Korea Healthy Living Guide

• Commentary: The things that matter most
• Great spots to heal your mind & body
• A career counseling, consoling troops
• A fallen soldier: A widow’s grief

8-PAGE PULLOUT
The things that matter most

BY MASTER SGT. ERIK LARSON. STRIPES KOREA

“The things that matter most must never be at the mercy of the things that matter least.”

— Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

There is so much to do in the military; like any career, if you are not careful, the job can take your whole life away. With that said, I would like to share an experience that made me realize time is our most valuable resource, and we should spend it on what matters most.

One day at work, I started experiencing chest pain and pounding pressure. The pressure grew progressively worse, and I realized I needed to have myself checked out by a doctor. I messaged my wife (who worked nearby), and she drove me to the emergency room. The medical technicians hooked me up to machines. The doctor told me to lie down, breathe, and relax, so I laid back to sleep. The experience of my career in the United States Air Force were foremost in my thoughts. I remembered a master sergeant I worked with in my thoughts.

Air Force were foremost in the experiences of my career in the United States Air Force. He was a highly respected and highly skilled airman. The master sergeant asked him why this was happening. The master sergeant asked him why this was happening. The master sergeant asked him why this was happening. The master sergeant asked him why this was happening. The master sergeant asked him why this was happening.

Although this was a scary experience, I realized we have no guarantee of tomorrow; we only have the present time. I have been able to put what I have learned from these development books into practice and have gained confidence by improving my communication skills. I now do my best to be straightforward and express my intent to those that can help me reach my goals. What matters most is not the same for everyone, so I challenge you to find out what matters most for you and spend time doing it.

I have been able to realize one of the things that matters most to me is personal development. I have been able to develop the healthy habit of filling my mind with the rich mental protein found in a myriad of personal development books. I have noticed that I progress and grow through reading personal development books and taking notes to internalize the things I am reading. There are so many to do in the military; like any career, if you are not careful, the job can take your whole life away.

I was able to realize one of the things that matters most to me is personal development. I have been able to develop the healthy habit of filling my mind with the rich mental protein found in a myriad of personal development books. I have noticed that I progress and grow through reading personal development books and taking notes to internalize the things I am reading. There are so many to do in the military; like any career, if you are not careful, the job can take your whole life away.

bet you will surprise yourself. I have been able to realize one of the things that matters to me is personal development. I have been able to develop the healthy habit of filling my mind with the rich mental protein found in a myriad of personal development books. I have noticed that I progress and grow through reading personal development books and taking notes to internalize the things I am reading. There are so many to do in the military; like any career, if you are not careful, the job can take your whole life away.

About the writer: MSGT. Erik Larson is stationed at Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, but is currently on a 7-month deployment to Djibouti. He writes so he can “give perspective on my military/personal life to make a positive impact in the lives of others.”
WOMEN MEDIPARK HOSPITAL

※ Opens: Weekdays – 9 a.m. – 6 p.m./ Saturday – 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
※ 24 hour emergency care & delivery with specialist care

Specialty Vaginoplasty Center
Rebirth of Venus

“30 years of Venus design cosmetic surgery. Supporting inner confidence and rejuvenation...”

Experience the benefits of youth again...

Get rid of the uterine tumor without any surgery!

Without side-effects!

Ultra-precise, ultra-fast, ultra-powerful, high-definition, high-quality multi-tasking procedure!

HIFU

Way of using Germany Multi-lens

Get rid of the uterine Myoma, adenomyoma and multiplicity huge leiomyoma without any surgery!!

Procedure is safe for women who plan on becoming pregnant in the future.

Over 1,000 cases of HIFU surgery procedure


English Coordinator
010-9095-7264
www.md-park.co.kr/english/
Mountains? Check. Ocean? Check. Natural hot springs, forest trails, eco-parks. Double check. Busan and the surrounding areas are packed with some of the most beautiful and vibrant natural travel destinations found on the Korean Peninsula, and we’d be as bold as to say in the entire world.

However, it’s not just the beauty of Busan that attracts tourists from all across the globe. Busan is becoming a top destination in the wellness tourism world, and things are heating up even as the weather cools down.

Worldwide, wellness tourism is on the rise, with luxury wellness destinations popping up everywhere from Argentina to Zimbabwe, and now Korea is getting a slice of the $500 billion market.

According to the Global Wellness Institute, Wellness Tourism is the fastest growing travel sector, growing almost 50% faster than the industry overall, and we can expect to see big changes over the next few years.

