

ETHICS FOR TODAY'S ARMY

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Our future is dependant on taking personal Responsibility and Accountability for our actions. Passing the buck, pointing fingers, not owning up to one's actions, decisions, or lack there of should not be the norm, such as Abu Graib. Many Soldiers and Department of the Army Civilians do not take responsibility or hold themselves accountable for there own actions or decisions, which hurts our credibility as a country and as an army. Other nations and there military will not respect us if we continue down this path. Definitions as provided by our Society and the Army. Responsibility: 1a) being responsible, b) authority and obligation. 2) Person or thing for which one is responsible. (Oxford) Accountability: a) liability; blame, guilt. b) See POWER and INDEPENDENCE: Charge, duty, trust. Responsibility, Accountability and Duty seem to be intertwined which leads use to Army Values: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage (LDRSHIP) (FM 22-100) which ties into Ethics, Warrior Ethos and Oath of Enlistment/Reenlistment. Ethical means conforming to the values of a given profession. (American) Ethos is a Greek word, which means "characteristic spirit or attitudes of a community, etc." (American) "Warrior Ethos refers to the professional attitudes and beliefs that characterize the American Soldier. At its core, the Warrior Ethos grounds itself on the refusal to accept failure."(FM 22-100)

Responsibility and Accountability begin as a cornerstone of moral and ethical values placed by family, religious beliefs and friends during adolescents. In the Army, this begins with the Oath of Enlistment/Reenlistment. "I, State your name, DO SOLEMNLY SWEAR (OR AFFIRM), THAT I WILL SUPPORT AND DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES AGAINST ALL ENEMIES, FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC; THAT I WILL BEAR TRUE FAITH AND ALLEGIANCE TO THE SAME; AND THAT I WILL OBEY THE ORDERS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE ORDERS OF THE

OFFICERS APPOINTED OVER ME, ACCORDING TO REGULATIONS AND THE UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE. SO HELP ME GOD."(Army) The Oath combined with Army Values and Ethics is what drives the Warrior Ethos. Even though values start at an early age in the life of a warrior, honor becomes a way of life once the Oath of Enlistment or reenlistment<sup>is</sup> administered. Let's look at the Oath in detail: "I WILL SUPPORT AND DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES AGAINST ALL ENEMIES FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC" When Soldiers take the Oath, they accept the challenge to exhibit courage -- the mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty in the performance of their duties. Soldiers also accept the challenge to exhibit commitment -- dedication to proudly serving our nation as a member of a team. Taking the forms of patriotism and esprit de corps, commitment must <sup>be</sup> practiced on a daily basis to maximize both individual and team productivity.

"AND THAT I WILL OBEY THE ORDERS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE ORDERS OF THE OFFICERS APPOINTED OVER ME, ACCORDING TO REGULATIONS AND THE UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE SO HELP ME GOD." When taking the oath, Soldiers accept the challenge to exhibit candor, honesty in what one says in addition to how you act. The Profession of Arms leaves no room for half-truth. The accuracy of information exchanged by the Army team must be absolute. When taking the Oath, Soldiers accept the challenge to exhibit competence, know your job, do your best, and develop your abilities to the utmost.

In summary: As Soldiers, Department of the Army Civilians and Leaders, we must take Responsibility and hold ourselves Accountable for our actions. The United States Army is the best in the world because of the dedication to excellence of each team member. <sup>23</sup>Twenty-three of the 40 signers of the Constitution were veterans of the Revolutionary War. After distinguishing themselves in combat, they went on to serve in the newly established government, as patriots and leaders. When taking the oath, you accept the same demands now that American Soldiers have embodied since the Revolutionary War.

When taking the Oath, Soldiers commit to a set of time-honored values: (LDRSHIP)  
 Loyalty: Bear true faith and allegiance to the U.S. Constitution, the Army, your unit, and other Soldiers. Duty: Fulfill your obligations. Respect: Treat people as they should be treated. Selfless-Service: Put the welfare of the nation, the Army, and your subordinates before your own. Honor: Live up to all the Army values. Integrity: Do what is right, legally and morally. Personal Courage: Face fear, danger, or adversity Physical or Moral. Once warriors commit to serving their country, honor becomes an everyday fact of life. The proud and honorable heritage our Warriors have established over the last 229 years is only the foundation for the future Warrior to build on. A Soldier who lives by the Warrior Ethos is a Soldier who will take the battle to the enemy and defeat him for the sole purpose of protecting the beliefs and livelihood of the United States of America.

I challenge each of you to hold yourselves and your fellow Soldiers responsible and accountable for there actions. Remind them of there responsibility to there Oath, there Soldiers and there families. Let us continue to be the best warriors in the world, with, great morals, ethics, and values. HOOAH!

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