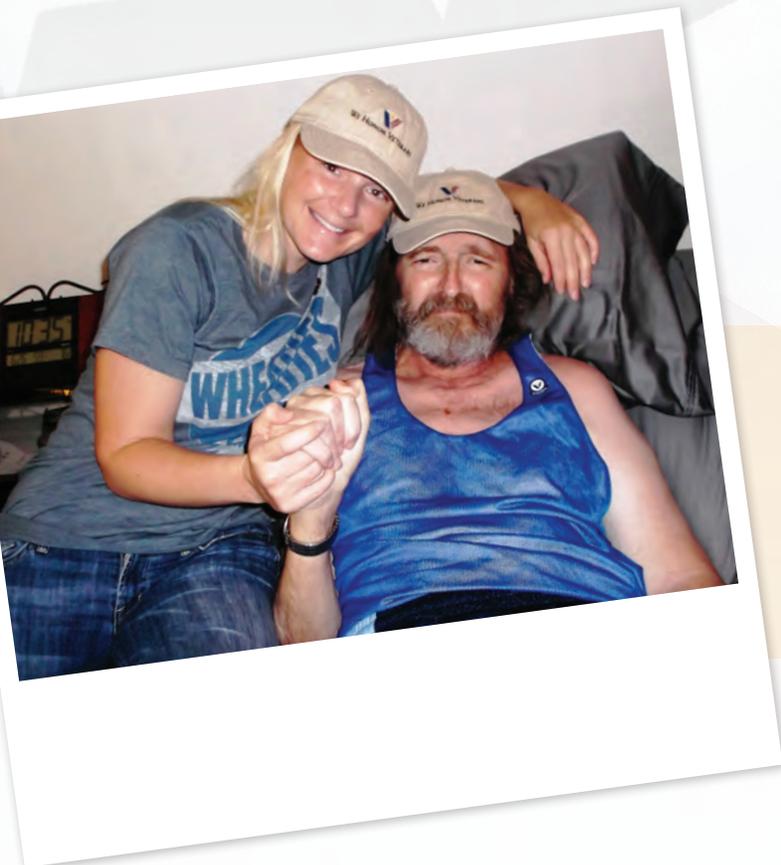


# WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT THE VETERANS IN YOUR LIFE

When was the last time you thanked a Veteran? Veterans have sacrificed their life to protect the freedom of this country. It's never too late to thank and honor them.

The events that occurred during war can impact a Veteran in various ways throughout their life. For example, WWII Veterans were exposed to weather elements that may result in long-term health risks. Though the Korean War was largely overshadowed by WWII and Vietnam, it is important to acknowledge the Veterans who fought in this conflict. For many of the American Veterans who fought in Vietnam the wounds will never heal, especially given the cold reception many received when they returned home.



## Communicate in a Caring Way

Even though many of us are curious about the events that occurred during War, there are certain types of questions we should not ask a Veteran.

Here are some of the questions you should avoid:

1. What was the most horrible thing you saw over there?
2. What was it like over there?
3. Are you glad to be home?
4. Have you seen the news?
5. Do you feel guilty about the things you had to do during the war?
6. Do you want me to pray with/for you?

These questions may offend a Veteran or elicit negative feelings. We should engage with a Veteran in a more cautious and sensitive way, different than how we engage with any other person. Always be supportive and ask them how they have been since coming home, or ask about their families and friends.



## WE HONOR VETERANS

Learn more at [www.WeHonorVeterans.org](http://www.WeHonorVeterans.org).

# WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT THE VETERANS IN YOUR LIFE

## How You Can Honor a Veteran

America's Veterans have done everything asked of them in their mission to serve our country and it is never too late to give them a hero's welcome home. Simple acts of gratitude can make up for a lack of appreciation or recognition during the Veteran's lifetime, especially for those Veterans who were never welcomed home or thanked for their service. The following are tips you can use to engage, honor and recognize the Veterans in your life.

- Give Veterans an opportunity to tell their stories.
- Respect Veteran's service, their feelings, and any suggestions they might offer.
- Thank Veterans for their service to our country.
- Show appreciation for the families of Veterans.
- Be sincere, caring, compassionate, ready and able to listen to what a Veteran and his or her family member has to share about the situation they are dealing with.
- Be supportive and non-judgmental and always validate their feelings and concerns.
- Accept the Veteran as he/she is without judgment.
- Be patient and listen; it might take longer for some Veterans to build trust in you.
- Expect the Veteran's sharing to occur over a period of time.

## Organize An Appreciation Event

Publicly acknowledge the military service and sacrifices made by the Veteran through a Veteran Pinning Ceremony. This gives an opportunity for each veteran to share part of his or her story. By doing so, a sense of meaning and purpose can be gained by the Veteran.

A planned ceremony is one coordinated to enable family to be present. Sometimes it will be connected to a holiday such as Veterans Day or Memorial Day. In most cases, the Veteran will share some of their stories. It is not uncommon for the family to be unaware of these stories if the veteran didn't talk about his/her service or role in the military.

You can also thank Veterans in informal or unexpected settings. One's judgment chooses the right time to do the pinning. While perhaps spontaneous, it is always good to present the pin in front of an audience – even a small one -- especially if can include the Veteran's family.



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