



Scenario: Witness to Abuse

Group Size: 4-15

This scenario may contain explicit language and references to harmful situations which may be emotionally activating for some people. If you need support, services are available through the [CAF Member Assistance Program \(CFMAP\)](#) and the [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#).

You are deployed on a mission in support of a recently established foreign military facing a hostile insurgent force. You are the commander of a four-person team, which works directly with a company of an allied force in a remote region of the country. Your team's tasks include observing patrols in conjunction with platoons from the host country.

After returning with one of the platoons from a foot patrol, you witness an unusual incident. A host country soldier has his rifle confiscated and is hustled off to a distant part of the compound by his leader. You ask what is going on, but you are advised to "mind your own business." You are told that you are prohibited from visiting that part of the camp. This seems odd, as you have never been prohibited from that area previously. You decide to walk toward the tent where the soldier was taken and, as you get closer, you hear yelling and a scream for help. As you move toward the tent to intervene, an officer from the host nation stops you and says, "Mind your business, and return to your tent." You tell him that you think a soldier is being abused. He replies: "That is none of your concern. Go back to your tent and I will look into it!" At that point, there is another scream.

Categories

Principles:	Respect the Dignity of all Persons, Obey and Support Lawful Authority
Values:	Loyalty, Courage
Cultural Themes:	Service, Identity, Leadership
Misconduct Types:	Not Specific
GBA Plus Themes:	Culture
Audience:	Canadian Armed Forces

Facilitator's Guide

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the ethical obligation of “Respect the Dignity of all Persons” and “Obey and Support Lawful Authority” in an operational setting.
- Discuss the ethical values of courage and loyalty. In addition to the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Ethos of responsibility and duty, and loyalty in an operational setting.

Facilitation Questions:

1. What would you do in this situation? What are the considerations?
 - Allow open discussion from the group.
 - Ethical concerns: Your concern is that someone is being mistreated. Does your obligation to help another person sway your obligation to follow orders?
 - Personal factors: On a personal level, you feel compelled to react and see that the soldier is not being mistreated. On a professional level, you feel obliged to do something.
 - Environmental factors: You are not in familiar surroundings. You are working directly for another allied unit. You are aware that the culture of the host country may contain practices and values that differ from those that are accepted in Canada.
2. What is the ethical dilemma in this situation?
 - This is a competing values dilemma. where there are more than one decision, option, or course of action are consistent with different core ethical values and obligations.
 - You are forced into a conflict between Canadian values and those of the allied country, in addition to the host country's values and international law. Do you remain loyal to your immediate chain of command from the allied unit, or do you disregard the orders and investigate?
3. What are some potential courses of action that could be taken in this scenario?
 - Option 1: Follow the orders and mind your own business. If there is abuse, turning a blind eye allows it to continue and the soldier in question may be seriously injured.
 - Option 2: Explain to the officer that, if a soldier is being abused, this is a violation of human rights and that you are obliged to intervene and report any instance of abuse to the chain of command. Not reporting instances of physical abuse may affect the CAF reputation should Canadians learn that one of their military members turned a blind eye to it.
 - Option 3: Try to establish if abuse is occurring by asking the officer to accompany you to investigate. This option will implicate the officer and he will have to react if abuse is occurring.
 - Option 4: Ignore the orders and continue to the prohibited area. Your intervention may poison relations with foreign allies.