Vanguard Bandits Morale Guide

by Statsjedi

Morale can make or break a Vanguard Bandits campaign. Yet for all its importance, it is poorly understood --- particularly because the game doesn't make it very clear to begin with. The purpose of this FAQ is to demystify the morale system and show you how to use it to unlock different endings in the game.

TL;DR Summary

- What is morale?
  - Morale is the feeling each character has toward Bastion, the party leader. This is shown by the column underneath Bastion in the Interview Screen.

- When does morale matter?
  - In the Kingdom branch, the main branch of the game, morale determines whether you get the good or bad ending. After Chapter 19, if the sum of your party's morale is 8 or greater, you get the good ending; if it is 7 or less, you get the bad ending.
  - In the Empire branch, the morale of Sadira and Cecilia determine your ending. After Chapter 17, if Sadira's is higher, you get her ending; if Cecilia's is higher, you get her ending. If Sadira and Cecilia have the same morale, you get Sadira's ending.
  - Morale doesn't matter for the Ruin branch.
- How do I keep the morale of my party high on the Kingdom branch?
  - Use the Interview screen between missions to boost the morale of individual party members, and only talk to people who will be in the party at the end of the game.
  - Do not let party members that will be with you at the end of the game be defeated in combat.
  - Make sure that Reyna, Barlow, Zeria, Dionne, Sadira, and Cecilia have at least half their HP by the end of a mission.
  - Make sure Devlin, Andrew, and Zeria are never idle during a combat round.
  - Complete the necessary steps to recruit Nana and Milea for your party.
  - Have Bastion only defeat enemies from the front or side.
  - Plus a few other things, which I'll get into later.

Hacking Morale

Morale is indicated by a series of icons on the Interview screen. Unfortunately, they are pretty vague. For example, you might see a column of smiley faces and think that everything is good with your team, but smiley faces are actually neutral (morale of -32 to +31) and might get you the bad Kingdom ending.

Fortunately, we can use some advanced techniques to pry into the game and get the exact morale values. Using a PSX cheat device or emulator, you can go to the memory addresses listed in Table 1 and view their contents. Each address contains a hexadecimal (hex) number between FFFFFFFF80 (shortened to 80) and 7F, which corresponds to morale values of -128 to +127.

Table 1: Memory addresses where morale is stored.

Character	Address
Row 2	300B79B2
Row 3	300B79EA
Row 4	300B7A22

Row 5	300B7A5A
Row 6	300B7A92
Row 7	300B7ACA
Row 8	300B7B02
Row 9	300B7B3A
Row 10	300B7B72
Row 11	300B7BAA
Row 12	300B7BE2

Be aware that the addresses in Table 1 are not tied to specific characters, but to rows on the Interview screen. As people join and leave your party, the characters listed at each row will change, and these changes will take place at the conclusion of each chapter of the game.For example, Reyna is in Row 4 after Chapter 2, but after Chapter 3 moves to Row 3 and her morale moves with her. After Chapter 4 in the Kingdom branch, she moves again, to Row 2. Bastion, however, will always be at Row 1.

Table 2: Morale values and their corresponding hexadecimal values. Note that the hexadecimal numbers for the negative morales are actually "FFFFFFFFXX,"" but only the XX digits are stored in memory.

Picture	Morale Range	Hexadecimal Range
	-128 to -97	80 to 9F
	-96 to -65	A0 to BF
	-64 to -33	C0 to DF
	-32 to +31	E0 to FF 0 to 1F
	+32 to +63	20 to 3F
	+64 to +95	40 to 5F
	+96 to +127	60 to 7F

Interview Strategies

Interviewing is one of the main methods to raise morale, and for several party members the *only* way to raise morale. You can speak to a maximum of three people between chapters, so make your choices count.

Table 3: Summary of interview morale bonuses. Characters that do not influence game endings have been omitted.

Name	Morale Boost	Ending
Andrew	+4	Kingdom
Milea	+4	Kingdom
Reyna	+3	Kingdom
Barlow	+2	Kingdom
Devlin	+2	Kingdom
Nana	+2	Kingdom
Zeria	+2	Kingdom
Alden	+1	Kingdom
Dionne	+1	Kingdom
Cecilia	+4	Empire
Sadira[†]	+4	Empire

[†]Sadira is present for the Kingdom Branch ending, but is not interviewable in it, and her morale does not count when determining which ending occurs.

To get the good ending in the Kingdom branch, you don't need every person to have a morale of +8 or better --- you just need the sum of everyone's morale to be +8 or better. To accomplish this, I recommend focusing on interviewing the people who receive the highest morale boosts. You can even interview the same person two or three times in a row, but be careful not to max out characters whose morale can increase other ways.

