

VetCenter(ed)



Pacific Western Region 4B

Readjustment Counseling Service Publication

***VA Secretary
Shinseki visits
the San Francisco
Vet Center***

***Vet Center
Opening
Celebrations***

***MVC: Road
Warriors***

***Tips for:
GWOT Outreach
MST Treatment***



**“We are dealing with Veterans, not procedures;
with their problems, not ours.”**

General Omar Bradley, 2 May 1947

upcoming issue highlights

The Modesto Vet Center promotes a program, inspired by a Veteran in a group therapy session, for the proper disposal of the American flag.

The Redwoods Vet Center honors Women Veterans, from WWII to GWOT, with an inspiring celebration.

The Sacramento Vet Center lists the qualities of great Tent Leaders to support a Stand Down event.

submitting content

You work hard to collect data and offer information to your peers. Did you present your discussion at a regional Vet Center continuing education conference or speak to other community professionals? Please share your information with your peers across the Vet Center network. Just convert your presentation into an article for a *VetCenter(ed)* issue. Contact Barb Kuhn 707.646.2988 or e-mail Barbara.kuhn@va.gov

submitting photographs

Capture your images using the high resolution setting on your camera, usually expressed in pixel dimensions. (For example, use 2048 x1536 instead of 640x480.) Common consumer cameras save images in Jpeg format, which compresses the files by deleting picture data, so choose the highest Jpeg size available in your settings.



Vet Center(ed) is a publication focused on the Vet Center community; a venue for Vet Center employees to share their expertise, experience, and anecdotes. With your collective input, *Vet Center(ed)* will provide the opportunity to inform, educate, and link staff. You will learn of best practices and lessons-learned; profiles of staff and working groups; and individual, team, and group accomplishments. *Vet Center(ed)* is your voice...an opportunity to be heard!



Contents

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A Visit
from the Top
of the Pyramid

4



Citrus Heights
Vet Center
Grand Opening

6



Concord Vet Center
Grand Re-Opening

8



Mobile Vet Centers:
Road Warriors

10



Outreach to
GWOT Veterans

12



Military Sexual
Trauma:
A Unique Trauma
Experience

14



An Unexpected Visit from the Top of the Pyramid

Lance Frederick, L.M.F.T., Team Leader, San Francisco Vet Center

Every Veteran who walks through the doors of the San Francisco Vet Center is equally important, but when the Veteran is VA Secretary Shinseki, the normal question we ask “how can we help?” was instead a request by Secretary Shinseki asking us how he can further help combat

Veterans and their families.

As Team Leader for the SF Vet Center, I had a one-day notice of the Secretary’s visit. To host the leader of the entire VA system in our program was an honor, and has become a highlight of my VA career.

The Secretary’s visit was coordinated through Senator Barbara Boxer’s office, as a venue where they could dialogue with Veterans face-to-face, without staff briefings, without press corps, and without any hassle. As we all know, Vet Centers are the perfect environment for this type of discussion.

After the initial shock upon notification, there were many tasks to accomplish in short order. I worked closely with the Senator’s Senior Field Representative (SFR), who came over immediately to personally check the site. The SFR was very informative and helpful in deciding how to proceed.

On the day of the event, the Secretary arrived promptly at 2:00 p.m. Secretary Shinseki is a very polished speaker who is personable, open, and approachable. He graciously met with my Vet Center staff, asked many

insightful questions, and discussed his vision for the VA. He sincerely tried to answer every question raised by Veterans in attendance.

I made a brief introduction of the Secretary, but overall, there were no official briefings and there was little to do once the event actually began.

“WE SIMPLY presented ourselves as we are and let the beauty of our program speak FOR ITSELF.”



(Above) Secretary of Veterans Affairs Shinseki and Senator Barbara Boxer meet with Veterans at the San Francisco Vet Center. (Below) Lance Frederick hosts a group of Veterans in an open discussion with the Secretary.

We simply presented ourselves as we are and let the beauty of our program speak for itself. After a full two-hour visit, Secretary Shinseki shook hands individually with

each Veteran and gave them his personalized coin. I was very impressed with our leader and confident that he has the ability to make dramatic changes in the VA programs.



