



The Silent Battle

The life of a military veteran is characteristically fraught with unique challenges and experiences. Even when the visible scars of war fade, invisible wounds often linger, leading to mental health conditions such as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). One significant, yet often overlooked, factor contributing to mental health problems in veterans is loneliness. Loneliness and other variables increase the risk of depression and suicide among veterans, posing an urgent public health concern that requires our attention.

The Magnitude of Loneliness

Loneliness, as defined, is a subjective feeling of being alone, isolated, or disconnected from others. While solitude can be a chosen state of being and sometimes even rejuvenating, loneliness is often unwanted and emotionally painful. Veterans, having spent significant periods in tightly knit military units and then transitioning to civilian life, can face a significant shift in their social networks and structures, leaving them vulnerable to feelings of loneliness.

A study by the Veterans Affairs National Center for PTSD found that nearly half of veterans reported feeling lonely often, with younger veterans reporting the highest rates. Such statistics underscore the pervasiveness of this issue within the veteran community.

Loneliness and Mental Health

Persistent loneliness can trigger numerous physical and mental health problems, including cardiovascular disease, diminished sleep quality, impaired cognitive performance, and depression and anxiety. The correlation between loneliness and depression is well established, and veterans are no exception. Loneliness acts as a catalyst, aggravating pre-existing mental health conditions such as PTSD and predisposing veterans to new mental health disorders like depression....

While the battle against loneliness, depression, and suicide among veterans is undeniably complex, it is one that society must confront. By acknowledging and addressing the issue of loneliness, we can improve veterans' mental health...

The book is available at Amazon or at <http://www.theveterandoctor.com/>



Transforming Trauma: Veterans, Nightmares of Deployment, and The Path to Healing

For countless veterans worldwide, the experience of warfare doesn't end with a discharge from military service. The scars left by the rigors of deployments often manifest themselves through post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression, and, quite commonly, nightmares. These nocturnal disturbances, filled with vivid and distressing images of combat experiences, can severely affect the quality of life of veterans, causing sleep deprivation, impaired daily functioning, and increased mental health issues.

Understanding the Psychological Impact of Deployments

Deployment-related nightmares stem from the brain's attempt to process traumatic experiences, and they can be frighteningly realistic. These nightmares often trigger intense fear, anxiety, sadness, or anger, pulling veterans back into their traumatic memories and making them feel as if they are reliving their traumatic experiences over again. From a psychological standpoint, these nightmares are the brain's response to unresolved stress and trauma. The brain naturally seeks resolution and healing; in the case of trauma, it often uses dreams to process unresolved issues. While distressing, these nightmares provide insight into the emotional turmoil veterans are grappling with and, thus, serve as a starting point for therapeutic interventions.

Healing Through Understanding

Understanding that nightmares are a manifestation of unprocessed trauma can be empowering for veterans. It is important to remember that healing from trauma is a journey, and these nightmares, as distressing as they may be, are part of that journey. While immediate suppression of nightmares might seem like the most desired option, the goal should be facilitating trauma processing and resolution rather than merely suppressing the symptoms. Many psychotherapeutic approaches, such as Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), effectively treat PTSD and trauma-related symptoms. Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT): This therapy involves helping veterans understand and change thought patterns that lead to PTSD and other trauma-related symptoms.

CPT enables veterans to confront and reinterpret distressing memories, thus reducing their emotional impact. Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR): EMDR is an interactive psychotherapy technique to alleviate the distress associated with traumatic memories. Through EMDR, veterans can reprocess traumatic information until it is no longer psychologically disruptive.

Dream and Nightmare Therapy: In addition to these general therapeutic approaches, more targeted treatments have emerged, specifically targeting traumatic nightmares. These include Image Rehearsal Therapy (IRT) and Exposure, Relaxation, and Rescripting Therapy (ERRT).

Image Rehearsal Therapy (IRT): IRT involves rewriting the script of a nightmare to make it less frightening. The veteran imagines the nightmare and then rewrites the narrative to make it positive or neutral. This rescripted dream is then rehearsed while awake. Over time, this can lead to decreased nightmare frequency and intensity. Exposure, Relaxation, and Rescripting Therapy (ERRT): ERRT is a cognitive-behavioral treatment for trauma survivors with nightmares, sleep disturbances, and PTSD. It includes components of sleep hygiene, nightmare exposure, rescripting, relaxation training, and cognitive restructuring...