Wellness tourism is travel designed to improve health and quality of life through wellness related activities like meditation, spa treatments, hiking, nature walks and exercise. Although a relatively new concept in Korea, wellness tourism has become a hot topic in the past couple of years.

By combining new and exciting wellbeing programs with existing markets, including K-beauty, medical tourism, spas, health cuisine etc. Korean wellness tourism looks to attract new and repeat travelers who want to spend their money on self-improvement and wellbeing.

According to the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, South Gyeongsang Province has been tapped as the country’s base for wellness tourism. Busan, Korea’s second largest city and largest port city, has all the makings of the perfect wellness destination, with abundant natural environments perfect for healing the mind, body and soul.

Healing Forest in Cheolma-myeon, Gijang-gun is newly included in the wellness spots recommended by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and Korea Tourism Organization. Selected as one of the new wellness attractions by the Korean Tourism Organization, the KTO has been recommending sites for healing and health travel since 2017.

Healing Forest, operated by Busan City, operates five healing programs which include Forests for Rest and Forests with Rest and Scent. Other locations around Korea which were added to the list this year include:

- Paradise City Cimer (Incheon)
- Therapispa Sobe (Gwangju)
- Chudasan Resort and Tea Meditation (Seogwipo, Jeju)
- Island Castle (Uijongbu, Gyeonggi-do)
- Paradise Spa Dogo (Asan, Chungnam)
- Jeonnam area Environmental Disease Prevention and Management Center (Boseong, Jeonnam)
- Museum Mountain Meditation Center (Wonju, Gangwon-do)
- Yongpyeong Resort Bahyangsan (Pyeongchang, Gangwon-do)
- Hanwha Belvedere Wellness (Geoje, Gyeongnam)

Spa Land Centum City was previously included as a well-being tourist destination selected in 2017-2018. It is recommended as an urban recreational hot spring spot with 18 colorful hot springs, 13 themed jjimjilbangs, esthetic spa programs and a variety of other facilities.

In Gyeongnam, Sancheong Dongbobogam Village was included. It is the nation’s largest herbal theme park, with facilities such as Hanok Stay, Oriental Medicine Museum, Jjimjilbang, Yaksun Restaurant, and Herb Greenhouse.

You can check out a list of wellness destinations around Korea at the KTO website.

How to get there: Subway
Line 2 – Jangsan, exit 10 and walk uphill towards the mountain.

Jangsan Mountain
Beautiful Jangsan has an elevation of 634 meters and is popular with locals and tourists of all ages and fitness levels. Jangsan offers a full range of trails for everyone, and nature abound. Jangsan park is a great place for families to enjoy the fall foliage, and for the more adventurous hiker, go a little further into the mountain to discover the signs warning of an active land mine field – just make sure you don’t venture too far!
Geumgang Park

Best during October and November, the fallen leaves of red and gold create a red carpet fit for a Joseon King. Head into the crisp forest air, wander through the towering trees, standing to attention for each new visitor. The park is easily accessible by foot and leads to some of the most breathtaking views of the city. Hike up the many trails for an invigorating workout, or take the cable car for 8,000 won return, and sip a cup of makkoli (Korean rice wine) as you check out the sprawling views from the top!

How to get there: Subway
Line 1 – Oncheonjang Station, exit No.1.

Taejongdae Park

While some wouldn’t consider this a traditional forest trail or hiking trail, there’s no denying it is the perfect place to dive headfirst into nature and enjoy the invigorating power of the ocean. Take a walk to the top of Taejongdae through the tree-lined roads, or hop on the Danubi Train for a ride to the top. You’ll soon relax in the calming and comforting atmosphere of Taejongdae Park. Perfect for a Sunday stroll with the family, a romantic ‘Couple Course’ with the one you love, or choose the ‘Cruise Ship Course’ to get the wind in your hair.

How to get there: Bus
From Busan Station, take bus No. 88 or 101 and get off at Taejongdae Cliff Bus Stop. Other buses for Taejongdae: No. 8, 13, 30, 88, or 101.

Children’s Grand Park

Situated in the heart of the city, in the Busanjin-gu area, Children’s Grand Park offers visitors of all ages something to enjoy. Take a healing stroll around the walking trails, which are conveniently wheelchair and stroller accessible. Enjoy some freshly made pajeon (spring onion fritter) at one of the outdoor restaurants and gaze at the shimmering reservoir surrounded by trees. With additional facilities such as a small zoo, children playgrounds and experience zones, Children’s Grand Park is the perfect place for kids, and big kids, to relax and unwind.

