



# GRIT

STRENGTH THROUGH  
RESILIENCE

2023

# WHY?



## ABOUT GRIT

It is the 81st TRW's 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 RAG 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 our greatest resource – Our Airmen & Guardians.



# 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

# 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.

Please select at least one topic for your  
Dragon GRIT discussion: ADAPT,  
M&FRC Community Readiness (Finance),  
or Chaplain's Spiritual Message

# C H E C K

Alcohol and Drug Abuse  
Prevention and Treatment  
(ADAPT)





**GOAL** - Develop an increased awareness of responsible alcohol use and drug use regarding drunk and drugged driving prevention.

## FACILITATOR'S NOTES

### HOW TO PREPARE:

- - Review the "Responsible Drinking" handout from ADAPT. This handout is a BASIC guide for information on BAC, standard drink, how alcohol is metabolized, and for creating a responsible drinking plan. Also, a handout on prescription drug use and avoiding illegal drugs.
- - Know when to ask for help. Risk factors: Frequently drinking more than you intended, struggle to stop or control alcohol use, neglecting home and family, experiencing strong cravings that led to alcohol use, continuing to use alcohol in situations that are hazardous such as driving, and inability to stop alcohol use when problems develop from it.

## THE EXTRA MILE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- - Resources available: Alcoholics Anonymous, VA health care, Military One Source, and local/virtual resources.
- - Base resources: Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment Program (ADAPT) in the Keesler Medical Center, on the ground floor. Call Mental Health Clinic 228-376-0385 and we can direct you to the right resource.

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Helping  
Agencies**



## MISSION PLAN HOW TO EXECUTE

### FRAMING THE CONVERSATION

December is Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month.

Education on responsible alcohol use and prescription drug use is important for all ages. A person can build a tolerance over a short period of time or gradually. Knowing what a standard drink is and how alcohol affects you will guide you in making informed decisions when it comes to alcohol use. Moreover, taking prescription drugs as prescribed and for what it is intended for is important. Avoid taking medications that are not prescribed to you, using expired medications, and taking more than prescribed. Furthermore, have a plan a head of time.

Although, Illegal drug use and DOD prohibited drug use is not tolerated for U.S. Air Force employees there are resources available to those needing help. Be aware of what you are putting in your body! Don't take something from someone or share with someone if you are unsure what is in what they are using (i.e., marijuana candies, vapes with drugs, etc.).

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS

- - What is a standard drink?
- - What is Blood Alcohol Content (BAC)?
- - How long before alcohol leaves your system?
- What are some warning signs of or drug impairment?
- - Plan before you go...
  - Set a number of drinks, stick to it, and share this plan with your friends.
  - Have phone numbers for Uber, cab, friends or whomever else you can call for a ride.
  - Plan to stay the night at a friend's house or hotel instead of driving.
  - Don't drink if on medications that alcohol could interact with.
  - Don't drink if your prescription directs you not to.
  - Don't take more of your medication than you are prescribed.

## MISSION CHALLENGE

### HOW TO APPLY THE LESSON

- Create and utilize a responsible drinking plan and use your plan to get home. Don't drink if under 21 years of age and don't drink and drive. Legal Limit is .08% BAC. Additionally, think about why you drink. If you find yourself using alcohol to cope with stressors or your alcohol use continually increases and it starts to impact daily functioning - seek help.
- Furthermore, take prescription medications as prescribed but if you start to use it for other purposes, this is drug misuse. Know how your medication affects you and follow the directions.
- Use the resources for seeking help when you need it. Don't drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Utilize your plan for and adjust where needed.



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.





# Referrals

**Self Referral:**

For members who identify help is needed for their alcohol or substance use.

**Command Referrals:**

Initiated by G-series commander.

**Medical Referrals:**

Initiated by a DOD healthcare provider.

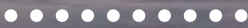


# Services

For Active Duty members empaneled to Keesler AFB we offer assessments, individualized treatment planning that best aids recovery.

ADAPT liaisons with local resources to provide support for dependents and government employees.

# ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT PROGRAM



# Contact

301 Fisher St,  
Biloxi, MS 39534  
Bldg 0468  
Phone: 228-376-0385

# Hours

M-F: 0730-1630



# Groups & Classes

- Outpatient Level I Groups**
- Aftercare Groups**
- Alcohol Brief Counseling**



Keesler AFB, Biloxi, MS

## ABC

Alcohol Brief Counseling are education sessions that increase awareness and understanding of how alcohol and substance use can impact your life.

## Outpatient Treatment

Treatment consisting of therapeutic group and individual sessions with medical intervention as needed. Unit leadership involvement is possible, and is meant to serve in a supportive role.

## Continuing Care

Also known as Aftercare.

Once individual goals are met in treatment a relapse prevention plan is implemented or continued sobriety. This level of care involves monthly groups and individual sessions.

## Higher Level of Care

Coordination with off base in-network facilities that offer Intensive Outpatient Programs, Partial Hospitalization Programs and Residential Programs.



## When should you ask for help

- ❖ Frequently drinking more than you intended
- ❖ Struggling to cut down or control use
- ❖ Neglecting home & family due to drinking
- ❖ Difficulty controlling strong cravings
- ❖ Unable to stop even though problems are developing
- ❖ Giving up activities and hobbies once enjoyed

## We are here for you!

**ADAPT is dedicated to empowering persons with alcohol & substance concerns. We assist you in managing these concerns and to lead a more fulfilling life through comprehensive assessment and treatment services.**

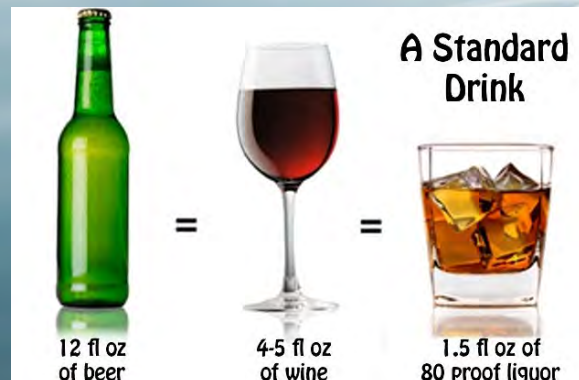
## Low Risk Drinking Plan: 0-0-1-3

0: If you're under the age of 21, pregnant or on contraindicating medications.

0: If you are driving

1: 1 drink per hour

3: No more than 3 standard drinks per night



## *Abusing Prescription Drugs Education*

### ***Air Force Policy and UCMJ***

The Air Force has set forth clear policies regarding the improper use of substances including those substances that are prescribed by a physician. AFI 44-121 indicates that, “The Air Force does not tolerate the illegal or improper use of drugs by Air Force personnel.” Similarly, the Uniform Code of Military Justice, Article 92 states:



### ***Use and Misuse – How to Tell the Difference***

Doctors sometimes must prescribe powerful medications to help individuals with a variety of difficulties but sometimes these medications are used in a way that is inappropriate and harmful. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse prescription drug abuse is:

- ✓ Taking a prescription drug that is not prescribed for you
- ✓ Taking a prescription drug for reasons other than what it was prescribed for
- ✓ Taking a prescription drug in dosages other than what your doctor prescribed

The most commonly abused prescription drugs are opioids (pain medication), central nervous system depressants (for anxiety and sleep problems), and stimulants (for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and narcolepsy). See the below tables for names of medications in each of these classes.

<b><i>Opioids</i></b>	<b><i>Central Nervous System Depressants</i></b>	<b><i>Stimulants</i></b>
Fentanyl (Duragesic®) Hydrocodone (Vicodin®)  Oxycodone (OxyContin®) Oxymorphone (Opana®) Propoxyphene (Darvon®) Hydromorphone (Dilaudid®) Meperidine (Demerol®) Diphenoxylate (Lomotil®)	Pentobarbital sodium (Nembutal®) Diazepam (Valium®)  Alprazolam (Xanax®)	Dextroamphetamine (Dexedrine®) Methylphenidate (Ritalin® or Concerta®) Amphetamines (Adderall®)

