

BETTER KNOW YOUR POST 9-11 ERA VETERANS

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Re-conceptualizing the life event of transition: Toward a deeper understanding



INTRODUCTION



KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
**MILITARY
AFFAIRS**

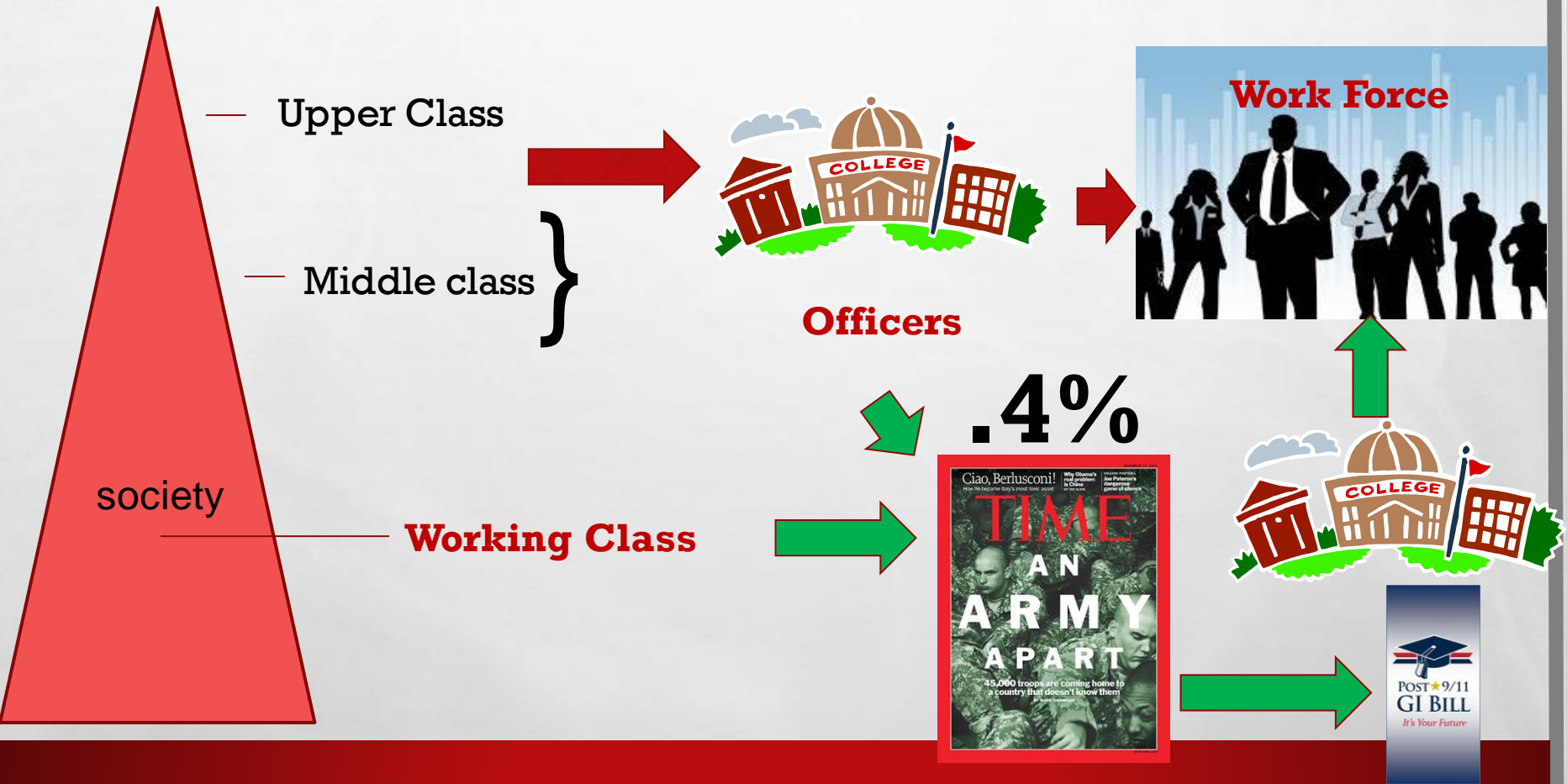
THE LONGEST WAR IN U.S. HISTORY

Post-9/11 Veterans

War on Terror,
fought with largest
all-volunteer Force ... and their
families



SOCIAL REPRODUCTION of the ALL VOLUNTEER FORCE



80+ % of new service members are from families that have served (RAND STUDY)

