PROBLEM QUANTIFICATION STATEMENT

Who they are

Every year, 5500 military members across Canada leave the Canadian Armed Forces and become veterans.[1] Difficulties in the transition from military to civilian life impact former military service members across multiple life domains. In a study of Canadian Veterans,[2] it was found that 37.6% of veterans felt they did not make a successful transition to civilian life, while 57.1% described their transition as difficult. Similar studies done on veterans in the U.S report that between 27 - 46% of veterans struggle with transition. These statistics suggest that approximately 2000 Canadian military members per year may benefit from our services which are tailored to support veterans succeed in their life after service.

What they need

Challenges faced by veterans in transition include caring for physical injuries and chronic health concerns, as well as managing psychological conditions including PTSD, depression, and substance use.[2] High rates of military sexual trauma (MST) make the transition to civilian life more difficult, with 38.4% of female and 4.0% of male military members impacted by MST during their service.[5] Moves across the country and loss of the identity associated with military service may result in social isolation, with female veterans being particularly affected.[6] After a lifetime of military service, many veterans struggle to function outside the structure of the military, and may have difficulties in their friendships, family relationships and in organizational structures.[2] As a result, veterans commit suicide at a greater rate than the general population, with female veterans even more at risk.[7] Veterans also have an increased risk of homelessness, with up to 10% of veterans experiencing homelessness in their lifetime.[8]

How we help

Our VTN programs directly address the difficulties that veterans across Canada face in transition. We do this through the teaching and practice of transition skills and therapeutic interventions designed to process and resolve memories of events that hamper successful transition. VTN's programs focus on social engagement, regulation and grounding, emotion identification and communication, career identity development, and goal setting skills and education. Our intensive therapeutic programs directly address psychological injury experienced in military service by integrating cognitive, emotional, and behavioural processes to process traumatic memories. Our evidence-based programs have demonstrated effectiveness in reducing PTSD, depression, anger, moral injury, and loneliness while increasing work and social functioning.

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