



Air National Guard CY20 Leadership Talking Points



Talking Point 1: January-March 2020

Connect: Building your team, listening, belongingness, help seeking

To Do:

1. Review the Background/Supplemental Information
2. Prepare your personalization- make it your own. ***optional personalization(s)** are italicized blue*
3. Add a personal touch to the PowerPoint slides

Message Bullets/Overview:

Making Connections (from Team-Minded Warrior/[Operation GRIT](#))

- As important as connection is, it is not always easy.
- The most effective way to build relationships and connections and make someone feel valued is to listen. Listening builds trust and trust is the fastest path to respect and cooperation
- What are some characteristics of a trusting workplace? Brainstorm possible solutions and changes that may create a more trusting workplace.
- Think about the last time you felt listened to. What did that feel like? What did it look like?

Building your team (from Resilience Connection “Building Your Tribe www.resilience.af.mil/Quick-Grips/)

- Why should we form connections with people around us?
 - Offers purpose, meaning, and inclusion with people who are part of our home, community and work. Connection is a wired need that protects and nurtures us as social beings.
- How would someone new to your unit/wing/group become incorporated into your team?
- What are the characteristics of a team that you would like to be a part of?
- What does your section/unit/group do right when building your team?

Belonging:

- It is important to feel valued and that we are a part of a greater community or larger team.
- Research shows that even a single instance of exclusion can hurt a person’s well-being, test performance and self-control.
- It is more challenging to work through difficult situations when a person feels like they don’t belong.

Help Seeking Culture Shift:

- A main objective of the NGB-J1 Warrior Resilience & Fitness Division is shifting to a culture that values support seeking behaviors and performance optimization for all NG Service members
- It is important to understand and accept that help seeking is not a sign of weakness. Rather, it takes courage to exercise self-improvement and act responsibly
- Help seeking can be a way to demonstrate your trust in others and build stronger bonds
- Seek help early before manageable problems become an unmanageable crisis. You don’t need to have experienced a traumatic event to seek help. It’s ok to seek support to get through everyday challenges.
- Proactively reach out to those who you have a connection with and be a source of help if you sense that they might need support or encouragement



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Scripted Message:

Slide 1
Slide 2
Optional Activity
Slide 3
Building your Team

Today we are going to talk about our *team/squadron/group*. ***Optional activity: Take a minute to turn to your neighbor and talk about what characteristics you have seen in successful teams? Allow audience members share***

As you know, the ANG team is always evolving and changing as new members join, seasoned members retire, missions change and priorities are refocused. ***Optional personalization: Talk about your team. Who is a part of your team, how has it changed with members coming or going, changing missions and priorities? ***

Despite these constant changes, we must be focused on building a cohesive team so we can effectively complete our mission. To build a strong team we need to connect with each other in meaningful ways. ***Optional personalization/discussion: Why is it important to be a cohesive team (use examples that are specific to your group/unit/squadron)? Reflect on the characteristics discussed earlier? You may also want to reflect on connections made following your RTP**.*

Slide 4
Listening to Build Trust

Making and maintaining meaningful connections is not always easy. Being in the guard makes it especially difficult. One way to improve on our connectedness and ultimately build a successful team, is to be thoughtful and willing to listen to each other. Listening allows us to learn more about one another, recognize changes in behavior and work as a team to build up and support each other. Not everyone is born with the ability to listen. Luckily, we can learn and improve on our ability to listen. *Optional video: <https://vimeo.com/157447379> (Teaching Dwight active listening)*

When we are connected, genuinely listening and building trust, we are strengthening our team.

Slide 5
Belonging

You might be wondering, “Why are we talking about Teams and Connection today?” Research shows that even a single instance of exclusion can hurt a person’s well-being. Your well-being matters to me, and it matters to the mission. If a person feels like they don’t belong or that they are not a part of the team they may feel less motivated to keep working towards overcoming difficult situations. When just one member of our team feels this way, it is ALL of our responsibilities to support and encourage them during challenging times. Ultimately, resilience is not an individual sport- it takes a team. ***Optional personalization: Give examples of how someone new to your unit/wing/group became incorporated into your team, how did you include them, support them, etc.. OR Share a time that you were new to a team, how did you feel? OR Give an example of when you had a difficult time but your “team” helped you get through it.***

Slide 6**
Prevention Resources

A benefit of being a part of our team is that we look out for each other. I expect that we are proactively reaching out to members of our team and being a source of help if you sense someone needs support or encouragement. Help seeking can be a way to demonstrate your trust in others and build stronger bonds. It takes courage to exercise self-improvement and seek help. You are all important contributors to our team. It takes each and every one of you to accomplish our mission ***Optional personalization: Give an example of how an unexpected member is vital to the mission***

****Make sure to update these slides with your local resources****

Building our connections, trusting that we are here to support and encourage each other through the good and challenging times and willingness and pride in help-seeking all strengthen our team and make us more resilient during difficult times. As you go through drill weekend, think about how you can help build up our team, make meaningful connections, show our teammates that they are valued and support those by encouraging help seeking. ***Optional personalization: Give examples of when during your drill weekend connections can be made (lunch, training events, birthday celebrations, ceremonies, wing events, etc.) or Give an example of when you sought help***



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Optional Exercise(s)

Who is your person? (from RTP Best Practices “Who is your person? www.resilience.af.mil/RTP/Best-Practices/)

Instructions: Ask the audience the following questions. Allow time between each question so they can formulate their answer before moving onto the next question. This is self-reflection exercise, but depending on time, you may ask people in the audience to share.

