

VET TO VET

THE WRITINGS

FROM THE WRITER'S GROUP

TRANSCRIBED BY

RON ST. JOHN



Rich Roberts
Vet to Vet
Coordinator
Errera Community
Care Center
West Haven,
Connecticut

PREFACE

These are some of the samples of the writing which came out of the Writer's Group from the Errera Community Center (CRP) in Connecticut over the past years.

This is look into the lives and thoughts of Veterans from that center. We continue on.....

moe armstrong November, 2009

These poems were transcribed by Ron St. John. Thank you to Ron and Errera Community Care Center for being in the lead of peer support. The Words that are all in CAPITAL letters-they are themes that are written each week.

SPACE

Hey man are you O.K. and have you seen your face?
It's pale as a ghost and crusty like dried tooth paste.
Yeah, I know, rushing along and no time to waste.
I guess I missed something and it was my face.
So little time, I try to fit in place.
Tomorrow I'll do better and make more space.

By Sam R.

For everything that happens there is a time, and there is a place, every day is an adventure of life. The good, the bad, and any issues we face. Time waits for no man, so we must keep pace.

We keep pressing on, by working, learning and enjoying life, because the mind is a terrible thing to waste.

We keep busy during the week at home or at the work place, and come Sunday is the time to say grace.

Things are always happening, from something as simple as tying a lace, to paying hotel, apartment and car rates, to coming home from work late, to seeing our friend's fate.

Through the love and hate, peace and war, countries, towns, cities and states where everything must be involved in space.

By T.J.

God and Jesus like space

God and Jesus like distance extending in all directions.

God and Jesus like an interval or period of time.

God and Jesus like outer limits or heaven

By Larry P.

Psychologist and doctors say we each have to have our own little space. Some laymen people say that their personal space consist of the area around the tips of our extended arms. It's good that we all have a sense of our own space. Be it 3 ft. or 6 ft. We have to have a way to express or define our boundaries of interacting with each other. I like the thought that it extends out in all directions and it's up to us what the limits are.

By David K.

Interpretation of the word and meaning of space. Space can be interpreted in many very different ways. Most interpretations deal with a blank or a void. You should always leave a space after a punctuation mark. There should be space between the car in front and in back of your car when you park. In civilian life space between you and the person in front of you is the norm where as in basic training, heel and toe is the way to stand in line. At the writers meeting there doesn't seem to be enough space between

beginning of the meeting and reading works. The country has more open space than its suburbs. Outer space seems to have an infinite amount. Sometimes I think the biggest void of space is in my head.

By B. Lewis

Space makes me think of the 1990's show of "Outer limits ." Our rockets take us out of the earth time zone and away from gravity. Now how does that effect your aging?

Aging is mankind's lose of time. It is something we all got to deal with. We are on this earth only for a very, very short time. Space has a volume and no weight and all kinds of gas from the milky way to the sun's millions of explosions. Travel is something we don't understand because space and distance converts into infinity. There is no end to it or close door!

By John G.

The idea of space is when I remember basic training. There's no room in the showers or at the chow hall, or on the bus on liberty off the base. One place I remember seeing a lot of space was those soldiers available after a dust-off. There would be plenty of seats open for new numbers of soldiers to fill the seats for in-bound combat soldiers to fill the space of those killed or wounded.

That's why today, I need my space without people waving their arms or hands in my face, without having my personal space invaded. As long as I got five feet, I'm O.K. After a period of time it gets a little easier but not by much. I still feel my space invaded, but I remind myself I'm in society now, and I realize I don't have to be angry anymore.

By Ernest K.

One thing I learned is you have to give people some space.
If you don't and you get too close, you might end up in their face.

And space can be something we can use, if we're having a bad day.
And it's usually something we all need in order to
get away.

Space is also something we seek, so we can call it our own.
It's a place to live and a place we can call our home.

When we travel to and fro, "time and space"
become a concern.
But after awhile, travel can be something we can predict and learn.

Space and time seem to be endless, they go on and on forever.
So space is something we can all ponder, and isn't it like the word "never"?

By Ron S.

CONTEMPLATE

There are many situations in life in which contemplating never stops, for example: paying bills—which ones should always be first, such as the rent, knowing the roof over my head is most important.

