



# INTEGRITY

Values for Living—Cadet Character Development Forum

## INTRODUCTION

Each Values for Living character development forum 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 squadron meeting.

**Integrity** is the first of CAP's core values. Our commitment to doing the right thing is the foundation for all lasting success. This lesson examines the challenges we face in maintaining our integrity. We also explore the consequences of a lapse in integrity and the best way to deal with those lapses.

## 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 Clip.** In "The Stray Path," a nursing student cheats to complete his training. After graduation, he lacks the necessary knowledge and skills to work in medicine. When a patient encounters a crisis, the new nurse is completely unprepared. (Media clip is in the folder and included by permission of the producer, Zach Smith)

**Option 2: Media Clip.** The United States Military Academy suffered the largest cheating scandal in over 40 years. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0-sc1kqleo>

**Option 3: Personal Story.** Share a story about your experience of a lack of integrity (your own or someone else's). What negative consequences followed from this lack of integrity?

## UNDERSTANDING THE DESIRED BEHAVIOR

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

- In our *Learn to Lead* textbooks, we learned that integrity is “doing the right thing, even when no one is watching.” What else does integrity mean to you?
- In a recent survey of 3000 college students, 86% of those surveyed admitted to cheating in high school. What makes cheating seem like a good idea?
- Can a person have integrity in some areas but not in others?
- Does integrity mean that I must follow CAP rules outside of CAP activities?
- Anonymity allows people to say and do things without revealing their identities. How can anonymity encourage integrity? Put differently, is it ever easier to do the right thing when no one will know you did it?
- Anonymity is common on the internet, where many people use handles, screennames, and nicknames. How would people act differently if they had to be responsible for everything they said on the internet?
- We also read in *Learn to Lead* that attitudes are contagious. Do you think integrity is contagious? Why or why not?

## APPLICATION OF THE BEHAVIOR TO THEIR LIVES

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

- How can a lack of integrity undermine the other Core Values?
- How would you handle a lapse of integrity in a friend, teammate, or squadron member?
- **Case Study.** In 2013, the Air Force discovered a massive cheating ring at Malmstrom AFB. Thirty-four missile launch officers cheated on their monthly nuclear proficiency tests. Fifty-two other missile launch officers knew about the cheating but did not report it. Most of these officers were Captains and Lieutenants. Some were Air Force Academy graduates. The Air Force found both the cheaters and those who knew about the cheating equally at fault. Air Force Officers are expected adhere to the core value of **Integrity**. After a full investigation by the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (OSI), 14 officers received formal legal punishment, 70 officers received permanent files of reprimand, and 9 officers were relieved of command. The career of each of these officers was over.
  - These were some of the finest officers in the USAF. They were responsible for our nuclear attack force. What might have driven them to violate their integrity?
  - What are some of the pressures that might tempt you to violate your integrity?
  - What happens to people who compromise their integrity on a regular basis?
  - Some of the officers relieved of command knew nothing about the cheating. Was it fair to fire them, too? Why or why not?
- Now that we have considered the Malmstrom case, we should return to two of our earlier questions. How would you handle a lapse of integrity in a friend, teammate, or squadron member?
- We all make mistakes. Should it ever happen, how would you want to handle our own lapse of integrity?

## ACTIVITY

ONLINE GROUP OR SMALL GROUP FACILITATED BY PHASE III CADET (10-15 MINUTES)

### Setup of the Exercise:

Each participant should have a blank piece of paper and a pencil/pen.

### Instructions:

Each participant should write down three statements about themselves. Two of these statements should be true and the other one false. For example:

- I am a cadet in Civil Air Patrol. (true)
- I go to Cleveland High School. (not true)
- I got to the meeting tonight driving my own car. (true)

The facts can be as tricky as you wish, but they should all be realistic and “possibly” true. Read your three facts to the group. As the group listens, they need to decide which of your statements is false. They can talk about it but must vote. The reader then tells the other participants whether they identified the lie.

### Discussion questions after the activity:

- How easy was it for you to identify the untrue statement?
- What questions did you ask yourself to identify the untrue statement?
- Is it more difficult to deceive the other players when playing in a virtual meeting space?
- What would make it more difficult to deceive the group?
- If it is so easy to deceive, how you can establish trust in your groups?
- Do games like this one, which encourage us to tell lies and sniff them out, do more harm than good?

## LESSON SUMMARY AND WRAP-UP

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

Integrity means doing the right thing, always and everywhere, whether anyone else is watching or not. Integrity requires the courage to do the right thing, no matter what the consequences will be. A reputation for integrity takes years to build but only seconds to lose. Never allow yourself to ever do anything that would damage your integrity.

Sometimes, integrity seems to be disappearing from our society. Far too many believe that “the end justifies the means.” Students cheat for better grades. Athletes use performance-enhancing drugs to get college scholarships and bigger paychecks. Salespeople exaggerate and mislead to meet their monthly quotas. Employees call in “sick” because they need to finish their Christmas shopping. Countless Americans treat speed limits as “constructive suggestions.” The list could go on.

Everyone who violates his integrity thinks he has a compelling reason to do it. These reasons are lies. Yes, dishonesty may offer a quick fix or an easy solution. That instant gratification will not last and it will leave destruction in its wake. A person without integrity is doomed to fail; it is only a matter of time.

Integrity, on the other hand, builds up and endures. Because of your integrity, people will trust you and want to work with you. Because of your integrity, you will understand your responsibility to other people. Because of your integrity, you will always give your best effort and strive to improve. Because of your integrity, you will treat other people with courtesy and compassion. Because of your integrity, you will be better prepared to excel in service to your community, state, and nation.

## QUOTABLE QUOTES

“The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.”  
– Proverbs 11:3

“Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful.” – Samuel Johnson

“Success will come and go but integrity is forever.” – Amy Anderson

“In looking for people to hire, look for three qualities: integrity, intelligence, and energy. And if they don't have the first, the other two will kill you.” – Warren Buffet

“The strength of a nation derives from the integrity of the home.” – Confucius

“One of the truest tests of integrity is the blunt refusal to be compromised.” – Chinua Achebe

“Integrity alone won't make you a leader, but without integrity you'll never be one.” – Zig Ziglar