

# Cultivating Ethical Leaders and Ethical Systems in the U.S. Army

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## Part I: Intuitions come first, strategic reasoning second

**Problem set 1:** Good people do bad things; weakness of will; hypocrisy

**Tool set 1:**

- A) See mind as a small rider (reasoning) on a large elephant (automatic/intuitive processes)
- B) Train the elephant (cultivate ethical habits)
- C) Change the path (norms, culture, processes, nudges)

## Part II: There's more to morality than harm and fairness

**Problem set 2:** How to connect? Weak moral appeals, lack of buy-in, moral diversity

**Tool set 2:**

- A) Develop network of meanings/stories/virtues grounded in the 6 moral foundations
  - 1) Care/harm
  - 2) Fairness/cheating
  - 3) Liberty/oppression
  - 4) Loyalty/betrayal
  - 5) Authority/subversion
  - 6) Sanctity/degradation
- B) Appeal to elephant before issuing policies to rider
- C) Study your diversity, know your audience, recognize your own failures of empathy

## Part III: Morality binds and blinds

**Problem set 3:** Disengagement, low morale, distrust, bystanderism

**Tool set 3:**

- A) Hive psychology, OFA-AFO, *We are 90% chimp and 10% bee.*
- B) Institutional design tools, for creating healthy hives
  - Shared fate, shared sacrifice (all in the same boat)
  - Suppress free riders (punishment, gossip)
  - Heightened similarity (e.g., uniforms and tribal markers; downplay diversity)
  - Synchrony (drill, ritual)
  - Healthy competition
  - Noble mission
- C) Leader behavior tools
  - Must be worthy of respect, admiration, and awe
  - Impartiality: followers can trust, and cede control
  - Self-sacrifice: shows shared fate
  - Eloquence: noble words uplift and inspire

**Haidt's Pitch:**

- Take a systems approach to ethics
- Individual character is an important piece
- Efforts to improve that piece alone will fail
- *Learn some tools from moral psychology*
- Then improve processes, norms, culture, and training, to be “psychologically realistic”
- The Army may be the best place in America to get this right
- Get serious about collecting data, collecting existing scholarship, and trying experiments

For more information, please see [www.EthicalSystems.org](http://www.EthicalSystems.org), and [www.RighteousMind.com](http://www.RighteousMind.com)  
Read Righteous Mind: introduction, plus chapters 2, 7, and 10, plus all chapter summaries