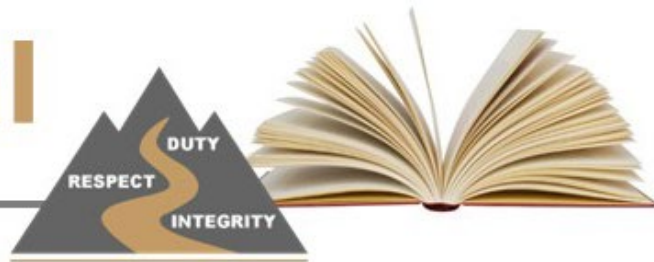


# Professional Reading Program

Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program



## *The Hero Code* by Admiral William H. McRaven (USN Ret.)

**Best Wildland Fire Leadership Level to read this book:**

- Level 1, Follower
- Level 2, New Leader

### Why Read *The Hero Code*?

*"This book is about heroes and the virtues they possess. You may wonder whether you can ever be as courageous or as compassionate or as humble as the men and women in these stories. Trust me, you can."*

*The Hero Code* is a tribute to, and examination of, the virtues and traits shown by everyday heroes that the author has met over the years. Retired Admiral William H. McRaven is a highly respected leader who served for many years in the U.S. Navy, and is a product of a culture that highly prizes reading as a professional development tool. The virtues that the author highlights in each chapter are all valuable to new and experienced leaders, and show how a follower or a leader can build character through small actions.

There are several videos related to the book and featuring the author available online. Find two of them at the links below, or by using an internet search engine.

- **The Hero Code by Admiral William H. McRaven (U.S. Navy Retired) (1 minute clip):**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NM9snA2FSvg>
- **The Hero Code and its Noble Qualities - Jocko Willink & Admiral William McRaven (7 minute clip):**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFoXBhStufo>

For more leadership ideas and to dig deeper, check out the Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program (WFLDP) blog, Facebook page, Professional Reading Program, and more at the links below:

**Blog:** <http://wildlandfireleadership.blogspot.com/>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/WFLDP>

**Professional Reading Program:** <https://www.nwcg.gov/wfldp/toolbox/prp>

**Main WFLDP page:** <https://www.nwcg.gov/wfldp>

## *The Hero Code Discussion Questions*

### **Chapter One: Courage**

What are some things you've faced in your life that have required courage to overcome? Personally? Professionally? Are there any things you wish you'd been more courageous about? How might courage as described in this chapter be important to a fire leader or follower?

### **Chapter Two: Humility**

Why is humility an important trait to develop as a leader and follower? How are respect and humility linked in this chapter? How has humility, or a lack of it, been present in your experience? How can humility help you connect with those around you, leaders and followers?

### **Chapter Three: Sacrifice**

Sacrifice comes in many forms. What are some sacrifices that you've made to be a better leader, follower, or person? How might you balance sacrifices in one area of your life (work, for example) with another (personal)? Are there times when sacrifice might not be worth it? Why or why not?

### **Chapter Four: Integrity**

How important is integrity to you? Why is integrity so important as a leader? How does integrity build trust in a team or organization? How you ever seen a lack of integrity in action? How did that make you feel, and how did it effect the team or organization?

### **Chapter Five: Compassion**

What does compassion mean to you, as a leader or a follower? How can compassion from a leader help build the team? Why might a compassionate leader be someone you'd want to follow? Can you think of any examples of compassionate leaders in your experience?

### **Chapter Six: Perseverance**

Why is perseverance an important virtue for a fireline leader to have? What are some things that you've persevered through? How can you develop this trait in yourself, and help develop it in others around you?

### **Chapter Seven: Duty**

What does duty mean to you as a fire leader or follower? What are some ways that you can demonstrate this in your current situation? Why is it important, as a follower or a leader in the fire environment, to do your duty to the best of your ability?

### **Chapter Eight: Hope**

How are hope and realistic optimism important as a leader? What are some things that give you hope as you read this chapter? What are some things that you can do to give hope to others?

## **Chapter Nine: Humor**

After reading this chapter, what do you think about the value of humor as a leader? What are some uses of humor that you've seen? Have you ever seen humor used inappropriately? How will you use humor to be a better leader, follower, and person?

## **Chapter Ten: Forgiveness**

Why is forgiveness so important as a leader? A follower? Are there any opportunities for you to practice forgiveness in your work life? Personal life? How often do you see forgiveness demonstrated in your team or organization?