

WOMEN VETERANS OF OK

We can do this. #okwomenvets

April 17, 2020

 OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS

Volume 2, Issue 4



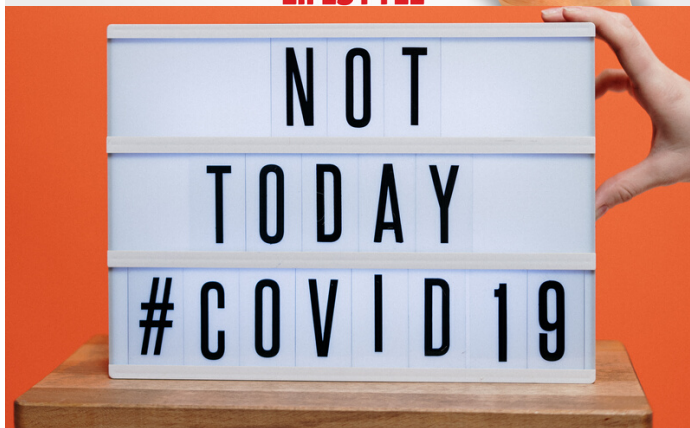
IN THE ISSUE

Couple of Words



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COUPLE OF WORDS, FROM A COUPLE OF WOMEN

By: Lisa Mussett, Women Veterans Coordinator, ODVA

Email: okwomenvets@odva.ok.gov

I encourage you to take a few minutes, read the following words, lower your shoulders, take a few deep breaths, smile. I'm sending you kind thoughts, virtual hugs and care for you and your family. You're a woman who stepped up for her nation or state's call to duty, and I believe in YOU. Lisa 🌸



REACH OUT EARLY, NOT LATE

By: Rachel Runfalo



I would say the important thing is to maintain daily social contact through phone calls, email, FB – something that doesn't cause isolation. Also, if the veteran believes they will need assistance of any kind they need to reach out early, do not wait, it will not get better. Our organizations are here to help and we can alleviate what can become a catastrophe for the veteran and/or their family.

Director of Veterans Programs
SSVF Program Manager
Tulsa, OK



COUPLE OF WORDS, FROM MEGAN



By: Megan Lowry

Self care is so important during long term high stress situations.

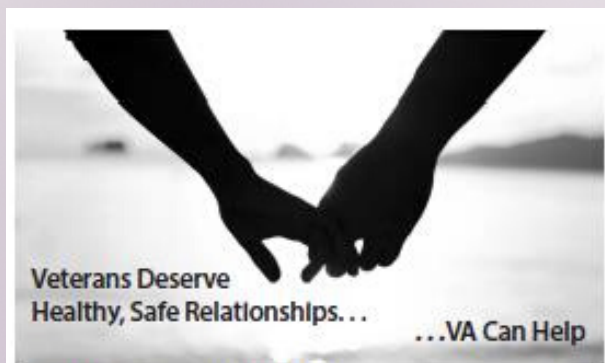
Quarantine self care ideas:

- try a new hobby you've always wondered about or join an online group to learn more about one you're interested in
- start a garden (you can order seeds online)
- go for a walk, hike, or bike ride if you can be in an area with little to no contact with others (but let someone know where you'll be!)
- get crafty! Coloring, scrapbooking, painting, sewing, and chalk art for those with kids (or for those who are kids at heart)
- start a friendship book club and have weekly check ins so you can stay connected to friends in a safe way
- start a spiritual or religious prayer group (or join one if your church offers online versions)
- try cooking a meal with a new recipe you've never used before, or a complicated one if you are up to the challenge
- play with your dogs, cats, and pets!
- make a staycation or home date night
- turn off the tv, cell phone, iPad etc and start a mindfulness practice for 5 minutes minimum (I use progressive relaxation videos on YouTube for guided relaxation and mindfulness)
- for households with kiddos, share your experiences with other moms, parents, or caretakers and remember you're not alone!

Outside of self care, it is important to create a schedule for yourself, even if you're not going anywhere- shower, put normal clothes on, and keep active.

Remember to practice realistically controlling what you can to protect yourself and your family.

Megan Lowry, USMC Veteran
Grad Student at OU Tulsa, Master of Social Work
American Humane, Service Dog Trainer



VA Can Help Build Healthy Relationships!

VA recognizes that strong healthy relationships are vital to the health and well-being of Veterans and their partners, caregivers and families. Many programs are available to help build or strengthen current relationships, or assist in address relationship conflict or distress in healthy ways. If you would like to improve your current relationship, or have concerns that you may be in an unhealthy or unsafe relationship, please talk to us. Your VA providers have many resources that can help!



