

Matching Volunteer Motivations to Promote Agency and Resiliency in Army Spouses

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According to the 2019 Blue Star Families Survey, 77% of military spouses are under- or un-employed due to the frequent moves required with a military career. Hall (1969) discussed the role of work in overall life satisfaction and as a large contributor to self-identity. An individual chooses an occupational path that matches self-esteem and personality traits. Compared to 3.4% unemployment for women age 20 and older, according to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, there is a career-identity mismatch for most Army wives. Frequent moves also produce a sense of isolation, with 67% of spouses reporting a neutral or lack of connection to their civilian communities (Blue Star Families, 2019). As the Department of Defense and the nation's legislators consider policy options to reduce the burden of unemployment and persistent relocation on families in the future, the task of building resilience and providing social support falls to the spouses themselves.

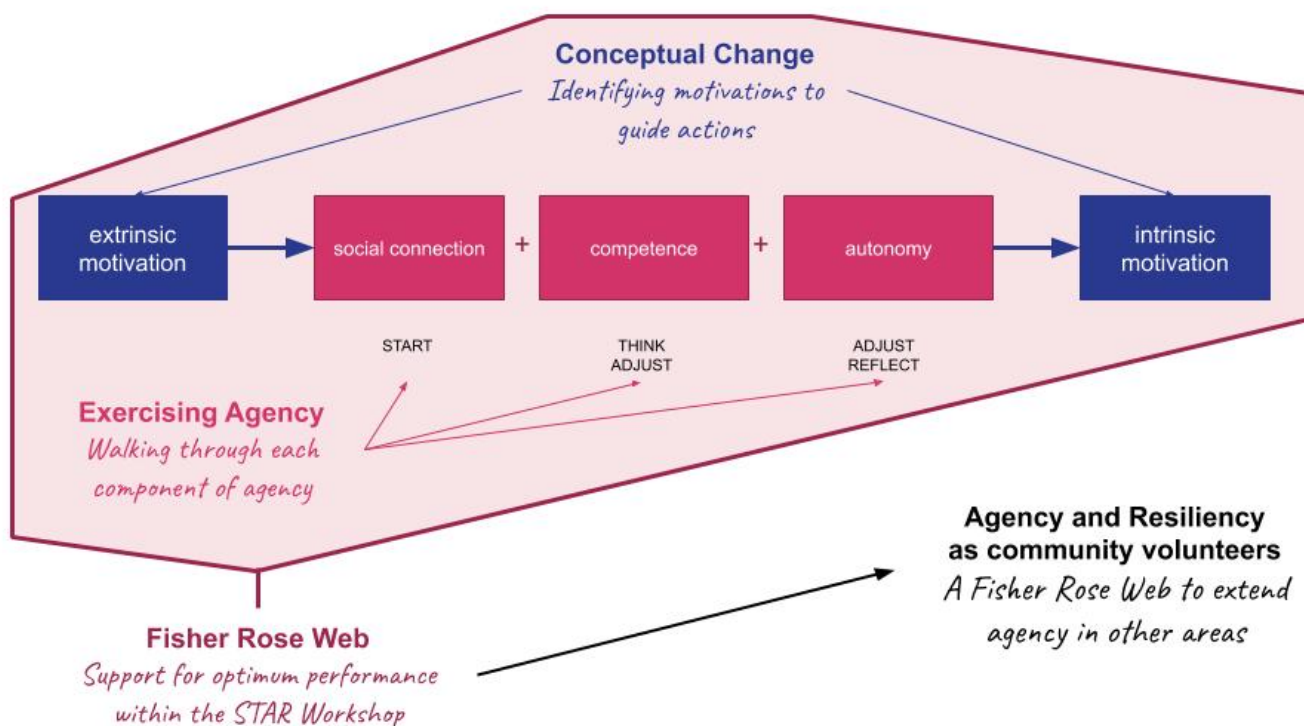
Despite lacking a sense of connection, military spouses are community-conscious - 96% feel it is important to work to improve their communities and 71% of military families actively volunteer (Blue Star Families, 2018). Volunteering can increase the informal social support available to a spouse, which has proven to increase the ability to cope effectively with spouse separation due to training or deployment (Orthner and Rose, 2009). Two motivations for volunteering have been identified: intrinsic - volunteering because doing so aligns with a personal sense of values - and extrinsic motivations which include: social, protective, enhancing, understanding, and career (Finkelstien, 2009; Kwak, Choi, and Wang, 2013). If an extrinsically motivated volunteer's needs are unmet, they are unlikely to volunteer again; however, intrinsic volunteering positively impacts well-being, decreases depression, forms a sense of identity and self-efficacy, and fosters informal social support (Konrath, Fuhrel-Forbis, Lous, & Brown, 2013;

