



# Not Your Average Jane

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# Not Your Average Jane

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- ▶ Statistics of women currently serving
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- ▶ Unique Stressors
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# History of Women in the Military

- ▶ 1775-1783 Women followed their husbands to their camps during the Revolutionary War; many served in the camps with permission from the commanding officer
- ▶ 1782-83 Deborah Sampson served for over a year in General Washington's army disguised as a man.
- ▶ 1812 Two women served as nurses for several months aboard the USS United States
- ▶ 1846-48 Elizabeth Newcom enlisted as Bill Newcom and marched 600 miles to the winter camp in Colorado
- ▶ 1861-1865 Women worked in hospitals as administrators, nurses, and cooks during the Civil War

# History Cont.

- ▶ 1898 1500 civilian women served as nurses assigned to Army hospitals during the Spanish-American War. Hundreds more served as support staff, spies, and several more women disguised themselves as men
- ▶ 1917-1918 33,000 women officially served in the military during the last 2 years of WWI
- ▶ 1941-45 More than 400,000 women served at home and abroad in non-combat roles during WWII
- ▶ 1950-53 Over 50,000 women served at home and abroad during the Korean War. 500 Army nurses served in combat zones.
- ▶ 1962-1972 Over 7,000 women served mostly as nurses in all five branches of the military during the Vietnam War

# History Cont.

- ▶ 1976 The first females are admitted to the service academies (West Point, AF Academy, and Navy Academy at Annapolis)
- ▶ 1978 Women in the Navy and Marines are allowed to serve on non-combat ships
- ▶ 1991-92 More than 41,000 women were deployed to the combat zone during the Persian Gulf War.
- ▶ 1991 Congress authorized women to fly in combat missions
- ▶ 1993 Congress authorized women to serve on combat ships

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2008

## Statistics of Women Currently Serving

<b>Women Active Duty Military Statistics</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent of Branch</b>
<b>Total number of women serving in the military</b>	<b>214,098</b>	<b>14.6 %</b>
Army	76,694	13.6 %
Marines Currently serving:	13,677	6.8 %
Navy	53,385	16.4 %
Air Force	63,552	19.1 %
Coast Guard	6,790	15.7 %
<b>Women Reserve Military Statistics</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent of Branch</b>
Total number of women in the reserves	118,781	19.5 %
		15.5 %
Total number of women in the National Guard	470,851	

<https://www.statisticbrain.com/women-in-the-military-statistics/>

# Breakdown of women currently serving:

- ▶ Of the roughly 200,000 women in the military:
- ▶ 167,000 are enlisted
- ▶ 36,000 are officers
- ▶ 28 female generals in the Air Force, 19 in the Army, 1 in the Marine Corps and 21 female Admirals in the Navy
- ▶ Enlisted women make up 2.7% of the military's front line units
- ▶ Among enlisted ranks, 30.1% of women are in administrative specialties and 30.5% are medical
- ▶ Health care is the top field for female officers 39%, followed by 28% administrative officers, and 18% in supply

# Some Facts about Military Families

Military spouses tend to be under 35 and are largely female.

Only 5% of military spouses are men.

Nearly 20% of service members in Iraq and Afghanistan experience acute stress, depression, and/or anxiety.

Military families relocate 10 times more often than civilian families -- on average, every 2 or 3 years.

Service members are more likely to be married at a younger age and have young children at home compared to their civilian counterparts.

Since 2001, more than 2 million American children have had a parent deployed at least once.

More than 900,000 children have experienced the deployment of one or both parents multiple times.

Children in military families experience high rates of mental health, trauma, and related problems. About 30% reported feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 weeks during the past 12 months. Nearly 1 in 4 reported having considered suicide.

37% of children with a deployed parent reported that they seriously worry about what could happen to their deployed caretaker.

Multiple and prolonged deployment also has an effect on spouses, with 36.6% of women having at least one mental health diagnosis compared to 30% of women whose husbands were not deployed.

