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# VA IntegratedEthics™: Value of the Month

## An Ethical Leadership Tool

### INTRODUCTION

#### *Purpose of the Tool*

Value of the Month is a set of simple, brief discussion activities for VA workgroups. Each activity includes a value and discussion prompts, e.g., examples, questions, case studies, quotes, that relate to the value. Leaders at all levels, including committee chairs, can use this tool to help employees articulate their individual values, respect the different values of other people in their workgroup, and improve mutual understanding of how individual values impact the work of the group or committee.

#### *Using Value of the Month with Workgroups*

These activities provide a way to get workgroup members accustomed to talking regularly about values and how values impact their work and the work culture at VA. The overall theme reflected in the discussion prompts is “How does the presence or absence of this value affect the performance of the workgroup?” More specifically, participants are led to explore:

- What values enable us to work well together? What are the consequences when these values are not exercised?
- How does the practice of these values make VA a safer, healthier culture in which to work?
- How does the practice of these values affect our ability to support the Veteran?
- How can VA’s core values make a difference in how employees grapple with ethical concerns?

By holding ongoing Value of the Month sessions, a model is established for discussion of differences in how workgroup members understand, prioritize, and act on ethical values. In time, Value of the Month sessions may become a neutral space in which workgroup members and their leaders may raise sensitive ethical concerns.

#### *Application to Ethical Leadership Compass*

The Value of the Month tool aligns with the first point on the Ethical Leadership Compass, “Demonstrate that ethics is a priority,” by encouraging discussion of values—and of ethical concerns that arise from values conflicts. In using the tool, leaders address their responsibility to ensure that ethical values permeate the VA culture, are discussed openly and often, and become a part of everyday decision making.

#### *Field Development of the Tool*

The National Center for Ethics in Health Care (NCEHC) is much indebted to the enterprising IntegratedEthics (IE) Council in Providence for sharing this set of discussion activities, which have been rolling out at Providence VA Medical Center (PVAMC) every month since May 2010. The values and related discussion prompts, repackaged by NCEHC in this leadership tool, are the creations of the Providence IE Council, and reflect the working environment of PVAMC employees.

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## **The Providence Program**

### **How It Began—and Spread**

Values of the Month began as an experiment at PVAMC. Would workgroup leaders take 5–6 minutes during their monthly meetings to hold a discussion with their employees about values if the values and discussion prompts were provided for them? The IE Council thought that giving leaders and committee chairs some concrete examples would assist them in stimulating good discussions on ethical values.

Originally, the email announcement of the monthly values went only to leaders in PVAMC. Then, when employees started asking the IE Program Officer (IEPO) for the Values of the Month, she realized that interest in the discussions was spreading at the ground level. Inquiries from committee chairs about using Values of the Month at their meetings also showed that the program was gaining traction. Now, the IEPO sends an email to *all* employees in PVAMC announcing the month's values. The librarian provides links to Web sites or readings where complementary materials can be found to improve understanding of that month's values.

### **Program Suggestions**

Here are some practices that contribute to the effectiveness of Values of the Month at PVAMC:

- a. The Values of the Month are not prescribed, enforced, or assessed. The activity is one way leaders may fulfill their obligation to discuss ethics on a monthly basis with their employees, but it is not the only way.
- b. The discussion prompts for every Values of the Month activity have relevance for all facility employees, in every service, at every level.
- c. The same values are discussed throughout the facility each month. The synchronicity reinforces recognition of the values across the organization and keeps people thinking and talking about work situations in which the monthly values play a part across department lines.
- d. The IE Council chooses the values for a year at a time. This enables the IEPO to think ahead about the sequence of discussion prompts, quotes, scenarios, etc.
- e. The facility librarian does a search on the monthly values and gives the IEPO a list of relevant articles, books, etc., to recommend.
- f. Where possible, the monthly values and prompts are connected to the rhythm of seasons and holidays, e.g., spring, July 4, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving.
- g. So far, all case studies presented in the activities have been taken from the VA workplace. However, the Providence IEPO notes that ethical "bombshells" highlighted in the news outside VA stir up values discussions across PVAMC. She is thinking of using some outside events as scenarios for Values of the Month with the same notion as TV's "ripped from the headlines."
- h. PVAMC uses a standard format for minutes of regular staff meetings, which includes a space for documentation of the monthly ethics discussion. The cover memo for Values of the Month advises that this documentation "should be extensive enough to allow those employees not present to understand the discussion that occurred." In other words, no one is left out of the values discussions.

