

How the Military Can Change Personalities, Slightly

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Miller-McCune:

What life experience is more immersive than marriage, more prolonged than college, more tightly regimented than the average job? Ah yes — military service, which starts with recruiters boldly announcing their intention to make a new man of every trainee. Surely drill sergeants believe they can change personalities.

But psychologists generally believe that our personalities don't change much over time. Just sticking to the Big Five, we remain mostly agreeable, extroverted, conscientious, neurotic, and open-minded throughout our lives.

“A lot of the discussion in the literature is that personality is so stable, if you go to college, or get married, your personality doesn't rearrange in this new environment,” said Josh Jackson, an assistant professor of psychology at Washington University in St. Louis. “The question that we attacked was, ‘OK, what's one of the most extreme experiences you could have?’

Read the whole story: [Miller-McCune](#)