Now, if I didn't put the rent first, most likely a little down the road I would find myself contemplating how to get a roof over my head again. Thank God, such contemplating never ends.

Then once after all the bills are paid the contemplating goes on in how am I going to balance the rest of my finances to make it through the rest of the month—boy, this is never ending!

By Sam R.

When you wake up, adjust the mental state,
conduct personal hygiene, after the breakfast you ate.
Since eating your frosted flakes, you feel grrreat!, watching TV you notice the time,
quarter to 8.
Time to get dressed for work, don't wait to be late.
Exiting the house, you get into your chevrolet.
Had to be to work by 8:30, you arrive at 8:28.
At the end of the workday, you're the only one left to close up, and lock the gate.
You call your girlfriend, to set up a date.
You can't get a hold of her, so you wait,
For her to call back, your mind is in a bottomless state.
Your girl calls back, and after you two talk, set up a time for 7:00, told her you won't be late.
Now on the road, to go out with your girl, you can not wait.
You start driving with lack of attention, hit a pot-hole, run a curb, and a tire deflates.
A trooper saw what happened, pulled up to you, now you can't concentrate.
It's now after 7, you have missed the date.
A while later, the cop gives you a ticket, now you're irate.
You can't get a hold of your girl, so you just go home and you're full of hate.
You are anxious, but mad, feel like you been put in check mate,
So all you do is sit and contemplate.

By T.J.

I often wondered if I had not used drugs where would I be in life.

I've also considered I have wasted away or die. Observe the here and now!
Contemplate where would I John be? A good for nothing, or a good for something.

By John Moo.

As I sit and contemplate my station in life, I can look at my glass as half empty or half full.

If I look at it as half empty, I think of being refused a job slot with Springfield police because of their affirmative action program 20 years ago. If I look at it half full, I remember I have my own place. If it's half empty, I realize I've been diagnosed and under a doctors care. If it's half full, I have SSDI that will take care of me for the next 50 years.

So when I contemplate, it's not all good, but it's not all bad. So it helps me to hang on another day, or another week. What I contemplate in doing is to try to forgive others for past violations against me. It's never easy, but it will be worth it in the end when Jesus comes back and those that a saved will be lifted up to heaven.

By Ernest K.

Through the wisdom of past experiences in life for me you can reach an outcome of positive results and be comfortable about it as a person.

To contemplate is a thinking process to reach a goal in problem solving to a situation that I'm dealing with as a person.

By Richard J.

God and Jesus like to contemplate
God and Jesus like to observe thoughtfully
God and Jesus like to observe thoroughly

By Larry P.

I'm really not a very deep thinker. But at contemplation, I'm a winner. Most of the times it amounts to almost nothin'. Except when concentrating on the belly button.

Anonymous

September 17 Revisted:

Starvation in solitary maximum security prison.

1974: Cruxifaction bionic style leading to brain death. St Luke Chapter 23 and 24.

I know many people hate Adolff Hitler. Everything is relative including "The" speed of light and I don't condone hatred of any sort.

1978: United Nations plan Present

1979: Called Paterson Air Force Base

1980: Present: No more cartoons on the American and United Nation Flags.

By Gary C.

FANTASY

Fantasy Island is based on Mr. Rork's and TaToe. It is a fantasy about an island in the pacific ocean. It was a false story on the television during the 80's.

By Russell E.

The new car you want to buy,
Then to your favorite country you will fly.
When you return, you realize you can't always get what you want, but you can get what you need,
If you try.
When times get tough, you exercise you mind and body, with friends you socialize and compromise to handle personal problems, you sympathize .
As all this is going on, lotto tickets you buy,
The rest of your money, spent on alcohol, and you don't know what, how, when or why.
Trying to live it up, and still go and see the guy,
Who gives you what you need, and to your family and friends you still lie.
You are always thinking about living the American dream, but in all actuality, you're just getting by.
Then one day you're found on the roadside,
It's your wife and daughter who is 5.
You are drunk, and all out of shape,
Your daughter asks: "Daddy why did you have to be so high?"
Your wife told her, let's go honey,
He is thinking about a fantasy.

By T.J.