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## ***Leading the Discussions***

Whoever leads a Value of the Month discussion must be a skilled facilitator. Because people care deeply about their values, they may find it difficult to talk openly and calmly about them, especially when their values seem to conflict with the values of others in the workgroup. Getting people to listen to each other's values can be an even greater challenge for the leader. Moreover, leaders must be aware of their own values and avoid overprivileging them in the discussion.

If a workgroup leader or committee chair doesn't feel comfortable facilitating a Value of the Month activity, he or she may request that a member of the IE Council facilitate the discussion. (The cover page for each activity should give the contact information for the person on the IE Council who will respond to the request.)

## ***Sources of Values***

The Values of the Month are taken from two sources: VA's core values (ICARE at <http://www.va.gov/icare>) and the list of values provided by the Ethics Resource Center, which can be found via the link to IntegratedEthics materials at <http://www.ethics.va.gov/integratedethics>.

## ***Domains of Ethics in Health Care***

VA's IntegratedEthics Initiative covers a number of ethical domains beyond clinical practice, as shown below. In accordance with the principle that every Values of the Month activity should have relevance for all facility employees, the discussion prompts relate to the domain of "ethical practices in the everyday workplace." Workgroup leaders and committee chairs are encouraged to refer to other domains when pertinent to the activity discussion.

- Shared decision making with patients
- Ethical practices in end-of-life care
- Ethical practices at the beginning of life
- Patient privacy and confidentiality
- Professionalism in patient care
- Ethical practices in resource allocation
- Ethical practices in business and management
- Ethical practices in research
- Ethical practices in the everyday workplace
- Ethical practices in government service

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

**[Name of Your Facility]**

**[Month Year]: IE Value**

#### Activity Goal

The goal is to hold an open, respectful discussion of what the chosen value means to workgroup members and how they see the monthly value acted on—or not—at work. Participants seek to understand each other's perspective, not to persuade or problem solve.

#### Role of the Discussion Leader

The discussion leader:

- Helps participants communicate their individual values
- Encourages participants to listen to the values of other people
- Promotes a mutual understanding of how individual values impact the workplace
- Does not lecture or dominate the discussion

#### Choosing a Discussion Leader

The discussion leader may be the chair of the workgroup or committee, a member of the group, or an outside facilitator. Members of the IntegratedEthics Council (IEC) may also facilitate Value of the Month discussions.

#### Discussion Leader Tasks

- Put the Value of the Month activity on the meeting agenda, allowing 5 minutes.
- Reflect on what the Value of the Month means to you and how you would respond to the discussion questions. Clarifying how you think and feel about the value(s) can help you to remain objective when eliciting others' thoughts and feelings.
- Hand out a printed copy of the Value of the Month sheet to each participant at the meeting.
- Read the name of the value and its definition to the group. Give group members a minute to think about the quote(s), scenarios, or bullet points referenced in the activity. Then ask for responses to the discussion questions and facilitate the discussion that follows.
- Ensure that details of the discussion are documented in the meeting minutes to allow group members who were not present to understand the discussion that occurred.

#### For Additional Information or Facilitation Assistance

**Contact [Insert Name of IEPO] at ext. [###] or [email address]**

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Integrity

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **integrity** and the description of **integrity** as an ICARE organizational value. Then read and respond to the discussion questions below.

### Integrity

Strict adherence to moral values and principles

### ICARE

Act with high moral principle.

Adhere to the highest professional standards.

Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.