230,000+ TRANSITIONS PER YEAR

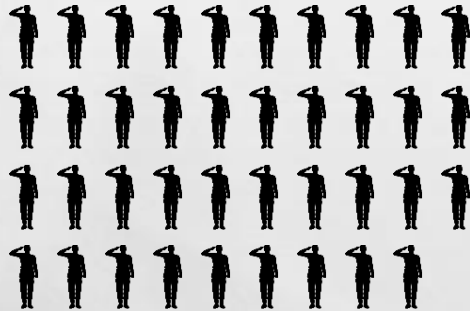


**SOLDIER
MARINE
SAILOR
AIRMAN
COAST GUARDSMAN**

**WORKFORCE
COLLEGE
TECHNICAL/TRADE SCHOOLS
UNEMPLOYMENT
??????**

GULF WAR II-ERA VETERANS

3.9 MILLION
Gulf War II-era
Veterans



161,000 ARE UNEMPLOYED (BLS, 2016)

722,000 “DISCOURAGED WORKERS” (BLS, 2016)

APPROX. 686,000 (18%) ARE USING GI BILL (VA)

29.4% HAVE “SERVICE-RELATED DISABILITY” (VA)

71% ARE AGE 25-44 YEARS OLD

48% ARE MARRIED MAKING “FAMILY TRANSITION”

**11-20% DEPART WITH PTSD DIAGNOSIS
COMPARED TO 8% NON-VET RATE**

78% REPORT “SIGNIFICANT DIFFICULTIES” RETURNING TO CIVILIAN LIFE

COST OF NOT GETTING THIS RIGHT

**Post 9/11 veterans &
Gulf War II-era veterans**



**A new generation of
veterans**



Workforce & Economy



All-volunteer Force

POST 9-11 ERA VETERANS TRANSITION ...



A NEW CHALLENGE FOR A NEW GENERATION

CRITICAL WHITE PAPER (2013)



**UNDER
INVESTIGATION**

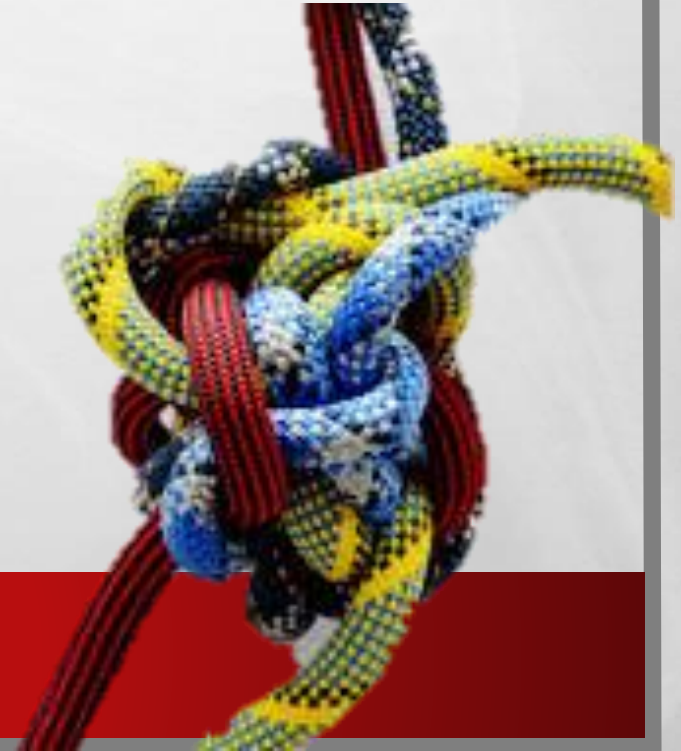
Discovered 8 major issues..