I use to work very hard to achieve my fantasizing about my being a foreman and leading a crew of workers to do a job. My fantasy was to be a outstanding supervisor with all the respect and prestige that went along with the job. I put so much hope into it becoming a reality, that I did not prepare for being rejected. When I realized that it was not going to happen, my psychosis went hay wire. It was painful that the company that I worked for did not want me as a supervisor. For years after my termination, I suffered from a psychosis that became known as paranoia . . .I was devastated that I got myself into using drugs to relieve my psychosis. Three years ago I finally woke up and quit using unprescribed drugs. The fantasy I had, had become a nightmare of self-doubt and worthlessness. I could not shake the thought of rejection. Being here at CRP has helped me to let "go". I pray that my being here will help me to become a clean and a productive person.

By David K.

Fantasy: it is not part of the real world! A child must learn how to face up to the hardships of all the wars and illnesses of life.

Fantasy is part of your dreams and all those colorful cartoons you are trying to figure out. People have to have some kind of escape when dealing with crimes and wars.

For the baby boomer, it was Walt Disney and Mickey Mouse, all in black and white. But the real fantasy for the baby boomer of the 50's was the beatniks and hippies' movement on LSD. all of Woodstock music.

Yes the flower child and hippies movement had its limits because the 50's had needs for the automobiles to aid the escape of the hippie movement.

By John G.

As I grew up, little did I know about the real world.
I imagined monsters, ghosts and creepy things that unfurled.
As I grew up after the war, war became a big game I played.
We had helmets, play rifles and every other toy weapon made.
I lived in a fantasy world not realizing what war really meant.
There were good guys and bad guys, which I imagined were hell bent.
The good guys, I fantasized always won the war.
That was the way I supposed it happened before.
Having now grown and being called to a war in the far east.
It was there reality sunk in, and childhood fantasy ceased.
My mental image of war from childhood even to this day,
Will now always be a part of me. What more can I say?,

By Ron S.

God and Jesus like fantasy

God and Jesus don't like unreal or odd mental images.

God and Jesus like whimsical or odd notion

God and Jesus don't like pleasant mental images

God and Jesus don't like pleasant imaginative creation.

By Larry P.

SPECIAL

When you have a different job, hobby or plans for the future, someone could be there for you to guide you through the rough times.

Presently, I have a few ills that are my constant “companion”. Yet I don’t really want this situation, it’s just the way my life is going these days.

If I weren't on so many medications, I could see that I would be much better all the way around. Perhaps it comes with getting older and life hands out a bad set of cards that I must play with even though I sometimes don’t choose the right plan to cope with my daily troubles.

I used to be very athletic and able to play sports. Not anymore. Like medications make me too dizzy to be active and exercising has a limit too.

I am coping the best I can. But sometimes it gets too much. I have to have a structured development so I don’t lose my self-esteem or even the interest in the things I use to do.

By Joel

It has taken mankind over millions and millions of years to see past the heavens! And there is no outer limits to outer space. Well there has to be a change, when mankind moved to the moon?

At this point in time mankind has passed the millennium and he has no choice but to leave this war driven earth! For all you to see that mankind still goes to church and has the human capacity to change himself. That’s why he is special!

By John G

The road to hell is paved with blacklisting, omissions), typo(s), and “good” intention(s). Don’t deface . . . Flags
Towns, counties, states, nations united nations and united federation of planet flags. . . Or you’ll be lost in space.

By Gary C.

I feel that there is something special about my being alive. When I was drinking and drugging, I heard auditory hallucinations. Many were those I thought of as Jesus and God expressing their pleasure of me coping with my mental turmoil, urging me to be more than just being another basket case.

My thoughts at the time made me feel special and I looked forward to the next confrontation. That was the first thing I thought about when I decided to stop doing drugs. I realized that stopping to use street drugs, reflecting on that, really made me feel special.

I can say today that I am special because I have 3 years clean time.

By David K.

There are many ways that “special” is used today.
Showing something that is distinct from others, is often one way.
There are special sales, special events, and all kinds of occasions.
And lots of unexpected events, of many different persuasions.
There are special people with special talents and different skills.
This is what makes life so interesting and gives us so many thrills.
If we take the word “special” out of our dictionary,
Think how everything will become so ordinary.
But I look at people to be extraordinary and unique.
Because there are no two alike and that should make us meek.
Thank God, we are always special in His eyes.
For He loves us, and in the end, we’ll be in for a surprise!
By Ron S.

