

Self-Care Checklist

- Don't take too big a course load initially. Ease into it, try not to overwhelm yourself
- Stay focused on class materials and lectures – take notes to help you stay focused
- Get involved in school activities as a way to break down barriers between you and your classmates
- Take advantage of all school services available to you including academic assistance and therapy services
- Talk to Veterans Representative in your school to utilize your veterans benefits
- Limit exposure to traumatic information (including watching news, reading paper, etc.)
- Talk with peers or professional – try to accept that others may not agree with you or understand your service in the military
- Take care of physical needs - Get plenty of sleep and rest, Eat a good diet – 3 meals a day, Get exercise (Physical exercise is great in reducing stress)
- Decrease unhealthy behaviors such as alcohol, nicotine or illegal substances
- Have fun! Engage in healthy, pleasurable activities
- Focus outside of yourself and give back to the community (Volunteer work, etc.)
- Spiritual fulfillment through prayer, meditation, fellowship, etc.
- Follow a daily schedule to help yourself stay organized
- Set reasonable boundaries for yourself
- Learn to recognize the physical and emotional signs and symptoms of stress and the behaviors associated with your reaction to things that happen in ordinary life situations
- Visit the Vet Center!

“Keeping the Promise”



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VET CENTER SERVICES
ARE PROVIDED AT NO
COST TO THE VETERAN
OR FAMILY

Confidentiality **And Privacy**

Vet Center Staff respect the privacy of all veterans. We hold in the strictest confidence all information disclosed in the counseling process. No information will be released to any person or agency without written consent from the client, except in circumstances averting a crisis.

From Soldier to Student

Making the Transition



*Tips for the returning Iraq and
Afghanistan Veterans as
they transition from the battlefield to
the home front*

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“He who did well in war, earns the right to be doing well in peace.”

Robert Browning

Homecoming is a process, not an event. Whether returning from active combat or Homeland Security missions, the return to a college atmosphere from active duty is almost always a severe shock to the system.

It may feel strange to return to school to find that others are going through their everyday motions, while you just returned from a life-altering experience. Relationships change quickly and many old friends may have graduated or moved on when you return.

Readjustment means overcoming obstacles and making small, but important changes. A vital change for the returning veteran is allowing yourself to relax and be more patient with those around you.

Each individual will experience their own obstacles. Some of these may include:

- Combat Stress reactions (see explanation)
- Boredom – missing the experience of thrill or adrenaline that is not part of the college experience
- Having low frustration, tolerance or patience – rules may seem meaningless, simple questions and comments may cause unexpected reactions
- Frustration over missed or lost time due to length of deployment

- Difficulty concentrating – reoccurring thoughts of war experiences or anxiety around finding meaning in activities
- High alertness or hypervigilance - difficulty relaxing or finding safety in your current environment
- Feeling out of place or having difficulty developing new relationships – you may find it very hard to feel close to others or connect with people who have not gone through the same experiences as you
- Redeployment anxiety – you may think ‘What’s the use? I am just going to be deployed again!’

What does the Vet Center Offer?

Readjustment Counseling Services

- * Individual counseling
- * Group counseling
- * Marital & family counseling
- * Bereavement counseling
- * Medical referrals
- * Assistance in applying for VA Benefits
 - * Employment counseling, guidance and referral
 - * Alcohol/Drug assessments
- * Information and referral to community resources
- * Sexual trauma counseling & referral
 - * Community education

Combat Stress

Combat Stress is a normal set of reactions to a trauma such as war, which could be experienced by almost anyone. With the passage of time or when feelings or issues related to the trauma are not dealt with, it can result in problems readjusting to community life. A delayed stress reaction may surface after many years and include some or all of the following problems:

- Anger, irritability, and rage
- Feeling nervous
- Depression
- Difficulty trusting others
- Feeling guilt over acts committed or witnessed, the failure to prevent certain events, or merely having survived while others did not.
- Hyperalertness and startle reactions
- Feeling grief or sadness
- Having thoughts and memories that will not go away
- Isolation and alienation from others
- Loss of interest in pleasurable activities
- Low tolerance to stress
- Problems with authority
- Problems feeling good about one self
- Nightmares
- Substance abuse
- Trouble sleeping
- Anxiety
- Paranoia