SECRETARY SHINSEKI'S GOALS



THE SECRETARY'S GOALS are to end homelessness for Veterans, to make a "SEAMLESS" PROGRAM WHERE military information flows easily following the Veteran into the VA system, and to create a state-of-the-art program to service the needs of Veterans.

Secretary Shinseki spoke of instituting a "SEAMLESS TRANSITION FROM THE MILITARY TO THE VA" for all Veterans.

The technology exists FOR A VETERAN'S MILITARY history to be delivered electronically once he or she leaves active duty. In other words, there is a "HANDOFF" FROM DOD TO VA which is already done for severely injured soldiers; however, it should be done for all military personnel.

As a Soldier himself, Secretary Shinseki feels the least we can do is appreciate what all Veterans have done for us. HIS "MISSION IN LIFE" IS A commitment to take care of Veterans.



We invited several Vets who had previously been homeless, several student OIF Veterans, and several Vets from Sword to Plowshares, a private non-profit based in San Francisco for 40 years.

A Veteran in the audience who served in Vietnam was present when Secretary Shinseki was wounded and loaded onto an awaiting helicopter. This Veteran reminded Secretary Shinseki of that day and presented him with a mug and a unit patch as a gift. Although the Secretary did not know the man personally, he was very gracious in accepting this small gift.

Secretary Shinseki WANTS TO "TAKE CARE OF THOSE YOUNG MEN" WHOM HE served with in Vietnam, and those who came before him, who trained him in his job, and those who will carry on the legacy.

The San Francisco Vet Center, led by Team Leader Lance Frederick, is located in the heart of downtown San Francisco, blocks from City Hall. The SF Vet Center maintains an excellent relationship with the community-based SF Outpatient Clinic and the SF VA Medical Facility to receive consultation from professionals at both locations and share referrals of patients to support the Veteran community.

Vet Center

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San Francisco



Citrus Heights Vet Center Grand Opening

Mike Miracle, M.S.W., Team Leader, Citrus Heights Vet Center

On November 10th (also known as the USMC birthday) 2010, the Citrus Heights Vet Center had its Grand Opening. The celebration was supported by many hours of staff and volunteer time devoted to providing a program befitting the Vet Center standard. Having presided over a similar program approximately 30 years ago in Fresno, CA, I had an idea of what was expected and the specifics needed. Although the primary objective of the Grand Opening remains the

same from the first Vet Center established, much has changed, and in a number of different ways we are a very different program.

In order to accurately reflect who we are today, we modified our program to reflect those differences, and to avoid relying too heavily on the past.

To provide perspective, I gave the attendees an overview of the Vet Center Program from our humble beginnings to the present. For me, one of the significant changes was the time it took from “step one” to opening the doors. In the early years, it took approximately six weeks. Using today’s model, it took over 12 months.

That, of course, was the downside; however, on the upside, we have better accommodations, unfettered line authority, a host of electronic gadgets (ostensibly to make our workload lighter) and fiscal stability; all things we did not have in the beginning. Other lesser changes: we had approximately 50 people in attendance in the



beginning, as compared to over 300 on Nov 10th, and a car show with Max Loffgren’s 55 POW Chevy and a California State award-winning custom motorcycle paying tribute to 9/11. However, in fairness, many of the cars were the same at both events, except today they are called “classics” and we take better care of them as they cost five times more than what we paid in the “good old days.”

To say that we had a full day would be an understatement, but as I look back on what the staff and volunteers

accomplished, I’m thoroughly amazed and extremely proud. Since that day, the staff has received numerous compliments on our accomplishments, thanks for genuinely making this an inviting and safe place, and several requests for a copy of our keynote speaker MG Brady’s speech.

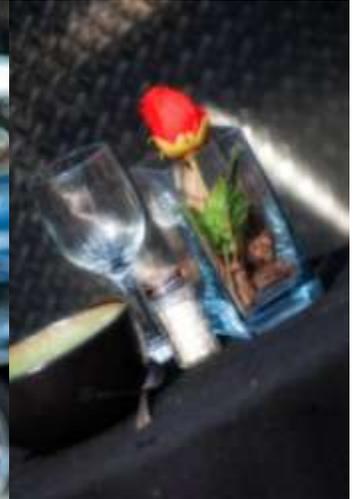
For those reasons and more, I can respectfully say that we lived up to the Vet Centers’ mission of providing Veterans and their families honor and respect for their service and sacrifice to our county.