1. What actions have you seen in your workgroup or other workgroups that demonstrate integrity? How do these actions influence your own behavior and/or your relationship with your colleagues?
2. Are there times when “acting with the highest moral principle” or “adhering to the highest professional standards” seems to conflict with other values? If so, how do you address the conflict in yourself or with other people?
3. Describe a work situation that requires integrity. What would be the consequences for your workgroup and/or VA of failing to act with integrity in that situation?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Commitment

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **commitment** and the description of **commitment** as an ICARE organizational value. Then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Commitment

Being bound emotionally or intellectually to a course of action  
or to another person or persons

### ICARE

Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries.  
Be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission.  
Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.

1. What actions have you seen in your workgroup or other workgroups that demonstrate commitment? Would these actions be possible without "an earnest belief in VA's mission?"
2. Do members of your workgroup share the same level of commitment on a day-to-day basis? What are the consequences when people don't have the same ideas about commitment?
3. Has commitment ever been a barrier to change in your experience at VA?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Advocacy

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **advocacy** and the description of **advocacy** as an ICARE organizational value. Then read the scenario and respond to the discussion questions below.

### Advocacy

The act or process of pleading for or supporting an individual, group, or cause

### ICARE

Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.

**Scenario:** A physician requests a level of service for a particular patient that can't be provided to other patients in the facility. The service chief and the physician meet to discuss the issue.

1. What does it mean for the physician to be an advocate in this situation? Should she "plead" for her patient's special treatment? What about her other patients?
2. What does it mean for the service chief to be an advocate in this situation? Should he grant the physician's request? What about other patients?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Respect

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **respect** and the description of **respect** as an ICARE organizational value. Then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Respect

Polite attitude shown toward someone or something that you consider important

### ICARE

Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect.

Show respect to earn it.

1. In your experience at VA, have you observed a leader showing respect to an employee, even when the employee has done something wrong? What did the leader do or say? What was the outcome? How were you affected by the respect the leader showed?
2. If others are disrespectful, how can you not “drop to their level,” but remain respectful yourself? What motivates you to “treat all those you serve and with whom you work with dignity and respect”?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Excellence

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **excellence** and the description of **excellence** as an ICARE organizational value. Then read the quotes and respond to the discussion questions below.

### Excellence

The state of being good to a high degree

### ICARE

Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement.  
Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions,  
willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

*Excellence is the gradual result of always striving to do better. —Pat Riley*

*When you realize you've made a mistake, make amends immediately. It's easier to eat crow while it's still warm. —Dan Heist*

1. Do these quotes apply to your work at VA? To the work of your workgroup? To the VA organizational culture?
2. How is excellence supported and recognized in your workgroup? In your facility?
3. What are the obstacles, if any, to achieving excellence in your work at VA? How can these obstacles be addressed?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Adaptability

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **adaptability** and the list of changing workplace situations in the box below. Then respond to the discussion questions.

### Adaptability

The ability to modify behavior to fit changing situations

#### *Changes at work*

- Workload demands increase or decrease.
- The work environment or practices change.
- Priorities change—sometimes frequently!

- 
1. What are the supports or constraints that impact how adaptable you can be in changing workplace situations?
  2. How important is adaptability in your workgroup? Are clear expectations set for when you should be adaptable and when you should hold firm to standard procedure?
  3. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being least adaptable, how would you rate the VA culture in terms of its adaptability to change? Explain the rationale for your rating.

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Caring

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **caring**, and then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Caring

Feeling and exhibiting concern and empathy for others

1. How does the value of caring impact the workgroup? Your service to the Veteran? The VA organizational culture?
2. How do you demonstrate caring for others in your workgroup? Is it okay to demonstrate caring for one person more than another?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Citizenship

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **citizenship** and the quotes. Then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Citizenship

Exercising the duties, rights, and privileges of being a citizen

*Citizenship is a tough occupation which obliges the citizen to make his own informed opinion and stand by it. —Martha Gellhorn*

*Truth-telling, I have found, is the key to responsible citizenship. The thousands of criminals I have seen in 40 years of law enforcement have had one thing in common: every single one was a liar. —J. Edgar Hoover*