How to get there: Subway
Take Bus No. 33, 44, 54, 63, 81, 83-1, 133 Or Village Bus No. 17
Get off at Children’s Grand Park
Subway Line 1 – Seomyeon, exit 13 and transfer to bus or taxi, Yengjeong, exit 5 and transfer to bus or taxi – Line 2 – Seomyeon, exit 2 and transfer to bus or taxi – Line 3 – Geojje, exit 8 and transfer to bus or taxi.

Democracy Park

Image: YouTube
Opened in 1999, Democracy Park symbolizes peace and honors the spirit of democracy, remembering the sacrifices of those who fought for Korea’s freedom. With facilities including an outdoor theatre, an observatory and exhibition halls, you can spend the day relaxing in the grounds, enjoying a game of baduk under the trees or find a quiet space in the democracy library.

How to get there: Bus
Take bus No. 38, 43, 70, 135, 190 and get off at Democracy Park bus stop
Subway Line 1 – get off at Busanjin, Choryang-dong or Busan station, transfer to bus or taxi.
A career counseling, consoling servicemembers

Hillary Valdez is a retiree living in Japan. Prior to his retirement, Valdez was a Master Resiliency Trainer at Camp Zama. Valdez has extensive experience working with the military as a certified Substance Abuse Counselor and Emergency Trauma Specialist. He continues to counsel members of the military community and is also a freelance writer, publishing books on relationships, psychology, mental health and the military. He’ll also be writing a column that will appear weekly in Stripes Japan. We recently sat down with Valdez to get to know him a little better. Here’s what he had to say.

What does a resilience trainer do?
Resiliency Trainers focus on positive psychology and finding positive elements in a person’s everyday life. The aim is improving well-being through enhancing: Self-awareness or identifying strengths emotions and behaviors; Optimism or what is controllable while being hopeful; Self-regulating emotions, and impulses; Mental Agility, or thinking flexibly; identifying a person’s top strengths and talents; and, Connection or improving positive communication, asking for support from others and increasing communication and strong relationships.

How long did you serve in the Marine Corps and what made you go into this field?
I served four years in the Marine Corps as an NCO then four years as a Civilian GS worker. When I was about 9 or 10 years old my neighbor had his Dress Blues hanging on the door, I was “wowed” at how beautiful the uniform was. I wanted to wear dress blues and join the Corps when I grew up. But, for the honor of wearing the “Blues” came with a heavy price. Eventually, I worked for the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C., as a Conciliation Specialist and Field Agent negotiating a broad range of civil and criminal activities. The Department trained me in various aspects of conflict resolution techniques. After that, more schooling and training with the Army and Navy with a focus on Trauma and Critical Incident psychology.

What are some of the mental health challenges troops and retirees face in the Pacific?
For the troops: loneliness. A degree of social isolation and alienation. Depression, Anxiety, and Stress. For retirees, depending on their retiree status, having limited access to quality medical and dental care; for some, no access to the commissary or PX; having enough money to make ends meet; health related issues from active duty; feelings of being alienated from America and uneasiness of adjusting to American life if they chose to return. Many military retirees are in mainland Japan, Okinawa, Thailand, Philippines, and Korea.

You’ve spent decades working with our military and their families, how do you cope with all the heartache you deal with? Who takes care of you?
I try not to personalize events. I want to stay objective and concentrate on the immediate needs of the family while keying into their emotional needs and well-being. It doesn’t do the client any good if I’m crying my eyes out while they are crying. However, as a helper, there is always a residual emotional side-effect of dealing with sorrow, you get emotionally “singed” to a degree. I have a support group and other Counselors who I speak with. I don’t sit around saying to myself: “Poor me, Poor me, Pour me a drink.” I don’t cope with my emotions by drinking. Alcohol is a depressant: I don’t want to be depressed, so, I go to the gym and ride my bike.

You’re retired but continue to work with patients. Tell us about your connection with the military community.
I’m retired, but my knowledge, skills, insights, and abilities remain. Concepts of retirement have changed. It’s not like great-grandpa days where you hobble around and do very little. Today, no such thing as retirement, you just change your role in society. You shift gears and transition into a livelihood that fits your lifestyle. For me, I enjoy helping people. Currently, I conduct Cultural Seminars to Japanese and I have a private practice catering to young business-men dealing with international marriages. Occasionally, I give seminars on Substance Abuse and Resiliency when called upon. However, I have active duty, civilian, and retiree friends in Japan, Korea, Manila and Bangkok, who I contact and meet regularly. All my closest friends and support groups are military associated. We chat at the gym, at breakfast, at the food court. My military friendships have become everlasting and meaningful.
When my brother died, my mother never recovered. Her grief never subsided. She was perpetually angry. Her despair and mood swings shifted through various states of depression, interspersed with crying spells. My father was quiet and supportive. I didn't know what to do or feel.

