

# VALUES AND ETHICS

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Values and Ethics are discussed to assist in the articulation and prioritization of principles foundational to the personal vision statement and to suggest that differing values can be *worthy* values.

## **GOAL:**

The goal of this module is for you to:

- identify and prioritize values by completing the Rokeach Value Survey
- recognize that different values can be worthy values
- have a basic framework of ethics

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

- John Schaeffer and Frank Schaeffer, 2002 Keeping Faith: A Father-Son Story About Love and The United States Marine Corps
- Rushworth Kidder, 1995 How Good People Make Tough Choices.
- Ron Zemke, Claire Raines, & Bob Filipczak, 1999 Generations at Work.
- Lynn Lancaster & David Stillman, 2002 When Generations Collide
- Arthur Dobrin, D.S.W., 2002 Ethics for Everyone.



***“In matters of style, swim with the current;  
in matters of principle, stand like a rock.”***

Thomas Jefferson

## **TOPIC OUTLINE**

1. Introduction
2. Definition of values
3. Importance of values
4. Navy Core Values
5. Definition of Ethics
6. Ethical dilemmas

***“The truth of the matter is that you always know the right thing to do.  
The hard part is doing it.”***

Norman Schwarzkopf

## **ETHICAL DILEMMAS**

### **Scenario #1 – CMC is married, separated and has a “significant other”**

The Base CO and his wife often host a quarterly Hail and Farewell for the Command Master Chiefs on the base. Since this is a large base with several ships and shore commands, the turnout is pretty good – typically two-dozen couples plus the single CMCs. Most of the CMCs and their spouses already have a dynamic social and professional relationship. Getting together with the Base CO and his wife gives everyone a chance to interact with them on a less formal basis. Normally at these affairs the Base CO and his wife greet all the guests as they come in the door.

This quarter there are five CMCs departing, and three have recently joined the waterfront. As introductions are made at the entrance it is clear who has been around a while and who the new CMCs are by their conversations. One of the CMCs who has been in the group for over a year and normally comes “solo” to these events, shows up with a lady on his arm. Most of the CMC’s and their spouses as well as the Base CO and his wife assume the lady is his wife. After all, the invitation said “CMC and Spouse.” Since you and your spouse have been on the waterfront for quite some time you know better. (He’s still married to his first wife, though contemplating divorce, and this is his new “significant other.”) Unfortunately, the Base CO’s wife extends an invitation to this lady, as she does to all new CMC spouses in the group, to come to her home for lunch. Clearly no one has told her of the circumstances. At the luncheon, the truth comes out, and the Base CO’s wife is embarrassed at being placed in that position. When the CO’s wife is embarrassed, you can bet her husband is not happy as well. The Base CO believes that all CMCs should be family role models for the crew.

The Base CO’s wife calls you and asks for some insight into the “significant other” issue. She is also interested in finding out about other commands on the waterfront. You know it all – This CMC is married, but his wife has breast cancer and he doesn’t want her to be deprived of medical care until her treatment is finished. They have an understanding that their marriage is finished, and she fully supports him seeing other women. They have discussed formalizing the separation and divorce once the medical issues are resolved. Additionally you are aware that another CMC’s new living arrangement is in conflict with the Base CO’s views. (There is talk going around about relieving this CMC for cause – moral turpitude, conduct unbecoming, possible TRICARE fraud.)

Your spouse tells you that the CMC who brought the significant other to the party feels he is doing nothing wrong and was surprised by the Base CO and his wife’s

embarrassment; in fact he feels he has taken the moral high road. This, plus the other CMC living with his girlfriend, has certainly generated fuel for the gossip mill.

- *What do you tell the Base CO's spouse? How do you deal with the gossip? Do you think living in the glass house that comes with being a CMC demands a higher standard of you? How do you deal with the "significant other" issue when a legal marriage still exists? Based on your values, what do you do? Can you think of how individual values could change the outcome of how this is handled?*

### **Scenario #2 – Donated funds are missing**

You are helping the homecoming committee to raise money for the command's homecoming. You and another spouse have volunteered to collect the donations. You notice the other volunteer isn't putting all of the money into the cash box. You are confident there are funds unaccounted for.

- *Do you pull him/her aside? If so, what do you say to that person?*
- *What do you tell your CMC/COB spouse, if anything?*

### **Scenario #3 – A Chief's Mess spouse has an extra marital affair**

A spouse in the Chief's Mess is a dedicated parent, a great organizer, and most importantly, is becoming a close personal friend. You have been a little concerned because during this recent deployment many people have mentioned seeing your friend with another companion. No one has actually stated that they suspected an affair, but the thought lingers even though you firmly discourage gossip and random speculations. Then, during a phone conversation, this friend strongly alludes to an extra-marital relationship.

- *Based on your value system, do you think you have any responsibilities, either as a friend or as the CMC's spouse to take any action? If so, what?*
- *What is your policy on what you do or don't tell your CMC spouse?*
- *How will your action (or lack of action) impact the morale of the Chief's Mess? Would your response have been different if you were aware of "rumors" but had no first hand knowledge? If that were the case, would you take any action?*
- *Would your response be different if the spouse in question was a man?*
- *Do the values of the CMC and their spouse influence the values of the Command unit?*
- *Do the CO's values influence your values in this situation?*

### **Scenario #4 – Is a fellow Chief's Mess spouse an alcoholic or is she ill?**

There is a spouse in the Chief's Mess who appears to be an alcoholic. People gossip about her apparent drunk behavior. You are a friend of hers and she has confided in you that she has MS, is embarrassed about it, and does not want people to know about her condition. You understand the symptoms people see are due to the disease and not the glass of wine she occasionally has at a party.

- *Do you help clarify the situation? If so, how?*
- *Should you take action or ignore the situation?*

### **Scenario #5 – A command family's children appear to be neglected or abused**

You live on base and it has been brought to your attention that there is another family on base who is in the command whose young children appear to be neglected and/or abused. The children are often dirty and stay outside playing much later than any of the other children on the block. They frequently go to the neighbors hungry, asking for snacks. The younger child has bruises on her legs and arms and when asked about it, the older siblings always answers for her – “She fell down.” When pressed, the younger one says she “banged” herself. The active duty just returned from deployment and the couple tells neighbors to mind their own business that they just want some time for themselves and the children are fine. People tell you they always see her at the commissary without the children. The two of them go out in the evenings and people are afraid they are leaving the children home alone, and they are not old enough to sit by themselves.

- *What are your obligations in this situation?*
- *Do you involve the Ombudsman?*
- *Would you deal with this directly or turn it over to the command?*
- *What is abuse? What is neglect? Who gets to make that call?*

### **Scenario #6 – A CMC is out with a spouse of a Chief in another command**

You are out to dinner with your spouse and you see another CMC out with the spouse of a Chief in another command.

- *What do you do? Do you report them to their commands?*
- *Would this be a situation that requires immediate action, action later, or no action?*
- *How do your personal values play a role in your decision-making?*
- *Would the rank of each person in this situation make a difference in your decision-making? Do you have “values by pay grade?” Is it OK to have that?*
- *Is this a spouse issue, or strictly an active-duty one?*