Lessons from Yusufiyah
Module 6: Discussion Guide
Identity, Watt

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"Watt: Identity"

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For all members of the Army Profession

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1. Checklist

- ☐ **Recruit additional strong/respected leaders from your unit to be facilitators with your unit. (Recruit as many as the situation mandates)**
- ☐ **Watch the video and read the transcript prior to your facilitation.**
- ☐ **Review the additional resources.**
- ☐ **Review the "How to run your workshop" guidelines prior to facilitating.**
- ☐ **Think about a personal experience that relates to the scenario.**
- ☐ **Resource Prep:**
    - Make copies of the video transcripts and facilitation questions as needed for each of your facilitators.
    - If you plan on showing video clips, test to make sure they work on the system in your designated training area.
    - Make sure you have a whiteboard with dry-erase markers.

2. Who's Who

Justin Watt was a Soldier with 1st Platoon, Bravo Company. He was also the "Whistle Blower" for the War Crimes that several Soldiers in his Platoon committed.

3. " Watt: Identity" Video Transcript: Justin Watt describes his upbringing and his true identity

"My name is Justin Watt. Ever since I was a kid, I'd wanted to join the Army. I mean, I've always had a profound respect for the military. I think the thing that I admired the most about my dad was that he always had enough to do whatever it was that was asked of him. Just the most impossible, ridiculous things that would make people...walk away from a problem, he would just attack it and defeat it, every single time. It was just like, where do you get that, 'I can do this, no matter what it is, mentality?' You know what I mean? My dad was like, 'That's the Army—specifically combat arms.' So, that's always something I wanted to have for myself. I think it's something that has stuck with me for sure. I've always had a profound respect and a desire to join.

A big part of it was just wanting to go through and prove to myself what I was capable of and answer those questions for myself; also just do something that I felt like was significant. I think that's a big part of why a lot of people join the military, especially if they have opportunities to do other things. Like people that went to college and are like, 'Well, I'm going to join the military now and be an officer.' Or, like guys like me that had all the opportunities in the world, like my parents could have sent me to whatever college I wanted to go to. I could have gone back through and gotten my diploma instead of my GED—gone to community college and then transferred into whatever school I wanted to go to.

But I wanted to do something and have that experience of actually doing something important. I think there's nothing better that you could do than the military for that.

Obviously, what's asked of the military is a lot, and I think that people understand a general idea of it. But at the same time, being in the military is hard. Basic training is hard. (Basic training) was hard for me. For the 18-year-old kid who just got out of football camp who is like 'I could do push-ups all day,' that's not hard for *that* kid. I hated *that* kid because that kid made me do push-ups a lot. I did not like to do push-ups. I was a blackjack dealer. I was inhaling smoke legitimately eight hours a day in a casino, so basic training was hard for me. I get there and it's like, I did it though.

Like me, infantry, right? Like the whole time—one, two, three, four, trained to kill. Every infantryman that has ever been has walked up on our hill. All the tests that anyone could ever ask of anyone to be like, 'You're now qualified to be the guy that walks across this line when diplomacy fails and fights against these guys—whoever it may be—all-comers. You are who we are going to send.' I had never been successful in that way. I had never tested myself in that way.

3. " Watt: Identity" Video Transcript: Justin Watt describes his upbringing and his true identity (continued)

You just learn that there are no walls except for the ones you just haven't broken down yet; that's it. What do *you* want to do? How far do *you* want to push it? How much time do *you* want to invest in it?

My identity—it's changed in a couple of fundamental ways, but I think the most important was I felt like I always had the capacity to be the man that I am now. I'm not perfect by any means, by any stretch of the imagination, but I never proved it to myself. I think that the Army helped prove to me what I'm capable of, and taught me what I'm capable of.

