



FRIENDSHIP

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

INTRODUCTION

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

Poets and scientists agree that "No man is an island."¹ We are fundamentally social creatures. Our relationships shape our values and contribute to our happiness. The best relationships involve genuine **friendship**, in which we act for each other's good as we pursue a common life of virtue. In this lesson, we'll explore types of friendship and the behaviors that cultivate friendship.

PRECLASS CHECKLIST

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

- Be familiar with and test the online software platform you will use for the meeting
- Consider scheduling several sessions with fewer participants

Consult your wing IT Officer for conferencing resources the wing may already have in place.

This lesson is designed to be completed in 40 minutes if needed. Be aware that a free Zoom account allows a 40-minute meeting with up to 100 participants.

NOTE: Online group discussions will have a different tempo and may feel forced. Facilitators may choose to call on cadets to participate rather than asking for volunteers.

ATTENTION GETTER

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

Option 1: Multimedia

If you are using virtual meeting software, share this link with your participants and give them a few minutes to watch the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F18kSA8OxqY>

¹ John Donne: Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions and Seuerall Steps in my Sicknes - Meditation XVII, 1624

NOTE: The discussion questions below refer to ideas and distinctions explained in this video. If possible, please use the media option. You are welcome to share the video link with your participants prior to the lesson.

Option 2: Personal story

Before the lesson, watch the video linked above. Once your lesson begins, share a story about a friend who inspired you and the positive effects each of you have had on the other's life. How are each of you better people because of the friendship? Explain the three kinds of friendship—pleasure, utility, and virtue—and explain why you think this friendship was a friendship of virtue.

UNDERSTANDING THE DESIRED BEHAVIOR

ONLINE GROUP FACILITATED BY CHAPLAIN/CDI/COMMANDER (10 MINUTES.)

The following questions are designed to encourage cadet participation in an online meeting format. The facilitator should pose the question verbally and ask all participants to answer by typing a response into the meeting chat box. As appropriate, the facilitator may comment on the responses and ask follow-up questions. Be sure to point out trends and common answers.

- Be honest: are most of your friendships based on utility, pleasure, or virtue?
- Think of someone with whom you have (or might have) a friendship of virtue. Which qualities do you admire in that person?
- Which qualities do you have that someone else might admire?
- What sort of things do you expect from your friends?
- What could a friend do that would destroy your friendship?

APPLICATION OF THE BEHAVIOR TO THEIR LIVES

ONLINE GROUP FACILITATED BY CHAPLAIN/CDI/COMMANDER (10 MINUTES)

The following questions require more thoughtful responses. Facilitators may ask for volunteers or call on specific cadets participating in the virtual meeting. Because some online meeting platforms limit meeting time, facilitators should choose a few of the following questions they would most like to discuss with the cadets.

- How do our Core Values help you be a better friend?
- How can our friends help us live the Core Values?
- Aristotle argued that “true friendships are infrequent because virtuous people are rare.” Do you agree? Can people who aren't virtuous or aren't trying to become virtuous be friends?

- Aristotle observed that "wishing to be friends is quick work, but friendship is a slow ripening fruit." How do you grow or deepen a friendship?
- Friendship requires a shared life. Aristotle thought that people who are very different can't be friends because they have little in common and live in different worlds. What do you think? Can people who are very different be friends? Consider some examples:
 - Can parents and children be friends?
 - Can teachers and students be friends?
 - Can senior members and cadets be friends?
 - Can men and women be friends?
 - Can bosses and their employees be friends?
- How is being a friend different from being a wingman?
- Friendship is often lived out in good conversations. Unfortunately, good conversations aren't always easy! Consider the following questions:
 - How does our society make it difficult to have good conversations?
 - What can we do to create the environment for good conversations?
 - Which habits can we cultivate to help us be better conversationalists?
- How do you know when it's time to end a friendship? What is the best way to do this?

ACTIVITY

LED BY ONLINE INSTRUCTOR (10 MINUTES.)

Five Friends Worksheet

Motivational speaker Jim Rohn argues that you are the average of the five people with whom you spend the most time. Social scientists agree that our friends influence our norms, the standards by which we behave and make decisions.

In this activity, you'll consider the five people with whom you spend the most time. You'll think about your relationships with those people. What kind of friendship do you share? What do you have in common? What do you admire in them? What do they admire in you? Are these friendships worth cultivating?

We've prepared a worksheet to help you through this exercise. You can download a copy at <https://capchaplain.com/downloads/Friendship-Values-for-Living-Cadet-Worksheet.pdf>. You may complete the worksheet electronically or print it to fill it out by hand.

Note to Facilitators: Allow the cadets a few minutes to start their worksheets but encourage them to spend time on the worksheet after the meeting thinking more deeply about their friendships.

After giving them a few minutes, ask for volunteers willing to share what they learned from this exercise. Has their assessment of their friendships changed as a result of thinking about

them in this way? Facilitators may want to complete the worksheet beforehand and be ready to discuss their own experiences.

Finally, ask the cadets to email their completed worksheets to the person facilitating the lesson (Chaplain, CDI, or Commander). Use these submitted worksheets to track participation in the online lesson.

LESSON SUMMARY AND WRAP-UP

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

In this lesson, we explored friendship, the sharing of a common life in which we pursue each other's good. We've seen that there are several types of friendship organized around different goals, such as pleasure, utility, or virtue. The most rewarding and enduring friendships are based on the shared attempt to encourage positive behaviors in ourselves and others. We also considered the behaviors that can strengthen or weaken a friendship.

Let's end this lesson with a challenge. Right now, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, you're probably separated from many of your friends and people you would like to have as friends. Using the resources available to you—whether the telephone, email, text messaging, or even an old-fashioned letter—reach out to a friend or would-be friend. Let that person know what you admire about her or him and say thanks for motivating you to be a better person.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm."
— Proverbs 13:20 (ESV)

"Friendship is the only cement that will ever hold the world together." — Woodrow Wilson

"A friend is one that knows you as you are, understands where you have been, accepts what you have become, and still, gently allows you to grow." — Shakespeare

"Friendship is the hardest thing in the world to explain. It's not something you learn in school. But if you haven't learned the meaning of friendship, you really haven't learned anything."
— Muhammad Ali

"He who is entangled in vices will not long observe the laws and rites of friendship."
— Aelred of Rievaulx

"He will never have true friends who is afraid of making enemies." — William Hazlitt

"Lots of people want to ride with you in the limo, but what you want is someone who will take the bus with you when the limo breaks down." — Oprah Winfrey

Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken. — Ecclesiastes 4:12