



GRIT

**STRENGTH THROUGH
RESILIENCE**

2022

DRAGON GRIT CHECK 6

WHY?



ABOUT GRIT

81st TRW way to connect our Airmen to each other, to our heritage, and to the broader Air Force mission.

We are investing in our collective success by providing the time, tools, and resources to enhance personal and professional performance and promote a shared responsibility of Airmen taking care of Airmen.

DELIBERATE FOCUS

DRAGON GRIT has a deliberate focus on two significant protective factors for interpersonal and self-directed violence.

CONNECTEDNESS and SHARED SENSE OF PURPOSE

- CONNECTION - to the unit, our mission, and heritage
- PERSONAL PERFORMANCE - recognize and strengthen positive personal and professional behaviors
- SHARED SENSE OF PURPOSE - building on our shared identity as warrior Airmen and finding common purpose in our mission and values

RESPECT

GRIT

STRENGTH THROUGH RESILIENCE

WHY IS DRAGON GRIT IMPORTANT?

Personal development is about investing in yourself to achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness. This is our vision for every Airman. Installation influencers are charged with serving as the delivery vehicle for these messages and inspiring Airmen to strive for personal and professional improvement. Making a commitment to personal development is the critical step on the path to personal fulfillment.

Personal development is beneficial in many ways:

- Promotes Self-Awareness to Recognize Strengths and Areas for Improvement
- Encourages Shared Goals and a Sense of Belonging
- Improves Focus and Effectiveness
- Strengthens Personal Motivation to Achieve
- Enhances Resilience to Overcome Hurdles
- Deepens Relationships with fellow Airmen

As an installation influencer, when you encourage and assist your team in a rigorous personal development course like Check 6, the rewards are amazing for them and for you!

The Check 6 topics represent a significant investment in 81st TRW greatest resource – Our Airmen.



SIMPLE ROLES OF A CONVERSATIONALIST



Make your
discussion
a priority



1 Partner

- Create an effective relationship with your team members
- Customize the Check 6 materials as needed to meet your team's needs



2 Planner

- Select the method and process in which you will initiate the Check 6 discussion
- Prepare time and space to ensure it will encourage dialogue and interaction with the group.



3 Enabler

- Create and sustain an interactive and participatory environment
- Honor and recognize diversity ensuring inclusiveness



4 Motivator

- Trust in your group's potential
- Model neutrality
- Acknowledge input, thoughts and ideas



5 Director

- Manage the time
- Keep the group focused
- Manage group conflict



6 Guide

- Guide the group with clear models and examples
- Facilitate group awareness of the topic
- Guide the group to consensus and desired goal

STRENGTH THROUGH
RESILIENCE

Ultimate TALK GUIDE

1

BE GENUINE

What does the Check 6 topic mean to you and your team?
Where do you find your motivation/inspiration?
Be true to yourself.

2

CONVERSE, NOT DEBATE

Adopt a forward thinking mentality.
No need to have a conclusion or agreement point in every discussion.
Allow things to be left open if a common point can't be achieved.

3

EMBRACE DIFFERENCES

Don't impose, criticize, or judge.
Respect each other's choices/inputs.
Seek commonalities.
Build on the common links.

4

BE AUTHENTIC

Share real thoughts and opinions.
Be proud of what you stand for.
Act on your personal beliefs and values.
Be present in the moment.

5

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Ask questions that cause reflection.
What was it like to...?
How did you know...?
In what way is that similar/different from...?
What was the best part of...?

6

GIVE AND TAKE

As people reveal more about themselves, they give you information about which to pose more questions.
Balance the talking vs listening.

*****Some months may contain multiple Paths to select from to include: Resilience, Diversity & Inclusion, or Violence Prevention - Select one*****

C H E C K

Path 1 - Resilience & Domestic Violence



GOAL

Airmen are intentional about finding the good in themselves, others and present circumstances.



FACILITATOR'S NOTES

HOW TO PREPARE:

- Watch *The Airman Spirit: Gratitude* and share with your team:
<https://www.dvidshub.net/video/534060/airman-spirit-series-gratitude>
- Gratitude flows from us when we are focused on what is good about ourselves and our circumstances. Remind your Airmen of the good you see in them and what they add to the team. Feeling valued and supported by you is vital to their ability to find the good in seemingly bad situations.
- Feeling, expressing and focusing on gratitude are more than just positive reinforcement - they contribute to each Airman's resilience. Read this article and prepare to share the concepts with your team:
<https://advice.theshineapp.com/articles/the-simple-way-gratitude-helps-us-build-resilience/>

All links should be copied and pasted into your secure browser's URL bar.