\*Retrieved from: <http://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/prescription-drugs>

### ***So What? Health Effects of Misusing Prescription Medication***

Some people mistakenly think that prescription medications are safer than street drugs because they are prescribed by medical doctors. Although these medications have been tested and approved for safe use it is with the understanding that they are used as directed by a physician and for short periods of



time (unless a person is being closely monitored by a doctor). If these medications are taken over long periods of time or in excessive dosages they can have very serious, if not fatal, effects.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (<http://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/prescription-drugs>):

- ✓ Physical dependence and addiction
- ✓ Opioids: drowsiness, constipation, suppression of breathing
- ✓ CNS Depressants: slowing of brain function; drowsiness if taken with alcohol or other medications; slowing of heart rate and breathing
- ✓ Stimulants: anxiety, paranoia, dangerously high body temperature, irregular heartbeat, seizures

### ***The Path to Addiction and Dependence***

There are clear signs when people are becoming physically dependent on prescription medications.

1. Stealing, forging, or selling prescriptions
2. Taking higher doses than prescribed
3. Excessive mood swings or hostility
4. Increase or decrease in sleep
5. Poor decision making
6. Appearing to be high, unusually energetic or revved up, or sedated
7. Continually “losing” prescriptions, so more prescriptions must be written
8. Seeking prescriptions from more than one doctor

(<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/prescription-drug-abuse/DS01079/DSECTION=symptoms>)

### ***Safely Disposing of Prescription Drugs***

Safe disposal of unused prescription drugs is important to protect others who may seek out unused drugs, children who may accidentally ingest unused drugs, and the environment. The following guidelines on safe disposal of prescription drugs were taken directly from the US FDA website.

“Follow any specific disposal instructions on the drug label or patient information that accompanies the medication. Do not flush prescription drugs down the toilet unless this information specifically instructs you to do so.

Take advantage of community drug take-back programs that allow the public to bring unused drugs to a central location for proper disposal. Call your city or county government's household trash and recycling service (see blue pages in phone book) to see if a take-back program is available in your community.

If no instructions are given on the drug label and no take-back program is available in your area, throw the drugs in the household trash, but first:

- Take them out of their original containers and mix them with an undesirable substance, such as used coffee grounds or kitty litter. The medication will be less appealing to children and pets, and unrecognizable to people who may intentionally go through your trash.
- Put them in a sealable bag, empty can, or other container to prevent the medication from leaking or breaking out of a garbage bag.”

For up to date information on how to dispose of prescription drugs, follow the link below to the US FDA website.

<http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/BuyingUsingMedicineSafely/EnsuringSafeUseofMedicine/SafeDisposalofMedicines/ucm186187.htm>

*Information for this handout obtained from the Alcohol Brief Counseling handbook*

Please select at least one topic for your  
Dragon GRIT discussion: ADAPT,  
M&FRC Community Readiness (Finance),  
or Chaplain's Spiritual Message

# C H E C K

M&FRC Community  
Readiness (Finance)





# GOAL - Develop an increased awareness of budgeting and holiday spending.

## FACILITATOR'S NOTES

### HOW TO PREPARE:

- - Review the "Tips for Military Families to Save on Holiday Spending" handout from *MilitaryOneSource.mil*. This handout lists some easy ways to keep holiday spending within your budget.
- - Know when to see a financial counselor. Each individual/family's financial situation is unique. One type of financial planning is not suitable for every circumstance. Airmen should seek financial counseling provided by staff at Military and Family Readiness Centers.
- - Familiarize yourself with what spending tracker apps can do.
- *All links should be copied and pasted into your secure browser's URL bar.*

## THE EXTRA MILE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- - Resources are available, so educate yourself! Be aware they can be local and virtual.
- - Base resources for financial education include the Personal Financial Managers and Personal Financial Counselors located within the M&FRC in room 110 of the Sablich Center. Virtual resources include <https://finred.usalearning.gov/> and <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/>. If reviewing articles or other online sources, check to see that the author has an "AFC or CPFC" after their name. This will assure the reader that the information presented is from a reliable source.

