

# Resiliency Skills & Veterans: Do they matter?

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## Introduction and Research Question

Veterans struggle with numerous hardships and trauma after returning home from their service. The purpose of this study was to learn how an individual's current hardships and from their post-combat issues can be dealt with the use of certain resiliency skills and what occurs when these skills are absent.

What resiliency skills do veterans utilize in their lives to cope with current stressors and/or post-combat issues?

## Literature Review

- Veterans struggle with post combat issues and adjustment into civilian life (Ahern, Worthen, Masters, Lippman, Ozer, Moos, 2015)
- Stressors effect physical functioning, mental health, and relationships/social issues (J. Spelman, S. Hunt, MD, K. H. Seal, MD, and A. L. Burgo-Black, MD, 2012)
- Use of resiliency skills can help veterans reintegrate into society (Ahern et al., 2015)
- There is understanding of the positive benefit of resiliency skills in veteran's lives, but less research on which skills are the most effective (Nugent, Sumner, Amstadter, 2014)

## Methods

- Survey of 11 questions was created to determine if resiliency skills were being used by veterans and if so, which activities were most used, and that impact had on their lives
- Survey sent to 100 professionals in this region who work with veterans to ask their observations about vets and resiliency skills

## Results

- There was a 17% response rate from professionals
- A quantitative and qualitative analysis was performed on the data
- Quantitative analysis indicated that most respondents observed veterans to use resiliency skills under time of distress
- Qualitative analysis indicated the positive impacts of using resiliency skills and the negative impacts of when not using resiliency skills
- Self-care, the utilization of a battle-buddy/someone to confide in, and having healthy communication patterns were the most common activities observed
- The impact of the quantitative analysis was the knowledge of which skills and activities were most beneficial for veterans
- The impact of the qualitative analysis was the knowledge of the impacts of when using and not using resiliency skills

### Impact of using Resiliency Skills

- Better mental health
- Better social relationships with friends, family, and in individuals' communities
- Happier
- Positivity
- Communicate better

### Impact of not using Resiliency Skills

- Depression & Anxiety
- Suicide/Suicidal Ideation
- Self-Destruction (e.g. Alcohol and/or Drug Abuse)
- Isolate
- Failed relationships with family and friends

## Discussion & Conclusion

- Resiliency skills are beneficial for veterans who struggle with current stressors and post-combat issues
- Exhibiting healthy and consistent communication patterns allows for individuals to make connections with those around them
- There should be further research on the specifics on other resiliency skills to further the understanding of how useful these skills are to help veterans with the adjustment back into civilian life

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