Many veterans grapple with Nightmares of deployments, a challenging consequence of military service. By understanding these nightmares as expressions of unresolved trauma, veterans can begin to see them not as relentless hauntings of the past but as part of a pathway toward healing. These nightmares can be managed with professional support and effective therapeutic approaches, reducing their frequency and intensity. As a society, recognizing the struggle of our veterans is the first step toward providing them the care and support they need to heal from their wartime experiences....

Complete article is on [The Veteran Doctor Blog](http://www.theveterandoctor.com/). Please go to <http://www.theveterandoctor.com/> for this article and more.

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Heroes Helping Heroes: Free Aid for Veterans in Navigating VA Disability Claims

The transition from active military service to civilian life can be a challenging process for veterans, and it often involves confronting a host of new realities and challenges. One of these is navigating the maze of Veteran Affairs (VA) disability claims. These claims are designed to aid and compensate for injuries or diseases that happened while on active duty or were made worse by military service. However, filing and receiving these claims can often be daunting and confusing. Fortunately, organizations are devoted to assisting veterans with their VA disability claims for FREE. This article will highlight a few such organizations and their tireless efforts in helping veterans access the benefits they rightly deserve.

1. Disabled American Veterans (DAV)

Disabled American Veterans, often referred to as DAV is one of the most prominent non-profit organizations helping veterans in

The United States. Established in 1920, the organization provides a network of volunteers who assist veterans in filing VA disability claims. It also offers other forms of aid, such as employment resources, and advocates for veterans' rights at the national level. DAV's services are free of charge, reflecting their commitment to ensuring veterans receive the help they need without any financial burden.

2. Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS)

The Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS) is a state-run organization committed to improving the quality of life for Nevada's veterans, military, and families. They offer comprehensive services, which include assisting veterans with their VA disability claims. Veterans Advocacy and Support Team (VAST) at NDVS comprises accredited Veterans Service Officers who provide free assistance in preparing and filing claims for benefits. They represent

veterans in their claims and help them understand the intricacies of the process, ensuring they receive the benefits they are entitled to.

3. Veterans Action Foundation (VAF)

The Veterans Action Foundation (VAF) is a non-profit organization committed to addressing the issues faced by veterans who are at risk of becoming or are currently, homeless. Among the many support services, they provide is filling out and filing VA disability claims. Their trained personnel work with veterans individually, providing personalized help to navigate the claims process. By helping veterans to secure the benefits they are entitled to, the VAF supports them in establishing stable lives post-service... Each organization represents a lifeline for veterans navigating the challenging waters of VA disability claims..

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Monthly Resource Picks



Waypoint Vets

www.waypointvets.org

Waypoint Vets is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization that facilitates unique opportunities of Camaraderie and Healing for Military Veterans across America. Our adventures combine mental and physical intensity with the stillness and beauty of nature. We strive to deliver meaningful and lasting experiences that our Veteran participants can look forward to and reflect upon. The Heartbeat of Waypoint's Mission is to Honor our Fallen by *Living*, and by taking back our Health and Happiness – *together*.



NV Outdoor Adventure Foundation

www.nvoaf.org

The Nevada Chapter of the Outdoor Adventure Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) We provide Hunting, Fishing, and outdoor adventures for veterans in need, some are wheelchair-bound caused by injury during active military service or who have lost a limb during active military service.

We also provide hunting, fishing, and outdoor adventures for children under the age of 18 and young adults under the age of 25 with cancer or another life-threatening illness.

Our Outdoor adventures include numerous Big game and Bird Hunts Including Dove, Pheasant, and Quail, Fresh and Saltwater Fishing trips, Camping and many other outdoor adventures.

Upcoming Local Events

- Branded One CrossFit-BJJ Fundamentals – Branded One CrossFit – 2055 E. Windmill Ln #125, Las Vegas, NV 89123 USA –Thursday, July 6th, 13th, 20nd, 27th, 2023 @ 8:00am – Occurs Every Thursday!
- NVOAF Fundraising Banquet – Gold Coast Hotel and Casino – 4000 W. Flamingo Rd, Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA, Saturday, July 8, 2023 @ 6:00pm – 9:00pm
- SNVCC 3rd Quarter Professional Mixer – The Rouge Room (Red Rock Resort and Casino) – 11011 W. Charleston, NV 89135, USA - Thursday, July 27, 2023 @ 5:00pm
- Veteran Social Club – Lovelady Brewing – 20 S. Water St, Henderson, NV – Saturday, August 12, 2023 from 5:00pm to 8:00pm.
- SNVCC 2nd Annual Vet Fest - The Lawn at Downtown Summerlin - 1980 Festival Plaza Dr, Las Vegas, NV 89135, USA – Saturday, October 21, 2023 @ 11:00am



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