



Developing Coping Skills for Veterans Experiencing PTSD

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that can occur after exposure to a traumatic event. Veterans, especially those who have seen combat, are at a higher risk of developing PTSD due to their intense and often life-threatening experiences. Managing and coping with PTSD can be challenging but entirely possible. Here, we delve into the importance of developing coping skills for veterans experiencing PTSD and provide practical strategies to help.

Understanding PTSD in Veterans

For many veterans, the scars of war are physical and emotional. The memories, sights, sounds, and even smells of combat can trigger severe emotional and physical reactions. These reactions can include reliving the traumatic event, avoiding trauma reminders, negative changes in beliefs and feelings, and hyperarousal (feeling on edge). While everyone's experience is unique, it's essential to acknowledge the struggle and work toward healing.

Coping Skills and Strategies

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT): This therapy focuses on changing the patterns of thinking or behavior behind people's difficulties. CBT can help veterans recognize and change negative thought patterns and behaviors contributing to their symptoms.

Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR): EMDR is a psychotherapy treatment designed to alleviate the distress associated with traumatic memories. Through bilateral stimulation (typically in eye movements), traumatic memories can be reprocessed, leading to reduced PTSD symptoms.

Mindfulness and Meditation: These practices help veterans remain present and focused, which can be immensely beneficial in managing PTSD symptoms. Techniques such as deep breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, and guided imagery can all be useful.

PTSD can be debilitating, especially for veterans who carry the weight of their experiences in service....

Full article is available on the BLOG at <http://www.theveterandoctor.com/>

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Veteran Suicide and Alternative Therapies: A New Approach to Healing Our Heroes

Next month there is a significant issue that cannot be overlooked. September is the month of observing Veteran Suicide, and it must be addressed as an issue deeply embedded in our nation's heart. Veterans are brave individuals who have donned the uniform, defended our freedoms, and faced dangers most of us can't imagine. Still, tragically, these individuals are taking their own lives at alarming rates. The weight of their experiences, often fraught with trauma and loss, is a burden they silently bear.

As of September 2021, here are some key statistics related to veteran suicide in the United States, primarily sourced from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA):

- **Overall Rate:** On average, approximately 17 veterans die by suicide daily. This doesn't include active duty servicemembers, members of the National Guard or Reserve not on active duty.
- **Comparison to Non-Veterans:** The suicide rate for veterans was 1.5 times greater than the rate for non-veteran adults after adjusting for age and gender.
- **Gender Disparities:** While the male veteran population had a higher absolute count of suicides, female veterans had a suicide rate 2.2 times greater than their non-veteran counterparts.
- **Firearms:** The use of firearms as a method of suicide was significantly higher among veterans than non-veterans. About 70% of veteran suicides resulted from firearm injuries.
- **Age:** The age group with the highest number of veteran suicides was the 55-74. However, the rate of suicide was highest among younger veterans aged 18-34.
- **State Differences:** The VA report also highlighted differences in veteran suicide rates by state, indicating that regional or local factors might influence these rates.
- **Trends Over Time:** As of the latest reports, there had been a slight increase in veteran suicides compared to previous years, but the rate of increase had slowed compared to the early 2000s.

It's important to note that while these statistics provide an overview of the situation as of 2021, numbers and trends may have evolved since then. For the most current and detailed data, I recommend checking the latest Annual Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report or similar publications from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or other reputable organizations.

It's also important to recognize that signs and symptoms related to suicide may be similar across different populations, including veterans. However, given the unique challenges and experiences veterans face, there are some specific indicators that professionals and loved ones should be particularly aware of.

Here are some general signs and symptoms associated with suicide risks, followed by those that might be more uniquely relevant to veterans:

General Signs and Symptoms:

- **Verbal Warnings:** Mentioning feelings of hopelessness, expressing a desire to die, or making verbal threats to harm oneself.
- **Social Isolation:** Withdrawing from friends, family, and community activities.
- **Mood Swings:** Sudden and dramatic mood changes, from extremely depressed to calm or even happy.
- **Risky Behavior:** Engaging in dangerous activities without consideration of potential consequences.

But to truly tackle the issue of veteran suicide, it's not enough to merely offer therapies. We need to reshape our societal approach to mental health, removing the stigmas attached to seeking help. A soldier should never feel that admitting mental anguish is a sign of weakness....

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



Monthly Resource Picks



Merging Vets & Players

<http://www.vetsandplayers.org/>

Our nation's warriors - from every field of battle - possess a sense of strength, of excellence, and of commitment that we seldom see here at home. However, far too many of them are struggling to transition their abilities towards a new mission - leading themselves, their families, and their communities off the field.

Battling Mental Demons: Veterans' Hilariously Unique Path to Mental Health

Mental health challenges are no laughing matter, and when it comes to our brave veterans, the struggles they face can be incredibly daunting. However, in the face of adversity, humor and sarcasm have become powerful allies for some veterans as they navigate their way towards resolution. Let's take a lighthearted look at some of the toughest mental health challenges veterans encounter and the hilariously unique ways they find resolve.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):

Ah, PTSD, the unwelcome souvenir from the battlefield. Veterans tackle this mental challenge head-on, armed with wicked humor. Nothing screams "recovery" quite like swapping war stories with fellow vets, where the punchline involves diving for cover at the sound of fireworks on the Fourth of July. It may be dark humor, but it helps them find common ground and relief from the memories that haunt

their minds.

Depression and Anxiety:

Depression and anxiety can be crippling for anyone, let alone those who have served in the military. But leave it to our veterans to find creative outlets for combating these demons. Some may opt for stand-up comedy, using laughter to conquer the gnawing sadness within. Others might hilariously proclaim their anxiety levels as comparable to an unexploded landmine, ready to blow up at any moment. Laughter truly is the best medicine, or so they say!

Identity Crisis:

Transitioning back to civilian life after years of military service can be disorienting, to say the least. Our veterans often struggle with an identity crisis, wondering who they are and where they belong. To cope, some veterans embrace a unique approach: taking up unusual hobbies or adopting eccentric alter egos. It's common to find a former Army sergeant rocking out as a ukulele-

playing mermaid or an ex-Marine becoming an aspiring gourmet cupcake baker. Hey, if it helps them find their place in the world, who are we to judge?

Substance Abuse:

Sadly, substance abuse can become a slippery slope for veterans grappling with mental health challenges. But amidst the struggle, they find extraordinary ways to reclaim their lives....

Mental health challenges are complex, and the road to resolution can be particularly challenging for veterans. However, these remarkable individuals often harness the power of humor and sarcasm to combat their inner demons. From sharing dark war stories to embracing outlandish hobbies, they find solace in laughter and create their own unique paths towards healing....

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



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.

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.

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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!
- Veteran Social Club – Lovelady Brewing – 20 S. Water St, Henderson, NV – Saturday, August 12, 2023, from 5:00pm to 8:00pm.
- Veteran Social Club – Tropicana Resort / Havana Room – 8345 E. Sunset Rd, Las Vegas, NV 89113, USA – Saturday, September 9, 2023 @ 6:00 to 8:00 pm
- 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
- SNVCC Inaugural Veteran Awards Gala – Aria Resort and Casino – 3730 S. Las Vegas Blvd, Las Vegas, NV 89158, USA– Saturday, December 9, 2023 @ 5:00 pm



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