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## MISSION PLAN HOW TO EXECUTE

### FRAMING THE CONVERSATION

For many, December means holiday spending.

In 2022 retail holiday spending totaled \$936 million. The average American spent \$812 last year on the holidays. Putting \$812 on a credit card with 22% interest, making only the minimum payment will take 69 months to pay off. The interest paid on this will be \$501. Americans have over \$1 trillion in credit card debt with an average interest rate of 22%. There is no need to add to this debt with your holiday spending.

Financial counselors (AFC/CPFC) are financial experts and can assist Airmen in meeting their goals. You can visit Keesler's Military and Family Readiness Center to speak with a financial counselor.

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS

- - Establishing a household budget (Spend Plan Worksheet).
- - Emergency and Goal Getter savings.
  - *Single/no house, \$500-\$1000 is an early target for emergency savings (\$20/payday).*
- - What strategies could be used to prevent going into debt?
  - *Air travel can be cheaper on certain days.*
  - *Decorations usually have large markdowns after the Holiday.*
  - *Not all cards/gifts must be purchased - be creative & crafty.*
- - Pitfalls of buy now - pay later.
  - *Easy to overextend your finances.*
  - *Watch for interest and late fees.*
  - *Most do not report to credit bureaus.*
- - Remember, many factors impact someone's financial situation, including one's knowledge about finances. Do not assume that one specific plan will work for everyone. Empower one another to reach out to a financial counselor when needed.

## MISSION CHALLENGE

### HOW TO APPLY THE LESSON

- Budgeting can seem intimidating, but technology has made the task fast and simple:
  - *Use banks app or download a FREE spending tracker like Mint, BUDGT, or DollarBird to populate the FINRED Spending Plan Worksheet.*
  - *Determine holiday gift/travel/decorations budget*
  - *Stick to your budget and do not use a credit card to extend your buying power*
- Use your resources, educate yourself to empower smart choices regarding your financial health. <https://finred.usalearning.gov/> and <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/> are excellent places to start. Keep in mind that each person's financial history and goals are unique. Your budget and financial strategy should be tailored to your specific goals and needs. See a Financial Counselor at the Military and Family Readiness Center for specific strategies.



Please use the QR code 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.

# SPENDING PLAN WORKSHEET

Month/Year:



Use this fillable worksheet to record your cash flow this month, then use the information to help you plan next month's cash flow. **Enter the letter "A" in every field for expenses paid by military allotments.**

## INCOME

	MONTHLY (CURRENT)	MONTHLY (GOAL)
Service member's take-home pay (salary after taxes, benefits and other deductions)	\$	\$
Spouse's take-home pay (salary after taxes, benefits and other deductions)	\$	\$
Other income (child support, second job, etc., after taxes)	\$	\$
<b>Total monthly take-home income</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

## SAVING AND INVESTING

Savings	\$	\$
Investments (IRA, other investment accounts)	\$	\$
<b>Total monthly savings and investing</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

## HOUSING

Monthly mortgage and property taxes (enter "0" if renting)	\$	\$
Monthly rent payment (enter "0" if you only have a mortgage)	\$	\$
Renters insurance or homeowners insurance not included in mortgage	\$	\$
Utilities (electricity, gas, etc.)	\$	\$
Internet, cable and phones	\$	\$
Repairs/maintenance (1/12 of annual total, if you have a mortgage)	\$	\$
Other housing expenses (pest control, lawn service, etc.)	\$	\$
<b>Total monthly housing</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

## FOOD

Groceries and household supplies	\$	\$
Dining out	\$	\$
Other food expenses	\$	\$
<b>Total monthly food</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

## TRANSPORTATION

Auto/motorcycle loan payment(s)	\$	\$
Auto/motorcycle insurance	\$	\$
Auto/motorcycle fuel	\$	\$
Auto/motorcycle maintenance (1/12 of annual total)	\$	\$
Public transportation (Metro, bus, etc.) parking, tolls, ride sharing	\$	\$
Other transportation expenses	\$	\$
<b>Total monthly transportation</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