The choice of whether or not to interview Devlin is a complicated one. On one hand, he does get a nice +2 bump in morale. On the other hand, he loses morale pretty easily, and if you aren't careful he can bottom out and turn into a black hole. My suggestion is only interview Devlin if you are confident that you can keep him from losing too much morale during combat missions (which should be easier with the help of this guide).

Interviewing in the Empire branch is much more straightforward. If you want the Sadira ending, interview Sadira and ignore Cecilia. If you want the Cecilia ending, the do the opposite.

If you want to see everyone's interview responses, save the game, interview everybody, load the saved game, make your strategic interviews, and then continue playing.

In-Game Dialogue Choices

At certain parts of the game, you will be able to pick between two different responses for Bastion. These responses will usually impact party morale.

Kingdom Branch

- At the beginning of Mission 4, Bastion has an opportunity to choose between two options in a dialog with Devlin. Both responses --- "I understand" and "I don't care" --- have no effect on party morale.
- After Mission 19, Sadira will ask to join the party. Regardless if you tell her "Of course, Sadira," or "I'm sorry, Sadira," she'll end up joining (but as an AI-controlled character whose morale will not impact the game). Next, you'll get to choose between "Let's bring peace to the Continent!" and "Let's bring an end to Faulkner's life!"
  - If you pick "Of course, Sadira," and "Let's bring peace to the Continent!" total party morale increases by a whopping 18 points.
  - If you pick "I'm sorry, Sadira," and "Let's bring peace to the Continent!" total party morale remains unchanged.
  - If you pick "Of course, Sadira," and "Let's bring an end to Faulkner's life!" total party morale increases by 3.
  - If you pick "I'm sorry, Sadira," and "Let's bring an end to Faulkner's life!" total party morale decreases by 17 points. Ouch!

Empire Branch

- After Mission 10, Cecilia will reveal to Bastion that she is a spy. If you choose the response "I'll keep your secret...for now," her morale increases by 32. If you choose "I'm going to tell Sadira the truth!" her morale decreases by 16.
- After mission 16, Sadira and Bastion have a heart-to-heart moment. Choose the dialog option, "Please tell me what's wrong!" and you will raise Sadira's morale by 32. Choose "Alright, Sadira. Good night." and she doesn't lose any morale, but she doesn't gain any, either.

Party Members

This section lists the party members whose morale will determine the Kingdom and Empire branch endings, and what will change their morale.

In the Kingdom branch, Devlin tends to be a problem. His starting morale is -32, just barely inside the "Neutral" category, and unless you're very careful with him, it will only drop further. Compounding the problem is the fact that the only way to raise his morale is to interview him. One good way to counteract the drag from Devlin is for Milea and Nana join your party. Not only are their initial morale values high (80 and 32, respectively), but they can be raised during missions as well as during interviews. However, you have to jump through some hoops, detailed below, to add them.

Some characters' morale will go up or go down if they do nothing during a round. This means no movement, no attacking, and no support skills. Dodging an attack, defending, countering, or counter-attacking do not count.

Bastion killing an enemy from behind can affect the morale of some party members. Attacking from behind doesn't have any effect, as long as it's not the killing blow. Overall, party morale will increase when Bastion kills an enemy, but the increase will be larger if the kill comes from the front or side instead of the back.

Reyna

"Time for you to watch and learn from the best of the Avalon Corps, Bastion."

- Joins: Chapter 2 (Kingdom branch)
- Ending: Kingdom
- Starting morale: 16 (hex 10)
- Gaining morale
  - Interview, +3
  - If she ends a mission with at least half her HP, +7
- Losing morale
  - If she ends a mission with less than half her HP, -7
  - If she is defeated in combat, -12 (-14 in Mission 19)

Devlin

"The insanity of war drives the most honorable of men to commit the most unthinkable acts."

- Joins: Chapter 3 (Kingdom branch)
- Ending: Kingdom
- Starting morale: -32 (hex E0)
- Gaining morale
  - Interview, +2
- Losing morale
  - If he is defeated in combat, -12 (-14 in Mission 19)
  - If he does nothing during a turn, -2
  - If Bastion kills an enemy from behind, -2

Barlow

"I fight for peace and candy!"

- Joins: Chapter 3 (Kingdom branch)
- Ending: Kingdom
- Starting morale: 0 (hex 00)
- Gaining morale
  - Interview, +2
  - If he does nothing during his turn, +2
- Losing morale
  - If he ends a mission with less than half his HP, -7
  - If he is defeated in combat, -12 (-14 in Mission 19)

Zeria

"They must be stopped at all costs, and we're the ones to do it."

