



# COURAGE

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.

Courage is the third component of Grit, is essential to effective leadership, and is a virtue that can be cultivated. This lesson will help cadets understand what courage is and how it relates to living out one's deeply held personal core values (also known as personal convictions).

## PRE-CLASS 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—COURAGE AND THE MEDAL OF HONOR

### READ IN LARGE GROUP. (1 MINUTE.)

The Medal of Honor is the highest award for valor in action against an enemy force which can be bestowed upon an individual serving in the Armed Services of the United States. It is generally presented to its recipient by the President of the United States in the name of Congress. Over 3,500 men, and one woman, have received this honor. Medal of Honor winners provide extraordinary examples of courage.

Courage, however, often doesn't involve dramatic scenarios like the risk of dying in battle. Throughout life you will be faced with a wide variety of situations where you will need courage. It may mean resisting temptations or powerful negative group pressure. It may involve personal sacrifice or a physical hardship. If you are faced with pressure, fear, or sacrifice, what will enable

you to respond with the courage of these brave Medal of Honor recipients? That's what we're going to explore tonight.

## ATTENTION GETTER

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

**Video Clip 1 Introduction (read to group):** Desmond Doss was a “conscientious objector” – an individual who claimed the right to refuse the performance of military service on the grounds of freedom of thought, conscience, or religion. Desmond wanted to serve his country but did not want to carry a weapon. During Army basic training he was mocked, hazed, ridiculed, and put in jail under the threat of court martial because he refused to carry or use a gun. In this clip his fiancé encourages him to have the courage to stand up for his personal core values (also known as personal convictions) even in the face of going to prison.

(Video clip in file) \* NOTE: in the video clip, Doss' fiancé first attempts to encourage him to GIVE UP his convictions, telling him they come from his pride and not from God. Doss rejects her argument and she capitulates NOT because she agrees with him but because she respects him for having the courage to stand by his convictions.

(Read after the video clip): Eventually Desmond Doss was released from jail allowed to complete basic training. He trained as an Army medic and was deployed to the Pacific Theatre during the final years of WWII where he rescued many wounded soldiers under heavy enemy fire. While serving his country and displaying enormous courage on the battlefield as a medic, Doss never once carried a weapon and stayed true to his personal core values as a conscientious objector.

**Read this in lieu of showing the video clip:** Desmond Doss was a World War II-era “conscientious objector” – an individual who has claimed the right to refuse the performance of military service on the grounds of freedom of thought, conscience, or religion. Desmond wanted to serve his country but did not want to carry a weapon. During basic training he was mocked, hazed, ridiculed, and put in jail under the threat of court martial because he refused to carry or use a gun. Eventually Desmond Doss was released from jail allowed to complete basic training. He trained as an Army medic and was deployed to the Pacific Theatre during the final years of WWII where he rescued many wounded soldiers under heavy enemy fire. While serving his country and displaying enormous courage on the battlefield as a medic, Doss never once carried a weapon and stayed true to his personal core values as a conscientious objector.

## UNDERSTANDING THE DESIRED BEHAVIOR

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

**What is courage?** Courage is the ability to control your fear in a difficult or dangerous situation. Developing strong personal convictions can help you live with courage.

**Small Group Exercise/Discussion** – (No more than 6 in each group including senior cadet moderator. Distribute copies of the Phase 1 & 2 Cadet Handout to each cadet. Give them a few minutes to score the questions.)

**How well do you display courage in your everyday life?** Respond to the following statements, giving yourself a score from 1–4, 1 being “I never do this,” and 4 being “I always do this.” Have the courage to be honest with your answers. No one will see your scores but you.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Score</b>
I stand up for what is right even if I have to stand alone	_____
I don't cave in to negative peer pressure	_____
Fear of failure does not prevent me from trying new or difficult things	_____
I am not afraid to express myself just because someone might disapprove	_____
I work to solve problems without violence	_____
I do not intentionally ridicule, embarrass, or hurt others	_____

**Group Discussion**

- Find your highest score. Why do you believe this statement is easier for you to live out than statements with a lower score? Share your observations with your small group.
- What was the hardest score for you to answer truthfully and why do you think it was?
- If you scored poorly in an area, what kind of personal conviction might help you improve?
- Take a minute to think about a situation in the last month or so where you demonstrated courage (or could have demonstrated courage). Are you willing to share that situation with the group?
- If you stood up for your convictions and showed courage, did it cost you anything to do the right thing? What were the benefits of doing the right thing?