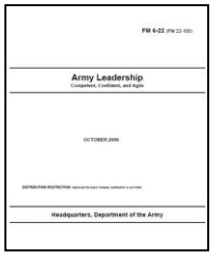
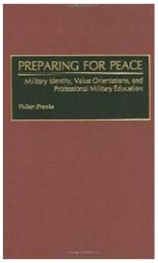
There are leaders that I've had in the military that I've gotten certain values out of. At first when I joined the Army—especially in the infantry—I thought it was all about being a big, imposing, physically fit, tough guy. In the civilian world, it's all about being good-looking or attractive, or being really, really smart. I found that the quality that I was able to pull from the Army that I placed the most value in is being hard. I think that that unwillingness to be defeated, that unwillingness to stop trying, that unwillingness to give up, that and the values system of the Army—and the values system of the leaders I've taken lessons from like Diem, Sergeant Lauzier—It's something that is probably the main reason why I'm at where I'm at today.

I think I'm a lot more confident than I was back then. I have a lot more perspective. In some ways—I mean obviously you don't go over there and do what you have to do and what I went through and come out the same guy—so I've got my little idiosyncrasies like everybody else.

I think for the most part, I'm a more complete person. I think if there's one value that I would say that I have that's a difference between me now and then, is that I'm definitely resilient."

4. Additional Resources

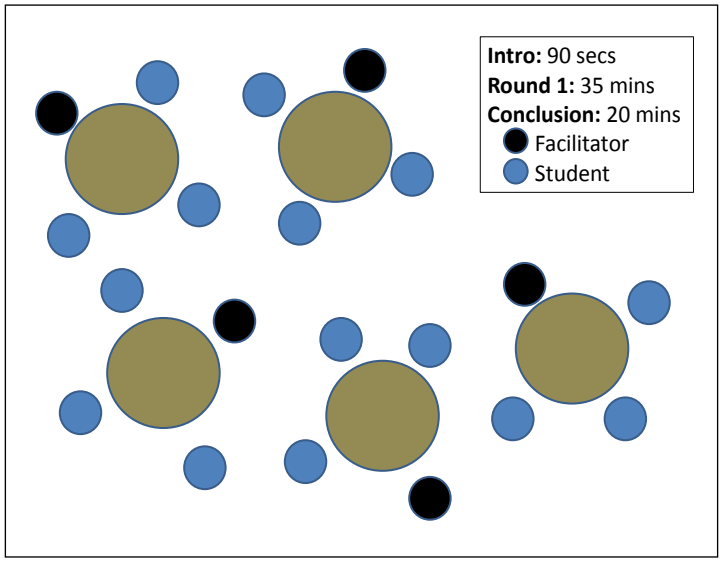
The following resources are available:

	<u>Lost in Transmission: How the Army has Garbled the Message about the Nature of Its Profession?</u> By: First Lieutenant Anthony M. Formica*, U.S. Army* http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20120430_art001.pdf • Both officers and enlisted personnel found some- thing to argue about in Junger's work: either the soldiers Junger depicted were not professional at all, they said or they were professional only where and when it mattered. The book either demonstrates that Army professionalism is an obsolete art or it shows the consequences of the Army allowing it to atrophy.
	**<u>FM 6-22, Army Leadership</u>** A-7. The core leader competencies are complemented by attributes that distinguish high performing leaders of character. Attributes are characteristics that are an inherent part of an individual's total core, physical, and intellectual aspects. Attributes shape how an individual behaves in their environment. Attributes for Army leaders are aligned to identity, presence, and intellectual capacity. (See figures A-10 through A-12.)
	<u>"Whistleblower denied clemency in killings case," *Army Times*</u> By: Gene Johnson http://www.armytimes.com/news/2012/04/ap-whistleblower-adam-winfield-denied-clemency-in-afghanistan-killings-case-041812/ • The *Army Times* reports on Watt's decision to 'blow the whistle.'
	**<u>Preparing for Peace: Military Identity, Value Orientations, and Professional Military Education</u>** But once they become members of the armed forces, people tend to partially define themselves by their military experience and remember their service far more vividly than they recall any commercial company they work for or other professional pursuits they engage in. Indeed, this speaks to the uniqueness of military service and that at the present time Americans hold the armed forces in the highest esteem of any public institution in the country.