White Paper:
<http://www.k-state.edu/militaryaffairs/docs>

Why is transition proving so difficult for this generation of veterans?

ISSUE #1

VETERANS TRANSITION IS A VERY COMPLEX LIFE EVENT



Life Cycle Model of Post 9-11 Military Veteran



ISSUE #2

MOST VETERANS ARE NOT READY TO TRANSITION



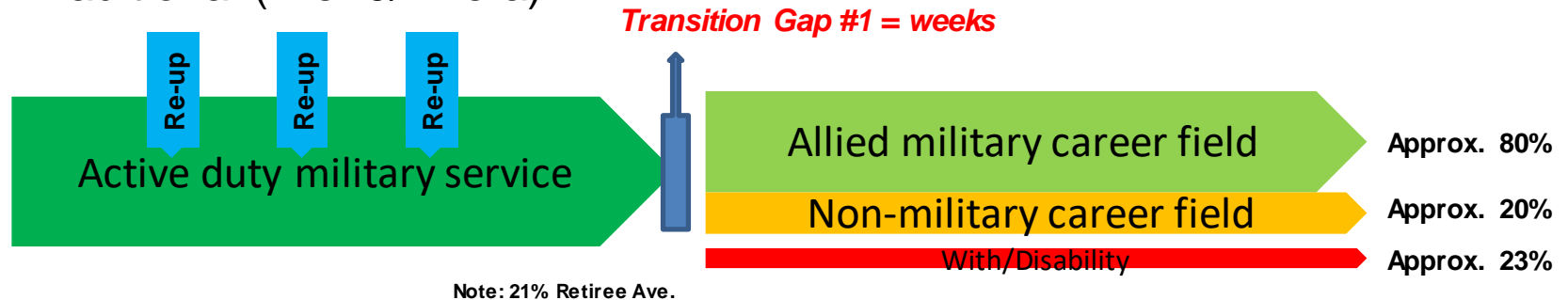
ISSUE #3

THE PATHWAYS FROM MILITARY SERVICE TO THE WORKFORCE HAVE CHANGED

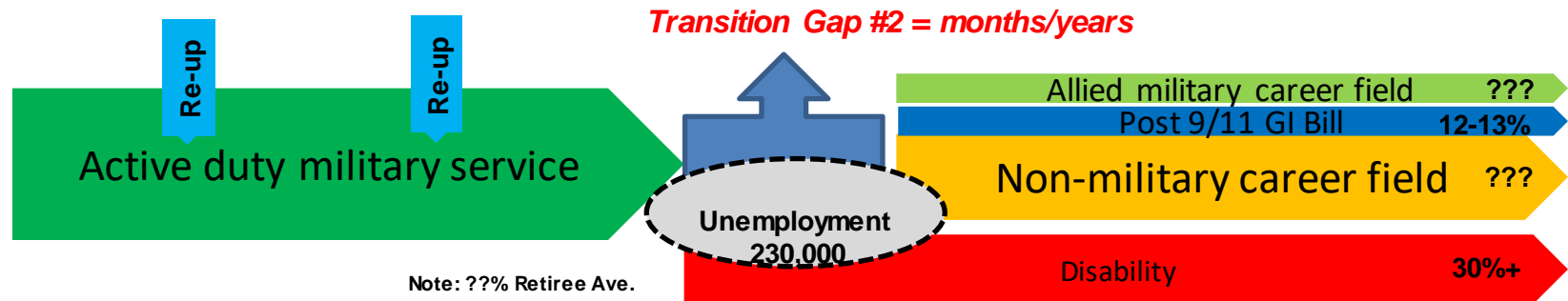


Military Pathways to Civilian Employment

Traditional (Pre- 9/11 era)



Contemporary (Post- 9/11 era)