<https://www.dosomething.org/facts/11-facts-about-military-families>

# Why Women Serve:

- ▶ To serve their country- patriotism
- ▶ Travel opportunities
- ▶ Education opportunities
- ▶ Health care
- ▶ Strong work ethic
- ▶ Difficulty finding civilian employment (42% women vs 25% men)

# Why Women Stay in the Military:

- ▶ Job satisfaction
- ▶ Comradery
- ▶ Same reason(s) for joining

# Why Women Leave:

- ▶ Impact of military role on family
- ▶ Frequent relocations
- ▶ Deployment
- ▶ Realities of combat
- ▶ Realities of military life
- ▶ Dual military marriages

# Why Focus on the Why?

- ▶ PIE perspective/Systems Theory
- ▶ Adjustment to military life
- ▶ Expectations vs reality of military life
- ▶ Role strain/role confusion



# Unique Stressors

- ▶ Combat operations
- ▶ Military Sexual Trauma (MST)
- ▶ Feeling alone
- ▶ Worrying about family

# Military Sexual Assault:

- ▶ 4.3% of active duty women have reported experiencing sexual assault
- ▶ A combination of combat trauma & MSA doubles the rate of PTSD due to the experience of multiple traumas

# Unique Risks for interpersonal violence:

- ▶ Geographic separation from support system
- ▶ Dual military relationships can affect victim and partner's military career



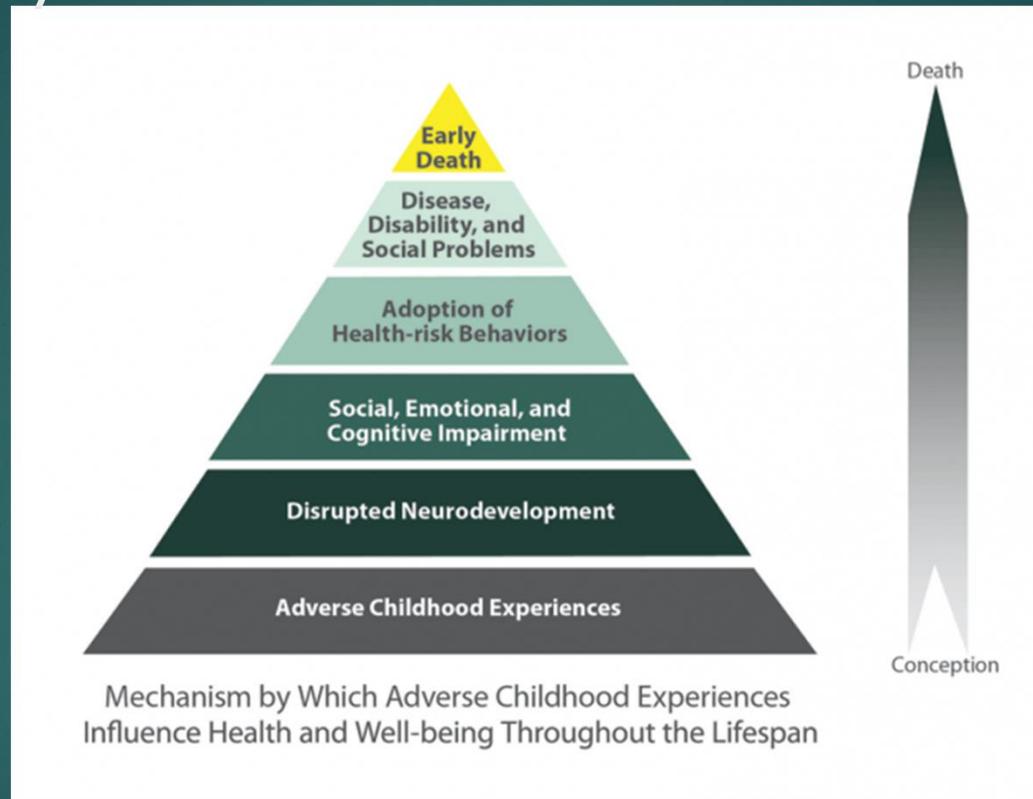
# Previous Trauma Experiences

Don't discount them!

