

# Hope Floats

Time	Activity	Materials
15 min.	Introduction	PPT Slides Projector, Screen Bowl, Water Feather + 4-7 other objects
20 min.	Information	PPT Slides Stopwatch
20 min.	Implications	PPT Slides Notecards Pens or Pencils
5 min.	Inspiration	PPT Slides

## Slides 1 & 2

### Introduction (slide 1)

1. **Welcome** all participants to the training.
2. **Thank** the leader for inviting you to join them.
3. **Focus** participants on the subject by playing a brief game of, “Will It Float.”

Directions: Fill a large clear bowl with water. Place 5-7 objects around the bowl. Divide the group into two or more teams depending on size of the group. Show each object and ask the teams to guess whether or not the object will float. Place each object into the bowl and see what happens. Ensure that the final object placed into the bowl is a feather. Have teams keep score of how many floating objects they guess correctly. **Thank you David Letterman!**

4. **Close game** by reading aloud the poem “Hope Floats.”

*Hope floats light as a feather. It dances in the red-black flames of burning coal. Hope is boundless and has no end. It is the spark of life that lives within all beings. Hope waits only for invitation, waits only for one little whisper, one little word or thought or bend of the soul.*

Anonymous

5. **Note** that today we are going to invite HOPE into our conversation on readiness and resilience.

### Introduction (slide 2)

**Share Training Goal:** for you to become more conscious and appreciative of how a hopeful attitude contributes to your readiness and resilience

**Share Objectives:** By the end of the session you will have .....

1. Identified some things you hope for and some things that you have hope in.
2. Reflected on the role patience, personal courage, and persistence play in developing a hopeful attitude.
3. Expressed your personal understanding of how and where hope fits into your life.

### Slide 3 & 4

#### Information (slide 3)

**1. Read poem.**

*Hope begins in the dark, the stubborn hope that if you just show up and try to do the right thing, the dawn will come. You wait and watch and work: you don't give up."*

**2. Say:** One of the reasons we are using some poetry when talking about hope today is because hope can be a hard thing for us to get our heads around. Coming at hope from the right side of our brain, the imaginative side of our brain, may help us to get a better handle on hope. So, what is hope exactly? Isn't it just wishful thinking by another name? Well no, not really. Wishful thinking isn't usually based on a very solid foundation, nor does it hold up very well against hard times, particularly not the kind of hard times we can face in our military and/or civilian service. Hope, on the other hand, does both. Listen to this definition of hope from the Cambridge Dictionary, "to want something to happen or be true, and usually have a good reason to think that it might." Hope is based on a solid foundation that can be built up and strengthened through practice. Yes, maintaining a hopeful attitude can take work, but its rewards are a more ready and resilient life.

#### Information (slide 4)

**1. Say:** As noted, hope can be learned through practicing certain attitudes that help to build hope. Let's talk about how that can be. I want to hear your ideas.

**2. Divide** the group into teams of twos or threes.

**3. Invite** each team to discuss the following:

- a. How would you describe each of these three attitudes? Patience. Personal Courage. Persistence. What do they look like in practice for you?
- b. How does each of these attitudes contribute to a hopeful outlook related to your service?

**4. Reassemble** the large group and invite a representative from each team to share discussion highlights with the whole group.

## **5. Close discussion** with an activity for practicing patience

Directions: Have all participants stand up and close their eyes. Tell them that they are to remain standing for as long as they think a minute lasts. When they think the minute is up, they are to sit down, and can open their eyes. Say, “go” and start a stopwatch. Note the time when the first participant sits and when the last participant sits. Ask for comments about what it felt like to wait; and how patience played a role in their waiting.

### **Slide5 -7:**

#### **Implications (slide 5)**

- 1. Return** participants to their teams of two or three.
- 2. Invite** each team to discuss the following:
  - a. Describe a situation when hope pulled you through.
  - b. What do you think people mean when they say “Don’t get your hopes up too high?”  
What would be a good response to this advice?
  - c. Does the prospect of the future fill you with anxiety or hope? What people and/or events have contributed to your feeling?
- 3. Reassemble** the large group and invite a representative from each team to share discussion highlights with the whole group.
- 4. Ask** the whole group:
  - a. Based on our discussions, how hopeful do you think you are as a group?
  - b. What does that mean for your group’s readiness and resilience in the face of your work challenges?

#### **Implications (slide 6)**

- 1. Say:** Now it’s time for a little personal reflection on how and where hope fits into your life. This is just for you.
- 2. Hand out** a notecard to each participant.
- 3. Invite** participants to each make a personal list of those things that they hope for in their work and in their life, and those things that they have hope in, the foundations on which their hope is based. Encourage participants to write these lists using their non-dominant hand to help them access less expressed thoughts and feelings. For many participants this will be their left hand/right brain side, their more creative side.

## Implications (slide 7)

**1. Invite** participants to flip their cards over and on the back to write their own poem about hope. Reassure them that this will be a very simple Haiku poem that no one else ever needs to see but themselves..... Unless they want to share.

**2. Give directions** for writing a Haiku poem. A haiku poem has three lines and a total of seventeen syllables (doable!). Line 1 has 5 syllables. Line 2 has 7 syllables. Line 3 has 5 syllables. That's it!

**3. Share** this following example of a Haiku about hope.

Hope keeps me going  
Without hope I am fearful  
Living is too dark.

**4. Allow time** (about 5 minutes) for participants to write their poem. Once everyone is finished writing, invite anyone who wants to share, the opportunity to share their Haiku with the whole group.

## Slide 8

### Inspiration

**1. Say:** I want to end where we began by reading this anonymous poem one more time.

**2. Read** poem.

*Hope floats light as a feather.  
It dances in the red-black flames of burning coal.  
Hope is boundless and has no end.  
It is the spark of life that lives within all beings.  
Hope waits only for invitation, waits only for one little whisper,  
one little word or thought or bend of the soul.*

**3. Close** with a word of encouragement for everyone to “catch the spark,” to practice patience, personal courage and persistence, to live a more hopeful, ready and resilient life.