**APPLICATION OF THE BEHAVIOR TO THEIR LIVES**

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

**Discussion questions offered by facilitator:**

- Which of the CAP core values apply to living with courage? (When a cadet responds, ask them to explain how they think each core value applies. See how many of the core values you can get them to identify.)
- What are some positive things that can happen in your life if you practice courage?
- What are some negative things that can happen in your life if you practice courage?

- What kinds of peer pressure exist at school? What makes it difficult to resist these pressures?
- What would help you stand up to negative peer pressure?  
(Be sure to make the connection between courage and core values—that it is essential to decide on your personal core values ahead of time and follow them consistently. You can also talk about the importance of choosing your friends wisely.)

## ACTIVITY

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

### Choice One: Situation and Response:

Break the cadets into their small groups. Explain this scenario to the cadets before you start.

- **Read to the entire room:** Oliver is about to enter the 8th grade when a new family moves in next door. They have a son named Brendan who is about to enter the 7th grade. Oliver and Brendan discover they both love to play guitar and quickly become friends. The new school year begins and, in the first week, one of Oliver's friends from back in elementary school begins bullying Brendan in the hallway.
- **Have three Phase 3/4 cadets enter and act out the bullying scenario in the front of the room:** Oliver and Brendan walk in together, but Brendan is confronted by the bully named David, who starts picking on him as Oliver stands just a few feet away. Oliver watches Brendan ask David to stop the bullying but says nothing and doesn't intervene as Brendan finally breaks away in tears. (Be creative but don't hurt anybody!)
- **Phase 3/4 cadets lead a discussion in the small groups:** If you were Oliver, what would you have done in this situation? What do you think would have been the result? Ask each person in your small group to respond. (Note: The result of showing courage might involve some personal difficulty or sacrifice.)
- **Debrief back in the large group.**

### Choice Two: Roleplay

Explain this scenario to the cadets before you start the roleplay.

- The Phase Three group leader is taking a class that involves students from several grades. His or her younger cousin happens to be taking the same class.
- Phase 1 & 2 cadet take turns playing the role of the Phase 3/4 cadet's younger cousin.
- The Phase 3/4 cadet will start the roleplay by saying, "Hey, I know we have a test today and I am really not ready. My mom was sick, and I didn't get a chance to study. Can we sit together and maybe you can let me see your paper from time to time? I would really

appreciate it – after all, we're family. It won't happen again." (Have the Phase 1 & 2 cadets trade off playing the younger cousin.)

- The roleplay leader may have to encourage the Phase 1 & 2 cadets by "hamming" it up. As the roleplay progresses, don't let the "younger cousin" off the hook. Say that you'll tell the Phase 1 or 2 cadet's brother or sister that "you are a coward" or try putting a guilt trip on: "It's only because mom was sick." The point is to try to pressure them into saying, "Well, maybe just this once."
- Discuss the role play back in the large group after you feel it has gone far enough.

### **Choice Three: Roleplay**

Situation to be shared with the cadets: You are in a hospital emergency room with the parent of your best friend. You and your friend have lived next door to each other all your life. His dad and mom are like second parents to you. Your best friend has just been admitted after experiencing an overdose of prescription narcotics he got from his parent's medicine cabinet. This was not the first time that your friend has stolen prescription medications. He has even shared them with you a few times. As you are standing there, his dad or mom turns to you and says:

- Phase Three Cadet playing your friend's parent: "Jake says you knew about his using and even shared a pill or two with you. He almost just died. I didn't even know. Can you explain to me why you didn't tell me? These things kill. You are like my own son/daughter and you didn't protect your brother."
- Let the cadets come up with reasons and keep challenging them. (Possible responses to look for: "I was afraid to tell you; I was ashamed to say something; I didn't know this would happen....")
- Discuss the role play back in the large group after you feel it has gone far enough.