DISTINGUISH

There is only one person I can think of that I would brand as “Distinguished”. He is the Senior Deacon at my church. I don’t know where he gets his energy. He prepares the bulletin for church every week. He has a growing routine that calls for him to volunteer at the food bank 2 days out of the week and helps distribute this food for our church once every 2 weeks. In order to have this food ready for distribution, it has to be picked up from the food bank on the Thursday before the third weekend of the month. It has to be loaded on to dollies at the food bank, loaded into cars or on trucks and brought to the church for distribution. He’s 75 years old and still going and aside from his duties with the food bank, he has time to visit the members of our church that are sick and shut ins and then serve them communion.

I respect him and admire him for his dedication to the church and all he does for the church and congregation.

By Dave K.

There was a time back in 1965, when the infantry unit (1/30), of which I was the gunner of a 4.2mm mortar (#2 Gun); that spring we of (1/30 Inf. Div.), had a training program of 13 weeks and finally three days testing.

If you failed one of the tests of those 3 days, you failed them all.

I passed all of the tests along with 139 others out of a battalion. 16 of us made E.I.B. (Expert Infantry Badge), and received a proficiency award of \$50 a month for completing the course of testing plus all the other tests (physical training) which earned 140 of us the extra \$50 dollars a month for 3 years proficiency pay. It was a very hard training time and I was 21 at the time.

Later in my life, I had been out of the service 6 years and re-enlisted at the age of 34 and accomplished 8 weeks of basic training in 10 days.

Those were very special training times and exceptional and separate training that made the accomplishment a very special time.

Those who made both the E.I.B. and 8 weeks of basic in 10 days (when I was 34) special training time bringing forth special and distinguished veterans who went the extra effort to accomplish a special training time that made in my mind, special people getting the reward of doing a little better than the average soldier.

By Joel

I often wonder how distinguished one could be?

History is full of distinguished people as far back as one can see.

They are people today in this world who have a lot of clout.

And to be distinguished, one needs to be or do something that stands out.

We celebrate in this country those who helped shaped our land.

This month it's Martin Luther King Jr. , and we honor his stand.

There's George Washington, Lincoln, and other great presidents to name a few.

But it's not only the great, for anyone can be distinguished too.

All veterans throughout this country have had something to give.

They're distinguished in their service to us, so we may live.

And even the tomb of the "Unknown" soldier is distinguished in a way.

So let's pray war will end soon, and we may have freedom for another day.

By Ron S.

Gary hit a rock on wet pavement and the motorcycle had gone sideways at 35 MPH. I drove this bike sideways for one hundred yards and then pulled it out and had gone straight on my way as if nothing happened. No stuntman in Hollywood has ever duplicated this.

Climbed Mt. Ketchikan on our first day in Alaska. This had been my first Mt. Climb and without cleats or ropes. Went to say my last goodbyes to my estranged fiancée when the lights, and I should add the gas station's gas pumps stopped working in the Autumn of 1965. This happened to the whole East Coast. Then I drove a complete stranger home to his wife two towns away, and barely missed a drunk pedestrian crossing the thouroufare against a red light.

After safely delivering this husband , then I ran out of gas in my driveway. The tank had already been on reserve.

By Gary Mike C.

A very good expression of Queen Elizabeth and Winston Churchill showing respect with their faces as they talk to reporters. You can see the truth when playing

with cards on a loaded deck. The process of aging and being honest in ones life makes you dress and act like a distinguished person.

By John G

Jesus and God like mark of eminence, distinction or excellence.
Jesus and God like famous, celebrated, great, and notable.

By Larry P.

RESOLUTION

I have made a resolution to come to Vet to Vet regardless of my mental illness. I am trying very hard to cope with my paranoia and participate in the CRP groups and meetings, to help me live a safe and productive life.

The healing process I'm beginning to feel, points me in the direction of a new outlook on life.

I've been plagued with thoughts of fear and rejection and at times they feed my paranoia.

I can see hope (light at the end of the tunnel). Slowly, but surely I'm facing my dilemma and coming to grips with my schizoid condition. I hope that by coming to CRP, I can get back to a good and productive life-style.

By Dave K.