Pro-Facilitator Tip: DO NOT call people out by name, instead open the floor to anyone that is willing to share. Optional personalization: Share your answers to the questions below. Share a time when you felt alone or without a “person” to lean on. How did you change your situation? How did you find your person?

- Who is your person?
- Why is that your person?
- Have you ever told them they are your person?

Express Gratitude (from 8 Tips for Leaders to Increase Connections)

Instructions: Ask the audience to write on a piece of paper a short note to someone they appreciate. Make sure to include in the note, why they appreciate them, be specific and honest. OR Ask the audience to turn to a person near them and share with that person what it is that you appreciate about them.

Background/Supplemental Information

Leaders, review the information below to help rethink and reframe Suicide Prevention and further develop your talking points above:

Videos:

Inclusive Leaders Build Teams: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KA-1s1G-_v4

Greatness by David Marquet https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OqmdLcyES_Q

What role does teamwork play as a Maintainer? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bsnML4fh4_o

What is Suicide Prevention?

- Suicide prevention is more than talking about risk factors and warning signs.
- If all we did for Suicide Prevention was talk about suicide deaths and the associated risk factors and warning signs, we would be missing the mark. Those items are important but we also need to look at overall wellness, making sure our airmen feel valued, appreciated and part of the team. We cannot wait until people are in crisis, we need to build safe environments for getting help early and often.
 - Example: If a person wanted to reduce the number of heart attacks, they wouldn't just focus on who to call when they are having a heart attack, they would put energy towards managing diet, exercise, cholesterol, blood pressure, family history, etc. We need to think about Suicide Prevention in the same way.

When people feel connected...

- Simon Sinek, Management theorist, has noted that when people feel connected, they feel safe to express themselves
- Making connections is also about building trust. Trust empowers people to make decisions faster and confidence to execute big projects successfully

Resources/References:

<https://www.ang.af.mil/suicideprevention>

<https://www.resilience.af.mil/>

[8 Tips for Leaders to Increase Connection in their Teams \(Part 3\)](#)

[The Importance of Belonging](#)

[Operation GRIT](#)



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Proper Terminology

<u>When Describing</u>	<u>Say This</u>	<u>NOT this:</u>
Individuals who have experienced suicidal thoughts, feelings and actions, to include suicide attempts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attempt Survivors ▪ People with Lived Experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ They were unsuccessful at suicide ▪ They had a failed or incomplete suicide attempt ▪ Anything that indicates weakness or cowardliness
When referring to the act of suicide during which a person survives the attempt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attempted suicide ▪ Non-fatal suicide attempt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Failed suicide attempt ▪ Incomplete suicide ▪ Unsuccessful suicide
The individual who died by suicide and/or the suicide event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use the person's name ▪ Died by/from suicide ▪ Death by suicide ▪ Suicide death ▪ Killed him/herself ▪ Took his/her life 	<p>Do not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sensationalize or glorify suicide ▪ Discuss the suicide event in detail ▪ Discuss the content of a suicide note ▪ Say the act was inevitable, cowardly or selfish <p>Do <u>not</u> use the terms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completed suicide ▪ Successful suicide ▪ Commit or committed suicide
Individuals who lost a friend or loved one to suicide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Survivor of Suicide ▪ Suicide Survivor ▪ Suicide Loss Survivor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anything to indicate guilt or culpability

Helping Resources and Points of Contact:

- Wing Director of Psychological Health
- Chaplain
- Local Emergency Room
- Local Veteran Health Administration (VA)
- Local Vet Centers <https://www.vetcenter.va.gov/>
- Military and Veterans Crisis Line phone number: 1-800-273-8255 (TALK) Option 1
- Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS): 800-959-TAPS (8277)
- Military One Source: 1-800-342-9647
- ANG Prevention Website: <https://www.ang.af.mil/suicideprevention/>
- AF Resiliency Website: <https://www.resilience.af.mil/>
- Give an Hour: <https://giveanhour.org/get-help/>
- Wingman Online: <http://www.wingmanonline.org/Home>
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: <https://afsp.org/>
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center: <https://www.sprc.org/>
- Defense Suicide Prevention Office: <http://www.dspo.mil/>
- ANG Suicide Prevention Office: Lt Morsch, katherine.a.morsch.mil@mail.mil
- ANG Drug Demand Reduction Office: Col Harvey, gilbert.t.harvey.mil@mail.mil