



CONFIDENCE

Values for Living—Cadet Character Development Forum

INTRODUCTION

Each Values for Living lesson is designed to help cadets explore a life virtue from multiple angles, examine it in ways that touch on all five learning styles, and experience the virtue through a hands-on activity that helps them internalize the virtue so it "sticks" and stays with them beyond the end of the squadron meeting.

Confidence is the assurance that comes from appreciating your acquired skills, natural abilities, and personal gifts. A healthy sense of confidence helps empower leaders to accomplish challenging objectives and lead teams to greatness.

PRECLASS CHECKLIST

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

- All media installed and checked out
- Handouts and materials prepared and available as per teacher instruction sheet
- Phase Three cadet orientation/training completed
- Participation awards such as candy or granola bar treats available
- Room arrangements complete

OBJECTIVE—CONFIDENCE

READ IN LARGE GROUP. (1 MINUTE.)

Confidence is the assurance that comes from appreciating your acquired skills, natural abilities, and personal gifts. A person with confidence is able to live out all of CAP's core values of integrity, excellence, service, and respect while contributing positively to the growth and success of others and to the health and success of the teams on which they serve.

There is an important difference between confidence and arrogance. An arrogant person thinks he is more important, more valuable, or better than he is. Arrogant people undermine the success of others and sabotage their teammates in efforts at self-promotion.

ATTENTION GETTER

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

Option 1: Video Clip from the movie *Unbroken*, the life story of Louis Zamperini

In this clip we see a young man, Louis Zamperini, being encouraged by his older brother, Pete, to train in order to be part of the Torrance High School Track team. Louis says he can't do it, but his brother ensures him he can if he "just believes in himself." Watch how Louis' confidence develops and grows. Note the role that Pete plays in encouraging that growth.

[Show video clip here.]

Louis Zamperini went on to set several long-distance running records and finally to become the youngest American to ever qualify for the Olympic 5000-meter race.

When the Second World War broke out, Louis volunteered for the Army Air Corps. While on a mission, his plane lost power and crashed into the Pacific. Along with two other survivors, Louis drifted for 47 days before being captured by the Japanese. Because he was a famous athlete, the Japanese wanted to use him as a propaganda tool to speak against America. Louis refused and endured severe torture during his time as a prisoner of war. The lessons learned from his brother about having confidence in himself gave him the strength to refuse to compromise his honor and to survive. He lived out the phrase, "If you can take it, you can make it."

(Video clip from the film, *Unbroken*, is provided under fair use copyright law for limited and transformative educational purpose.)

Option 2: Read this in lieu of showing the video clip

Louis Zamperini wasn't born with confidence. He wasn't like his older brother, Pete; Pete was a member of the track team and popular in school. Louis didn't think he could be either of those things, so he turned to gang culture. Because Pete was concerned about his younger brother, he encouraged Louis to start running and to try out for the track team. Louis complained that he didn't have the ability, but Pete trained him anyway. Pete kept encouraging Louis to not give up and believe in himself.

Louis was often tempted to quit but, with Pete's encouragement, he refused to give up. When Louis struggled, Pete would urge him on with this phrase: "If you can take it, you can make it." As Pete pushed him to run faster and longer, Louis gradually learned to believe in himself, both as a runner and as a person. As he discovered he could "take it," Louis slowly developed confidence. Before long, Louis had made the track team and succeeded beyond what he originally thought possible.

Louis did better than make the high school team. First, he set the California high school record for the mile run. Then, while still in college, he was selected as a member of the US Olympic Team and finished eighth in the 5000-meter event in Berlin. He remains the youngest American ever to be selected to compete in that event in the Olympics. After coming home from the Olympics, Louis set a record in 1938 for the fastest mile time by a college student.

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Option 3: Personal Story

Share a story where you experienced growth in confidence or the difference between confidence and arrogance.

Summary and Transition

Each of us has a set of skills and personal strengths; learning to use and develop them can be a challenge. Confidence is our assurance of those skills and strengths, both our own and those of others. Confident people know what they can do and are eager to use their gifts to perform in exceptional ways. Excellent leaders encourage that same confidence in their teams, so that everyone is ready and willing to contribute to the success of the group.

