



## Military Culture and Terminology: Enhancing Clinical Competence

Center for Deployment Psychology  
Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences



## Disclaimer

The views expressed are those of the presenters and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.



## Learning Objectives

1. Recognize the structure and major components of the United States Military.
2. Identify common characteristics of the military population and how they compare to the general population.
3. Discuss the importance of a distinct culture to the military.
4. Describe elements of the military experience and lifestyle that are integral to military culture.



## Presentation Objectives

- The United States Military
  - What is it?
  - Who runs it?
  - How is it organized?
- Military Culture
  - The Basic Elements of Culture
  - Military Culture: Information You Should Know
- Military Language & General Terminology
  - General Terms & Acronyms
  - Deployment-Related Terms & Acronyms



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## United States Military

- The United States Military
  - What is it?
  - Seven federally established Uniformed Services of the United States
  - Four departments:

DHHS

DOC

DOD

DHS



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## Uniformed Services of the United States

### Noncombatant Uniformed Services



Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS)

U.S. Public Health Service  
Commissioned Corps (PHSCC)



Department of Commerce (DOC)

National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration  
Commissioned Corps (NOAA Corps)



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## The “Armed Forces”

### Department of Defense (DOD)



*United States Army (USA) – Jun 14, 1775*



*United States Navy (USN) – Oct 13, 1775*



*United States Marine Corps (USMC) – Nov 10, 1775*



*United States Air Force (USAF) – Sept 18, 1947*



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Department of Homeland Security  
(DHS)



United States Coast Guard (USCG) –  
August 4, 1790

The Coast Guard also operates under the  
Department of Defense during wartime, and in  
military operations.



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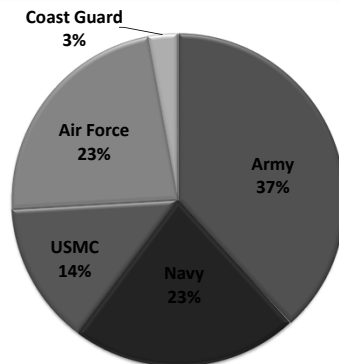
## Military Branches



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## Active Duty Members by Service Branch



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2013 Demographics Profile of the Military Community (2014)



## Reserves

- Primary Distinction from National Guard:

– A **Federal** Entity versus A **State** Entity

- Army Reserves
- Navy Reserves
- Air Force Reserves
- Marines Corps Reserves
- Coast Guard Reserves



- One weekend a month, two weeks a year
- Organized, trained, and equipped similarly to active duty components



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## The National Guard of the United States



Army National Guard



Air National Guard



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## National Guard: Some Important Details

- A reserve military force: State National Guard militia members/units
- All 50 states (U.S. territories)
- State governors or territorial adjutant general
- Called up for active duty by their respective states
- CAN BE mobilized for active duty during times of war (or of national emergency), as declared by Congress, the President, Secretary of Defense
- CAN BE mobilized individually through voluntary transfers and Temporary Duty Assignments



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## National Guard: You Should Be Aware That...

- Prior to September 11, 2001, National Guard's policy: Guardsmen would be required to serve no more than one year cumulative on active duty (with no more than six months overseas) for each five years of regular drill
- Post 9/11: mobilization time was increased to 18 months (with no more than one year overseas)
- With the invasion of Iraq: mobilization time increased to 24 months
- August 2007: soldiers will be given 24 months between deployments of no more than 24 months

\*Individual states may have differing policies.



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## Military Culture Perspective from the Top

The Armed Forces

Who runs it?

How is it organized?



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## The Armed Forces: The President & Congress

- The United States Constitution
  - Ultimately rests responsibility for the nation’s defense upon the shoulders of the President
  - Congress has no direct constitutional authority over the conduct of war
- The Chain of Command
  - President – Commander-in-Chief of the Military.
    - Secretary of Defense
      - Combatant Commanders



## Combatant Commanders’ Areas of Responsibility



## Military Culture

United States Military Rank Structure

Officers & Enlisted



## Chain of Command

- Chain of Command (CoC)
  - Salient feature of military culture
  - Clearly defines individuals’ roles, responsibilities, and anticipated behaviors
    - Determines who may speak to whom & when
    - Determines who lives where
    - Defines social and economic status
    - Defines and shapes roles and responsibilities



# Military Personnel

- Commissioned Officers
- Warrant Officers
- Enlisted
- Noncommissioned Officers



# Military Culture

## Commissioned Officer Ranks

| 0-1 | 0-2  | 0-3 | 0-4  | 0-5 | 0-6  | 0-7 | 0-8 | 0-9 | 0-10 | SPECIAL |
|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|------|---------|
|     |      |     |      |     |      |     |     |     |      |         |
| ENS | LTJG | LT  | LCDR | CDR | CAPT |     |     |     |      |         |

## Navy

Rank of CAPT is a pivotal rank amongst Commissioned Officers  
Note that a CAPT in the Navy is a COL in other Services.