Trend Lines:

1. Much longer transition gap exists today
2. Fewer finding work in allied military career fields
3. Greatly increase of disability and unemployment today
4. Fewer Post 9/11 GI Bill users than expected



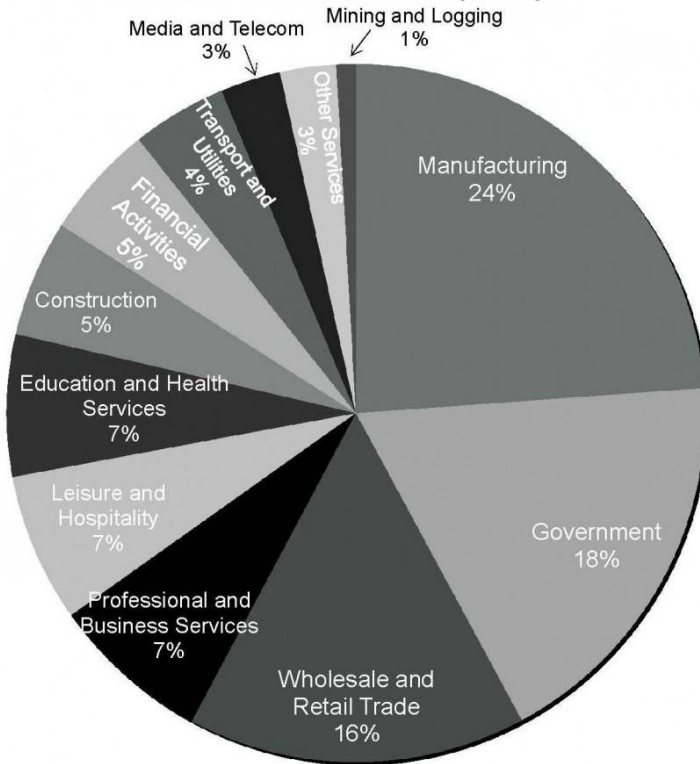
ISSUE #4

**WHERE VETERANS WANT TO
LIVE AND WORK ARE NOT
WHERE THE JOBS ARE**

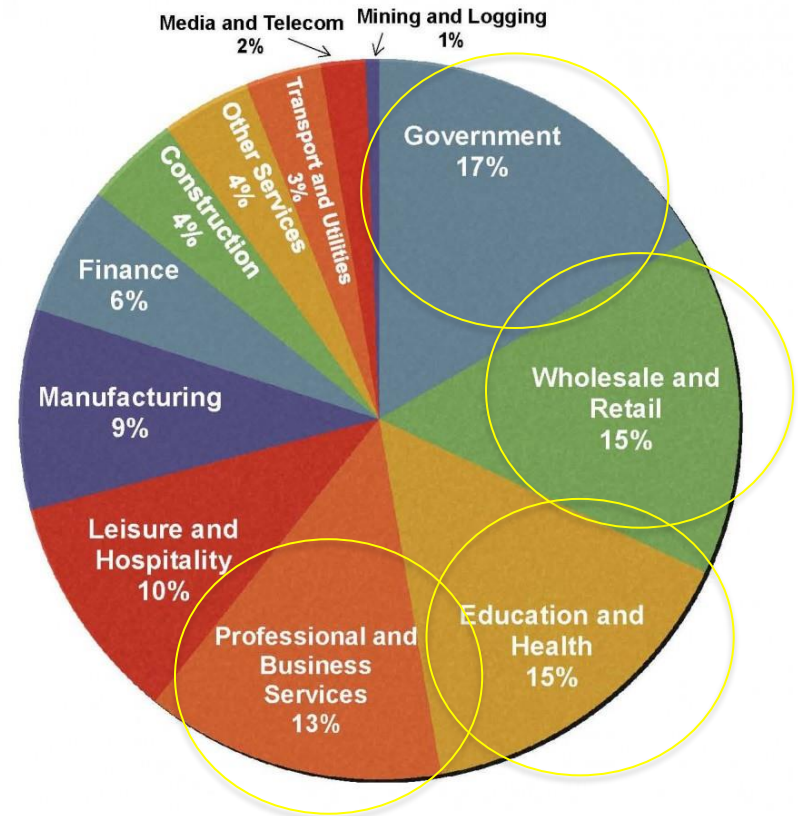


We are not steering transitioning veterans to where our workforce needs are

Where we used to work (1972)



