



## Veteran-to-Veteran Helpful Suggestions

- Get in touch with your spirituality**
- Get your VA card upon exiting from the military**
  - Learn about your benefits
    - Education
    - Home loans
    - Medical care
    - Counseling services
- Carry your VA registration card and a photo identification card**
- Keep up with your medical appointments**
- Keep copies of your medical reports**
  - Give copies to a trusted friend
- If you can't stop doing drugs or alcohol, do it until you are over the need to do it – then quit for good**
- You are strong enough to quit bad habits**
- Sober up**
  - You can't think, if you can't think
  - Realize you are sick
- Privately check your behavior**
  - The VA has a free PTS cell phone "App" to help you
- Listen to the older veterans that have a quality of life you desire**
  - They already have been through our same stuff and have good ideas
- Sometimes you have to let a veteran crash**
  - Once they finally hit bottom, maybe they will want to change their behavior
- Find someone you can trust and talk to them**

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- ❑ **A combat veteran is more likely to talk to another combat veteran**
- ❑ **Anger management training can be worthwhile**
- ❑ **It's up to you to become 100% successful — it's not someone else's responsibility**
  - Blaming others gives away control of your life to the one you are blaming
- ❑ **You create what happens to you**
- ❑ **Keep in good physical and mental shape**
- ❑ **It's okay to not want to relive war trauma**
  - However that feeling does not excuse you from striving to live a good life  
Get help when you need it
- ❑ **Figure out how to work with your particular kind of PTS**
  - Learn new techniques
  - You are used to hard work—yes, this is hard work
  - You completed your missions in the service—realize that your new mission is to complete yourself
  - Find a coach or attend counseling sessions
  - Learn to recognize the symptoms and manage them
- ❑ **Know that the VA is quick to judge, slow to listen**
- ❑ **Find a good VA Case Worker**
- ❑ **If you see your brother/sister fighting a PTS episode, stay with them until it passes**
- ❑ **Pick up where you left off now that you are home**
  - Return to your music
  - Return to your drawing
  - Return to playing sports
  - Return to your hobbies
  - Return to God
  - Return to your favorite activities
  - Return to....
- ❑ **The paperwork may be a nightmare, but like before, get the job done and go have fun**
- ❑ **There are other veterans who have been where you are now**
  - The healthy ones can help

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- ❑ **You were a hero and successful during your service to the United States and, you can be equally important in your civilian life**
  - Yes it's hard, but you already have endured far worse
  - Do that hard step for yourself
  
- ❑ **Learn self-control**
  - Don't let people or events agitate you to the point you explode
  - Don't react to people who are jerks—ignore them—never hang with them again
  
- ❑ **Ask your significant other out on a date**
  - Re-introduce yourself
  - A lot has changed for both of you
    - You just may learn some really cool information
    - After all, s/he kept your family intact for you
    - S/he may be doing things differently than you expected
      - Check your ego, s/he may have found ways to be more efficient
    - S/he had to take your place and be mom and dad while you were gone
      - They get credit for that! Appreciate that they did what they had to do in your absence
  
- ❑ **Learn to manage your money**
  
- ❑ **Realize you are human and not invincible**
  - It's okay to ask for help
  
- ❑ **Now that you are in the civilian world, you are your family's point man**
  - It is your job to be a good spouse
  - It is your job to be a good mentor to your children
    - You protected your war buddies, now it's time to guide your family
  
- ❑ **Civilians don't get our sense of humor**
  - Save those remarks for our re-unions
  - Remember to “check your neighborhood” before popping off with a one-liner
  
- ❑ **You already know how to adapt, improvise, and overcome**
  - Be successful now that you've come home

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