



FORTITUDE

Values for Living—Cadet Character Development Forum (For Online Delivery)

INTRODUCTION

Each Values for Living helps Civil Air Patrol members explore a virtue from multiple angles and practice that virtue through a hands-on activity. The combination of analysis and practice helps members internalize the virtue so it stays with them beyond the end of the squadron meeting.

Fear gets a bad rap. Most of us are familiar with fears that hold us back and prevent us from living with excellence. We rarely allow ourselves to appreciate our fears. Fear can improve our performance, reveal dangers, and show us what we value most. By engaging and reflecting on our fears, we can develop the virtue of **fortitude**. Fortitude helps us to fear the right things in the right way at the right time.

PRECLASS CHECKLIST

Prior preparation is essential to success. Please prepare the following well ahead of time:

- All media installed and checked out
- Phase Three cadet orientation/training completed
- Participation awards such as candy or granola bar treats available
- Room arrangements complete

ATTENTION GETTER

LARGE GROUP FACILITATED BY CHAPLAIN/CDI/COMMANDER (5-10 MINUTES.)

Option 1: Media, “5 Tricks For Overcoming Fear”

This video responds to a young viewer who shared his fear of learning how to drive with 5 tricks for overcoming fear. (5:17) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlbPYzUftlw>

Option 2: Media, “How Fear and Anxiety Drove Human Evolution | Nat Geo Explores”

This National Geographic video shows how fear contributes to human survival. Like the lesson on Temperance, this video asks how our brains affect our behavior. (4:39)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6-HAPgVsv4>

Option 3: Media, from *The Replacements*¹

In this scene from a 2000 sports comedy, a football coach asks his players to acknowledge their fears. These players failed to make it as sports professionals. Now, because of a player's union strike, they have a second chance. Their first game ended in a tough loss and they are not willing to admit their fear of failure. We often do the same. We avoid confronting the fears, trying instead to "laugh them off" or hide them. When one player acknowledges his true fear, the others begin to open up. (3:36, Media file is available in the Axis LMS)

Option 4: Personal Story

Share a personal story about a fear that held you back. Tell the cadets how you faced your fear and how it changed your life. What lessons did you learn? How has your attitude toward fear changed?

UNDERSTANDING THE DESIRED BEHAVIOR

ONLINE GROUP OR SMALL GROUP FACILITATED BY PHASE III CADET (15 MINUTES.)

If possible, please allow cadet facilitators to pose these questions to small groups. The questions encourage cadets to reflect on their own experience of fear.

- Fear is the anticipation of harm. Consider some common fears. In each of these cases, what harm do you think the fear anticipates?
 - Fear of snakes
 - Fear of public speaking
 - Fear of authority figures
 - Fear of failure
- What changes do you notice in your body or in your thinking when you are afraid?
- Can you describe a time when fear became a hindrance to you?
- Can you describe a time when fear helped you?
- How can you tell the difference between a helpful fear and a hindering fear?
- How does fear affect the performance of teams?
- Can you describe a time when you confronted and conquered some fear? How did that experience change you?

¹ Video clip from *The Replacements* (2000 Warner Brothers) is provided under fair use copyright law for specific limited and transformative educational purpose. Please do not give clip files to anyone else.

APPLICATION OF THE BEHAVIOR TO THEIR LIVES

LARGE GROUP FACILITATED BY CHAPLAIN/CDI/COMMANDER (15 MINUTES)

- In your small groups, you discussed your experience of fear. You may have noticed that fears can be either helpful or harmful. In the rest of this lesson, we will discuss the way we face our fears, even turning them to our advantage. We use the word “fortitude” to name the virtue of facing our fears effectively.
- There are some things of which we *should* be afraid. For example, Aristotle argued that we should be afraid of disgrace. “One who fears disgrace is an honorable man with an appropriate sense of shame” (*Nichomachean Ethics*, III.6). How might someone act if he or she were not afraid of disgrace? Would you trust that person to wear our uniform?
- Besides disgrace, what else *should* we fear?
- Which fears might motivate us to live according to the Core Values?
- Fortitude is *not* the absence of fear. Instead, the absence of fear is usually called “recklessness” or “rashness.” What happens to people who are reckless or rash?
- Recklessness is an absence of fear; an excess of fear is cowardice. What happens to our lives when fears take over?
- With the help of reason, we can use fears to improve our lives. In the *Cadet Wingman Course*, you learned the basics of risk management. Risk management is about anticipating harm—that is, about fear! Using risk management as an example, how can you use fear to improve your lives?
- Think again of risk management: when are the most effective times to use your fears?
- Fortitude, then, is about fearing the right things in the right way at the right time. We will close this discussion with a little secret about fear: *fear arises from love*. We fear what is harmful to things we love, value, or cherish. If you want to know what you love or value, ask yourself, “Of what am I afraid?”

ACTIVITY

LED BY SMALL GROUP FACILITATORS OR ONLINE INSTRUCTOR (15-20 MINUTES.)

According to the medieval philosopher Thomas Aquinas, “the brave man chooses to think beforehand of the dangers that may arise, in order to be able to withstand them, or to bear them more easily.” In this activity, we will consider some common fears and the dangers they portend. We will try to understand these fears and consider how to use them to our advantage.

Facilitators should pick several of the common fears below and analyze them with their units. For each fear, ask the following questions:

- What harm does this fear anticipate?
- What do I value that this fear is trying to protect?
- How could this fear keep me safe?
- How could this fear hold me back?
- How could I prevent the harm revealed by this fear?

Below is a list of common fears. Facilitators should choose examples appropriate to the needs of their units.

- Fear of driving
- Fear of public speaking
- Fear of meeting new people
- Fear of taking tests
- "Fear of Missing Out" (FOMO)

LESSON SUMMARY AND WRAP-UP

LARGE GROUP FACILITATED BY CHAPLAIN/CDI/COMMANDER (2 MINUTES)

Fear is not the enemy. In moments of great danger, fear can be your friend. It can help you fight harder, run faster, and react more quickly. Fear can save your life. Even when danger is not immediate, fear can help you avoid unnecessary risks and even reveal what is most important to you. Remember that your fears are trying to help you. Approach them gradually and patiently; accept their invitation to practice your responses.

Fortitude is using your fears effectively or fearing the right things in the right way at the right time. By developing fortitude, you can become both more responsible and more daring. By engaging your fears, you can empower yourself to make the most of every opportunity.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"Fortitude is the deliberate facing of dangers and bearing of toils." – Marcus Tullius Cicero

"Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer fear, do not sit home and think about it. Go out and get busy." – Dale Carnegie

"The fear of man brings a snare." – Proverbs 29:25

"You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, 'I have lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along.' You must do the thing you think you cannot do." – Eleanor Roosevelt

"I'm not afraid of storms, for I'm learning how to sail my ship." – Louisa May Alcott

"One of the greatest discoveries a man makes, one of his great surprises, is to find he can do what he was afraid he couldn't do." – Henry Ford

"Don't let the fear of striking out hold you back." – Babe Ruth

"Bravery in unforeseen danger springs more from character, as there is less time for preparation; one might resolve to face a danger one can foresee, from calculation and on principle, but only a fixed disposition of fortitude will enable one to face sudden peril." – Aristotle