1. What do the quotes mean to you as a VA employee? To what extent do you associate the duties, rights, and privileges of citizenship with the work you do?
2. Does the VA organizational culture influence you to make your own informed opinions at work and stand by them?
3. What role does truth-telling play in fulfilling your responsibility to the Veteran?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Collaboration

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **collaboration**, and then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Collaboration

To work cooperatively, especially in a joint intellectual effort

1. When is collaboration most important in achieving the goals of the workgroup?
2. How would you describe an effective collaborator in your work area? In VA?
3. Can conflict exist within collaboration? What do you do when you disagree deeply with someone who is collaborating with you?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Competence

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **competence** and the 3 bullet points below that describe **competence**. Then, respond to the discussion questions.

### Competence

The state or quality of being adequately or well qualified

#### *Areas of competence*

- Attitude
- Knowledge
- Skills

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1. What is your responsibility as a VA employee in terms of competence? How competent must you be?
  2. Are the 3 areas of competence more important in the work of the workgroup than others? Why or why not?
  3. Are any of the 3 areas of competence more recognized in the facility than others? What difference does it make if they are recognized or not?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Courtesy

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **courtesy** and the examples of **courtesy** below. Then respond to the discussion question.

### **Courtesy**

Civility, consideration for others

#### ***Examples of courtesy***

- Demonstrated manners, such as saying please and thank you
- Knocking on closed doors before entering
- Shutting off cell phones during meetings or presentations
- Not monopolizing conversations; listening to others' points of view
- Not interrupting when others are speaking
- Opening and holding doors for those behind you
- Allowing elderly or disabled individuals to go first
- Escorting individuals who are lost

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How does the presence or absence of this value affect your performance as a workgroup? As an organization?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Dedication

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **dedication**, and then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Dedication

Complete, selfless, wholehearted devotion

1. Where do you see evidence of dedication to the Veteran in the daily routines of the workgroup?
2. How does dedication differ from “stick-to-itiveness”?
3. Is it possible to be dedicated and yet not completely “selfless”?

# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Dependability

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **dependability** and the bulleted list of behaviors that describe **dependability** in a work context. Then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Dependability

Worthy of reliance or trust or belief

#### *Employees reliably:*

- Come to work
- Report on time and leave on time
- Complete work assigned
- Report errors or mistakes
- Follow procedures or policies
- Provide honest feedback on decisions and actions within the workgroup
- Are consistent in their behavior

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1. How does this list of dependable behaviors compare with the behaviors expected in your workgroup? Are some behaviors emphasized more than others?
  2. What standard is set in the workgroup for dependability in these behaviors—100% dependability in all behaviors, all the time, or less? Is the standard clear and known to all members of the workgroup?
  3. Is there a consistent standard for dependability across the facility? If not, how does that affect the organizational culture?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Fortitude

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **fortitude** below, and then respond to the discussion questions.

### Fortitude

The strength or firmness of mind that enables a person to face danger, pain, or despondency with stoic resolve

1. What conditions in the workplace are helpful in supporting employees who lack fortitude?
2. Is it the supervisor's job to develop an employee's fortitude?
3. Can **too much** fortitude be a problem? If so, how?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Generosity

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **generosity** and the list of behaviors that demonstrate **generosity**. Then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Generosity

Liberality in giving or willingness to give

#### *Generosity in the workplace*

- Willing to help peers with work efforts
  - Listening thoughtfully and empathetically to a sad and troubled patient
  - Covering a work schedule for a co-worker to attend her child's play
  - Sharing knowledge to help another department problem-solve so that it may succeed
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1. How often do you see these behaviors, or similar ones, demonstrated in your workgroup? In other workgroups? In the facility?
2. How does the generosity of others in the workgroup affect your own thinking and behavior?
3. How do you balance generosity toward others with your work duties and time constraints?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Goodness

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **goodness**, and then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Goodness

