

Deployment 101

Law Enforcement and Military
Interface
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Veterans, Combat Veterans, And Law Enforcement

Although the focus of presentation will be on most recent veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan, couple of stats to keep in mind:

- According to 1985 readjustment study of Vietnam Veterans, 11% had been convicted of a felony and 34.3% had been arrested for a misdemeanor
- In 1998, over 225,000 veterans were in prison or in jail, more than half of those for violent offenses. Of those about 20% had served in

Veterans, Combat Veterans, And Law Enforcement

- In a 1952 article, it was noted that between 1946 and 1949, 40% of all new admissions to 11 Midwestern prisons were World War II veterans.
- Studies have indicated that combat exposure has been associated with higher rates of arrests and convictions in past conflicts.
- Research is still being gathered about the numbers of returning veterans who come in contact with law enforcement

TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES

What do we know about Exposure to Combat?

TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES

"No one comes away from war unscathed"

-Dr. Louis French

"No one crosses a river without getting wet,
no one goes to war
without being changed"

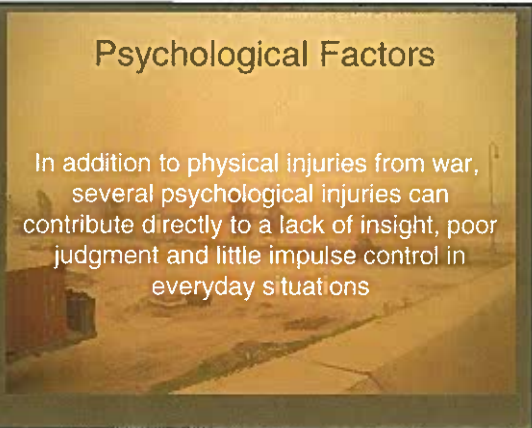
-SGT Patrick Campbell

Source: Remsburg, 2008.



Psychological Factors

In addition to physical injuries from war,
several psychological injuries can
contribute directly to a lack of insight, poor
judgment and little impulse control in
everyday situations



Psychological Factors

- 1) Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- 2) Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- 3) Major Depression and Anxiety Disorders
- 4) Substance misuse or abuse

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

- ✓ Approximately 20-35% of returning service members will experience symptoms of PTSD post discharge from military
- ✓ Symptoms include re-experiencing trauma, avoidance, and increased arousal.
- ✓ Most effective method of treatment is evidence based psychotherapy (prolonged exposure, cognitive processing therapy)

Traumatic Brain Injury

- ✓ Prevalence of TBI around 17%
- ✓ TBI symptoms include problems with processing (auditory, cognitive) memory problems, sustained attention problems, difficulty with impaired executive decision making, judgment and problem solving.
- ✓ Most effective treatment for TBI involves a variety of methods: speech therapy, cognitive retraining, physical therapy, pain management

Percentage seeking treatment

- ✓ As of Feb 29, 2012, of the 1,478,370 Iraq and Afghanistan Combat vets to leave Active duty, 54% had utilized the VA at least once
- ✓ The most common condition treated was muscular skeletal complaints, with mental health disorders being second.
- ✓ Of the mental health disorders diagnosed, the majority were PTSD followed by depression.

Substance abuse issues

- ✓ 39.2% had estimated lifetime prevalence of alcohol abuse or dependence.
- ✓ 11.2% currently for alcohol abuse or dependence.
- ✓ 5.7% had estimated lifetime prevalence of drug abuse or dependence.
- ✓ 1.8% currently for drug abuse or dependence.

A Word About Anger

- Most commonly reported symptom complaint outside of sleep and pain issues
- Many returning veterans have spent a long time expressing anger while overseas, towards the enemy, at the separation from home, the frustrations of the mission and towards command
- "Anger is as much a part of war as the weapons and the armor, too often warriors bring home a rage that has lost its targets." Nancy Sherman, *Stoic Warriors*
- Some service members explode instantly, some allow the anger to simmer until an eruption occurs.



Skill Sets for Combat

Many of the skill sets needed for combat do not work in the civilian world

Skill Sets for Combat

- Hyper vigilance, sense of always being "on"
- Selfish mentality focused on survival
- Tendency to vilify particular people or populations
- Sense of unlimited power and ability to make demands
- Offensive and defensive driving
- Sleep deprivation and chronic fatig

Skill Sets for Combat

- Expected immediate response to orders without question.
- Providing information only on an as needed basis, "operational security"
- Carrying weapons 24/7
- Emotional Numbing
- Increased anger to get the job, the mission accomplished

Law Enforcement and Veterans

So what makes interactions between Law Enforcement and Combat Veterans so unique?

