The objective of this lesson is for the cadets to learn the importance of self-control.

Have each student choose a piece of wood and 4 nails. Have them mark their names on the wood. Once that is completed, tell them to exchange pieces of wood with each other. Have them hammer the 4 nails, in succession, any way they want, into the other person's wood. Then, have them pull the nails back out again and give the wood back to its owner.

If you think before you speak or act, the world will be a better place.

During this character development session, we will:

• Read the case study Nails in the Fence.
• Discuss the facts, assumptions, problems and solutions (FAPS) of the case
• Answer and discuss your responses to questions that relate to the case study, or the larger issues of respect and integrity.
• Record what you’ve learned.

The case study, “Nails in the Fence” is located on the next page. See Part 1 for instructions on how to lead a case study.

A verbal wound is just as bad as a physical one. Wounds can be all sorts of things: gossip, lies, cheating, stealing, losing your temper, or even just inconsiderate actions.

You should value the people around you who share your everyday life. They make you smile, encourage you to succeed, lend an ear, share words of praise, comfort and hold you up just when you need it most and they are by your side at your best or at your worst.

So remember, if you think BEFORE you speak or act, the world will be a better place.

DON'T BE A NAIL IN A FENCE.
CASE STUDY

Eli had a very bad temper. His Father gave him a bag of nails and said that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence. The first day the boy drove 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, he learned to control his anger. The nails hammered daily gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence. Finally, the day came when Eli didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father and the father said he should now pull out one nail for each day that he held his temper. The days passed and Eli finally told his father that all the nails were gone. The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, 'You have done well, Eli, but look at the holes in the fence! The fence will never be the same. When you say or do things in anger, they leave scars just like these.

SOLO PILOT

1. Have you ever had a problem with losing your temper, or know someone who does?

2. What are some ways you have tried to control your temper?

3. Have you ever had one of your leaders lose their temper? How did you feel?

PILOT

1. Why did driving nails into a fence help Eli to control himself?

2. What do the holes in the fence mean to you?

TEST PILOT

1. Is there a situation you can think of where your own lack of self-control resulted in hurting someone? Do you regret it? What would you do differently now?