# Military Culture

- Understanding Officer Roles and Responsibilities
- Officers are:
- leaders
  - organizers
  - strategists
  - managers
  - “THE MILITARY OFFICER must fill a number of roles, often simultaneously . . . as a warfighter, as the Nation’s servant, as a member of the profession of arms, and as a leader of character.”



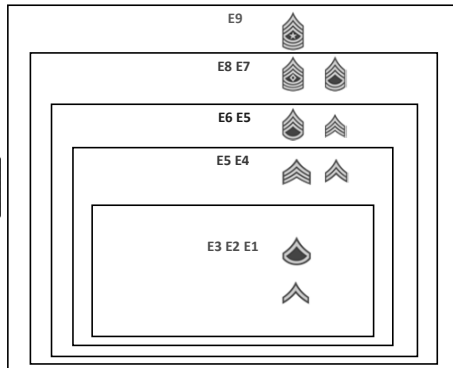
# Enlisted Ranks

| E-1                 | E-2                       | E-3                       | E-4                             | E-5                              | E-6                             | E-7                        | E-8                               | E-9                               |  |  |
|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| no insignia         |                           |                           |                                 |                                  |                                 |                            |                                   |                                   |  |  |
| Private E-1 (PV1)   | Private E-2 (PV2)         | Private First Class (PFC) | Specialist (SPC)                | Sergeant (SGT)                   | Staff Sergeant (SSgt)           | Sergeant First Class (SFC) | Master Sergeant (MSG)             | First Sergeant (1stSgt)           | Sergeant Major (SMA)                                       | Command Sergeant Major (CSM)                             |
| no insignia         |                           |                           |                                 |                                  |                                 |                            |                                   |                                   |  |  |
| Private (PV)        | Private First Class (PFC) | Lance Corporal (LCpl)     | Corporal (Cpl)                  | Sergeant (Sgt)                   | Staff Sergeant (SSgt)           | Gunnery Sergeant (GySgt)   | Master Sergeant (MSG)             | First Sergeant (1stSgt)           | Master Sergeant (MSG)                                      | Sergeant Major (SMA)                                     |
| no insignia         |                           |                           |                                 |                                  |                                 |                            |                                   |                                   |  |  |
| Airman Basic (AB)   | Airman (Amm)              | Airman First Class (A1C)  | Senior Airman (SRA)             | Staff Sergeant (SSgt)            | Technical Sergeant (TSgt)       | Master Sergeant (MSG)      | First Sergeant (E-7)              | Senior Chief Sergeant (E-8)       | Chief Sergeant (E-9)                                       | Command Sergeant Major (CSM)                             |
| no insignia         |                           |                           |                                 |                                  |                                 |                            |                                   |                                   |  |  |
| Seaman Recruit (SR) | Seaman Apprentice (SA)    | Seaman (SN)               | Petty Officer Third Class (PO3) | Petty Officer Second Class (PO2) | Petty Officer First Class (PO1) | Chief Petty Officer (CPO)  | Senior Chief Petty Officer (SCPO) | Master Chief Petty Officer (MCPO) | Force or Fleet Command Master Chief Petty Officer (FCMCMC) | Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON)           |
|                     |                           |                           |                                 |                                  |                                 |                            |                                   |                                   |  |  |
| Seaman Recruit (SR) | Seaman Apprentice (SA)    | Seaman (SN)               | Petty Officer Third Class (PO3) | Petty Officer Second Class (PO2) | Petty Officer First Class (PO1) | Chief Petty Officer (CPO)  | Senior Chief Petty Officer (SCPO) | Master Chief Petty Officer (MCPO) | Command Master Chief Petty Officer (CMCPO)                 | Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard (MCPON-CG) |



## Military Culture

- Understanding enlisted roles and responsibilities
- The more stripes...