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Wilson and Musick, 1999). The STAR Volunteer Workshop aims to educate Army spouse volunteers about intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, lead in self-discovery of the individual's own motivations, inform volunteer leaders how to identify others' motivations, and equip volunteer organizations to create opportunities for each extrinsically motivated volunteers to develop competency and autonomy in their positions. Fostering competency and autonomy should help volunteers develop intrinsic motivation, allowing them to reclaim a sense of identity as a volunteer, as well as initiating a conception of agency within a small portion of life, equipping the Army spouse to seek out opportunities and take an active role in developing agency and resiliency beyond volunteering.

Figure 1

Core Concept Design of the STAR Volunteer Workshop



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Core Concepts of the STAR Volunteer Workshop

There are three key concepts highlighted throughout the STAR Volunteer Workshop: conceptual change, motivation, agency, and the Fischer-Rose Web (Figure 1). Conceptual change is the overarching human development concept; however, only motivation and agency are explicitly discussed within the workshop. The Fischer-Rose Web serves as a basis for the design of the workshop.

Individual Agency and Identity

Many aspects of the military spouse's life are externally controlled: timing of moves, assignment of duty stations, and separation from spouse due to training and deployments. Bandura (2001) developed Social Cognitive Theory, exploring the conception and formation of agency. The core idea of agency is that individuals are not only shaped by experiences; rather, we have capacity to actively control our experiences and the outcomes thereof (Bandura, 2001). Individual agency is comprised of four elements: intentionality, forethought, self-regulation, and self-reflection (Bandura, 2001). Intentionality means the individual makes a deliberate choice for future course of actions. Forethought refers to establishing a plan to accomplish the intentional goal. Self-regulation requires consideration of outcomes and adjusting the plan of action to maintain motivation, while self-reflection assesses the individual's motivation itself, and weighs the course of action against values and sense of purpose (Bandura, 2001). For the military spouse, agency can be an issue. Explicit discussion of agency; therefore, is the core feature of the STAR Volunteer Workshop. Bandura's four components of agency have been translated into action steps for the STAR Volunteers to navigate:

- **Start** with purpose (intentionality)
- **Think** about motivations and plan to match opportunities (forethought)

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- **Adjust** volunteer commitments, resources, and tasks to meet goals (self-regulation)
- **Reflect** on motivations, efficacy of plans in fulfilling purpose (self-reflection)

Motivations

Understanding motivation is crucial to providing appropriate social support and resiliency to military spouses. Ryan and Deci (2000) developed Self Determination Theory (SDT), identifying two motivations from which people operate: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivators are self-derived, where the individual is rewarded simply by pursuing the activity itself, while extrinsic motivators involve some kind of reward outside of self and outside of the activity (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Ryan and Deci (2000) recognized three inherent needs: the need for competence, autonomy, and social connection. Social connection is predominantly the driving force for human activity. People operating with extrinsic motivations are typically doing so because they are first and foremost trying to establish social connection. Once an individual establishes social connection, if he or she is able to perform an activity proficiently (competence), having made decisions and established a sense of controlling the outcome (autonomy), it is possible for the individual to move from being extrinsically motivated to intrinsically motivated (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