QUICK REFERENCE RESOURCES

CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM – 1.855.260.3274 – www.caregiver.va.gov
CHAPLAIN SERVICES – www.patientcare.va.gov/chaplain/index.asp
CRISIS LINE – 1.800.273.8255 Press 1 – www.veteranscrisisline.net
LGBT – www.patientcare.va.gov/LGBT/index.asp
MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA – www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome.asp
NAT'L DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE – 1.800.799.SAFE (7233)
VET CENTER – 1.877.WARVETS – www.vetcenter.va.gov
INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
www.socialwork.va.gov/IPV/Index.asp

For more information or assistance, please contact the
 VA Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program Coordinator

Johna Smasal, Ph.D.
 Jack C Montgomery VA Medical Center
 10159 E 11th St, Suite 100 Tulsa, OK 74128
 918-610-2037

VA helps build healthy & safe relationships

Visit us at: www.socialwork.va.gov/IPV

Intimate partner violence impacts everyone in a variety of ways. The VA is committed to engaging Veterans and their families in reshaping the conversation about IPV to promote sustaining and healthy relationships. Join the mission to end relationship conflict.

COVID-19 has many of us feeling a lack of control over our lives. Many of us may be struggling to manage that lack of control and may take it out on someone we love during this difficult time. If you or someone you know is experiencing or using domestic violence which includes yelling, talking down to or insulting, threatening, and further emotional, physical or sexual violence the VA Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program (IPVAP) is here to help.

OKC VA Health Care System
 Stephanie McCabe, IPVAP Coordinator
 405-456-5729 (office) or 405-568-9869
 24/7 National Domestic Violence Hotline
 800-799-SAFE (7233)





We honor and support our nation's Veterans all year round. But each April, Sexual Assault Awareness Month provides an important reminder for all of us to renew our commitment to Veterans with wounds we cannot see, survivors of military sexual trauma.

Military sexual trauma, or MST, is a term used by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to refer to sexual assault or sexual harassment experienced during military service. Service members of every era, branch, gender, and sexual identity have survived MST. The experience can affect survivors' physical and mental health, sometimes even many years after the incident, leading to depression, sleep issues, anger, and isolation, among other challenges.

VA offers free and confidential support, no matter where you are on your path to recovery. Veterans who have experienced MST may contact their local MST Coordinator, a professional who specializes in connecting survivors with the care and services that are right for them.

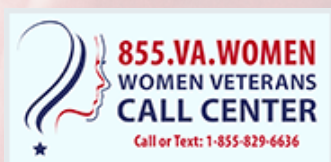
Learn more: <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/MST/index.asp>

OKC VA Health Care System, MST Coordinator
Deborah Larson-Stoa, Ph.D. 405-456-3415

Eastern OK VA Health Care System, MST Coordinator
Jennifer Chafin-Van Dusen, LCSW 918-610-2035

Vet Center Call Center 877-927-8387

Lisa Mussett, ODVA Women Veterans Coordinator
405-523-4020



Recovery is possible.
MakeTheConnection.net



Oklahoma Tele-Townhall
May 15, 2020 4:00pm Central Time Zone
Call-In: 844-227-7557



USB Lawrence Tele-Townhall

Join Under Secretary for Benefits, Dr. Paul R. Lawrence, when he hosts a Tele-Townhall for Veterans.

The call will be focused on COVID19 response and VBA program updates.

<https://benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/news.asp>

Veterans can continue to get information about benefits or file a claim for benefits by visiting our VBA website at www.va.gov. Veterans with claims specific or other questions may request information via Inquiry Routing & Information System (IRIS) or telephone at 1-800-827-1000. VBA benefits and services provided to Veterans, families, and survivors will continue to be delivered throughout the duration of COVID-19 impacts. Please continue to check www.va.gov and social media for updates.

State Veteran Service Representatives are available to assist and support **SERVICEMEMBERS, VETERANS & their FAMILIES** during the COVID19 Health Crisis.

Telephone 405-523-4000
www.odva.ok.gov



OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS

PREVENTS

#morethaneverbefore

<https://www.va.gov/PREVENTS/resources.asp>

More than ever before, we must pay attention to our emotional well-being and the well-being of those we love. This isn't an option – it's a necessity. Just as washing our hands, disinfecting surfaces and maintaining physical distance is required to minimize the impact of this pandemic, so too is caring for our mental health and the mental health of those around us.

#morethaneverbefore

We all need support right now.
Some of us need more.

#morethan**ever**before

Psych Hub and the #mentalhealth community wants to make sure you have the tools you need to address your mental health concerns during the coronavirus pandemic. Check out the official #COVID19 Mental Health Resource Hub now ➡ <https://psychhub.com/covid-19/>

**Mental Health
Resource Hub**

#StrongerTogether



Women in Military Service for America Memorial

The Women's Memorial is located at the Ceremonial Entrance to the Arlington National Cemetery, VA, and is directly across Memorial Bridge from the Lincoln Memorial, at the end of Memorial Drive. Admission to the Memorial is absolutely free. The heart of the Memorial is a digital Register containing more than 258,000 women's stories. If you've served in any branch of the military, please register YOUR story today.

www.womensmemorial.org

Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs

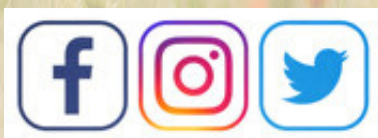
Women Veterans Coordinator

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Website: okvets.ok.gov



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VETERANS AFFAIRS**

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