## HEALTH

Medicines and supplements	\$	\$
Health insurance deductibles/co-pays	\$	\$
Other health expenses (dental, glasses, contacts, etc.)	\$	\$
<b>Total monthly health</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>



**PERSONAL AND FAMILY****MONTHLY** (CURRENT)**MONTHLY** (GOAL)

Child care	\$	\$
Child and/or spousal support	\$	\$
Clothing and shoes	\$	\$
Laundry service/dry cleaning	\$	\$
Money given to family members	\$	\$
Entertainment (movies, streaming services, magazines, etc.)	\$	\$
Vacations	\$	\$
Pets	\$	\$
Memberships and subscriptions (not included in entertainment)	\$	\$
Other personal or family expenses	\$	\$
<b>Total monthly personal and family</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

**OTHER EXPENSES**

Credit card debt payments	\$	\$
Student loan payments	\$	\$
Other loans (furniture stores, appliances, HVAC systems, etc.)	\$	\$
School costs (tuition, supplies, etc.)	\$	\$
Non-monthly expenses (HOA fees, civic associations, vehicle registration, if annual ÷ by 12)	\$	\$
Life insurance (monthly premiums paid for private policies)	\$	\$
Gifts and donations (estimated annual expenses ÷ 12)	\$	\$
Other expenses (bank, credit card, ATM and other fees)	\$	\$
<b>Total monthly other expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

**TOTALS**

<b>Income</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Savings and Investments</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Monthly Expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>

If your income is more than your expenses, you have money left to save or spend. If your expenses are more than your income, look for expenses to reduce or cut.

**Personal financial managers (PFMs) and personal financial counselors (PFCs) are available at your installation's Military and Family Support Center to help you achieve and maintain financial readiness at every step of your military journey through flexible, no-cost personal support services.**



ARTICLE

# Tips for Military Families to Save on Holiday Spending

4 minute read • April 25, 2021

The holiday season and spending money often go together, but there are ways to celebrate with your family without going into debt. It's all about spending wisely.

Consider these tips for staying in control of your finances during the holidays:

- **Create a spending plan.** Money can fly out of your wallet quickly for gifts, special meals, decorations and travel. Decide how much you're going to spend in each of these areas and stay in that range.
- **Be careful when using credit cards.** If you are making the majority of your purchases with a credit card, it can be easy to lose track of how much you are spending. Checking your balance as you go, however, may keep you from spending more than you intended.
- **Take inventory.** Before you rush out to buy wrapping paper, check to see if there's a forgotten stash of rolls shoved to the back of a closet. The same is true for presents you may have hidden too well last year.
- **Shop for secondhand decorations.** Thrift stores and garage sales usually have loads of holiday decorations as people upgrade, downsize or realize that the ones they already have multiplied when they weren't looking.
- **Consider budget-friendly alternative gifts.** Homemade gifts are a great option if you're crafty or a whiz in the kitchen, or even if you aren't but can follow online directions. "Coupons" for your services, such as babysitting, can also make good presents.
- **Make your own holiday cards.** You can save money (and trees) by using e-cards to send greetings to your loved ones. Many websites offer free or inexpensive e-cards, some with options to add videos or slideshows.
- **Plan holiday meals early.** Knowing what you're going to cook well in advance allows you to watch for sales on the nonperishable items you'll need. It also helps spread the higher food costs over a couple of paychecks instead of one.
- **Use your smartphone while shopping.** Many retailers can send coupons directly to your phone when you walk into their stores. You can also use your phone to compare prices to make sure you're getting the best deals.
- **Consider traveling on the holiday itself.** You could score a much cheaper airline ticket by flying on the holiday instead of in the days before. And arriving on the big day conveniently gets you out of a lot of meal-prep duty.
- **Search hotel rates and airfares online.** Take advantage of websites that compare airfares and hotels to make sure you get the best deal. Many will also alert you to price drops. And online reviews can help you sidestep a bad experience. Be sure to check out [special travel options for service members](#) on lodging and flights.
- **Consider Space-A transportation.** This program allows you to fly for free or at a very low cost on military flights if there is room for you. Schedules change and restrictions apply, so [learn more about Space-A travel](#).