UNDERSTANDING THE DESIRED BEHAVIOR

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION LED BY PHASE 3 CADETS (3-5 PEOPLE IN EACH GROUP. 10 MINUTES.)

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

- What changes did you see in Louis? (Some possible answers: Learned to believe in himself; learned to push himself toward excellence; learned to endure the pain of training and then torture; developed confidence that led him to volunteer to serve his country)
- What role did Pete play in Louis' life and how did Pete do it?
- Identify a person in your life who exhibits confidence. What are the traits you see in this person that show his or her confidence?
- Conversely, do you know someone who lacks confidence? What traits do you see in this person?
- Who has helped you to develop your own self-confidence? How?
- Can you describe an instance in which you helped someone else develop confidence? What did you do and what effect did it have?

APPLICATION OF THE BEHAVIOR TO THEIR LIVES

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

Discussion questions offered by facilitator:

- Which of CAP's Core Values do you see in the life of Louis Zamperini?
- Who benefits when we believe that everyone has special qualities and skills? How do they benefit?
- Is there such a thing as too much confidence? If so, how can you recognize an appropriate level of confidence? (Here you might want to draw out the difference between confidence and arrogance.)
- How can you serve someone who has too much confidence?
- How can you serve someone who has too little confidence?

Summary and Transition:

So far, we've seen that confidence enables us to live out our core values. We've also seen that we can encourage a healthy confidence by being honest about strengths and skills. In the next activity, we'll have a chance to practice that honesty.

ACTIVITY

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION LED BY PHASE 3 CADETS (3-5 PEOPLE IN EACH GROUP. 15 MINUTES.)
PICK ONE

Resources Needed: a large bag of small candies, such as M&Ms, Skittles, or Gummy Bears.

Instructions:

1. Have the group form a circle and be seated.
2. Place a pile of candies (about 3-5 per member of the small group) and ask each member of the group to take as many as they think they would like, but to not eat them yet. This is the only instruction you will give them. If they ask for more information, simply say, "You will find out soon enough." Candy distribution does not need to be equal.
3. When they are done taking their candy, instruct them that for each piece of candy taken, the small group member must share one positive trait or strength about herself/himself with the group. For each shared positive trait, the cadet may eat one piece of the candy.

After all the cadets have shared and eaten their candy (or after ten minutes), ask the following questions:

1. Was it easy or difficult to identify positive things about yourself and share them with the group?
2. Is it socially acceptable to share “how good we are?”
3. How can we talk about our strengths without falling into arrogance?
4. What can we do to make others more comfortable talking about their own strengths and abilities in positive ways?

LESSON SUMMARY AND WRAP-UP

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

Read to the group:

We have seen that confidence—the assurance of strengths and skills—is crucial to our success as individuals and as teams. Confidence requires a specific kind of integrity: Honesty about our strengths and weaknesses. When we recognize our strengths, we are more eager to put them at the service of others. When we recognize our weaknesses, we can commit to addressing them in the pursuit of excellence. Perhaps most importantly, when we show confidence in each other by respecting every individual's ability to contribute to the success of the team, we strengthen one another, the Civil Air Patrol, our nation, and our world.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

“Believe you can and you're halfway there.”

– Theodore Roosevelt

“Confidence is like a dragon where, for every head cut off, two more heads grow back.”

– Criss Jami

“With realization of one's own potential and self-confidence in one's ability, one can build a better world.”

– The Dalai Lama

“The way to develop self-confidence is to do the thing you fear and get a record of successful experiences behind you.”

– William Jennings Bryan

“If you hear a voice within you say, 'you cannot paint,' then by all means paint, and that voice will be silenced.”

– Vincent Van Gogh

“Always be yourself and have faith in yourself. Do not go out and look for a successful personality and try to duplicate it.”

– Bruce Lee

“You wouldn't worry so much about what others think of you if you realized how seldom they do.”

– Eleanor Roosevelt