Volunteer Motivations

Finkelstein (2009) explored the impact of intrinsic versus extrinsic motivations specifically in volunteers. If an individual is volunteering from intrinsic motivation, that is, to align with an individual sense of values, they will reap the resiliency benefits, form a sense of identity as a volunteer, and repeat volunteering (Finkelstien, 2009). Considering agency, when an individual chooses to volunteer in a way that aligns with personal values (with intrinsic motivation), an individual will be able to successfully self-regulate and self-reflect and an

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identity as a volunteer will develop as the individual intentionally chooses to continue volunteering. From a SDT perspective, intrinsic motivations are fulfilled by completing the activity itself, providing a self-fulfilling competence and autonomy (Ryan and Deci, 2000). There are other, extremely valid reasons to volunteer, considered extrinsic motivations; such as the desire to develop a skill, gain experience, fill a gap in a resume, or simply make friends (Finkelstien, 2009). When individuals volunteer with extrinsic motivations, if the volunteer opportunity does not meet their needs, the volunteers are not likely to volunteer again nor will they experience the resiliency benefits.

Conceptual Change

There are few major decisions a military spouse can deliberately make: the military delivers orders indicating the moving location and a report date, housing is assigned on post, and employment may not be feasible. With the idea of agency fading away in many areas of life, military spouses settle for volunteering to develop a sense of purpose. A writer for SpouseBuzz describes the process (2009):

I struggle with [whether or not to get a job with each new move] as a wife, mother, and professional.... I decided NOT to get a job. I quickly became involved in multiple volunteer activities and have enjoyed each and every one of them. Plus, I get to go to the gym a few times a week while the kids are in school.... [my husband asked], "I thought you wanted a job?" [I replied], I DID! But I decided to volunteer since I can't get a job. If money is such an issue, I'll go get whatever I can find that has nothing to do with my heard-earned [sic] master's degree and be miserable.

Strike and Posner (1985) proposed a conceptual change theory of learning in which an individual cannot learn what they cannot conceive; thus learning begins with adjusting current

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conceptions. If the current conception for most Army spouses is that they cannot have their career of choice, so they settle for volunteering, the initial task of the STAR Volunteer Workshop is to identify specific motivations for volunteering that STAR Volunteers can decisively act upon. This small step is the first step toward developing the conception that fulfilling motivations provides the opportunity for learning to act as an agent in their own lives, to reclaim a locus of control, develop an identity, and have an active role in promoting resiliency through the volunteer experience.

This conceptual change takes place over three phases: initial understanding, deeper understanding, and accommodation (Strike and Posner, 1985). The initial understanding introduces the new conception, providing a framework to build the conception upon. Deeper understanding occurs as the participants realize the new conception is plausible and can solve existing problems across a variety of real-world examples to confirm that the framework is useful. Accommodation pushes the new conception beyond the examples provided, applying the conceptual framework to complex problems and new situations. Conceptual change is not a definitive point; rather, a process that can retrace through the various steps as new situations challenge a framework's plausibility and utility. The STAR Volunteer Workshop was developed with a scaffolding design throughout the sessions, as learning is not predicated upon transfer of the information, but upon the transfer of responsibility to the participant to activate and engage the concepts (van de Pol, Volman, and Beishuizen, 2010). Each session of the STAR Volunteer Workshop scaffolds conceptual change, phase by phase building understanding, and ultimately, asking participants to accommodate the adjusted conception of fostering agency beyond the role as a Volunteer Leader.

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Fischer-Rose Web

In order to accommodate conceptual change beyond volunteering, participants must first feel proficient with applying agency as Volunteer Leaders within the workshop. Fischer and Rose (2001) introduced the concept of a web of skills to support learning development for students. They suggested that by supporting the student and allowing the student to operate at a level beyond their own individual capacity with help from a teacher, over time, the web of skills would knit together, increasing their capacity to learn and their individual performance would improve. In the same way, participants explicitly learn how to support volunteers with extrinsic motivations by meeting their needs and fostering the social connection, competence, and autonomy necessary for the volunteer to adopt intrinsic motivations. They learn how to offer a Supportive Volunteer Community through positive relationships with peers and a place within the organization, so the volunteers can navigate their own motivations for volunteering because their needs are met. Throughout the learning process, the components of intrinsic motivation, steps of agency, and conceptual change framework are not volunteer-specific, although applied to real-world volunteering examples. This transforms the STAR Volunteer Workshop itself into a Fischer-Rose web of learning, allowing each participant to walk through the steps of agency and experience the phases of conceptual change with the support of the facilitator and peers, optimizing the learning experience, and offering the tools necessary to extend agency beyond the volunteer experience.