(Above left; Below) Citrus Heights Team Leader Mike Miracle welcomes attendees to the Grand Opening. (Above right) Beale Air Force Base Honor Guard; California State award-winning Tribute to 9/11 custom motorcycle.



The Citrus Heights Vet Center Grand Opening was truly grand. The program began with my opening comments, presentation of the colors by the Beale AFB Honor Guard, the Pledge of Allegiance by Kathy Smith, President of District 17 Auxiliary, and the singing of the National Anthem by Jerri Meier. The invocation was conducted by Craig Sultana, District 17 Chaplain, with guest speakers Zachary Gavriel, Deputy Regional Manager, and Mr. Ted Puntillo, Deputy Secretary of the Veterans Services Division, California Dept of VA. After the keynote speaker, we were privileged to have Margie Stratfull, the wife of a Vietnam veteran, sing "God Bless America," and Ed Fedor, Chaplain, USAF provided the benediction to the program. The day was capped off by a wonderful tri-tip BBQ provided by three Vietnam Veterans (Art Payne, Manny Galvez and Mike Palaca and their wives), with very appropriate music from MC Entertainment – Cort and Margie Stratfull.

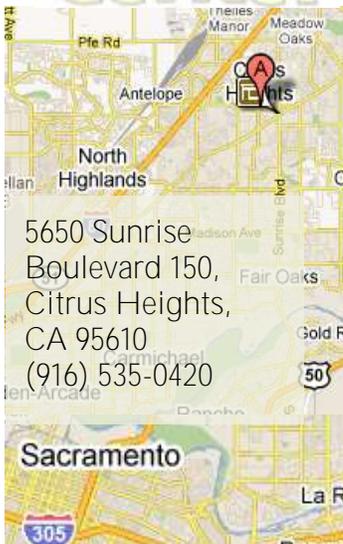


Attendees gather to acknowledge those who are missing from our midst in the celebrations we hold; we honor their sacrifice to our country.



(Above) Keynote speaker MG (Ret.) Patrick Brady, a Medal of Honor and Distinguished Service Cross recipient, gave a truly inspiring and heartfelt message honoring all combat Veterans. (Below) The Citrus Heights Vet Center staff, with Team Leader Mike Miracle, received genuine thanks for making an inviting and safe place for Veterans.

Vet Center



Concord Vet Center Grand Re-Opening

Denver Mills, M.A., Team Leader, Concord Vet Center

What distinguishes a Grand Opening from a Vet Center “Grand Re-Opening”?



The answer is numerous years of continuous networking and community building by the Concord Vet Center which supported the Grand Re-Opening celebration.

With little effort, we were able to provide our Veterans, their families, and the community a chance to celebrate and enjoy each others’ company. After 27 years, we moved to a larger and nicer spot, having made it through the myriad of challenges imposed by contracts, location, and real estate issues.

The City of Concord declared November 6th, 2010 as “Concord Vet Center Day.” The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors also gave us a plaque expressing their support.

Throughout the celebration, guests were treated to food supplied by local Veterans Organizations, who partnered with our new neighbor Sizzlers Restaurant. The Blue Star Moms provided great cookies and cakes for dessert. The Blue Star Moms also acted as our hostesses for the event and made certain all participants received a program and got a great seat.

Music included a pre-ceremony concert by the CA Air National Guard Band of the West Coast. Following were ceremonial marches by the Black Bear Pipe Band to bring the Concord Team to the front. Iain Morrison, the lead piper, served in Afghanistan and Iraq and has served in the USAF for 16 years. His rendition of “America the Beautiful” was immensely memorable. Distinguished visitors included clients who were POWs in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam.



(Above) Music was provided by the Black Bear Pipe Band, Strumming for Vets, and the California Air National Guard Band of the West Coast.

After the ceremony, we had a ribbon-cutting and an Open House. We served dinner to 350 people. The music for the evening was provided by Strumming for Vets. The

band is made up of Veterans in the Palo Alto/Menlo Park VA’s Homeless Veterans program and Blind Veterans program. A good time was had by all and we hope to see you at our new location.



