

The Military as a Culture



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Veterans experience culture shock that includes:

- ▶ Changes in status
- ▶ Disorientation
- ▶ A search for identity



Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) veterans are suffering from:

- ▶ Injuries from Improvised Explosive Devices (IED)
- ▶ Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) the most severe and common mental health condition
- ▶ Self-medication with alcohol or drugs

Identifying Military Culture: Challenges for Nurses

- ▶ No standard ethnicity
- ▶ No standard language
- ▶ No standard race
- ▶ Resistance to verbalize behavior health issues

Mental Health Disorders of Veterans involve the following:

- ▶ Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- ▶ Mood Disturbances
- ▶ Anxieties
- ▶ Co-morbid substance abuse



Veterans are Devasted by PTSD Symptoms: Attempt to Reduce Symptoms:

- ▶ Self-medicate with alcohol or drugs
- ▶ Experience life-long alcohol abuse disorder
- ▶ Increased rates of family and marital issues

Military Culture is comprised of the following:

- ▶ Traditions
- ▶ Values
- ▶ Norms
- ▶ Perceptions



Common Military Characteristics of Various Divisions:

- ▶ Courage
- ▶ Honor
- ▶ Integrity
- ▶ Loyalty
- ▶ Commitment

Honesty
Self-Control
Excellence
Responsibility
Courteous
Respect

Nurses Understanding of Military Culture:

- ▶ Potential to recognize mental illness and disability
- ▶ Provide a critical bridge between veterans and mental health care
- ▶ Assist veterans in coping with PTSD
- ▶ Decreasing veterans suicide rate

Conclusion:

- ▶ Mental health need to distinguish service members from the underlying political issues
- ▶ The U.S. government provides the direct orders
- ▶ Service members fight for peace, exercise restraint, and obey the chain of command

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Questions?