Participants and Challenges

The primary focus of the STAR Volunteer Workshop is the Army spouse, who has a unique set of challenges regarding employment and agency. There are great advantages to working with this population as well. Although 67% of the military families do not feel a sense

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of belonging, 65% believe most people in the local community are willing to help each other and have a grassroots approach to support, citing peers as their source of support (Blue Star Families, 2019). Within the Army Community, workshops are offered to the community and available through a voluntary commitment. This means the participants will not only exhibit the Military-wide commitment to volunteerism, but they will have elected themselves as leaders of the volunteer community.

Playing off of this assumed determination to impact the community for the greater good, participants will be addressed as STAR Volunteer Leaders, and motivation and agency will be explicitly unpacked throughout the workshop. Addressing the participants as STAR Volunteer *Leaders* is indicative of the scaffolding employed throughout the workshop, by immediately challenging participants to develop their self-conception as leaders and asking the participants to accept responsibility for the content, rather than deferring the knowledge to a perceived expert (van de Pol, Volman, and Beishuizen, 2010). This approach thrusts the STAR Volunteer Leaders into the role of tutors in training, who will employ and explain the key concepts with their peers beyond the confines of the workshop, drawing on the literature suggesting learning occurs for both tutors and tutees, particularly when the tutors are primed to understand that learning is a process, rather than a transfer of knowledge (Roscoe and Chi, 2007).

Understanding Goals

In order to develop the key concepts, the STAR Volunteer Workshop is designed as a one-day, four session workshop, with a follow-up session one month later. Each session builds on the previous one, scaffolding the transfer of responsibility for the material by challenging participants to take responsibility for the learning process by utilizing the knowledge gained and engaging to build concepts together. There are two overarching understanding goals, (the

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learning that will occur as a result of the workshop), reflecting the conceptual change that will occur as a result of the workshop:

- STAR Volunteer Leaders will understand how to identify and fulfill external motivations to develop intrinsic motivation and identity through fostering agency.
- STAR Volunteer Leaders acknowledge the process-dependent nature of developing agency, deliberately planning to implement agency beyond the workshop in real-world situations.

Figure 2

STAR Volunteer Workshop Structure

	Session One	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
Conceptual Change	<i>Minimal Understanding</i>	<i>Deeper: Plausibility</i>	<i>Deeper: Solves Problem</i>	<i>Accommodation</i>
	<i>Introduce Star Agency</i>	<i>Introduce Volunteer Motivations</i>	<i>Social Connect; Competence, Autonomy Agency: Start, Think, Adjust, Reflect</i>	<i>Motivations: Reassessment Agency: Adjust and Reflect</i>

In order to scaffold the learning process, each session is driven by specific sub-goals, systematically progressing the development of agency and conceptual change with each session:

- Session One: Participants will identify as STAR Volunteer Leaders
- Session Two: STAR Volunteer Leaders will be equipped to decipher Volunteer Motivations

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- Session Three: STAR Volunteer Leaders will recognize each volunteer commitment as an opportunity to exercise agency
- Session Four: STAR Volunteer Leaders will identify opportunities to utilize agency in supporting Army Spouses within the Army Community
- Follow-Up Session: STAR Volunteer Leaders will identify any changes in motivation and engage agency to adjust goals and plans