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## Military Organizational Culture

Some of the main characteristics of the military organizational culture include:

- A **highly structured** and authoritarian way of life with a mission-focused approach
- A strict sense of **discipline** adhering to the rules and regulations
- A **strong work ethic** with high regard for physical and mental strength
- Decisive **leadership** that expects loyalty from subordinates and allies

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## Military Culture

- **Cultural Elements Common to all Branches:**
- An Organizational Structure
  - Shapes roles and responsibilities
- Army
  - Corps > Division > Brigade > Battalion > Company > Platoon > Squad
- Air Force
  - Wing > Group > Squadron > Flight > Section > Element
- Marine Corps
  - Division > Regiment > Battalion > Company > Platoon > Squad > Team
- Navy – organizational structure is complex – in general there are...
  - Operating Forces - consisting primarily of combat and service forces
  - Shore Establishment – which provide support to the Operating Forces

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## Military Culture



Photo by Jm13

- Military culture is heterogeneous
- There are as many experiences of military culture as there are Service members, Veterans, and their families

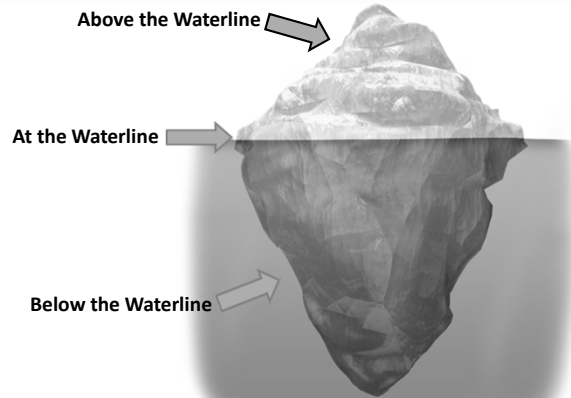
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## Military Culture



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## Military Culture: Above the Waterline

- Uniforms
- Medals
- Salutes
- Ranks
- Ceremonies



DoD photo by Sgt. Sarah Ficco, U.S. Marine Corps/Released



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## Elements of Military Ethos

- Selflessness
- Loyalty
- Stoicism
- Moral Code
- Excellence



DoD photo by Cpl. Mondo Lescaud, U.S. Marine Corps/Released



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## Acquiring Military Ethos

- Oaths of Enlistment or Commissioning
- Service branch core values
- Creeds
- Professional training
- Military decorations
- Punishing violations of codes of behaviors



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## Military Culture Promotes

- An ordered and disciplined social environment through rituals, ceremonies, and celebrations:
  - Example:
  - The Uniform
    - Everybody gets one
      - Generally speaking – the SAME one
      - Uniform differences can denote social status, job duties, etc.



## Military Culture Promotes

- An ordered and disciplined social environment through rituals, ceremonies, and celebrations:
  - Example:
  - The salute – a show of respect
    - Enlisted Service members salute Officers
      - Junior Officers salute Senior Officer
      - Enlisted Service members do not salute each other regardless of rank



## Military Culture Promotes

- An ordered and disciplined social environment through rituals, ceremonies, and celebrations:
  - Example:
  - Ribbons, medals, and honors
  - Uniform inspections
  - Promotions – timely and consistent
  - Celebrations – birthday balls and long weekends
  - Ceremonies – Change of Command, promotions, and retirements



## Military Culture Promotes

- An ordered and disciplined social environment through rituals, ceremonies, and celebrations:
  - Example:
  - The military installation
    - “A gated community”



## Military Culture Promotes

- An ordered and disciplined social environment through its beliefs, values, and attitudes
- Army Values
  - Loyalty \* Duty \* Respect \* Selfless Service \* Honor \* Integrity \* Personal Courage

“Army Strong”

“I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.”



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## Military Culture Promotes

- An ordered and disciplined social environment through its beliefs, values, and attitudes
- Navy Core Values
  - Honor \* Courage \* Commitment

“It's Not Just a Job. It's an Adventure”

“I represent the fighting spirit of the Navy and those who have gone before me to defend freedom and democracy around the world.”



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## Military Culture Promotes

- An ordered and disciplined social environment through its beliefs, values, and attitudes
- Air Force Core Values
  - Integrity First \* Service Before Self \* Excellence in all we do...

“My mission is to fly, fight, and win.”

“It's not science fiction; it's what we do every day!”



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## Military Culture Promotes

- An ordered and disciplined social environment through its beliefs, values, and attitudes
- Marines Core Values
  - Honor \* Courage \* Commitment

“My rifle and myself are the defenders of my country.”

“Marines never give up, never give in, never willingly accept second best.”



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## Military Culture Promotes

- An ordered and disciplined social environment through its beliefs, values, and attitudes

“In war there is no substitute for victory.”