## **LESSON SUMMARY AND WRAP-UP**

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

**Video clip 2**—Desmond Doss has been allowed to stay in the military and serve his country without carrying a rifle. He has been trained as an Army medic and participates in the battle of Okinawa, unarmed. This battle occurred near the end of WWII. The Japanese defended the island with everything they had. One of the big battles was for an area called Hacksaw Ridge. There were many Marine casualties and Desmond was determined to save as many as possible. (Video clip in file)

### **Read Desmond Doss' Medal of Honor Citation in lieu of showing the video clip:**

Medal of Honor Citation. The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Private First Class Desmond Thomas Doss, United States Army, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action above and beyond the

call of duty from April 29 – 21 May 1945, while serving with the Medical Detachment, 307th Infantry Regiment, 77th Infantry Division, in action at Urasoe Mura, Okinawa, Ryukyu Islands.

Private First Class Doss was a company aid man when the 1st Battalion assaulted a jagged escarpment 400 feet high. As our troops gained the summit, a heavy concentration of artillery, mortar and machine gun fire crashed into them, inflicting approximately 75 casualties and driving the others back. Pfc. Doss refused to seek cover and remained in the fire-swept area with the many stricken, carrying all 75 casualties one-by-one to the edge of the escarpment and there lowering them on a rope-supported litter down the face of a cliff to friendly hands.

On May 2, he exposed himself to heavy rifle and mortar fire in rescuing a wounded man 200 yards forward of the lines on the same escarpment; and 2 days later he treated 4 men who had been cut down while assaulting a strongly defended cave, advancing through a shower of grenades to within eight yards of enemy forces in a cave's mouth, where he dressed his comrades' wounds before making 4 separate trips under fire to evacuate them to safety.

On May 5, he unhesitatingly braved enemy shelling and small arms fire to assist an artillery officer. He applied bandages, moved his patient to a spot that offered protection from small arms fire and, while artillery and mortar shells fell close by, painstakingly administered plasma. Later that day, when an American was severely wounded by fire from a cave, Pfc. Doss crawled to him where he had fallen 25 feet from the enemy position, rendered aid, and carried him 100 yards to safety while continually exposed to enemy fire.

On May 21, in a night attack on high ground near Shuri, he remained in exposed territory while the rest of his company took cover, fearlessly risking the chance that he would be mistaken for an infiltrating Japanese and giving aid to the injured until he was himself seriously wounded in the legs by the explosion of a grenade. Rather than call another aid man from cover, he cared for his own injuries and waited 5 hours before litter bearers reached him and started carrying him to cover. The trio was caught in an enemy tank attack and Pfc. Doss, seeing a more critically wounded man nearby, crawled off the litter; and directed the bearers to give their first attention to the other man. Awaiting the litter bearers' return, he was again struck, by a sniper bullet while being carried off the field by a comrade, this time suffering a compound fracture of one arm. With magnificent fortitude he bound a rifle stock to his shattered arm as a splint and then crawled 300 yards over rough terrain to the aid station. Through his outstanding bravery and unflinching determination in the face of desperately dangerous conditions, Pfc. Doss saved the lives of many soldiers. His name became a symbol throughout the 77th Infantry Division for outstanding gallantry far above and beyond the call of duty.

### **Wrap-up Comments**

- Desmond Doss was able to display a heroic level of courage because earlier in his life he had developed a rock-solid set of personal core values. His commitment to living out those deep personal convictions enabled him to endure ridicule and persecution, and eventually push past his fear to save the lives of dozens of others, even at the risk of his own life.
- We talk a lot about our Civil Air Patrol core values of Integrity, Excellence, Volunteer Service, and Respect. I want to challenge you to think about your own personal core

values. What are some ways you can develop your own set of rock-solid personal convictions? (Possible responses: Talk about it with parents, chaplain, CDI, commander, pastor/rabbi/imam, etc.; start with CAP's core values and apply them to your own life; read books on leadership and developing core values/personal convictions.)

- You are the upcoming leaders of our nation and our world. Developing solid personal core values now and consistently living by them will empower you to live and lead with courage.

## QUOTABLE QUOTES

"It is curious that physical courage be should be so common in the world and moral courage so rare." –Mark Twain

"Courage is contagious, when a brave man takes a stand; the spines of others are often stiffed." –Billy Graham

"Success is not final, and failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts." – Sir Winston Churchill

"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

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Hacksaw Ridge "Lord help me get just one more" video montage by Kimer Lorens and used by permission.