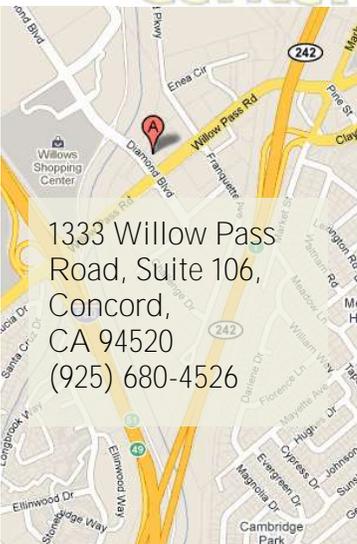


The event began with a car show, including some classics from the 1950s and 1960s. The star of the show was Max Loffgren's 55 Chevy POW/MIA race car. Max is a U.S. Army 1st CAV Vietnam Veteran and tours the United States showing the car at patriotic events and shows.



(Above) An ongoing highlight is a display of the Concord Vet Center Huey. This is a 1967 UH1-H that is shown in partnership with the local AMVETS post. Kids, some in full camouflage, enjoy the display. (Below) The Concord Team, with Team Leader Denver Mills, is looking forward to many prosperous years serving Veterans.

Vet Center



Road Warriors: Mobile Vet Centers

Chris Selby, Readjustment Counseling Technician, MVC

DAY 1 Tuesday

The start of the week is typical: nothing goes as planned. Guadalupe Sanchez, MVC Counselor, and I meet at the Fresno Vet Center to cover our itinerary for the next five days. The goal is to be on the road towards our first destination by 10:00AM. After returning calls and completing paperwork, we leave the Vet Center an hour behind schedule.

As we pull the “land yacht” that is MVC 841 from storage, we are approached by two regular occupants of the storage facility. Both are Veterans. Each comments that they saw us earlier at the Fresno Veterans Day Parade, and as we load our equipment, we invite them to attend next year.

One of the Veterans, who served in Iraq, pulls me aside to confide he has an appointment at the Vet Center the following week. I encourage him to keep his appointment, and as we finally hit the road, I note its two-and-half hours later than planned, but not a bad start considering our day.

We drive south on Highway 99 towards Bakersfield, turn east towards Mojave, and continue driving with the ultimate destination that night being Ridgecrest, CA.

At this point, most of you are probably wondering the same question that everyone asks us when we say we’ve been to Ridgecrest. “Where is Ridgecrest?”

You turn left at Mojave. And drive into the sunset. Our speed remains steady as we try outpace the setting sun, stopping once to stretch our legs and take advantage of the gorgeous desert view. The race for light has been lost by about 45 minutes as we drop from a pitch black desert into the town of Ridgecrest. For what had seemed like hours, it was the only light I could see.

The MVC gets parked two blocks from our destination hotel as we are left wondering about the promised “plenty of parking.” A friendly desk clerk guides us to the intended parking spot, which is a foot longer than the MVC. What remains of the evening is spent studying the route for the next day and having a late dinner.

DAY 2 Wednesday

While setting up for the event, I am happy to see familiar faces: Bakersfield Vet Center Counselor Joe Acosta, whom we have worked with a number of times, and Mike Jackson, Team Leader from the Antelope Valley Vet Center, who helped set up the very first outreach event that Team MVC 841 officially attended. Throughout the day we visit with various Veterans, who schedule us between their sessions at the EOC, which is focused on employment help.



We explain to the Veterans the benefits available to them and sign up those who express interest in services.

As the event ends we start the teardown. What is normally a 10-minute process takes 90 minutes on this occasion due to Veterans arriving throughout the process. With each Veteran, we stop to answer their questions and help them.

Belatedly, we hit the road for tomorrow’s event in Sacramento, CA. The ride through the desert is a little frustrating this time with the setting sun in our eyes most of the way.

DAY 3 Thursday

We head to Sacramento City College, meeting Albert Revives, Sacramento Outreach Counselor, along the way. I do the usual dance that seems common when trying to fit a 38-foot vehicle on a college campus.

After a couple of minutes placing the vehicle, we are a “GO” to help Sacramento City College and their Veterans celebrate the opening of a permanent campus Veterans Resource Center. We give information as well as tours of the MVC. Throughout the evening, I laugh at the most common question we get when people come aboard the vehicle. “You sleep onboard?”

