



# LOWELL Vet Center

# Lowell Vet Center Outreach Specialist



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# Vet Center Mission

We are the people in the VA who welcome home war Veterans with honor by providing readjustment counseling in a caring manner. Vet Centers understand and appreciate Veterans war experiences while assisting them and their family members toward a successful post-war adjustment in or near their community.

# Briefing Objective

To provide situational awareness and information relative to the Vet Center system, and to briefly explain the readjustment process as it pertains to Veterans and their family members post-deployment.

# Vet Center History

- Established by Congress in 1979.
- Originally stood-up for Vietnam Veterans.
- Service now extended to all war zone vets and sexual harassment/assault victims of any era.
- Goal is to provide a broad range of counseling, outreach and referral services, to help vets make a satisfying post-war readjustment to civilian life.

# READJUSTMENT COUNSELING SERVICES

- Individual counseling
  - Group counseling
- Marital and family counseling
  - Bereavement counseling
    - Medical referrals
  - Assistance in applying for VA Benefits
- Employment counseling, guidance and referral
  - Alcohol/Drug assessments and referral or counseling
  - Sexual trauma counseling & referral

# Vet Center Locations

MA: Boston

Brockton

Lowell

New Bedford

Springfield

Worcester

Hyannis

NH: Berlin

Manchester

VT: South Burlington

White River Junction

ME: Bangor, Sanford, Caribou

Portland and Lewiston

RI: Providence

CT:

Danbury & New Haven

Hartford & Norwich

# Readjustment



Welcome Home



# Readjustment

Readjustment is a stressful situation and stress is normal. The readjustment process is difficult, and issues can manifest themselves in any one or all of the following ways:

- Mental & Physical Changes
- Support System Change
- Mood adjustment “Being Tough Vs. Feeling”

# Some veterans may experience...

Marriage, relationship problems	Medical issues	Financial hardships
Endless questions from family and friends	Guilt, shame, anger	Lack of structure
Feelings of isolation	Nightmares, sleeplessness	Lack of motivation, forgetfulness

# Barriers to Seeking Help

- Stigma
- Pride (trained to be tough!)
- Denial
- Fear



-- Source: the *New England Journal of Medicine* 1 July 2004.

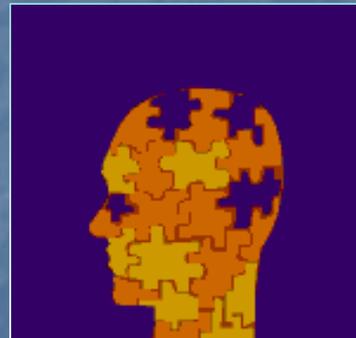
Some of the Ways Vet  
Centers Help and Support  
Veterans struggling with  
readjustment

# Clinical Interventions

- Individual Treatment
- Group Treatment
  - Activities
  - Yoga
  - Anger Management
  - Warzone specific
  - Writing workshop
  - "Walk off the War" Hiking

# Vet Center for Families

- Individual counseling
- Couples Counseling
- Family Counseling
- Spouse Support Groups



# Top 10 Reasons for Veterans to go to a Vet Center

1. Meet and socialize with other veterans
2. We are located in the community, not in a hospital
3. 35 years experience helping war zone veterans/families
4. 72% of staff are veterans and 40% are war zone veterans (did not verify)
5. All staff speak military
6. We can help first and then worry about paperwork
7. We can help with all readjustment issues
8. We can help negotiate the VA and state veterans system
9. Everything discussed is confidential
10. There is no cost to the veteran (not even co-pay)

# Questions