“I am a soldier, I fight where I am told, and I win where I fight.”

“We are not retreating - we are advancing in another direction.”

“If you can't get them to salute when they should salute and wear the clothes you tell them to wear, how are you going to get them to die for their country?”



## Beliefs, Values, and Attitudes

- Military Culture is a dynamic culture
  - The decision to belong is a conscious one
    - You don't wake up and determine you're a part of it
    - To the contrary – you go looking for it
- Beliefs, Values, & Attitudes
  - Are instilled from day one (Boot Camp, OCS)
  - Are intended to increase cohesion, camaraderie, and esprit de corps
  - May/may not be acceptable to the individual
  - May/may not be passed on without question



## Rules, Taboos, and Ethical Codes

- Place of Duty (AWOL)
- Disrespecting an Officer
- Disrespecting a NCO
- “Jumping” the CoC
- Fraternalization
- Uniformed Code of Military Justice (UCMJ)
  - An Article 15 – Non-Judicial Punishment
- Core Values – what you live by



## Military Culture

- BIG THINGS happen in small groups
  - Names/Terms Used:
    - Patrol
    - Convoy
    - Squad
    - Team
    - PSD (Personal Security Detail)
    - PRTs (Provincial Reconstruction Teams)
    - MITTs (Military Transition Team) (“MiT Team”)
    - QRF (Quick Reaction Force)



## Military Culture

- Who are these individuals?
  - Across ALL uniformed services, combining both Enlisted and Officer, data indicates the average trends:
    - The majority come from middle income families
    - The majority have graduated high school with more than a GED
    - Minorities: NOT overrepresented in military

Watkins et al (2008)

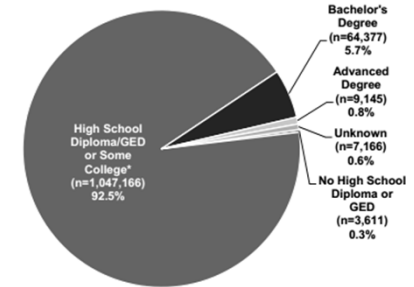


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## Military Culture

- Majority have graduated H.S. with more than a GED
  - Active Duty Enlisted Education Level
  - (N = 1,131,465)
  - H.S. Diploma = 92.5%
  - B.A. Degree = 5.7%



2013 Demographics Profile of the Military Community (2014)

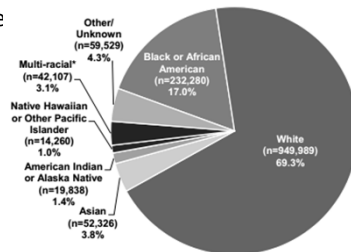


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## Military Culture

- Minorities: NOT overrepresented in Military
  - Race of Active Duty Force
  - (N = 1,370,329)
  - White = 69.3%
  - Minority = 30.7%
  - Comparable to Census Bureau statistics



11.6% of the military population is identified as Hispanic  
Now analyzed as an ethnicity rather than a racial category

2013 Demographics Profile of the Military Community (2014)



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## Military Culture: Why Join?

Friends did it  
 Serve country  
 Travel  
 Family tradition  
 Support family  
 College money  
 Sense of selflessness  
 Transition to manhood  
 Protect country and way of life  
 Get out of legal trouble  
 Free medical care  
 Give life a purpose  
 Be part of a team



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## Subcultures

- Be aware of military subcultures (different cultures within the larger military culture)
  - Infantry, Special Forces, medical providers, etc.
- Culture differs among branches, units, and teams
- Subcultures influence individuals' military experiences differently



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Marylou Lorne



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## National Guard & Reserves

- “Weekend Warriors”
  - A subculture of citizen soldiers
  - Viewed differently by Active Duty components
  - May or may not adopt military culture in its fullness
  - Hesitant to bring dependents into the fold (knowing that it is only a temporary change)
  - Dependents may feel more “out of the loop”
  - Typical services and benefits may not be readily available



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## Women in the Military

- ~200,000 served in OIF or OEF
- Higher risk for divorce, single parenthood
- Gender stereotypes
- Family caregiver role
- Deployment stressors
- Sexual assault/harassment



U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Jennifer A. Vittalovos/Released



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Street et al. (2009); Teegarden (2012); Zoroya (2012)



## Military Dependents

- The key cultural elements of the military—cohesion, camaraderie, and esprit de corps—apply to military families as well
- Military families have a unique lifestyle, including values, norms, stressors, and risk factors that may vary from the civilian population

“When something happens, we are a big family. We take care of each other.”