There are a lot of ways to save money during the holidays. Check out other budget-friendly tips from Military OneSource, or take advantage of [free financial counseling](#) available in person, by phone or by video chat.

You will also find tips for smart spending through the [Office of Financial Readiness](#)  and the Department of Defense's free Sen\$e app, available via the [Apple Store](#)  and [Google Play](#) .

THIS ARTICLE IS FOR

New Service Member, Retiree/Veteran, Service Member, Spouse

TOPIC

Please select at least one topic for your  
Dragon GRIT discussion: ADAPT,  
M&FRC Community Readiness (Finance),  
or Chaplain's Spiritual Message

# C H E C K

Chaplain's Spiritual  
Message





**GOAL** - Develop an awareness of the importance of spirituality during the holidays.

## FACILITATOR'S NOTES

### HOW TO PREPARE:

- - Encourage discussions that encompass mental, emotional, and spiritual health, emphasizing their interconnectedness for a comprehensive wellness approach.
- - Acknowledge that spirituality and religion are related but distinct concepts. Emphasize that one can have spiritual practices without a religious affiliation, creating a space that respects and includes diverse perspectives.
- - Acknowledge and respect diverse spiritual beliefs within your unit. To create a safe space for open dialogue, facilitators should practice actively listen without judgment, paraphrasing and summarizing participant contributions to demonstrate understanding.

## THE EXTRA MILE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- - Exploring Religious and Spiritual Diversity: The holidays are a time of many different religious and spiritual celebrations. Consult an interfaith calendar to enhance your awareness the different faith groups' traditions. This will broaden your perspective and encourage inclusivity. (Example: <https://hds.harvard.edu/community-life/religious-and-spiritual-life/multifaith-calendar>)
- - Consult with the Chaplain: Chaplains are the SMEs for all matters religious and spiritual. They can provide interfaith resources and guidance and assist with accommodations to ensure Airmen can observe their traditions during the holidays and beyond.
- - Mindfulness Practices: Introduce mindfulness exercises or guided meditation sessions during unit gatherings to foster spiritual awareness and tranquility.

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## MISSION PLAN HOW TO EXECUTE

### FRAMING THE CONVERSATION

As we all know, the holidays are upon us. For some, this time is a period of important religious observances. This year, faith groups such as Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, and Pagans will mark major celebrations in their traditions. For others, it may be a time of important spiritual or cultural celebrations, such as Kwanza. And, of course, this time is filled with secular and non-religious events.

The holiday season is a special time, but it can also be stressful and challenging. The pressures of finding the perfect gifts, planning gatherings, and managing various commitments can create a hectic atmosphere. Additionally, the expectation of joy and togetherness during this time may contrast with the reality of personal challenges or feelings of loneliness. Recognizing these stressors, it becomes crucial to approach the holiday season with mindfulness and empathy, fostering an environment that supports individuals amidst both the joys and complexities of this special time.

## SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS

- - What holiday traditions contribute to your well-being? What traditions do you find stressful?
- - How can we individually set spiritual goals, and in what ways might the unit support our efforts?
- - How can our spiritual principles and practices contribute to resilience in facing and overcoming holiday challenges?
- - What are some of the diverse spiritual practices within our unit? How might we discuss them in ways that foster understanding and inclusivity?
- - What strategies bring brief mindfulness or tranquility to your busy holiday schedule?

## MISSION CHALLENGE

### HOW TO APPLY THE LESSON

- Daily Reflections: Integrate brief moments of mindfulness or gratitude into your routine for enhanced well-being.
- Explore Diversity: Talk to your fellow Airmen and consult other resources to understand and celebrate the diversity of spiritual and religious practices within the unit.
- Set Spiritual Goals: Share and work towards personal spiritual goals with unit support.
- Chaplain Guidance: Tap into Chaplains' expertise for religious and spiritual guidance, ensuring inclusive observance of traditions and support.
- These challenges guide you to infuse holistic wellness into daily life, creating a supportive and inclusive environment beyond the holiday season.



Please use the QR code 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.