Thankfully no, because at this point it has been a long day, and as much as I love the MVC I have never looked at any office thinking it would be nice to sleep there.



DAY 4 Friday

As we head to the small town of San Andreas located in California's Gold Country, we debate on the advice we were given concerning the best route to travel. We decide to forgo the advice and use the mountain highway as it is the most direct route.



Redefining Veterans Roadways to Recovery



The route is very scenic and ends up being one of the most beautiful routes we've taken yet. The only excitement occurs when pulling in to refuel; it's not the height clearance that's an issue this time, although it was close with only four inches to spare, but the issue is how to back out of the station. Two of the exits are so steep the overhang would slap a high-five with the asphalt. Upon looking at the three entrances and exits out of the station, we

realize that the only one suitable is the one we used to enter. We back out the same way we came in.

We pull into the tiny VFW in San Andreas, figure out the best way to position ourselves, and set up for the event. Guadalupe has a number of appointments and I take care of answering questions for Veterans throughout the day. We wrap up for the evening and a joke I made earlier comes back to haunt me. The joke is we travel so much that if we ever got bed bugs we wouldn't know from where. I proceed

to check into the only hotel room that I can honestly say I would definitely know the source. I sleep in my clothes.

DAY 5 Saturday

We wake up early then proceed to set up shop. The day starts well as we mingle with the local VFW members at a breakfast that happens to also have state VFW representatives attending. Questions are answered and tours given as we fall into our routine. We pop chocks at two and drive

back in the rain to Fresno. We finally arrive and place the MVC in storage. As we reminisce about the week, we hope the Veterans we've seen follow through with their Vet Centers for support. It is now time to retreat for the weekend, ready to return next week and ride the roads again.



Christopher Selby, Readjustment Counseling Technician for the Fresno Vet Center, shares his thoughts and humor as he and Guadalupe Sanchez, M.S.W., Mobile Vet Center Counselor, journey on the road to support Veterans.



Outreach to Global War On Terror (GWOT) Veterans

A Day in the Life: Tips and Techniques to Reach Veterans from Vet Center Outreach Coordinators



Aaron Mattia, Concord Vet Center



As the GWOT Outreach Coordinator, I have to stay flexible with my schedule so I can take advantage of any opportunity on any given day. I may have an outreach event at a US Army Reserve or National Guard unit, speak at a local college about VA benefits,

and in-between meet with my supervisor or consult with the staff clinicians on outreach events they would like their clients to attend.

If I'm not actively participating in any event, I try maintain my correspondence with clients and staff, letting them know about events and collaborating with outreach ideas. I might also be doing research on materials that need to be ordered, such as promotional material with

Vet Center branding, or brochures that explain the Vet Center and its mission to potential clients. When I'm at the Vet Center, I also need to be prepared to handle walk-in clients with questions about benefits or services or to answer the phone when the front desk needs assistance.

In general, my days tend to be varied and interesting, and always educational. One note: I try every day to find time to sit and meditate. If I'm able to relax for a minute, often



Dustin Noll, Peninsula Vet Center



I began my job as a Readjustment Counseling Technician in October 2010. Since then it has been a whirlwind of learning, networking, and establishing

footholds in the community. When trying to connect with Veterans, I have come to realize what works and what doesn't. My advice is based primarily upon working at universities and junior colleges as well as community events and organizations.

Treat each Veteran with universal respect. Making the effort to listen and understand their unique situation in life is crucial.

Try be specific to the Veteran audience you are addressing. At the same time inform them of the additional resources offered if they are interested.

Briefly share personal military experiences. Any communication barriers ease immediately when I comment on past combat experiences. This is an obvious tip, but easily forgotten when speaking to a large group of Veterans on a one-after-another basis.

Share personal experiences with the Vet Centers and the VA, if possible. I've had a positive experience which leads me to believe others can as well.

Remember, not everyone, unfortunately, is happy to see a Vet Center or VA presence. This may be the result of numerous reasons beyond comprehension at the time. Smile, take that into consideration, and just be willing to help regardless.

solutions to problems present themselves or new outreach ideas appear that prompt my attention. If I can't deal with the ideas immediately, I write them down for future reference then refer to them when I have a free moment.