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# Military Dependents

|                  | Active Duty Members* |              | Family Members** |              | Total DoD and Families |               | Ratio of AD Members to Family Members |
|------------------|----------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|
|                  | N                    | %            | N                | %            | N                      | %             |                                       |
| Army             | 528,070              | 38.7%        | 837,052          | 61.3%        | 1,365,122              | 100.0%        | 1 to 1.6                              |
| Navy             | 319,838              | 44.7%        | 394,917          | 55.3%        | 714,755                | 100.0%        | 1 to 1.2                              |
| Marine Corps     | 195,848              | 49.1%        | 202,801          | 50.9%        | 398,649                | 100.0%        | 1 to 1.0                              |
| Air Force        | 326,573              | 42.4%        | 443,322          | 57.6%        | 769,895                | 100.0%        | 1 to 1.4                              |
| <b>Total DoD</b> | <b>1,370,329</b>     | <b>42.2%</b> | <b>1,878,092</b> | <b>57.8%</b> | <b>3,248,421</b>       | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>1 to 1.4</b>                       |

\*\* Active Duty members include both married and single members.  
 \*\* Family members include spouses, children, and adult dependents.



# Military Dependents

The screenshot shows a White House blog post from December 22, 2011. The title is "Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal One Year Later: 'Out of Many, We Are One'". The author is Gabe Rappaport. The post includes a photo of President Obama and other officials. The text discusses the repeal of the Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) policy and the impact on the military community. The page also features a sidebar with a "GIVE FEEDBACK ABOUT THIS PAGE" section and a "YOUR FEDERAL TAXPAYER RECEIPT" section.



# Military Dependents

- Repeal of DOMA
  - “Defense of Marriage Act” found unconstitutional by the US Supreme Court
  - DoD will extend benefits to same-sex domestic partners of military members
    - Military health insurance
    - Increased base and housing allowance
    - Relocation assistance
    - Surviving spousal benefits

The screenshot shows a memorandum from the Secretary of Defense, dated February 11, 2010. The subject is "Extending Benefits to Same-Sex Domestic Partners of Military Members". The memorandum discusses the implementation of the repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) and the extension of benefits to same-sex domestic partners of military members. It includes details about the benefits to be provided, such as health insurance, housing allowance, and relocation assistance. The memorandum also mentions that the implementation of these benefits will require additional policy review, training, and funding.



# Engaging the Culture with Confidence



## Some Opening Questions

- Which branch of service are you (were you) in?



Soldier



Sailor



Airman



Marine

- What is/was your Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), Navy Enlisted Classification (NEC), or Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC)? (Army & Marines both use MOS)
- Were you an Officer or Enlisted?
- Why did you join the military? Why did you join the specific branch of service that you did?



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## Some Opening Questions

- What was your rank?
- Did you deploy?
- How many times?
- To where?
- Did you stay with your unit?
- What did you do while deployed?



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## Military Language and Terminology

- Some common acronyms and phrases you should know
  - **CONUS/OCONUS** – Continental US/ Outside Continental US
  - **Post** - Army installation
  - **Base** - Air Force or Navy Installation
  - **Camp** - Marine Corps Installation
    - Marines also use Base for aviation installations



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## Military Language and Terminology

- Some common acronyms and phrases you should know
  - **PCS** - Permanent Change of Station (Relocating)
  - **TDY** - Temporary Duty
  - **Leave** - Off Duty - (usually vacation)
  - **AWOL** - (“A-Wall”) - Absent Without Leave
  - **UA** - Unauthorized Absence
  - **MEB** - Medical Evaluation Board



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## Military Language and Terminology

- Deployment-Specific
  - **MOB/DEMOB** – (“MOB” as in Mobilize) Mobilization/Demobilization
  - **OIF/OND/OEF** –
    - **Operation Iraqi Freedom** is the military campaign that began in March 2003 with the invasion of Iraq and ended September 2011
    - **Operation New Dawn** is the withdrawal of troops September–December 2011
    - **Operation Enduring Freedom** is the official name used by the U.S. Government for the war in Afghanistan
  - **BOG** – “Boots on the Ground”
  - **CHU** – “Chew” Containerized Housing Unit “CHUville”
  - **FOB** – “FOB” - rhymes with “Bob” Forward Operating Base
  - **COP** – Combat Outpost



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## Military Language and Terminology