5. How to run your workshop

The basic concept provided below is a way to facilitate this module. Modify as necessary to fit the needs and demographics of the group. We find that having a variety of ranks/leadership positions in each group increases perspective and maximizes takeaway.

PREP: Have a whiteboard and markers available. Bring copies of the video transcripts. Have a Facilitator Guide available for each facilitator. Get there early and set up the room in huddles large enough to support a variety of leadership at each table. Put chairs around one table (keep people close), rather than pulling several tables together.



BASIC CONCEPT: Meet for 55 minutes to discuss the module. The group breaks down into huddles large enough to support a variety of leadership at each table. For example, you want to have SLs, PSGs, PLs, and CDRs in the same huddle so you can maximize the overall effectiveness and increase the number of vantage points. Have one facilitator at each table to guide (NOT LEAD) the discussion. The workshop begins with facilitators asking the participants what their response was to the module. The facilitators' main role is to be a catalyst for conversation and learning about the topic at hand. This module includes two rounds of discussion, and ends with personal stories and vignettes that relate to the module.

KEYS TO SUCCESS:

- Let participants do most of the talking.
- The facilitators' key role is to ask questions that spark thought and conversation.
- Ensure you engage each level of leadership and everyone within your group. Do not let any one person dominate the conversation.
- Have questions prepped for each round to drive the conversation. (See "Detailed Plan" on page 6)
- You are a catalyst for conversation. Make sure that you continue to ask questions that make your group dig deeper.

INTRODUCTION (90 seconds)

Introduce the Workshop in a way that communicates the purpose of the event.

"Today we're going to look at the Army Profession and discuss true identity."

ROUND 1 - (35 minutes): Discuss an individual true identity

[Watch "Watt: Identity"]

1. How does a Soldier's identity develop?
2. Watt describes a number of factors that helped shape his identity as a person and as a Soldier. What were some of these factors?
3. Watt says, "Ever since I was a kid, I wanted to join the Army. I'd always had a profound respect … for the military." A) What was Watt's concept of the Army Profession at that point? B) How did that shape his professional identity once he joined the Army?
4. Watt talks about his father who was an Army airborne combat engineer. He says he respected his dad and wanted to mirror his attitude. Describe his father's sense of identity.
5. What role does family play in the lives of soldiers?
6. What roles do outside influences play in encouraging a person to serve and establish an identity as a Soldier?
7. Watt wanted to prove to himself what he was capable of and do something he felt was significant. How did that attitude contribute to his willingness to be a Soldier?
8. A) How does a sense of purpose contribute to a Soldier's identity, or does it? B) How would you describe your purpose?
9. A) Does Watt view himself as a professional? B) What statements does he make that inform your response?
10. A) Do you view Watt as a professional? B) What does he say or do which makes you believe one way or the other?

11. How does having the title of a, "professional," give someone a sense of identity and ownership in his/her field of work?

12. What criteria should a person meet in order to be called a professional?

13. Watt attributes his identity to a number of influences in his life, including his leaders and the Army's value system. What role do leaders have in Soldier-development? Why?

14. A) What role do Army methodologies have in Soldier development? B) In what ways does the Army intentionally shape the identities of its Soldiers?

ROUND 2 - Conclusion (20 minutes): Personal Vignettes and takeaways.

Facilitator asks students to share any personal vignettes and takeaways from the module.

It is important for the group to relate to this story on a personal level. Conclude the module emphasizing true identity. Leaders should walk away with a better understanding of an individual's true identity, and how to cultivate an ethical identity in their unit and their Soldiers by establishing a positive command climate.

Upon concluding, the following questions are useful for determining learning and promoting reflection:

Learning	Q - What did you learn from listening to the reactions and reflections of other leaders? Q - What are the future implications of this decision and or experience?
Reflection	Q - How do you feel/what do you think about what you learned? Q - What will you do with your new information? Q – How can you integrate new learning into your Command team philosophy, command structure and climate?