



FRIENDSHIP

Values for Living—Cadet Character Development Forum

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:

- 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, Multimedia: Aristotle's Three Friendships

This video will introduce cadets to Aristotle's three types of friendship and provide a foundational understanding for how to build relationships that last a lifetime and help them grow into people others want to emulate and follow.

NOTE: The discussion questions below refer to ideas and distinctions explained in this video. If possible, please use the provided media option.

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

Option 2: Personal story

Before the lesson, please review the provided video. 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

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

Small Group Exercise/Discussion – (no more than 6 in each group including senior cadet moderator).

It's easy to go through life without stopping to evaluate how your relationships shape the person you are becoming, which relationships are worth cultivating, and which ones are not. Aristotle's three kinds of friendship—pleasure, utility, and virtue—provide a valuable framework to help you know where to put your energy as you build friendships that will determine the person you become.

- 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

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

The following questions require more thoughtful responses.

- 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:
 - What might be difficult about good conversations?
 - 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 SMALL GROUP FACILITATORS (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>.

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.

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. This coming week, review the Five Friends worksheet you started tonight. Consider which relationships would be worth cultivating as friendships of virtue. Reach out to a friend or someone you would like to have as a 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