- Deployment-Specific
  - **MRAP** – (“M-Wrap”) Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicle
  - **IED** – Improvised Explosive Device
  - **VBED** – (“V-Bed”) Vehicle Borne Explosive Device
  - **DFAC** – (“D-Fac”) Dining Facility, Mess Hall
  - **IBCT** – Infantry Brigade Combat Team
  - **SBCT** – Stryker Brigade Combat Team
  - **HBCT** – Heavy Brigade Combat Team
  - **HMMWV** – (“Humvee”) High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle



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## Military Language and Terminology

- Deployment-Specific
  - **Kevlar** – Typically the helmet made of the material Kevlar
  - **IOTV** – Improved Outer Tactical Vest
  - **MRE** –Meal Ready to Eat
  - **OPTEMPO** – (“Op-tempo”) Operations Tempo
  - **COSC** – (“COS”) Combat Operational Stress Control



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## Military Language and Terminology

- Deployment-Specific
  - **Outside the wire** – Off the base
  - **Inside the wire** – On the base
  - **Down range** – Deployed
  - **Fobbit** (“Fobbit” - rhymes with “Hobbit”)
  - **Battle Rattle** – Tactical gear (e.g., body armor, ammo, etc.)
  - **Gunner** – “My Gunner”
  - **Driver**
  - **“11 Bravo”** – Infantryman



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## Military Language and Terminology

- Deployment-Specific
  - Theater Clinic
    - Landstuhl Regional Medical Center:
      - Located near Landstuhl, Germany it serves as the nearest full service hospital treatment center for wounded soldiers coming from Iraq and Afghanistan
  - MEDEVAC – Medical Evacuation
  - WTB/WTU – Warrior Transition Battalion/Warrior Transition Unit



## CDP Website: Deploymentpsych.org

### Features include:

- Descriptions and schedules of upcoming training events
- Blog updated daily with a range of relevant content
- Articles by subject matter experts related to deployment psychology, including PTSD, mTBI, depression, and insomnia
- Other resources and information for behavioral health providers
- Links to CDP's Facebook page and Twitter feed



## Online Learning

The following online courses are located on the CDP website at:

<http://www.deploymentpsych.org/content/online-courses>

**NOTE: All of these courses can be take for free or for CE Credits for a fee**

- Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) for PTSD in Veterans and Military Personnel (1.25 CE Credits)
- Prolonged Exposure Therapy for PTSD in Veterans and Military Personnel (1.25 CE Credits)
- Epidemiology of PTSD in Veterans: Working with Service Members and Veterans with PTSD (1.5 CE Credits)
- Provider Resiliency and Self-Care: An Ethical Issue (1 CE Credit)
- Military Cultural Competence (1.25 CE Credits)
- The Impact of Deployment and Combat Stress on Families and Children, Part 1 (2.25 CE Credits)
- The Impact of Deployment and Combat Stress on Families and Children, Part 2 (1.75 CE Credits)
- The Fundamentals of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) (1.5 CE Credits)
- Identification, Prevention, & Treatment of Suicidal Behavior in Service Members & Veterans (2.25 CE Credits)
- Depression in Service Members and Veterans (1.25 CE Credits)

*All of these courses and several others are contained in the Serving Our Veterans Behavioral Health Certificate program, which also includes 20+ hours of Continuing Education Credits for \$350.*



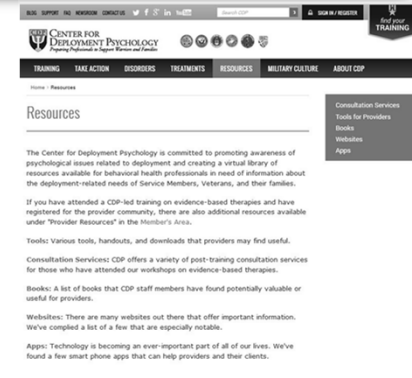
## Provider Support

CDP's "Provider Portal" is exclusively for individuals trained by the CDP in evidence-based psychotherapies (e.g., CPT, PE, and CBT-I)

### Features include:

- Consultation message boards
- Hosted consultation calls
- Printable fact sheets, manuals, handouts, and other materials
- FAQs and one-on-one interaction with answers from SMEs
- Videos, webinars, and other multimedia training aids

Participants in CDP's evidence-based training will automatically receive an email instructing them how to activate their user name and access the "Provider Portal" section at Deploymentpsych.org.





## How to Contact Us

### Center for Deployment Psychology

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**Website:** [DeploymentPsych.org](http://DeploymentPsych.org)

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/DeploymentPsych>

**Twitter:** @DeploymentPsych

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