Power of holding firmly to a purpose. I need to purpose in understanding to be able to be able to not hurt myself in falling, because of my inability to cope with life.

By Russell E.

God and Jesus like resolution.

God and Jesus like things decided, things determined.

God and Jesus like power of holding firmly to a purpose.

By Larry P.

RELINQUISH

I have had a difficult time since August 15th, 2007, when I had an operation to remove a tumor from my pancreas. I now have half a pancreas and take 4 capsules before eating in order to have the 3 enzymes which help digest food from the stomach.

It began just 2 weeks after the operation. I returned to work the following Monday, the 20th of August . I found that it was too soon to return to work. I was in extreme pain across the abdomen, and both sides seemed to stay in pain until recently.

Now, I am coping with pain in my feet, legs, back, and hips. Some days are worse than others.

I have already been through pain management for 10 weeks. That worked for awhile along with taking codeine these days to cope with pain and have temporary relief in order to function each day.

Here it is January 2008, and the pain goes and comes, even though I take pain medicine and use a patch on my back because of a prolapsed disc.

Just these past 4 days, and to include last Friday, I went through a time of depression and pain. Today, I am doing much better, that is I have some relief of both the pain and the depression.

I try so very hard to relinquish the hurt and sadness I have been going through. I am sure that I need to change my Saturday schedule so that I can be in better shape than I have been since August of 2007.

When and if I can get up by 8 am on Sundays and attend the 11:30 am program through CRP, I am sure that I will start to feel less painful and less depressed. To relinquish the pain and depression and other ailments, I need to practice relinquishing my medical issues on a daily basis, so that I can function better

By Joel A.

I relinquished alcohol from my life. One day at a time. I did give up the booze November 23, 1984. My life has become more interesting since I quit. I'm able to remember what I did the night before. I had a release from alcohol. I'll take it by the inch, cause it's a cinch by the inch. I didn't quit. I surrendered to not drinking alcohol.

By Joe A.

Some things we have, will be here today, and gone tomorrow.
So it's not too good to hold on to some thing that will bring us much sorrow.
Even the ones we love will one day soon depart.
And we'll have to let them go, even though it hurts our heart.
There are times we have to relinquish the things we love and need the most.
For we don't have control over them, and we must coast.
When all else fails, the only choice is to give it up.
Or we may taste the bitterness in our life's cup.
So don't hold onto anything in life too tight.
And avoid becoming bitter, and losing the fight.
Therefore, remember life's ups and downs.
But relinquish them to the pass, without a frown.
Ron S.

WORK

Work can be anything involving physical, emotional, or mental effort. In many cases, work has a specific goal or rewards attached to its completion. But work can be so much more. It can be how a person defines themselves or how they are compared or “measured” against others, either in or outside of a peer group.

Anyway it is defined, work is an expanding of something or some part of an individual or group, such as “teamwork”. Work may be measured in time or by things more tangible, such as you would associate production with work. Work can also run the gauntlet of human emotions, satisfaction, frustration, anger, joy, confusion and even apathy.

By Eugene

Work started in Egypt with Jews and blacks as slaves. The building of pyramids came by a number of workers using logs as rollers like a wheel. Later wheels were put on carts for war.

Just Think of the wheel, and the technology used by builders for boats and ships. A greater path to all wars. Just ask the Romans for they used the wheel. The Romans constructed roads and stadiums of death.

As you see, work is a process that all civilizations live on!

By John G.

Making it through the day is work for many.
They may be in recovery, and have issues aplenty.

It's hard to get by in life if you don't work and just sit.

For then someone else has to provide for you, and that's just it.

Everything we see around us is a direct result of someone's work.

So it's better if you pitch in, and help out if you can, but don't shirk.

We can't work when we're little, and when we get old, the same thing.

We need then to rely on others for what we need them to bring.

Probably, the worst case is a person who can work but will not.

He wants others to work for him and still wants what they got.

If a man does not work, then “don't feed him” it, says in the Good Book.

So if we have the ability to work, let's be happy, eat and cook.

Work is work, there's no ifs ands or buts about it, so don't cry.

Let's make work enjoyable, and then see how quickly each day goes by.

By Ron S.

DANGER

I only sense danger when my paranoia takes possession of my mind which makes me nervous, instead of my using reason. A sense of fear of hostilities from others makes me fearful of harm.

