FAQs

Q: Where can I get more information about courses in Augusta?

For more information, contact www.tmwomenprofessionals.org/Nurses or contact Josephine Ruffin, Certified Teacher of the Transcendental Meditation Program in Augusta, GA at JRuffin@tm.org.

TM for Nurses pamphlets are available at the conclusion of this seminar with the details of each of the 7-step course.