

The Basics and Beyond: A Training Curriculum for Supporting Our Military and Veteran Communities

Descriptive Index

Module 1- Military 101- The Basics

Chapter 1: Our US Military and Branches of Service

Chapter 2: Our US Military- Who Serves

Chapter 3: Our US Military- Conflicts Since 1940

For some, especially for those who have served or are part of a military family, the information presented in Chapters 1-3 of this training will be basic and familiar. For many, especially civilians with no direct ties to our US Military or direct interest in military life and history, the information presented in Chapters 1-3 may be new and presented in a detail not previously encountered.

Although one does not have to be an expert on all of the details that follow in Module 1, a basic understand of our US Military is the first step in becoming culturally aware. This provides a basic building block for those who have not served to use as a frame of reference and understanding when interacting with service members, veterans, and military families in our community and within organizations. This is a vital step in honoring the lives and experiences of those who have been drafted or have volunteered to carry the burden of our National defense.

Module 2- Relational Healing

Chapter 4: Talk the Talk

Chapter 5: Walk the Walk

Chapter 6: Group Facilitation 101

You may have heard of a concept known as the Veteran-Civilian Divide. The term refers to a loss of connection between the military experience, service, and citizenship in America. American civilians at all levels of society and government are more and more disconnected from the sacrifices and experiences of service members, veterans, and their families. This module discusses how we can listen to and talk with veterans in a way that promotes understanding and connection.

Knowing your audience, becoming familiar with basic military vocabulary, thinking about what being culturally competent demands of us, and practicing active listening all go a long way towards traversing this divide. For practitioners working in a group setting, the basics of group work and how it relates to work with veterans is included.

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Module 3- Service

Chapter 7: Implications of Service

Chapter 8: The Cost of War

Chapter 9: Warrior and Civilian Identities

There are many reasons why people join the military, and acknowledging a diversity of experiences is key to successful work with service members, veterans and their families. This module delves deeper into military cultural competency and discusses warrior identity formation, acculturation, as well as the physical, emotional, and psychological effects of military service. Special attention is paid to veteran's and their families' experience of sacrifice, duty, and loss. Take an in-depth look at the cycle of miscommunication that defines some veteran's post-deployment and reintegration and how to successfully intervene. Discuss a veteran's experience of choosing between warrior and civilian identities and searching for a "new normal."

Module 4- Coming Home

Chapter 10: Evolution of a Warrior

Chapter 11: The Return

Chapter 12: Impact from Current Events

The purpose of this module is to provide an in-depth look at the redeployment and reintegration experience of service members, veterans, and their families. This process can be referred to as a "rapid rebirth" as warriors become veterans and civilians, attempting to redefine their identity and role accordingly. Tips to help service members, veterans and their families during this process are provided, along with common physical, emotional, and psychological challenges faced during the transition. Explore the role that moral questioning, shifting self-perception, redefining home and community, and current events play for the veteran. Finally, discuss how moving from *actor* to *observer* shapes a veteran's post-military experience.

Module 5- Climbing the Mountain- Challenges

Chapter 13: Visible and Invisible Wounds

Chapter 14: Red Flags

Chapter 15: Exit Strategy

As healthcare providers, employers, or colleagues it is important for us to know the challenges faced by military members, veterans, and their families. Knowledge on these topics create better service providers, advocates, and friends and could mean saving someone's life. This module begins with an overview of the role that stigma and discrimination play in a veteran's experience, especially as it relates to seeking mental

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health care. Major subjects include Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Military Sexual Trauma, moral injury, and particular challenges faced by minority veteran populations. More general risk factors such as personal stagnation, navigating bureaucracy, and financial hardship are included. Conclude with an analysis of healthy processes for coping with and overcoming hardship.

Module 6- Hope for Tomorrow

Chapter 16: Resources and Support

Chapter 17: Prevention Strategies

Chapter 18: Building Resilience

The final module of this curriculum is based in a strengths perspective and the belief that all military members, veterans, and their families can build resilience and successfully transition into the civilian world. An emphasis is placed on communities and the people within them as the foundational pillars to address any unexpected crisis. Tips are provided for helping veterans navigate the maze of support services available to them, practicing simple stress relief activities, and staying ahead of the curve when anticipating the needs of veterans and their families. Finally, discuss how to improve the quality and effectiveness of services for veterans and their families at your agency or organization.