

What Do Veterans Mean to America?

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Veterans are a solid representation of what it means to be an American; brave and proud of their country. Veterans devoted their family, life, realism and values to commit to a selfless act; serving their country to support and defend the constitution and to promote the spread of democracy around the world. American citizens value veterans, and all that they mean to our country and our history as a nation. One can see the sacrifices veterans make when you more closely examine these aspects of a veterans life. They don't go unappreciated, and should always be held in highest regard by citizens of this nation.

When someone elects to serve the nation, his or her family serves as well. A veteran represents discipline and resilience that does not go unnoticed by the American citizens. Without veterans, the United States of America would not be able to have the freedoms that so many citizens enjoy. Because of veterans, our country is protected and our constitution is upheld. Veterans dedicate their entire lives to serving our country. As citizens, we must recognize the sacrifices that veterans made. While we are in the comfort of our own home, there are men and women on the battlefield sacrificing time away from their spouses, children, friends, and families for long periods. Veterans are absent for many memorable family moments; from the birth of their child to their child's first steps. Citizens recognize the sacrifices that veterans make and hold the upmost respect for veterans and their families.

A veteran's life is in no way shape or form a normal life. A veteran is not hindered or bound by the thought of others, but instead the thought that they know they did what is right- serving, protecting, and accomplishing the stated mission. As soldier's, veterans never once put themselves first, but rather their family, friends and neighbors when serving their country and upholding the constitution. As soldier's, veterans quickly had to adapt to a strict code of conduct from waking up early, exercising daily, suppressing their opinion, self-care, relationships, housing, finances, and expectations. Citizens recognize that adapting to the civilian life from a soldier's life is a difficult transition, therefore the life of a veteran is admirable and respected by the American people.

Possessing value, character, and having beliefs is a concept that this nation was founded upon. Veterans are held to a high standard by the citizens of this country. They are also seen a national treasure, as they should be by all. Veterans are the highest quality role models thus representing at all times leadership, integrity, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, and personal courage. These values are visible when the enlistment oath is administered to a potential veteran. The words of the oath, "I, _____, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God." To the American citizens a

veteran is once a soldier always a soldier because of the sacrifices they made to make our country a better place to live in. Citizens recognize the hardships a veteran has faced and those they are dealing with during and after their term of service to the military. As soldier's, veterans placed their own morals and values aside to uphold the constitution and fulfill their obligation. Citizens recognize the discipline, diligence, and bravery that a veteran possesses.

The majority of citizens do realize the importance of our veterans. However, sometimes veterans are easily overlooked by both civilians and our government. Veterans come home as soldiers lost attempting to readjust to civilian life. Some of the price they pay are loss of loved ones, such as separation, which has caused their marriages, or relationships to be inevitably be broken or unrepairable. This causes them to start from square one - their basic needs are not being met. Some of the unseen prices that a veteran pays as a debt to their country are homelessness, lack of medical care for their basic and mental health. Mental health issues are common to our soldiers both before, during, and after combat. Many soldiers live with PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) which interferes with their daily life. Flash backs, horrible dreams in the night, constant fear for their lives and those they love are just a few of the symptoms of veteran's experience. Our government even forgets our soldiers/veterans because after they arrive home, they are issued State IDs and sometimes those are lost, if a veteran needs another copy, they often cannot obtain one with ease because they hear the words "It was lost, we no longer have those files, I don't know how to help you." The unseen Triggers cause them to struggle the most: noises, sights, and memories of the unforgettable things they have seen during combat. Because these unseen truths and the realism of these stated facts are important, goes to show that, our veterans pay an ultimate price and they are important to us because citizens realize that the veterans need more support, encouragement, and love when returning home.

There is no definitive word to describe what a veteran means to America because veterans are invaluable and held to the highest regards by citizens. The sacrifice that a veteran make for his/her country doesn't go unnoticed. American citizens stand with veterans as though they stood for us when they were soldiers. American citizens believe that veterans deserve an easier transition back into civilian life and the full support of our country when building back their civilian life; relationships, finances, and housing. American citizens believe our veterans are heroes and represent all Americans with the pride and bravery it took to uphold our countries constitution. Children still dream about the honor and dignity a veteran represent and hope that someday they too will get the opportunity to take the oath and serve the nation. Veterans represent the true American dream by sacrificing their own morals and values to do what is right and to uphold the constitution as soldiers. American citizens recognize that not all veterans end their military career on two feet and get the opportunity to return home. Tragedies happen and therefore when one veteran pays the ultimate price and loses his or her life; we as a country must remember their sacrifice and mourn along with their family. To our American veterans, your selfless act of service to our country doesn't go unnoticed and we say thank you for your service, bravery, and admiration. You live in our hearts and dreams, and we are forever thankful that you have elected to represent us as individuals, a community, and a nation.