Session One: Participants will identify as STAR Volunteer Leaders

Session One of the STAR Volunteer Workshop begins by immediately challenging the participants' conceptions by introducing two analogies. The first analogy describes the Army spouse as a passenger in a helicopter. The Army is the pilot, determining the destination and the soldiers are the crewmembers who are active and crucial to the mission. Passengers tag along, buckle-up, and wait for landing. The second analogy features the Army spouse as a lead actor, one of three actors on a stage. The Army decides the location of the stage, where a three-person show will be performed. The three actors are the soldier, the military kids, and the Army spouse. The participants are asked if they relate to either analogy, but they are also asked to consider how the two analogies differ. Through exploration of the analogy, participants realize they are able to influence the performance, respond to the movements of other characters, change the pace and tone of the performance, and feel the warmth of the spotlight – they are STARS. The analogy introduces the aim of the workshop: create STAR volunteers.

The use of analogy serves two specific purposes for the learning process: to convey hard to describe emotion and to draw a bridge from specific situations to broader applications (Holyoak, Gentner, and Kokinov, 2001). The difference between the analogies presented in the workshop is the adjusted conception of acting with agency. Agency, as a state of mind, can be

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difficult to grasp without a previous experience to draw from; however, participants have a clear sense of the agentic state of mind through the contrasting analogies, providing the initial understanding necessary to initiate conceptual change as well as a framework to build the STAR Volunteer Workshop concepts upon. The analogy will also serve the participants beyond the workshop as a framework to extend agency beyond their role as STAR Volunteer Leaders. The use of analogy and leading questions employs active construction and social connection, two key components of project-based learning seeking to promote deeper understanding and broader application of the materials (Krajcik and Blumenfeld, 2005). An example is provided through the SpouseBuzz Volunteer quote, explaining the process behind her decision to volunteer. The analogy begins to construct a framework for STAR agency and the example provides a real-life scenario to apply the framework to, in order to reinforce the initial understanding for conceptual change. Both the STAR analogy and the SpouseBuzz Volunteer are carried throughout the workshop sessions for continuity.

Session Two: STAR Volunteer Leaders will be equipped to decipher Volunteer Motivations

The second session of the STAR Volunteer Workshop scaffolds conceptual change, by establishing the plausibility of the adjusted conception that there are a variety of volunteer motivations to decisively act upon. Verifying plausibility leads to a deeper understanding, the second phase of conceptual change. Session Two provides a short quiz to identify participants' own motivations and distinguishes between the various extrinsic and intrinsic motivations. Two important outcomes are identified: volunteer retention for extrinsic motivation and identity formation through intrinsic motivation. Identifying their own motivations and understanding why motivations matter solidifies the plausibility of the adjusted conception, demonstrating that the framework applies to real life, even to the way their own minds work.

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Although Session Two utilizes three slides relaying information, the session is designed to scaffold the transfer of responsibility for the material to the participants. Instead of asking the participants to memorize the material, a mind mapping activity, working through identifying volunteer motivations as a group, is presented to ask the participants to apply the material directly. The mind mapping activity is a targeted strategy to lighten the cognitive load early on in the workshop and will be displayed throughout the remaining workshop to serve as a reference. By having the information downloaded visually, the participants should have a greater capacity for application of the material and while learning through contextual problem solving, the motivations, although not pressured into memory, will also be retained (Perkins, Simmons, and Tishman, 1999).

Session Three: STAR Volunteer Leaders will recognize each volunteer commitment as an opportunity to exercise agency

Throughout the workshop, exploring volunteer motivations is the method to scaffold the development of agency and foster conceptual change in the participants. Session Three deepens the understanding necessary for conceptual change, by providing a variety of examples to prove the problem-solving possibilities of the adjusted conception. The material in Session Three directly identifies the development of STAR agency (Start, Think, Adjust, Reflect) within the shift to intrinsic motivation through Ryan and Deci's social connection, competence, and autonomy (2000). Social connection is where everything Starts for those with extrinsic motivations. Competence, the ability to complete a task proficiently, requires an individual to Think (plan tasks that match motivations and can be completed well) and Adjust (play to strengths). Autonomy, the ability to make decision and impact outcomes, the fulfillment of agency, requires one to Adjust (make changes to tasks and commitments in order to play to

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strengths) and Reflect (re-assessing motivations and whether plans fulfill present purposes).

