



Create cohesive, high-performing teams that foster trust & connection through small group discussions.



## “BE A HERO! OVERCOMING BARRIERS WITH THE WARRIOR ETHOS.”

Less than 80 years ago, many people feared supersonic flight was impossible because of an invisible “barrier” that could destroy aircraft. On October 14, 1947, despite many proclaiming he would die trying to break the speed of sound, Captain Charles “Chuck” Yeager was dropped from a B-29 in the Bell X-1, then started a rocket motor propelling him to Mach 1.06 and breaking through a barrier many believed unbreakable.

Airmen continue to break bureaucratic, social, and invisible barriers today, like the courageous and indomitable Airmen we recognize as heroes. Lance Sijan, Eddie Rickenbacker, Robin Olds, John Chapman, and countless other USAF heroes possessed the traits of a warrior ethos.

- 1. Mental Toughness and Tireless Motivation.** We must persist when we are doing the right things for the right reasons. Airmen need the toughness and motivation to keep fighting, whether pushing a 60,000-pound aircraft off a runway to re-open a combat airfield or pushing a policy change through our bureaucracy.
- 2. Unceasing Vigilance.** We must remain vigilant to counter threats, whether the threat is a deadly surface-to-air missile, or complacency after a long day in the office.
- 3. Willingness to Sacrifice.** There will be times when our own goals, desires, or safety must be put at risk in the service to our nation and our brothers and sisters in arms. We must remember the first article of the Code of Conduct; I am an American, fighting in the forces that guard my country and our way of life, I am prepared to give my life in their defense.
- 4. Growth Mindset.** We must embrace who we are today, envision the hero we want to be, then create the habits and take the actions to see that vision realized. We can improve in all areas of our professions and our lives, and we must commit to perpetual improvement.

The warrior ethos is a core set of traits we see in our heroes, past and present. If we take on a warrior ethos, we can break through barriers. All our roles include barriers, challenges, and opportunities. The Airmen living the warrior ethos are equipped to become heroes. They have the traits to find success in situations others find impossible. Be a hero. Live the warrior ethos.

## WATCH...

Gen Leavitt comments on how she has broken barriers during her time in the Air Force.

<https://www.dvidshub.net/video/553138/general-leavitt-breaking-barriers> (0:30)



The Tuskegee Airmen's achievements paved the way for integration, breaking the race barrier.

**DVIDS - Video - Breaking Barriers: The Race Barrier (dvidshub.net)** (1:48)



## DISCUSS...

1. How can you live the warrior ethos in your current position?
2. When have you failed to live the warrior ethos? Have you tried to overcome that shortfall?
3. How can individuals develop and strengthen their courage in both personal and professional contexts, and what practices or experiences contribute most effectively to this growth?
4. What barriers exist in your life? How can you start working to overcome them?



“The greatest warriors are not the ones who always win, but the ones who never quit.”

– Tony Robbins,  
*Awaken the Giant Within, 1991*

“A warrior is not defined by their armor or weapons, but by their courage, resilience, and ability to protect what they believe in.”

– Brene Brown,  
*Dare to Lead, 2018*

“Courage is doing what you’re afraid to do. There can be no courage unless you’re scared.”

– Capt Eddie Rickenbacker,  
American fighter ace, World War I

## Team Activity

- ▶ Set up a display in your breakroom, conference room or open area, showcasing the heroes depicted in the Air Force “Portraits of Courage” series. Discuss which heroes are role models to you and how they inspire you to be your very best.

[Portraits In Courage Main \(dma.mil\)](#)

## Related Resources

- ▶ “Breaking the Sound Barrier: Chuck Yeager and the Bell X-1”  
<https://airandspace.si.edu/stories/editorial/breaking-sound-barrier-75th>
- ▶ “The Blue Book”  
[https://www.doctrine.af.mil/Portals/61/documents/Airman\\_Development/BlueBook.pdf](https://www.doctrine.af.mil/Portals/61/documents/Airman_Development/BlueBook.pdf)
- ▶ 5 Min to Thrive: Moral Courage:  
<https://www.acc.af.mil/Portals/92/Docs/5M2T/3.%205M2T%20-%20Moral%20Courage.pdf?ver=rla2eR7b7gaALAcPjwhzQ%3d%3d>





# Air Combat Command INTEGRATED RESILIENCE

SUPPORTING OUR TOTAL FORCE AIRMEN AND FAMILIES



## PREVENTION TAKES ACTION

Learn new skills to improve your well-being such as self-care and resilience, healthy relationships, meaningful connections, effective communication. Act in ways to show your family and Airmen that you care and they matter. Proactive behaviors can be small things that create a positive culture in mitigating risks.