Where we work today (2012)



**We are not steering transitioning veterans
to where our workforce OPPORTUNITY EXISTS**

ISSUE #5

MOST VETERANS ARE NOT SKILLED FOR THE WORKFORCE WHEN THEY DEPART



**Assertion: Military Human Capital is NOT Directly Transferable
to Civilian Workforce Needs**

ISSUE #6

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION & TRAINING ARE BEING UNDERUTILIZED (POST-9/11 GI BILL)



ISSUE #7

**VETERANS MUST PAY A HIGHER
ENTRY COST TO ENTER THE
WORKFORCE THAN ARE ARE
WILLING AND/OR ABLE ...**

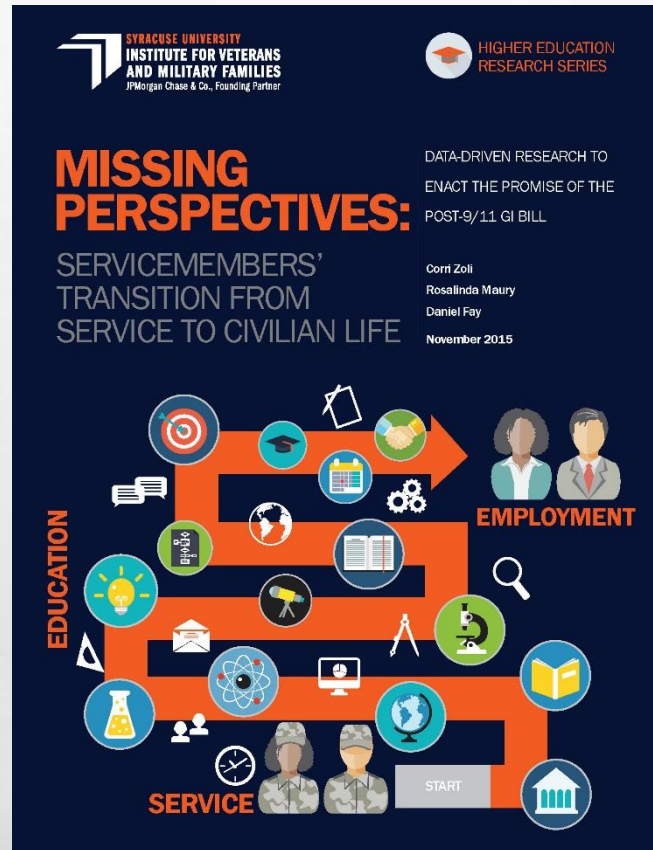


ISSUE #8

POST 9-11 VETERANS APPEAR TO EXPERIENCE TRANSITION DIFFERENT THAN OTHER GENERATIONS OF VETERANS



MISSING PERSPECTIVES



Zoli, Maury & Fay, 2015 –Institute for Veterans & Military Families, Syracuse University

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY



"LIVED EXPERIENCE" STUDY FINDINGS

THEMES AND ISSUES OF POST-9/11 TRANSITION

THEMES OF
TRANSITION

Mindset	Socialization	Mediation*	Self-Realization	Mobility
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confronting Departure• Support from Unit• Preparedness for Transition• Resilience• Expectations of Army Transition Assistance Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impact of Army Service• Professional Army Culture• Communication• Lifestyle Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Army Transition Assistance Experience• Personal Transition Experience• Mentorship• Impact of Family and Friends• Veteran Service Organizations• Medical Care at Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decision to Depart• Self-Directedness• Self-Identity• Social Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Re-Socialization• Civilian Workplace• College Experience• Community• Personal Finances