Not all trauma responses are combat related

What do we know about trauma?

# ACE Study



- ▶ Kaiser Permanente

# Resilience

- ▶ Resilience- bouncing back from adversity
- ▶ Resilience is pretty ordinary, not extraordinary. It includes behaviors, thoughts, and actions that can be learned and developed by anyone
- ▶ Many studies show that the primary factor in resilience is having caring and supportive relationships within and outside the family. Relationships that create love and trust, provide role models and offer encouragement and reassurance help bolster a person's resilience.
- ▶ <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx>

# Reactive Resilience?

- ▶ Command's misinterpretation
- ▶ Reactive vs. Proactive/Protective Factors

# Barriers to seeking treatment

- ▶ Impact on career
- ▶ Stigma
- ▶ The Why's

# Building Resilience

- ▶ **Make connections.** Good relationships with close family members, friends or others are important. Accepting help and support from those who care about you and will listen to you strengthens resilience. Some people find that being active in civic groups, faith-based organizations, or other local groups provides social support and can help with reclaiming hope. Assisting others in their time of need also can benefit the helper.
- ▶ **Avoid seeing crises as insurmountable problems.** You can't change the fact that highly stressful events happen, but you can change how you interpret and respond to these events. Try looking beyond the present to how future circumstances may be a little better. Note any subtle ways in which you might already feel somewhat better as you deal with difficult situations.
- ▶ **Accept that change is a part of living.** Certain goals may no longer be attainable as a result of adverse situations. Accepting circumstances that cannot be changed can help you focus on circumstances that you can alter.
- ▶ **Move toward your goals.** Develop some realistic goals. Do something regularly — even if it seems like a small accomplishment — that enables you to move toward your goals. Instead of focusing on tasks that seem unachievable, ask yourself, "What's one thing I know I can accomplish today that helps me move in the direction I want to go?"
- ▶ **Take decisive actions.** Act on adverse situations as much as you can. Take decisive actions, rather than detaching completely from problems and stresses and wishing they would just go away.
- ▶ **Look for opportunities for self-discovery.** People often learn something about themselves and may find that they have grown in some respect as a result of their struggle with loss. Many people who have experienced tragedies and hardship have reported better relationships, greater sense of strength even while feeling vulnerable, increased sense of self-worth, a more developed spirituality and heightened appreciation for life.
- ▶ **Nurture a positive view of yourself.** Developing confidence in your ability to solve problems and trusting your instincts helps build resilience.
- ▶ <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx>

# Building Resilience Cont.

- ▶ **Keep things in perspective.** Even when facing very painful events, try to consider the stressful situation in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective. Avoid blowing the event out of proportion.
- ▶ **Maintain a hopeful outlook.** An optimistic outlook enables you to expect that good things will happen in your life. Try visualizing what you want, rather than worrying about what you fear.
- ▶ **Take care of yourself.** Pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Exercise regularly. Taking care of yourself helps to keep your mind and body primed to deal with situations that require resilience.
- ▶ **Additional ways of strengthening resilience may be helpful.** For example, some people write about their deepest thoughts and feelings related to trauma or other stressful events in their life. Meditation and spiritual practices help some people build connections and restore hope.
- ▶ <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx>

# Evidence Based Treatments:

- ▶ Prolonged Exposure Therapy
- ▶ Cognitive Processing therapy
- ▶ Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

# Resources for Providers:

- ▶ Center for Deployment Psychology
- ▶ VA.gov

# Resources for Patients:

- ▶ Military One Source
- ▶ <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/>
- ▶ So many smart phone Aps!
- ▶ Base/Post Facebook page
- ▶ **Veterans Crisis Line**
- ▶ <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>

# More Resources Cont.

- ▶ Key Spouse program
- ▶ First Shirt
- ▶ Airman and Family Readiness
- ▶ Yellow Ribbon