## RECOGNIZE SIGNS OF DISTRESS

- Mood changes, such as depression or anxiety
- Irritability, agitation or anger
- Sleep difficulties
- Withdrawing from social activities, family, friends or others
- Lack of interest in activities that were previously enjoyed (hobbies, work, etc.)

## ASK

Directly **ASK** the individual if they are having thoughts of death, self-harm, or suicide.

## CARE

**CARE** about their answers. If they hesitate, or seem uncertain, ask follow-up questions to convey that you care about their well-being.

## ESCORT

If the individual is having thoughts of suicide or needs help, **ESCORT** them to a qualified professional or leadership.

## GO SLO

If someone demonstrates signs of distress, consider their access to **LETHAL** means including firearms, medications or other means of fatal methods. Airmen should remember **SLO** – use **SAFES**, **LOCKS** or store mean **OUTSIDE** of the home.

## SMALL STEPS SAVE LIVES.

[www.resilience.af.mil](http://www.resilience.af.mil)

HELPING RESOURCE	COMMANDER/ SUPERVISOR	MILITARY & FAMILY READINESS CENTER	MILITARY ONESOURCE/ MILITARY FAMILY LIFE COUNSELOR (MFLC)	CHAPLAIN	CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	MENTAL HEALTH (MH) CLINIC	EMERGENCY ROOM
<b>CONTACT:</b>							
<b>CAN ASSIST:</b>	All	All	Military and Family Members	All (full confidentiality)	Civ/NAF	Military	All
Suicidal Thoughts	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Relationship Problems	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Loneliness/Isolation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Workplace Stress or Problems	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Alcohol/Drugs	Must report to ADAPT			✓	✓	✓	
Fatigue/Sleep	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Anxiety/Panic Depression	✓			✓	✓	✓	
Grief and Loss	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Deployment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Finances/Budget	✓	✓	✓ (One Source)	✓	✓		
Retirement/Separation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

## ASK. CARE. ESCORT. QUESTIONS THAT CAN SAVE A LIFE

ANSWER QUESTIONS 1 AND 2	IN THE PAST MONTH	
	YES	NO
1. Have you wished you were dead or wished you could go to sleep and not wake up?		
2. Have you actually had any thoughts about killing yourself?		
<b>IF YES TO #2, ANSWER QUESTIONS 3, 4, 5 AND 6. IF NO TO #2, GO DIRECTLY TO QUESTION 6</b>		
3. Have you thought about how you might do this?		
4. Have you had any intention of acting on these thoughts of killing yourself, as opposed to you have the thoughts but you definitely would not act on them?		
5. Have you started to work out or worked out the details of how to kill yourself? Do you intend to carry out this plan?		
<b>ALWAYS ASK QUESTION 6</b>	IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS	
6. Have you done anything, started to do anything, or prepared to do anything to end your life? <i>Examples: Collected pills, obtained a gun, gave away valuables, wrote a will or suicide note, held a gun but changed your mind, cut yourself, tried to hang yourself, etc.</i>		

**ANY YES MUST BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. SEEK HELP FROM A FRIEND, CO-WORKER, CHAPLAIN AND INFORM YOUR SUPERVISOR/OTHER MEMBER IN YOUR CHAIN OF COMMAND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**

- If the answer to 4, 5 or 6 is **YES**, immediately **ESCORT** Wingman to the nearest Chaplain, Mental Health Provider, Unit Leader or Emergency Department.
- **DON'T LEAVE YOUR WINGMAN ALONE** even to go to the bathroom.
- **STAY ENGAGED** until you make a warm hand-off to someone who can help.

**MILITARY CRISIS LINE 1 (800) 273-8255 24/7 - 365**