VENTURING IN TO “NO MAN’S LAND”

SEPTEMBER 25, 2020
OBJECTIVES

This presentation will provide information that will enable attendees to:

- Understand the impact that their *personal biases* may have on treating those impacted by military service.
- Discuss the importance of *screening all client/patients* for a history of military service, both their own or that of someone significant to them.
- Appreciate the range of *impact* military service can have on our clients/patients.
“NO MAN’S LAND”

“No man’s land” is an expression that originated in the military and was used “to describe any area that it was dangerous to stray into or even topics of conversation that could anger another speaker.”

Source: https://www.military.com/undertheradar/2015/06/15-common-phrases-civilians-stole-from-the-us-military
DO YOU HAVE ANY BIASES?

Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom.

-Aristotle
DO YOU HAVE ANY BIASES TOWARDS MILITARY SERVICE?

- Personal Experience
- Political Objections
DIFFERENT FEELINGS ABOUT DIFFERENT CONFLICTS?
### DIFFERENT CONFLICTS MAY ELICIT DIFFERENT RESPONSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Thoughts</th>
<th>By the Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World War II</td>
<td>• “Greatest Generation”</td>
<td>• 16.1 million Americans Served ¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 405,399 (.3% of 1940 population) ²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>• Three polls conducted from 1990 to 2000 found about 7 in 10 Americans saying it was a mistake to send troops to Vietnam (Newport &amp; Carroll, 2017)</td>
<td>• 8.7 million Americans Served ¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Working Class War (&quot;United States military casualties of war&quot;, 2020)</td>
<td>• 58,209 (.03% of 1970 population) ²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>• All volunteer military</td>
<td>• 770,000 deployed at least once ³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• 28,000 deployed five or more times ³</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ (Congressional Research Service, 2019)  
² ("United States military casualties of war", 2020)  
³ (Lamothe, 2019)
Military Screening Questions:
(U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs)

- Have you ever served in the military?
- Do you have a close family member or partner who has served in the military?
MILITARY CULTURE

- Credo of Self-Sacrifice
  - Values of
    - Duty
    - Honor
    - Loyalty
    - Commitment to comrades, unit, and nation
MANY WAYS TO SERVE

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Polytrauma

- **Polytrauma** - “two or more injuries sustained in the same incident that affect multiple body parts or organ systems and result in physical, cognitive, psychological or psychosocial impairments and functional disabilities.”

“U.S. soldiers are currently surviving injuries at a higher rate than they have in previous conflicts.”

Source: Johnson, et al (2013, p. 32)
While PTSD has only been recognized formally as a diagnosis since 1980, it isn’t new.

- American Civil War PTSD was referred to as, 'Soldier's Heart,' in combat veterans.
- World War I it was referred to as, 'Combat Fatigue.'
- World War II occurred, the disorder was being referred to as a, 'gross stress reaction.'
- Vietnam War called, 'Post-Vietnam Syndrome.'

Other names for PTSD include, 'Battle Fatigue,' and, 'Shell Shock.'
POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

**Defined:**

“Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is a form of anxiety disorder that may happen once a person has experienced a traumatic event, something that the person perceives to be horrible or frightening and that they have witnessed or has occurred to them. During the event, the person believes their life or the lives of other are in danger. They may feel frightened, or feel they have no control over the event.” (Weiss, 2016, *emphasis added*)
POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER
("How Common is PTSD in Veterans?", 2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>15% (Though 30% are believed to have suffered from PDSD at some point during their lifetime)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Enduring Freedom (OEF)</td>
<td>11-20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulf War (Desert Storm)</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA (MST)
(“How Common is PTSD in Veterans?”, 2018)

- In addition to combat, MST is a known cause
- Defined as “any sexual harassment or sexual assault that occurs while you are in the military”
- Among Veterans who get their care through the Veterans Administration, about:
  - 23 out of 100 women (or 23%) reported sexual assault when in the military.
  - 55 out of 100 women (or 55%) and 38 out of 100 men (or 38%) have experienced sexual harassment when in the military.

NOTE: Because there are so many more men in the military, even though the MST is more common in women, more than half of the veterans with MST are men
TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI)

- TBI is a stressful injury to the brain caused by an outward force, often times due to a blow to the head or a violent movement of the head. (DAV)

- According to VA, many people who sustain a TBI will also develop PTSD. (DAV)

(Source: Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center, 2020)
TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY - SCREENING

(Johnson et al, 2013)

1. Did you experience blasts or explosions, vehicular accidents, fragment or bullet wounds above the shoulders, or falls during your service?