Law Enforcement and Veterans

Often it is a veteran's first interaction
With law enforcement that gets them to
Acknowledge that they might indeed have
A problem.

Law Enforcement and Veterans

Often the law enforcement officer
And the veteran have something in common:

A Sense of Duty, Honor and Service
To Country

Critical Incidents involving Law Enforcement and Veterans

- Suicidal individuals
- Domestic Violence
- Homicides followed by suicides
- Bank Robberies
- Barricaded Individuals
- Illegal Substance involvement
- Traffic incidents

Critical Incidents involving Law Enforcement and Veterans

- Studies show that individuals with PTSD are 2-3% more likely to commit intimate partner violence than those without PTSD.
- A 2009 examination of the FBI's national Hostage and Barricaded Database system found that 6% of all such incidents nationwide involved veterans or active duty service members.

Critical Incidents involving Law Enforcement and Veterans

What make the interactions prone to problems?

Potential Issues in interaction with law enforcement

- Cynicism and distrust of government and social institutions
- Tendency to react to stressful situations with survival tactics
- Hypersensitivity to justice and injustice
- Difficulty with authority figures.

Source: FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, Police Negotiations with War Veterans, July 2011.

Combat Skill Sets in Civilian Environment

- Hyper vigilance can become physically and emotionally exhausting
- Selfish survival mentality can put others at risk
- Unlimited power and ability to make demands may not translate well to conflict situations
- Vilifying certain populations may lead to increased violence against or acceptance of violence against those populations

Combat Skill Sets in Civilian Environment

- Offensive and Defensive driving can put others and self at risk
- Sleep deprivation and chronic fatigue impact decision making ability
- Surrendering weapons can increase insecurity and threaten identity of service member
- Increased domestic violence issues can arise from perception that instructions aren't being followed, or obeyed.

Combat Skill Sets in Civilian Environment

- Emotional Numbing can lead to increased isolation at home
- Increased anger can distance service member from social supports- family, friends, community

Tips for interaction with combat veterans

- ❑ Don't make assumptions regarding service ("females not in combat", "that MOS was in the green zone", "each war is basically the same others")
- ❑ Leave communication open and express willingness to listen
- ❑ Utilize active listening skills
- ❑ Avoid labels ("he's just a crazy veteran")
- ❑ Many veterans want to maintain sense of duty, honor

Tips for interaction with combat Veterans

- Often one of the greatest fears of service members is to appear weak or cowardly
- Sometimes by relating to them as equals or servants of the public good, police officers may have better chance to gain trust
- Officers can understand the concepts of honor, bravery, and duty.

Tips for interaction with combat Veterans

- Utilize active listening skills like:
 - ~mirroring: "so you said...(use a direct quote)"
 - ~paraphrasing: "so are you trying to say..."
 - ~labeling emotions: "I hear you are angry"
- If possible, allow the veteran to vent and de-escalate, thereby lowering the tension of the situation

Source: FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, Police Negotiations with War Veterans, July 2011.

Resources to assist

- Many counties are setting up Veteran only courts in order to get veterans into treatment earlier



Department of Defense and VA are partnering to provide services to service members and veterans before, after and during deployment

Local community organizations have joined in effort to treat veterans and service members in their community
-Military One Source :1-800-342-9647

Resources

- 1) D. Dier, J. B. McCarthy, and M. Asken "Police Negotiation with War Veterans: Seeing through the residual fog of war" July 2001.
- 2) L. Rensberg "Gays back from the war: What problems do they pose?" March 12, 2008
- 3) Department of Defense Numbers of Traumatic Brain Injury 2000-2012.
- 4) VA Healthcare Utilization by Recent Veterans March 31, 2012
- 5) N. Sherman *Stoic Warriors: The ancient philosophy behind the military mind.* 2005.



Resources

- 6) "Returning Home from Iraq and Afghanistan: Preliminary Assessment of readjustment needs of veterans, service members and their families." National Academy of Sciences 2010.
- 7) G. Gambill "Veterans and Law Enforcement: A new Deal aimed at preventing crime?" 2009.