I don't see myself in any danger although my mind says differently. I pray to God to keep me safe from any danger. I have no intention of hurting anyone, nor anybody hurting me. So I don't let worries of danger get the best of me.

By David K.

As a mother I worry about cars. Buying one! Even getting hit by one.
As an alcoholic, I'm faced with the fact that I could go into a blackout and kill myself or someone else in a car.
Trust the police, I guess that's all you can do in times of an emergency.
I'll probably never own a car for the rest of my life or better yet, never waste the valuable income I have saved on one.
Liquor kills!

Anonymous

What was learned in morning group about aggressive behavior is knowing how to walk away from certain situations to avoid danger to self or others.

By Richard H.

In life, we're all constantly in and out of danger.
We've all experienced it in some way, in which I'm no stranger.
In Vietnam, there was always danger all around.
You had to constantly be alert to each and every sound.
When the rockets came in, there was no doubt.
We all got together and woke up others with a shout.
When the danger was over and everything stopped.
It was hard to go back to sleep, so I stayed up till I dropped.
This went off and on for months, while I was there.
It was an everyday danger that I had to bare.
When my tour in Vietnam was finally over, I returned to "normal life".
But there was a big adjustment involved to get over the strife.
Now there's the usual dangers we all have to face.
Now I go my way, trust in God, stand, and take my place.

By Ron S.

Forgiveness is something I've given some thought to recently. I've been starting to believe this is a health benefit as well. When you forgive someone for an offense committed against you, it's no longer your problem, it's their problem. Just release them to the Lord, and live in peace.

The danger is when you don't forgive, you're in danger of making yourself sick. Anger can eat away inside you, and you can never recover.

But by forgiving others who make an offense against you, you keep yourself healthy.

By Ernest K.

There was a time, back when I was a teenager (1956), I didn't sense much harm or danger around or near me.

Then, as I grew older, the danger seemed to creep into my life and the lives of those I knew and loved.

By the time I graduated high school, the area of South East Asia was heating up to a time of war. The trouble in the Dominican Republic was settled, the Bay of Pigs at Cuba was ended, and the dangerous October missile crisis which involved nuclear weapons came to an end. The "Turn back or else" option was the first real danger I understood because it was deemed to be a nuclear threat, and very dangerous. The danger hung around like a terrible fog, thick with risk and peril.

The greater danger, to me, was when the President was assassinated. The late president Kennedy, was the youngest president the U.S.A. has ever had elected. He had the youth of America and all Americans for that matter, leaning on his every word and foreign policy action.

When he was killed in November of 1963, I thought the world as I understood it, was in grave peril and a grave danger of war on the horizon.

I read and understood about Vietnam, but never thought the U.S. would be so heavily involved until August of '64 when I was training to be a heavy weapons (mortar) gunner.

That first medal after 8 months in the Army, the National Defense Metal was given to all those in the Military, all branches, because they were in the military during a declaration of war.

By 1968-69, the danger was building at home and in Asia. It was dangerous to be a Vietnam veteran in uniform at home, but more so where the war raged and danger and peril, risk, and harm to our vets was a 24/7 occurrences.

Now, it is 2008 and danger is around us and aimed at the U.S., even though we are trying to bring the danger and peril to an end.

I believe the danger since 1956 has crossed our borders with 15 million aliens (illegal at that), getting carte-blanche treatment and where our poor and needy are being left out along with our vets.

By Joel A.

Yes it's time to go back to the basics of English. Like cause and effect! Who, what, when and why and sometimes how. It's not always a vet or soldier who kills someone. In the New Haven area, the drug rate is very high in the months of December and January. Why? Because people can not see in the deep, very dark New Haven skyline. There is no reflection of sunlight and no echo of voices when drug activities become dangerous.

By John G.

COMPASSION

Compassion is something that we all can give.
It's also something we can receive from others as long as we live.
Compassion we can learn as we go through this life.
As we experience with others the things that cause great strive.
Compassion can be felt when we have pity on someone.
It leads to helping out others until the work is done.
Sometimes it's nothing more than to say I've been there and done that.
It could be a common experience like sitting in a "Hot seat" we've both sat.
Also compassion is having sympathy for someone's sorrow.
It helps a person work through their grief for a better tomorrow.
So never turn away an opportunity to show people compassion.
It's been around as long as man, and will never grow old fashion!