2. Were you dazed or did you experience loss of consciousness or memory or a concussion or head injury immediately after the event?

3. Have you started to experience memory or sleep problems, dizziness or balance problems, sensitivity to light, irritability, or headaches? If you have, have they gotten worse?

4. Have you experienced any of the abovementioned symptoms in the past week?

If the veteran answers yes to one or more of these questions, refer for further evaluation and care of mild TBI.
OTHER COMMON ISSUES

- Hazardous Exposures
- Chronic Pain
- Substance Use Disorders
- Suicide Risk
- Homelessness
ALL IN

Parents

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OH, THE CHILDREN ...
### Negative Changes in Children During Deployment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
<th>Moods</th>
<th>Remedy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infants</td>
<td>&lt; 1 yr</td>
<td>Refuses to eat</td>
<td>Support for parent, pediatrician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Listless</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddlers</td>
<td>1-3 yrs</td>
<td>Cries, tantrums</td>
<td>Increased attention, holding, hugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Irritable, sad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>3-6 yrs</td>
<td>Potty accidents, clingy</td>
<td>Increased attention, holding, hugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Irritable, sad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Age</td>
<td>6-12 yrs</td>
<td>Whines, body aches</td>
<td>Spend time, maintain routines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Irritable, sad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teenagers</td>
<td>12-18 yrs</td>
<td>Isolates, uses drugs</td>
<td>Patience, limit-setting, counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Anger, apathy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ISSUES FOR CHILDREN OF OUR MILITARY**

SO MUCH UNCERTAINTY

OVERALL UNCERTAINTY

INJURED OR DISABLED

DEATH
OVERALL UNCERTAINTY

The Five Stages of the The Deployment Cycle
(Pincus, House, Christenson, & Alder)

- Pre-deployment (varies)
- Deployment (1st month)
- Sustainment (months 2 thru 5)
- Re-deployment (last month)
- Post-deployment (3-6 months after deployment)
## DISABLED: BY THE NUMBERS (SISK, 2019)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL VETERANS</strong></td>
<td>19.2 MILLION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THOSE WITH SERVICE-RELATED DISABILITY</strong></td>
<td>4.7 MILLION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• RATING OF UNDER 30%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• RATING OF 30-60%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• RATING OF 60% OR MORE</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RATING OF 60% OR MORE</strong></td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GULF WAR ERA II (Post-9/11)</strong></td>
<td>4.1 MILLION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THOSE WITH SERVICE-RELATED DISABILITY</strong></td>
<td>1.7 MILLION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• RATING OF 60% OR MORE</td>
<td>NEARLY 50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This means that 35% of pre-9/11 veterans have a disability rating of 60% or more.
AND THE CAREGIVERS
(PALMER, 2019)

- 90% are women
- 3.4 million post-9/11 caregivers are raising children
  - These children, in the two years after a military injury, were found to have
    - more cases of maltreatment,
    - more reported injuries and an
    - Increased number of psychiatric medication days.
- 50% of the post-9/11 caregivers indicate that they have no support network
## DEATH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Combat Deaths</th>
<th>Other Deaths in Service (Non-Theater)</th>
<th>Non-mortal Wounded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WWII (1)</td>
<td>291,557</td>
<td>113,842</td>
<td>670,846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean (1)</td>
<td>36,574</td>
<td>17,672</td>
<td>103,284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam (1)</td>
<td>58,220</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>153,303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desert Shield/Desert Storm (1)</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>1,565</td>
<td>467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global War on Terror (2)</td>
<td>6,993</td>
<td></td>
<td>32,333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) (U.S Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Public Affairs)  
(2) (Smith, 2019)
WHEN A MILITARY MEMBER DIES
DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF . . . NO MORE

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NEVER AGAIN
6 JULY 1943

NEVER FORGET
22 JUNE 1988

A GAY VIETNAM VETERAN

WHEN I WAS IN THE MILITARY
THEY GAVE ME A MEDAL FOR KILLING TWO MEN
AND A DISCHARGE FOR LOVING ONE.
JUST A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS

Make a Difference

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Dr. Judy Hefren, LCSW, CPA
Teaching Faculty
College of Nursing
Florida State University
jhefren@fsu.edu
850.644.5631
REFERENCES


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