THE EXTRA MILE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Set time aside after the discussion for the Airmen to make a list of what they are grateful for in the present moment. Regroup to discuss how the items on their list helps them focus on the good in the day-to-day.
- Consider preparing and sharing your own list with them. This provides an example and encourages openness among the rest of the team.

Resilience
Center
Resources

MISSION PLAN HOW TO EXECUTE

FRAMING THE CONVERSATION

We have things to be grateful for; people, experiences and even some material possessions. Being a Grateful Warrior involves taking that idea deeper, teaching yourself how to focus on the good in the world and in yourself.

When we focus on the good, no matter what is happening in and around us, we free our minds from the negative and find hope beyond the present moment. This is a daily practice that has long-term impact.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS

- What are three things you are grateful for off the top of your head?
- What are three things you have currently negative feelings towards?
- When you pause to consider what you are grateful for, how does it change your mood in this moment? What about when you consider the negative?
- Do you see how teaching yourself how to focus on the good and gratitude can impact you and those around you?



Please use the QR code/link on the left to submit your feedback on this discussion. This would greatly enhance the experience for you, as well as improve the program for the future Airmen of tomorrow's Air Force.

MISSION CHALLENGE

HOW TO APPLY THE LESSON

As the team leader, you are in the unique position to set the example for what it means to be a Grateful Warrior. When you are living in gratitude, it has the power to boost the morale of your Airmen. Challenge yourself to find a moment to express your gratitude for one quality in each Airman and how it strengthens the team. This may open the door for them to follow your lead and express the good about their fellow wingmen.



C H E C K

PATH 2 (Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion)



GOAL

Instill confidence among Airmen in the Department of the Air Force leadership's support of a diverse and inclusive workforce. This guidance will facilitate discussion about American Indian Heritage and gratitude.

OBJECTIVES

Airmen and Guardians will be able to use a story about gratefulness to engage in a gratitude practice.

FACILITATOR PREPARATION

■ Discussion Guidelines:

- Small groups of up to 5 people -
 - To start the discussion, present each question & allow participants to think of their answer/ write it down.
 - (optional) Ask all members to share with the group, but respect the choice of those who do not wish to share.
- Large groups of 6-20 people -
 - To start the discussion, present each question & allow participants to think of their answer/ write it down.
 - (optional) Have participants turn and share their responses with 1-2 people nearby.
 - (optional) Ask for 1-3 volunteers to share with the larger group; respect the choice of those who do not wish to share.

■ Create a safe & productive environment.

■ Gather materials:

- Tech Options
 - Computer with internet connection
 - Projector & speakers
 - Handouts & pens/pencils
- No Tech Options
 - Printed articles
 - Handouts
 - Pens/pencils

■ Plan the discussion for your group:

Review the *Facilitation Guide* below and make a plan for how you will execute your discussion.

NOTE: *Italicized text* can be read as a script or used as a starting point for you to guide the discussion.

■ Budget the time: 15-30 minutes

MISSION PLAN HOW TO EXECUTE

A more detailed guide with background information, links to videos, talking points for the Facilitator, and additional resources can be found in the accompanying *Facilitation Guide*.

1. Provide handout with questions
2. Introduce topics
 - a. Gratitude practices
 - b. American Indian Heritage Month
3. Have participants pick & read/watch a story that resonates with them
4. Walk through the gratitude practice/ discussion questions
5. Wrap up the conversation
6. Request feedback

Resources

Keesler AFB
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NOTES

Gratitude Practice

- Which story did you choose? Why?
- Describe how the person/people felt at the start of the story you chose.
- Why were they feeling this way?
- Describe how the person/ people felt at the end of the story.
- What sparked the change in emotion/ feeling?
- Use your responses to the above questions to create a short (1-3 sentence) summary of the story.
- What can you do show gratitude and facilitate a similar emotional change in others?



Grateful Warrior Discussion - Gratitude Practice & American Indian Heritage

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- American Indian Heritage Month was established in 1990 by President George H.W. Bush. Native American Heritage Month was established in 2009 by President Barack Obama.¹
- There are hundreds of federally recognized American Indian/ Native American tribes and not all agree on a preferred term.¹
- American Indians make up about 1% of the active duty force as of 2021 according to the Defense Manpower Data Center.¹
- As reported in the 2020 Census, American Indians and Alaska Natives make up about 3% of all people living in the US.¹