ISSUES OF
TRANSITION

RESULTS

“LIVED EXPERIENCE” STUDY (2016)



Exploring the lived experience of the Post 9-11 Army veteran in transition (DeGroat, 2016)

RESULTS

PRIMARY FINDING: THE MEANING OF TRANSITION

- Post-9/11 veteran's transition is a situated and dynamic life event which affects one's **mobility** to cross boundaries from military to civilian life. It is a socially **mediated** effort that involves reconstruction of personal identity through the process of **self-realization** and reformation or non-formation of one's personal **mindset** and **socialization** to form new social bonds.

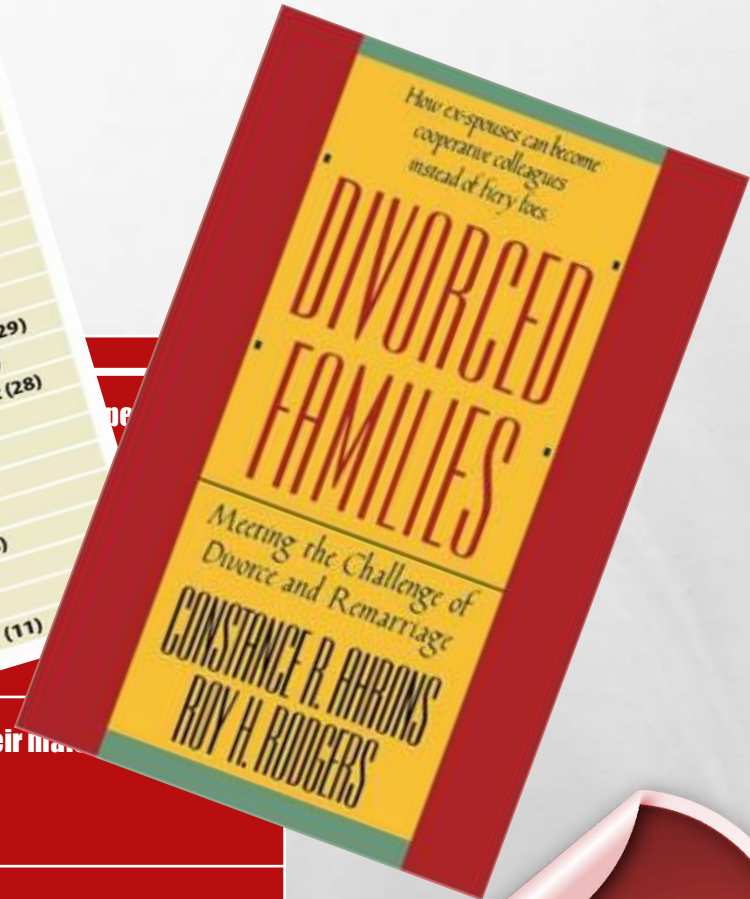
(DeGroat, 2016)

Exploring the lived experience of the post 9-11 Army veteran in transition

RESULTS

OTHER COMPELLING FINDINGS

The Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS)		
Example items		
Rank	Life event (LCU)	
1	Death of a spouse (100)	
2	Divorce (73)	
4	Jail term (63)	
6	Personal injury or illness (53)	
7	Marriage (50)	
8	Fired at work (47)	
10	Retirement (45)	
12	Pregnancy (40)	
17	Death of a close friend (37)	
22	Change in responsibilities at work (29)	
23	Son or daughter leaving home (29)	
25	Outstanding personal achievement (28)	
27	Begin or end school (26)	
28	Change living conditions (25)	
30	Trouble with boss (23)	
33	Change in schools (20)	
36	Change in social activities (18)	
41	Holiday (13)	
42	Christmas (12)	
43	Minor violations of the law (11)	



A By Gender Status –

Women participants (Kate, Carrie & Diana) more concerned about the transition issues of:
(Michael, Bruce, Jake, Phillip & Paul) about the transition issues of:

- Impact of Family and Friends in Transition
- Mentorship Relationships

Women participants (Kate, Carrie & Diana) less often expressed concern than did their male counterparts about the transition issues of:
(Michael, Bruce, Jake, Phillip & Paul) about the transition issues of:

- Veteran Service Organizations Role in Assisting Transition

RESULTS

HOW VETERANS FACE TRANSITION ... IN STAGES

**Confront
departure**

**Disengage
from military**

**Re-socialize
Into society**

(Ruth Jolly, 1996)

RESULTS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE



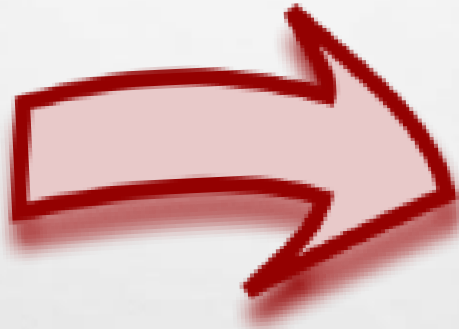
We need to integrate behavioral science insights into our assistance programs.

RESULTS

HOW TO HELP OUR VETERANS TRANSITION



**Informational
Approach**

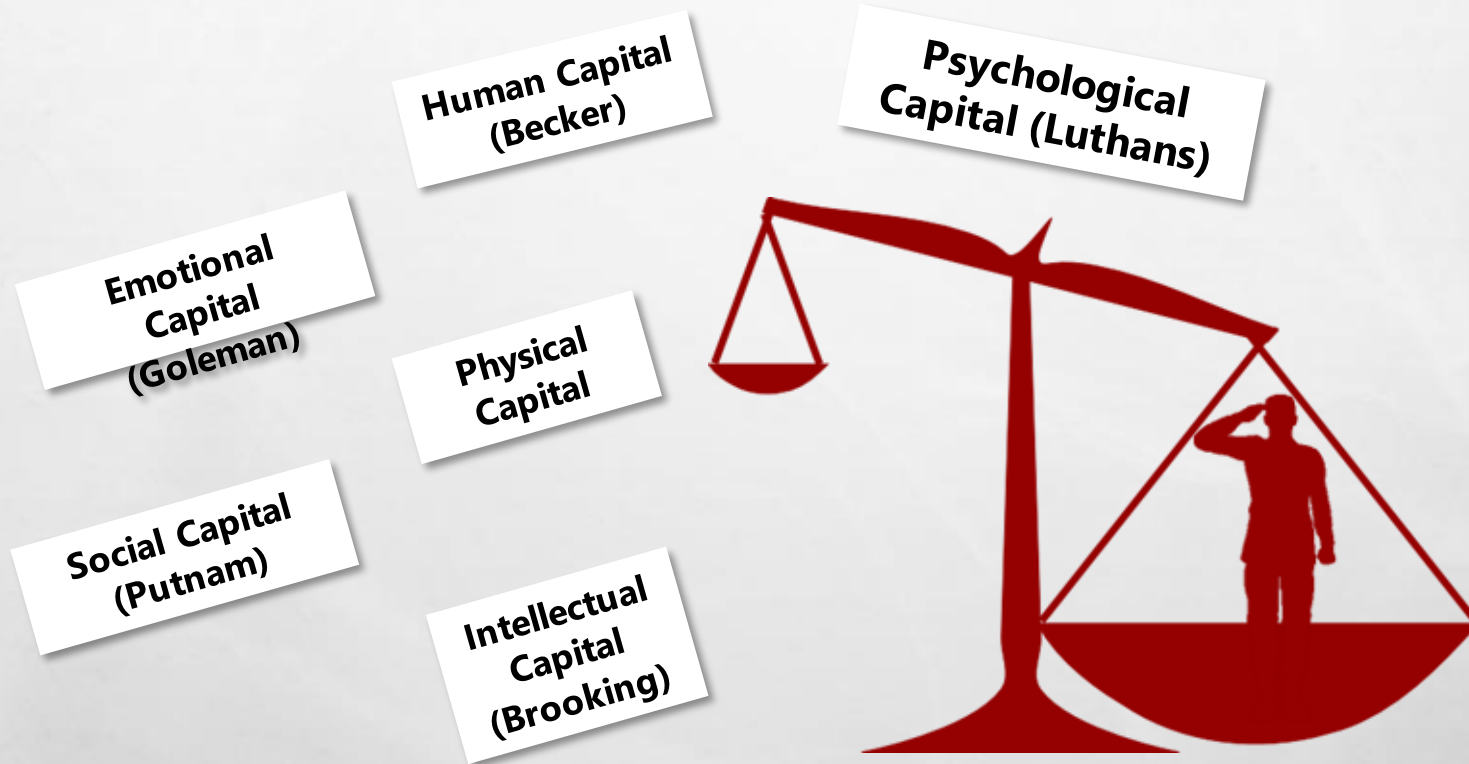


**Relational
Approach**

GET VETERANS READY TO TRANSITION



THE VALUE OF A VETERAN ...?



THE HOLY GRAIL OF TRANSITION ...

HOPE

OPTIMISM

RESILIENCE

SELF-EFFICACY



Can we restore a state of **Positive Psychological Capital** needed at time of transition

10 FAVORABLE CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE TRANSITION

- **CONDITION #1:** VETERANS CHOOSE TO TAKE **PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY** FOR THEIR TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN LIFE AND WORK
- **CONDITION #2:** THE VETERAN IS IN A SUFFICIENT **STATE OF READINESS** RELATIVE TO RE-SOCIALIZATION AND REINTEGRATION TO EFFECTIVELY PURSUE AN OCCUPATIONAL TRANSITION