- Joins: Chapter 6 (Kingdom Branch), but isn't playable until Chapter 10
- Ending: Kingdom
- Starting morale: 10 (hex 0A)
- Gaining morale
  - Interview, +2
  - If Bastion kills an enemy, +2
- Losing morale
  - If he is defeated in combat, -12 (-14 in Mission 19)
  - If he ends a mission with less than half his HP, -7
  - If he does nothing during a turn, -2

Andrew

"Sometimes, Bastion, not even I know how I manage to look so damn good all the time."

- Joins: Chapter 8
- Ending: Kingdom

- Starting morale: 0 (hex 00)
- Gaining morale
  - Interview, +4
  - If Bastion kills an enemy from behind, +2
- Losing morale
  - If he is defeated in combat, -12 (-14 in Mission 19)
  - If he does nothing during a turn, -2

Nana

"You're really nice to me, Bastion! I'm going to marry you and be your princess when I grow up!"

- Joins: Chapter 11
  - To get Nana to join, you need to choose "Actually, Zeria, I'll meet with him," then "Yes. Tell him I will depart soon" in the cut scene after Mission 5
  - Next, you have to allow Bastion to be defeated in Mission 6. Bastion will then be captured, and meet Nana
- Ending: Kingdom
- Starting morale: 80 (hex 50)
- Gaining morale
  - Interview, +2
  - If she does nothing during a turn, +2
  - If Bastion kills an enemy, +2
- Losing morale
  - If she is defeated in combat, -12 (-14 in Mission 19)

Alden

"You will never win with power alone."

- Joins: Chapter 15 (Kingdom branch)
- Ending: Kingdom
- Starting morale: 0 (hex 00)
- Gaining morale
  - Interview, +1
- Losing morale
  - If he is defeated in combat, -12 (-14 in Mission 19)
  - If Bastion kills an enemy from behind, -2

Milea

"I'll be glad once the fights are over."

- Joins: Chapter 15 (Kingdom branch)
  - To recruit Milea, Bastion must be at Level 19 or below by the end of Mission 14
  - If he is, then in the cutscene after Mission 14 Milea will ask Bastion if she can join; reply "Of course, Milea. I would be honored," and she joins
- Ending: Kingdom
- Starting morale: 32 (hex 20)
- Gaining morale
  - Interview, +4
  - If she does nothing during a turn, +2
- Losing morale
  - If she is defeated in combat, -12 (-14 in Mission 19)

Dionne

"Age and experience are my weapons."

- Joins: Chapter 19
- Ending: Kingdom
- Starting morale: 0 (hex 00)
- Gaining morale
  - Interview, +1
  - If he ends a mission with at least 50% of his HP, +7
  - If Bastion kills an enemy from the front or side, +2
- Losing morale
 - If he is defeated in combat, -12 (-14 in Mission 19)

Cecilia

"Everything always ends up okay in the end, Bastion! I've always believed that!"

- Joins: Chapter 5 (Empire branch)
- Starting morale: 0 (hex 00)
- Gaining morale
  - Interview, +4
  - If Bastion kills an enemy from the front or side, +2
  - If Bastion kills an enemy from behind, +4
  - If she ends a mission with at least 50% of her HP, +11
- Losing morale
  - If she is defeated in combat, -12

Sadira
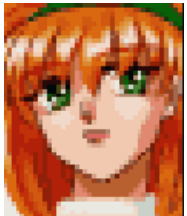
"I'm going to stop the war. I'm going to restore peace to our land and our people. I shall not forget this day. And I shall not fail!"

- Joins: Chapter 20 (Kingdom branch), Chapter 5 (Empire branch)
- Ending: Kingdom (AI-controlled, morale does not count), Empire
- Starting morale: 0 (hex 00)
- Gaining morale
  - Interview, +4
  - If she ends a mission with at least 50% of her HP, +7
- Losing morale
  - If she is defeated in combat, -12
  - If Bastion kills an enemy from behind, -2

Contact Info

Questions? Comments? Find something wrong? Email me at statsjedi (at) gmail (dot) com.

Acknowledgements

If you enjoy in-depth FAQs about the minutiae of old games, be sure to check out my Combat Analysis FAQ for *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*, hosted at Neoseeker (www.neoseeker.com/starwars-kotor/faqs/1609992-star-wars-kotor-combat.html) and GameFAQs (www.gamefaqs.com/pc/516675-star-wars-knights-of-the-old-republic/faqs/71303).

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