

Is war or military life driving you crazy? Do they say that you have an “attitude problem?” Need help dealing with rage, fear, nightmares, anxiety, flashbacks, depression, guilt, frustration?

Get help from the **Military Counseling Service** of *Vietnam Veterans Against the War*

Fighting for Veterans, Peace and Justice since 1967

Non-governmental - Free & confidential help with discharges
Legal, medical and mental health referrals for GI's & veterans

Dear combat vet,

Do you still feel alone after all the homecoming parties and reunions? You're not. **Vietnam Veterans Against the War** is there to give you the support that you need. As long as there has been war, veterans have helped each other deal with it.

Reach out for the help that you need. A “good life” is what you've earned. Talk to your family, friends and other vets for support. Current GI's are also counting on you to be ready to help them when they return. Find a local vet center or vet group. See resource list below and call **VVAW's Military Counseling Service** at **1-773-561-VVAW (8829)**.

Resources

Vietnam Veterans Against the War has a website at www.vvaw.org with a national list of local contacts, a informational list serve, basic advice on military & veterans laws and issues of the newspaper VETERAN.

Military Families Speak Out

Since many GI's fear retaliation for voicing their opposition to government policy, their families speak for them through MFSO: www.mfso.org, mfso@mfso.org

GI RIGHTS Hotline provides information on military rights and discharges and trains volunteers to answer calls from their local areas. **1-800-FYI-95GI (394-9544)**
www.girights.org

National Network Opposed to Militarization of Our Youth is a national coalition that helps veterans find a place to discuss the militarization of society. Call **215-241-7176**, NNOMY@afsc.org.

Dear GI,

Do you want to know your rights? Do you want to know how to work your way through the military's justice system? To win, you have to know the rules.

You're not the first or the last GI to doubt the patriotism of blind obedience. “Just following orders,” is an excuse that no one, including you, should accept.

There's no easy way out. You have to listen to your conscience if you want to face yourself in the morning. If you have questions or want to find out more about your options call **VVAW's Military Counseling Service** at **1-773-561-VVAW (8829)**.

Protect yourself. Read the regulations.

Discrimination, abuse and retaliation for whistleblowing are prohibited. But so is unionization of the military and GI Collective bargaining.

According to **Department of Defense Directive 1334.1 and 1325.6**, **GI's have the right to:**

- Possess one copy of any literature,
- Write to a member of Congress to complain,
- File a UCMJ Art. 138 complaint against anyone,
- Say and write what you think, respectfully,
- Consult a civilian attorney or counselor,
- Attend public, political rallies, off base, off duty, out of uniform,
- Publish a newspaper using your own resources.

See other side for more details on Military Discharges, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and VVAW.

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What are Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and “Political Therapy”?

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder can affect combat veterans and victims of rape or abuse. This mental illness can cause anxiety, depression, rage, self-destructive behavior and suicide. Although some PTSD symptoms may persist for a lifetime, the sooner vets get treated, the less disabled they will be.

The military and VA have been overwhelmed with veterans. Those who aren't near vet centers are being neglected. GI's disabled by PTSD are being declared “cured,” and then redeployed. The misconduct or desertion caused by PTSD, results in bad discharges, which bar veterans from VA treatment and benefits and subjects them to job discrimination.

Why VVAW Can Help

Members of **Vietnam Veterans Against the War** know that everyone's wartime experiences are both unique and traumatic. Not all veterans find the help that they need to deal with their experience during war. Some vets don't have the necessary support at home, or can't find help within the military or the VA. Many are told to just “deal with it,” and are ridiculed or punished for complaining. Some continue to suffer and die in silence and solitude.

We have accumulated a wealth of knowledge through our personal experiences and our continuing efforts help fellow vets recover from the war and thrive in a civilian society. Having survived our own problems, we feel duty-bound to use and pass on these skills so that future generations of “stressed out” vets will have fewer suicides and wasted lives.

Ray Parrish is our GI Counselor and **VVAW's** only full-time staff. His barely living wage makes up most of our budget and depends on your tax-deductible donations.

E-mail us at vvaw@vvaw.org or call
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PTSD can destroy family and work life, but both can be restored with treatment and support. When veterans recount their experiences, they often face hostility and are called “political” or “traitors.” This is unfortunate; because many veterans find that speaking about their wartime experiences can help them better deal with those memories. It's therapy.

VVAW breaks down the barriers between vets and the public as part of our counseling. When they are ready to do so, we take new vets to speak to students, parents and others who want to discuss militarism in society. This “counter-recruiting” forces the public to face the truth about war and its human aftermath - us.

Military Discharges

A less than honorable discharge is likely to be a lifetime burden, so avoid it. We can help you to understand the regulations and present evidence.

You may get an honorable discharge if:

- You are disabled by a medical or mental disability, i.e. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder;
- Military service is a hardship for your family;
- You are unable to perform your military duties;
- You are a conscientious objector;
- You are homosexual and careful.

Less than honorable discharges may be given if:

- You get caught engaging in homosexual acts;
- You refuse to perform military duties;
- You break enough small rules or a big one.

See the Uniform Code of Military Justice for a more complete list of ways to get confinement, bad discharges and loss of pay and benefits. We help veterans try to “upgrade” bad discharges.