Always have a stack of your business cards on you. You never know when you will run into a collaboration contact or a potential client.

Know VA benefits and services as much as possible. In my daily life, aside from the Vet Center, I can't tell you how many people see me wearing my Vet Center hat or shirt and ask me a VA benefits question for themselves or someone they know.

Coordinate and collaborate with your local colleges.

A lot of schools now have staff whose job it is to interact with the student Veterans on campus. Work with them to help support student Veterans.

Know how to search the internet. Look for online resources. Military One-Source and other websites are great places to find materials to support your outreach mission.

Don't be afraid to ask questions of your supervisor or Vet Center staff. They are great resources for ideas and ways to make things happen.

“NO DAY IS typical at a VET CENTER.”

Aaron Mattia

One last comment, regarding my experience thus far in outreach: I often am regarded as an outside “salesman” as a Veteran Outreach Coordinator. For example, if I approach a community police station, identify myself, and then inquire if there are Veterans on the workforce, I am regarded with suspicion. This fact underlines the lack of awareness on how Vet Centers support the community. While not a criticism on my part, it is as much a realization of current conditions regarding Veteran care and the information disseminated to the community.

Emphasize the role of Vet Centers. Remember to tell combat Veterans that the Vet Center not only provides readjustment counseling services, but we are a connecting bridge between VA Medical Clinics, County Veterans Services Offices (CVSO), EDD, colleges, and universities.

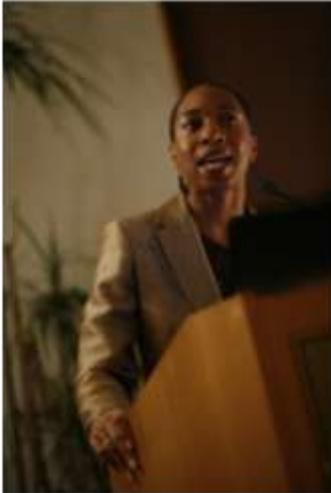
Partnering for referrals can help Veterans achieve their needs and goals. Although the Vet Center is a primary resource for Veterans, many other organizations support Veterans. As an Outreach Coordinator, you can inform your audience that the Vet Center also coordinates with numerous Veteran friendly organizations, such as the VFW, American Legion, and Swords to Plowshares.



Li Huang,
San Francisco Vet Center

MST: a Unique Trauma experience

Miatta R. Snetter, Psy. D., Los Angeles Vet Center



Although various military trauma experiences can be devastating and difficult to “recover” from (recovery signifying clients reaching their individually set therapy goals, etc.), military sexual trauma (MST) frequently presents as a uniquely different military-related trauma. For many Veterans, males and females alike, enlisting into the armed forces is a great moment of pride, honor, and commitment to serve their Nation. They enter with pre-existing desires to complete a life of service, personal and professional growth, career advancement, and opportunity; many frequently hold plans of a life-long career ending in retirement.



Once in the military, they then accept the military culture and “esprit de corps” which embraces unity amongst troops, duty to protect, trust and allegiance to authority, and a determined commitment to the “group’s mission.” This can naturally engender a very intimate and familial acceptance of other Soldiers, individuals that under ordinary civilian conditions, they would not so freely trust.

“THE SOLDIER, whether male or female, is left feeling their most trusted ally has violated their every sense OF SAFETY.”

In fact, the Soldiers you defend, the same ones with whom you live, work, eat, and sleep can become an integral and personal part of one’s life; they become “family.” For this reason, sexual assault within this context tends to feel more devastating, shocking, and confusing; with

intense and lasting feelings of betrayal. The Soldier, whether male or female, is left feeling their most trusted ally has violated their every sense of safety. Complicate this with the inherent challenges of reporting other Soldiers, particularly well-liked or higher ranking officers, feelings of guilt, shame, blame, and humiliation can make reporting MST terrifying and risky.



These and numerous other factors create a platform for serious and long-standing mental health problems. Additionally, studies have found that person-against-person traumas, such as MST, worsen the severity and duration of mental health problems.

Military sexual trauma represents an intentional, deliberate, and pre-meditated thought of harm, leaving Veterans feeling emotionally “trapped,” chronically depressed, anxious, and devoid of “hope” years after the assault.