FACILITATION GUIDE

1. Provide all participants with handout of questions & feedback QR code
2. Gratitude discussion
 - a. Conversation opener –
 - i. Talking points.
 1. *Even more than listing things we are thankful for, receiving gratitude and reflecting on how you felt before and after can be a powerful way to change your mindset to be more positive, empathetic and resilient, and less anxious or resentful.*²
 2. *We cannot always rely on waiting for someone to show us gratitude, so the next best thing is reflecting on a story of received thankfulness we can strongly identify with.*²
 3. *November is also American Indian Heritage Month, which was established in 1990 by President George H. W. Bush to honor the hundreds of Native American tribes and people in the United States.*¹
 4. *Today we will review stories that celebrates Native American culture and achievements. We will reflect on these stories together to walk through a gratitude practice that you can incorporate into your everyday life.*
 - ii. Stories of gratitude – have participants review the stories, select one to read/watch carefully, and come prepared to discuss one in depth.
 1. Option 1: Code Talkers website (printable if needed)
 - a. Quick option – Chapter 7 Medals & Praise:
<https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/code-talkers/recognition/>
 - b. Start at the beginning & get the whole story:
<https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/code-talkers/introduction/>
 2. Option 2: comics from a Smithsonian program/exhibit. (Pick one)
<https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/resources/Collected-Comics-from-Native-New-York> (click the View button to the right to access the PDF)
 - a. *Returning Home, Nurturing Community* (pg. 18 – 22)
 - b. *Ancient Tradition, Modern Practice* (pg. 8 – 12)
 3. Option 3: A celebration of story (read or watch)
<https://news.cornell.edu/stories/2021/10/storyteller-makes-ancient-native-american-rites-new-again>
 4. Option 4: videos on land acknowledgement practice (watch both)
 - a. What land acknowledgement means to people:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETOhNzBsiKA>
 - b. The land acknowledgement tradition:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtG7j19na4>

- b. Discussion Guidelines
 - i. Present each question & allow participants to think of their answer/write it down on the provided handout.
 - ii. Large groups (6-20 people): Have participants turn and share with 1 or 2 people next to them. Provide time for 1-2 small groups/people to share with larger if they want.
 - iii. Small group (2-5 people): everyone shares with the group.
- c. Discussion Prompts
 - i. Which story did you choose? Why?
 - ii. Describe how the person/people felt at the start of the story you liked/identified with the most.
 - iii. Why were they feeling this way?
 - iv. Describe how the person/people felt at the end of the story.
 - v. What sparked the change in emotion/ feeling?
 - vi. Use your responses to the last 4 questions to help create a short (1-3 sentence) summary of the story. Your summary should capture for you the essence of what happened and why the gratitude was so meaningful.
 - vii. What can you do to help facilitate that change in others?
- 3. Wrap up the conversation: *Thank you for your time today and your reflection on the stories of gratitude for the culture and contributions of American Indians. I encourage you to review the short summary you have created from the story for 1-2 minutes, 3 times per week. Engaging in this practice can help reduce activation of anxiety, resentment, and fear neural circuitry while increasing activation of well-being, motivation, and empathy – all of which enhances the overall quality of your social interactions.¹ Consider engaging in this practice the next time you experience gratitude. Remember to express your gratitude to others when you are thankful for them and the things they do for you.*
- 4. Request feedback (QR code on handout or slides): *Your feedback on this discussion helps the development team know whether this was a valuable use of your time. Please provide your honest, anonymous feedback using the survey linked through the QR code so that these continued conversations help to build a strong Warrior community.*

DISCUSSION SOURCES

1. Vergun, David. (1 Nov 2021) *DOD Honors Native Americans and Their Many Contributions to the Nation*. DOD News. < <https://www.defense.gov/News/Feature-Stories/Story/Article/2825658/dod-honors-native-americans-and-their-many-contributions-to-the-nation/> >
2. Huberman, Andrew. (21 Nov 2021) *The Science of Gratitude & How to Build a Gratitude Practice*. Huberman Lab Episode 47 < <https://hubermanlab.com/the-science-of-gratitude-and-how-to-build-a-gratitude-practice/> >
3. National Museum of the American Indian (2022). *Native Words, Native Warriors*. Smithsonian. <<https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/code-talkers/>>
4. National Museum of the American Indian (2022). *Telling Stories with Pictures: Collected Comics from Native New York*. Smithsonian. < <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/resources/Collected-Comics-from-Native-New-York> >
5. Kelley, Susan. (6 Oct 2021) *A storyteller makes ancient Native American tales new again*. Cornell Chronicle. <<https://news.cornell.edu/stories/2021/10/storyteller-makes-ancient-native-american-tales-new-again>>
6. US Department of Arts and Culture. (3 Oct 2017) *#HonorNativeLand*. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETOhNzBsiKA> >
7. Paquette, Stephen. (23 April 2020) *Indigenous Voices – Land Acknowledgement*. Sheridan SOURCE. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtG7j19na4> >