Walking through each STAR action step and marrying them to shifting motivations throughout Session 3 provides an exercise in agency within each STAR Volunteer Leader's position, thus the opportunity to solidify each participant's identity as a STAR Volunteer Leader capable of utilizing agency within the role.

In order to identify each volunteer activity as an opportunity to develop agency, STAR Volunteer Leaders must first understand that most people volunteering with extrinsic motivations are initially seeking to establish social connections. Identifying the relationship between extrinsic motivations and establishing social connection is the first action step in developing STAR agency: Start with Purpose. Bandura's initial step of intentionality requires making a deliberate choice impacting the future course of action (2001). Start with Purpose, then, provides a direct application of the adjusted conceptual framework.

The second step of STAR agency Think asks participants to consider "How can we meet Extrinsic Motivations while fostering Social Connection?" utilizing the SpouseBuzz Volunteer in a role-playing scenario. Role-playing scenarios provide an opportunity for participants to realize the adjusted conception fits with real world examples, aligns with their own sense of the way the world works, and is capable of solving problems, all leading to deeper understanding.

Participants work in groups to identify the extrinsic motivation guiding the SpouseBuzz decision to volunteer. After identifying the extrinsic motivation, the group is asked to assign tasks that will match the extrinsic motivation, while fostering social connection. This exercise serves to foster social connection for the participants through active construction in a project-based learning situation. The project-based learning design of the workshop serves to walk participants through each step of agency as Volunteer Leaders, providing additional reinforcement of the

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plausibility and problem-solving capacity of the adjusted conception, proving it is important to identify volunteer motivations, in order to provide opportunities to meet the needs of the volunteer, deepening the understanding as part of the conceptual change process.

Project-based learning also provides valuable feedback to the facilitator. If participants are unable to adapt the terminology at all, the facilitator has a red flag that there is no foundation to build upon and may take time to revisit the key concepts of the workshop. This type of assessment is considered formative assessment and provides opportunities to enrich the learning experience through scaffolding the transfer of information only as the participant is ready to build the concepts (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Formative assessment is crucial to at this point in the workshop, as these concepts of intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivations, and STAR agency - particularly Start and Think, are the bedrock of information as well as the learning requiring the lightest cognitive load. It would be difficult to move beyond these steps, if the participants have not yet demonstrated understanding through correct identification of motivations and an understanding of the need for each STAR Volunteer Leader to take responsibility upon herself to fulfill motivations through the volunteer experience for self and others. The role-playing scenario provides the necessary feedback to the facilitator to signal readiness to move into the metacognitive Adjust and Reflect.

In order to make this transition to the metacognitive Adjust and Reflect action steps, the STAR volunteer action steps are revisited and the shift from extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation (through developing agency) is presented in the form of a process flow chart (Figure 3). The flow chart again serves to lighten the cognitive load as a visual download. As Adjust and Reflect are the more challenging metacognitive components of STAR agency, but vital to the

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process of forming and exercising agency, Adjust and Reflect are the focus for the remainder of the workshop.

Figure 3

STAR Volunteer Agency within Motivational Shift



The first Adjust exercise asks participants to utilize the mind map of motivations to assign tasks that will maximize competency for each extrinsic motivation. This exercise is the first to marry the idea of matching motivations and developing intrinsic motivation through fostering agency, continuing to prove the value of the adjusted conception. Closing Session 3, participants are asked to Reflect: “How can we engage autonomy?” Providing opportunities for autonomy is not inherently easy for all Volunteer Leaders. Working in small groups, STAR Volunteer Leaders write position descriptions outlining tasks that promote competence and autonomy for at least one of the common Army community positions listed. This exercise challenges participants to perform within their new conception as STAR Volunteer Leaders, affirming that the new conception not only fits what could be, but functions within their understanding. Working in small groups and regrouping to discuss the newly created position descriptions serves to lighten the load for individual STAR Volunteer Leaders and provides the application of concepts necessary to encourage automatization of the information, that is, establishing a general plan of action for each extrinsic motivation to be enacted each time the

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extrinsic motivation is encountered. This automatization is another strategy to reduce the load of learning (Perkins, Simmons, and Tishman, 1999).