Morally right or admirable because of kind, thoughtful, or honest behavior

1. How does the practice of—or lack of—goodness affect the performance of the workgroup?
2. Are there any occasions where the absence of goodness is acceptable? If so, are there consequences?
3. Is honesty the best policy? ALWAYS?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Honor

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **honor**, and then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Honor

Principled uprightness of character; personal integrity

1. What does honor mean to Veterans? How does their sense of honor impact how you work with and for them?
2. What does honor mean to you as health care professionals? Is it an important value in your day-to-day work? Why does it matter, or not?
3. Do the members of your workgroup share the value of honor? How does sharing the value—or not—impact your work together?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Hope

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **hope**, and then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Hope

The feeling that something desired can be had or will happen

1. Where have you seen Veterans or co-workers give up hope? Why did they give up hope?
2. How can you help other people find hope when they have given up?
3. Does leadership address discouragement or loss of hope? How?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Humility

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **humility** and the quote. Then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Humility

Feeling that you have no special importance that makes you better than others

*You cannot be a leader, and ask other people to follow you, unless you know how to follow, too.*  
—Sam Rayburn

1. How does this quote apply to your observations of leadership at VA? Are VA employees better followers when their leaders demonstrate humility?
2. What is the difference between true humility and “false modesty”? How does the difference impact your working relationships with others at VA?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Liberty

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **liberty** and the quotes. Then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Liberty

The right and power to act, believe, or express oneself in a manner of one's own choosing

*Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, to assure the survival and success of liberty.*  
—John Fitzgerald Kennedy

*Those who desire to give up freedom in order to gain security will not have, nor do they deserve, either one.* —Benjamin Franklin

*You can protect your liberties in this world only by protecting the other man's freedom. You can be free only if I am free.* —Clarence Darrow

1. What do the quotes mean to you in your service to Veterans?
2. What do the quotes mean to you in your relationships with other VA employees?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Loyalty

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **loyalty**, and then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Loyalty

A feeling or attitude of devotion, attachment, and affection

1. What behaviors have you observed in your workgroup that show loyalty to the mission of VA?
2. How does the presence or absence of this value affect your performance as a workgroup? As an organization?
3. Is it possible to be too loyal?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Self-discipline

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **self-discipline** and the list of work demands that may require your **self-discipline**. Then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Self-discipline

Making yourself do things when you should, even if you do not want to do them

#### *Work demands that may require self-discipline*

- Completion of a difficult project
  - Timeliness of reports
  - Agreeing to work on a project that doesn't appear exactly interesting
- 

1. Where do you find the self-discipline to accomplish work at VA that you find difficult or tedious? Does it matter whether co-workers and supervisors are demonstrating self-discipline or not?
2. Your self-discipline may not be obvious to others, just as their self-discipline may not be obvious to you. How does this value get acknowledged and appreciated in your workgroup?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Stewardship

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **stewardship** and the list of ways that employees can be good stewards of limited VA resources. Then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Stewardship

The careful conducting, supervising, or managing of something

#### *Stewardship of resources*

- Recycling waste
  - Minimizing use of work materials (paper, pens, other supplies, heat, air conditioning, etc.)
  - Efficient and good use of time
  - Looking for work efforts that could be redundant and eliminating the redundancy
- 

1. Do the bullet points above apply to your workgroup? How important are they? How does your workgroup assess its performance in regard to these ways of conserving resources?
2. Are there resources other than those on the list that you need to manage?
3. How does “careful conducting, supervising, or managing” apply to your workgroup’s care for Veterans?

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# IntegratedEthics

## Value of the Month

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY FOR WORKGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

[Name of Your Facility]

[Month Year]: Trust

#### Directions:

Read the definition of **trust**, and then respond to the discussion questions below.

### Trust

Assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something

1. How important is it for the members of the workgroup to trust each other? What aspects of the work require “assured reliance on each other’s character, ability, strength, or truthfulness?”
2. Describe a situation in which trust was undermined in the workgroup, facility, or VA at large. Can trust be reestablished? How?