Later, I joined the Marine Corps, and during Vietnam, as a bugler, I played Taps at countless funerals, witnessing the sorrow of family members. After one burial, an inconsolable father grabbed my shoulders, and shaking me shouted, “Why is my son dead? Why are you alive?” Then collapsed in my arms, sobbing.

After post-graduate school, I served with Marines from the 2d Battalion, 7th Marines and 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, at the 29 Palms Combat Center. That Christmas, in 2005, 32 Marines were killed during combat operations of Operation Enduring Freedom, followed by two suicides. As a trauma counselor, I was tasked with providing defusings, which are psychological decompression sessions, for widows, family members and Marine survivors.

After this duty assignment, I spent two years dealing with my own post-traumatic stress, compassion-fatigue, bewilderment, nightmares, anger, and remorse. I had to re-wire my head, re-calibrate my psychological senses, re-boot my humanity, and outlook on life.

My next role was with the Army as a Survivor Outreach Manager, while training Casualty Assistance Officers dealing with active duty deaths. A military death is filled with complications. Death does not bring out the best in anyone, it is painful to witness the deep sorrow of the families left behind.

Military widows come in all ages, races and nationalities. Most of the husbands or wives had died suddenly and violently, in a foreign country, many were young. For a widow, the loss is life-changing. Their loved one is never coming home. The widower loses more than that person: they also face losing a part of themselves. And, children only complicate widowhood further.

There is no quick or pain-free way through grief. How and why a service member dies has a great impact on grief. The ordeal of military widowhood is just beginning. A nightmare has invaded the person’s life. There is a loss of purpose and a heightened sense of fragility emerges. The widows are forced to face their own mortality as the death has erased security from their lives.

Death is a critical time. Depression, anger, fear, emptiness, guilt, are common emotional reactions to sudden death. Grief affects every part of you, physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and psychologically. Pain and sorrow are the price of a love lost to death. Your emotions follow you and there is no geographical cure. Protecting America is a dangerous profession.


Death is complicated. Prepare for paperwork at a time of severe emotional grief. There are numerous resources for the widow or widower, too many to provide in this article. A more complete list of resources is available at: Military Widow: A Survival Guide/Steen & Asaro.

Hilary Valdez is a retiree living in Japan. He is an experienced Mental Health professional and Resiliency Trainer. Valdez is a former Marine and has worked with the military most of his career and most recently worked at Camp Zama as a Master Resiliency Trainer. Valdez now has a private practice and publishes books on social and psychological issues. His books are available on Amazon and for Kindle. Learn more about Valdez and contact him at www.hilaryvaldez.com or at InstantInsights@hotmail.com

The Health Plan that Covers You and your Family Worldwide

FOREIGN SERVICE BENEFIT PLAN

• Enjoy generous chiropractic, acupuncture, and massage therapy benefits
• Receive worldwide coverage – 200+ direct billing partners, overseas providers treated as in-network
• Use our convenient 24/7 emergency translation line & nurse advice line
• Earn wellness incentives to lower out-of-pocket medical costs
• Save with our competitive rates and low annual deductibles
• Keep this health plan, if you return to the U.S.

www.afsfa.org/fsbp
Daegu Catholic Univ. Medical Center

We are here for you in sickness and in health

**Department**

- Endocrinology and Metabolism
- Rheumatology
- Digestive Disease
- Circulatory Internal Medicine
- Nephrology
- Oncology And Hematology
- Pulmonology
- Infectious Disease
- Surgery
- Orthopedic Surgery
- Neurosurgery
- Thoracic & Cardiovascular Surgery
- Plastic Surgery
- Neurology
- Psychiatry
- Obstetrics And Gynecology
- Pediatrics And Adolescent Medicine
- Ophthalmology
- Otorhinolaryngology
- Dermatology
- Urology
- Anesthesiology And Pain
- Laboratory Medicine
- Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
- Family Medicine
- Emergency Medicine
- Radiation Oncology
- Radiology
- Pathology
- Dentistry

**Location:**
33, Duryugwongwon-ro 17-gil, Nam-gu, Daegu, Rep. of Korea
International Medical Center
(Cancer Center - Organ Transplantation Center, 3rd floor)

**Homepage:** [www.dcmc.co.kr/ihc](http://www.dcmc.co.kr/ihc)
**E-Mail:** dcmchc@gmail.com
**Phone:** +82-53-650-4716-7
**Language:** English, Russian

---

**International Insurance Support**