Session Four: STAR Volunteer Leaders will identify opportunities to utilize agency in supporting Army Spouses within the Army Community

The fourth and final session of the STAR Volunteer Workshop session explicitly asks the STAR Volunteer Leaders to accommodate conceptual change, by pushing them to function within the adjusted conception as well as expanding the application of the conception beyond the established function within volunteering. Central to engaging conceptual change and agency, Session Four reinforces the process-dependent nature of each, revisiting the Adjust and Reflect action steps and deliberately guiding participants in planning to implement agency beyond the workshop. The session begins by reviewing the STAR Action steps, translating them into questions STAR Volunteer Leaders can utilize in communicating with volunteer peers. The Session Four Adjust activity asks participants to brainstorm questions to measure progress in competency. The Reflect activity is a group task of charting a timeline to reassess motivations for each participant as well as volunteer peers. Both of these activities are metacognitive tools the participants can utilize to facilitate their own learning and formation of agency, as well as impacting their peers. These activities employ a time-sharing strategy, or intermittently interrupting cognitive thought to engage metacognitive reflection, utilized systematically to increase metacognitive thought (Perkins, Simmons, and Tishman, 1999). This purposeful pause acknowledges the development of agency and conceptual change as processes requiring intermittent examination to remind oneself to employ the strategies acquired and reassess the usefulness of the conceptions we operate within. Providing multiple activities and examples for Adjust and Reflect across Session Three and Four, not only fosters abstraction of the ideas to

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facilitate learning the material, but also primes the participants for the final phase of conceptual change, accommodation.

Pushing the STAR Volunteer Workshop to the pinnacle understanding goal (STAR Volunteer Leaders acknowledge the process-dependent nature of developing agency, deliberately planning to implement agency beyond the workshop in real-world situations) Session 4 concludes by asking participants “How can promoting a sense of agency as a STAR Volunteer support Army Spouses within the Army community during PCS (military move) and deployment?”. Throughout the workshop, participants have applied the framework of the adjusted conception (acting with agency) to volunteer-specific examples. Extending the framework to additional scenarios implicitly asks the participants to accommodate the adjusted conception, the final phase of conceptual change. In accommodation, the framework is applied to new situations, beyond volunteering, and increasingly complex situations, such as deployment, where there the spouses operate in a variety of roles and tasks. The Adjust and Reflect activities serve as active construction opportunities for participants to solidify the possibility of utilizing agency in all areas of life. The final activity of the STAR Volunteer Workshop challenges each individual STAR Volunteer Leader to create a plan to continue engaging agency beyond the workshop. Suggestions include: planning timesharing moments to exercise Adjust and Reflect, purposeful communication within volunteer organizations, and identifying ways to act with competence and autonomy within present volunteer roles both for self and peers.

Follow-Up Session

The Understanding Goal driving the Follow-Up Session is that STAR Volunteer Leaders will identify any changes in motivation and engage agency to adjust goals and plans. Because one cannot definitively arrive at agency or conceptual change, rather, they are processes that

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inherently require self-reflection and adjustment; the Follow-Up Session itself serves as a timesharing moment for the metacognitive Adjust and Reflect components of STAR agency. Participants will have opportunities to reassess individual volunteer motivations and to share examples of social connection, competence, and/or autonomy experienced or created by the STAR Volunteer Leaders within their volunteer roles and the Army community. The session will focus on asking how the STAR Volunteer Leader has implemented the key concepts of the STAR Volunteer Workshop. Discussion questions such as “Have any STAR Volunteer Leaders utilized the Feedback Questions designed in Session 4?” and “Are you meeting your Session 4 goals?” complete the transfer of responsibility to the participant as the workshop moves beyond the construction of concepts to real-world application.