With feelings of hopelessness come increased risk for more severe behavioral problems and suicidal threats, creating increasingly unique challenges for therapy. The constellation of clinical symptoms resulting from MST, as well as their impact on relationships, career goals, self-perception, suicide risk, quality of life and even physical illness can frequently leave survivors

feeling alone and different from combat Soldiers’ trauma. Therefore, it is especially necessary to help Veterans with a history of MST to feel they will not be judged when they finally come in to share their trauma.

In many cases, the greatest fear of the Veteran is that others, even their mental health professional, will find them somehow at fault for the trauma. This would then confirm their greatest fear, which is “It must be something I did that caused me to be assaulted. It happened to me, so it must be my fault.” Therefore, clients’ relationship with their “helper,” is keenly important to their overall therapy success.



MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA

Miatta R. Snetter, Psy. D., Los Angeles Vet Center

In creating a rapport and alliance, and ultimately making effective clinical progress, here are ten key concepts to keep in mind that will hopefully help when working with a Veteran with Military Sexual Trauma.

1

Clearly communicate your intentions for the assessment with your client, which will help ease their anxiety and give them a sense that this is a two-way “information gathering” process.

2

Realize your client is observing you and your non-verbal communication, just as you are observing them and their non-verbal communication. They are primarily looking for an environment that feels safe to them, and that starts from the moment you make an introduction.

3

“Normalizing” is a very important tool to alleviate anxiety about the symptoms your client may experience. (Example: “What you’re experiencing is actually pretty common after such an assault. It doesn’t mean you’re going crazy; instead, hyper-vigilance is an uncomfortable, but pretty ‘adaptive’ attempt to regain a sense of safety...”).

4

Ask open-ended questions to get the fullness of certain responses; use close-ended questions to address quicker comments. These will help save time with a client who comes in “ready to tell their full story.” (A good cathartic experience is great, but not when you are trying to complete the assessment intake.)

5

Allow your client to be “right,” even when they appear to be “wrong.” (Example: Long-standing, entrenched beliefs like, “This IS my fault,” “I’m worthless,” and “I’m weak,” cannot be rationally debated.) Generally, clients intellectually understand that it wasn’t their fault. However, because these beliefs are so deeply internalized, it requires the therapeutic process, and your patient help, to dislodge these cognitive distortions. Instead, listen for opportunities for them to question their own incorrect beliefs; even when it elicits strong emotions from your client. (Example: “It’s got to feel pretty terrible to believe it’s been your fault all these years...”).

6

Resist your own need to “make your client feel better” too quickly. The therapy process will take time (which we instinctively know, but...). This will allow you to empathically understand their internal experience and prevent you from “rushing” their process.

7

Occasionally, we should observe our own anxiety around certain disclosures or emotions; otherwise, this may hinder your client’s process.

8

One of the most useful tools you can “give” your client is the sense that you “get them” (you can never “understand,” but you can “get” them) and that they “make sense” to you. It is very reassuring for clients to hear their “helper” demonstrate their understanding by repeating their experience back to them. (Example: “It sounds like you’re saying that for a long while you blamed and punished yourself for being raped, because you weren’t able to prevent it...”).

9

Statements of clarification that demonstrate your interest in them (as a person and human being) make a huge difference in maintaining rapport and a positive therapeutic alliance; these can help mend “mistakes” that you, as a clinician, will inevitably make. (Example: “Now, help me understand this better...” “Help me out a bit, because I think I may be missing something...” “Help me understand what that meant to you...” and “I think I may be missing something; can you help me with this...?”).

10

The single most important “gift” you can give your client is HOPE. Sometimes, you may be the only carrier of hope; if you convey it, it may be what they need most.

Combat Veteran?



**Vet Centers are your source of support.
We are a part of your community...**

**Vet Center locations are near you,
close to home and work.
Our goal is to ensure you get support
in a safe and comfortable environment.**



Born of rebellion...

**Vet Centers were
begun by Vietnam Veterans
to support the unique
needs of combat Veterans.
At a Vet Center, you can find
camaraderie and become
a part of the legacy.**



Vet Centers answer the phone...

**We take your calls or you can walk in.
We are ready to support you and your family.
You served, you deserve.**