- **CONDITION #3:** THE INDIVIDUAL TRANSITIONING VETERAN HAS AN **ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING** OF HIS/HER VALUE TO THE CIVILIAN WORKFORCE
- **CONDITION#4:** TRANSITIONING VETERANS POSSESS **ACCURATE INFORMATION** REGARDING THE TRUE COSTS AND CHALLENGES OF REENTRY TO CIVIL LIFE AND WORK AND ARE ABLE AND WILLING TO MEET THEM
- **CONDITION #5:** TRANSITIONING VETERANS ARE **WILLING TO EXPAND** THEIR CAREER INTERESTS TO WHERE CURRENT WORKFORCE OPPORTUNITIES EXIST

(DeGroat, 2016)

Any effort should consider these conditions...

10 FAVORABLE CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE TRANSITION

- **CONDITION #6:** THE MILITARY INSTITUTIONS MUST RE-ALIGN ITS VOCATIONAL TRANSITION PROCESS TO ACCOMMODATE THE **CIVILIAN WORKFORCE TALENT ACQUISITION SYSTEMS**
- **CONDITION #7:** EMPLOYERS SHOULD ONLY BE ASKED TO HIRE A TRANSITIONING VETERAN BASED UPON THE SOUNDNESS OF DOING SO AS A **BUSINESS DECISION**
- **CONDITION #8:** THE PROFESSIONAL MILITARY CULTURE **HONORS DEPARTURE** IN A MANNER THAT FOSTERS HEALTHY TRANSITION AND PROMOTES A FAVORABLE LIFE- LONG CONNECTION WITH ONE'S MILITARY SERVICE
- **CONDITION #9:** THE MILITARY INSTITUTION AND INDIVIDUAL VETERANS USE THEIR **HIGHER EDUCATION/TRAINING INVESTMENTS** FOR THE ADDITIONAL PURPOSE OF COMPETIVENESS IN POST-SERVICE EMPLOYMENT
- **CONDITION #10:** ALL "INTERMEDIARIES" OPERATING IN THE TRANSITION PROCESS SHOULD **USE EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES** WHEN ASSISTING VETERANS

(DeGroat, 2016)

Any effort should consider these conditions...



Questions?

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