Assessment

Following each exercise, the workshop regroups to discuss the material. This discussion provides the facilitator with valuable information about the learning process. The participants should early on begin using the new terms presented: STAR volunteer, agency, intrinsic motivation, and extrinsic motivation, because the activities are specifically asking them to do so. The Follow-Up session provides valuable assessment of the transfer of responsibility to the learner and the engagement of agency. The Follow-Up session, by nature of the steps of agency, Adjust and Reflect, provides formative assessment both for the individual as well as the facilitator. The facilitator can see any direct implementation of the STAR agency steps and key concepts in the Follow-Up discussion. The design of the program acknowledges the need for real-time feedback both to grasp the key concepts and to engage the key concepts beyond the workshop. Agency is not a definitive end, rather a process requiring constant consideration and activation. The STAR Volunteer Workshop is designed around the stepwise progression and

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repetition in developing agency and the assessment of learning is likewise reflective of the necessity of immediate feedback throughout the active construction learning process.

Critique

The STAR Volunteer Workshop creates an opportunity to develop agency within a small aspect of Army community life, with the hopes of engaging agency in other domains of life. Due to the nature of agency, as a process, rather than a destination, the major critique of the workshop is the lack of guarantee that any development of agency will occur. Agency by nature requires the individual to take ownership of situations. The workshop likewise proceeds by utilizing optimistic biases regarding participants. Because the program would be offered within the Army Community, voluntary investment of time in completing the workshop is viewed as a commitment to enhancing the community, a trait common among military spouses (BlueStar Families, 2018). The voluntary enrollment in the workshop also assumes the individual's self-identification as a leader in the community. These elements alone prime the individual to be receptive to the concept of agency, as they would be operating with intrinsic motivation (in taking the course), thus already implementing some amount of autonomy. Completing the workshop would fulfill their motivation, as it would reaffirm them as volunteer leaders capable of impacting the community. Considering the various extrinsic motivations, if an individual is merely accompanying a friend, she may be seeking to fulfill social connection alone, a motivation the workshop should match through group engagement. If the participant is seeking to add a skill to her resume, it would be useful to offer a certificate of completion that may be added to her VMIS (Army Volunteer Management Information System) profile. Considering the extrinsic motivations of developing a new skill and gaining experience, provided the workshop is not too far from the participants' initial perceptions, the activities within may provide enough

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exposure to fulfill the motivation and open the door to agency. An individual who is truly struggling with agency in life and does not view herself as capable of impacting her community would be the biggest challenge within the workshop, yet the individual the STAR Workshop most hopes to reach. The design of the program to consider participants tutors in training addresses this specific challenge; however, again, there is no guarantee that learning will occur within or outside of the classroom. The scaffolding design throughout the workshop, actively constructing and walking through each step of agency collectively, with the support of the facilitator, allows participants to operate at their fullest potential, much like a Fischer-Rose (2001) supportive learning environment, with the hope of increasing the capacity of the individual participant's potential beyond the supportive setting. However, Fischer and Rose's research explored one-on-one teacher-student interaction, not a group setting where individual support necessitates direct contributions from the participant for the facilitator's formative assessment.

Conclusion

The STAR Volunteer Workshop aims to increase agency and resiliency in Army spouse volunteers by developing the conception that identifying and fulfilling motivations in volunteer roles provides the opportunity for learning to act with agency in every area of life. The concept of settling for volunteering when all other options are stripped away is immediately challenged and the analogy of the Army spouse as a STAR, one of three lead roles in a play, capable of influence, is established in its place. Beyond this initial understanding, conceptual change is developed by leading participants through deeper understanding, implicitly requiring participants to accommodate the adjusted conception. Agency is likewise explored by walking through each step of STAR agency - Start, Think, Adjust, Reflect, providing an opportunity to develop agency

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within and a plan to extend agency beyond the workshop. Fostering agency within volunteers and fulfilling extrinsic motivations produces intrinsic motivation, identity, and numerous health and resiliency benefits. Within the support of the workshop, participants establish a framework for agency that can extend to all areas of life, encouraging them to step out of the helicopter and into the spotlight.

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