By Ron S.

God and Jesus like compassion.
God and Jesus like pity, feel for another's sorrow, or hardship that leads to help.
God and Jesus like sympathy.

By Larry P.

Having had the experience of both sorrow and hardship, and receiving help through another's sympathy and concern, has helped me understand how to cope with other people's hardship and sorrow.

Take for instance, a friend suddenly dies and I feel the need to attend his funeral and offer my sympathy, understanding and condolences to the family I may know well, because of my friendship to my dear friend. Taking part of the final goodbye has a therapeutic effect plus the sharing of loss and feelings of grief puts to rest my hope that I can offer prayers and sympathy to ease the grief they are suffering.

Another instance is when 911 happened, I had watched the story on TV twice so that I might understand why 3,000 plus Americans died that day. It took me a few weeks to get over what I had seen and read about the incident. I felt deep sorrow and grief for those who died and those who survived. Even though I didn't know those people who died, I had to attend a candle-lite vigil in order to share with others the

sadness I felt and the sorrow and sympathy I felt toward those who were related, or friends or co-workers of those who died.

There is another type of compassion that will flow from us and hopefully, bring an ease of the sorrow, grief, and sadness another person is going through. The worse time I ever had in offering my condolences and sympathy was when my foster father's dad died and I felt, at age 14, deeply sorrowful and offered my condolences.

He surprised me by turning me away while he and my foster mother took a walk outside around the yard. I felt so dejected and left out at age 14, how could I understand. He never offered any condolences to me when I was 12 (a month from 13) when my biological mother died of cancer. I never had the chance to share my grief and sorrow with my sister who was still at the orphanage I had just left in Jan. of '56. She came to where I lived in Aug '56, just after our mother died. We never talked about it, never shared the grief and compassion, which fell away to the four winds of our minds.

By Joel

HELPLESS

Helplessness is a feeling of defeat. Feeling helpless is not always a "bad" thing. When most folks hear the word "helpless", they feel it is a negative or bad feeling. Helplessness interpreted as a "bad" feeling can affect our minds, emotions, communication styles, etc. These bad feelings are called "cognitive distortions". Cognitive distortions are thoughts that are embedded in our heads and beliefs about those thoughts. We as human beings conjure up thoughts about events that may have happened and it enables our ability to determine behaviors in our head.

Now, in order to change those negative "helpless" conclusions, helplessness can be a much more effective tool, for instance, helplessness can be a thought process in a bad situation. When we are scared, helplessness can help us to see the good in life and raise our awareness of the things we can be thankful for in our life. Helplessness can be a very frustrating thing. But if used the right way, it can be an advantageous.

By J. B.

I come to Vet to Vet to help me overcome some of my paranoia experiences. By being here I can put aside my thoughts and feelings of helpless frame of mind, and try to change my outlook on life. Here I don't beat myself down with feelings of worthless, unfounded thinking and worry. Through the interaction of sharing thoughts and experiences with each other, I leave with a positive feeling of hope and confidence that I can overcome my feelings of helplessness with my mental illness.

By D. K.

Back in May of '97, I had a grand mal seizure and two more seizures right behind that. I was told that the medical people had to administer aide to me for three quarters of an hour before taking me to a hospital.

I woke up from three days in a coma and felt very helpless while laying in bed, trying to speak, read a newspaper, talk to a friend who was with me when I fell to the floor with my second time experiencing a seizure.

I found it difficult to read because the letters in the newspaper started to come together causing my eyes to feel tired and useless. I found it difficult to read, speak, chew, walk and spell. When I tried to eat, I had trouble chewing at my normal speed. I bit my tongue more times than I can remember. It was now that I felt helpless and anxious to a point of not trying to accept any more effort than necessary in order to save my lips from being bitten and eyes getting blurred. Even my coordination with the use of a knife and fork were a challenge to use. I was confined to bed and examined by two doctors who told me that I had pancreatitis. No treatment followed for that and now I am recovering from an operation to remove a tumor from the pancreases and the removal of two lymphnodes that were cancerous.

I continued on with blood tests to find the right level of medication to keep from having any more seizures. Six years later, June 29, 2004, I had another seizure and a change in medication that helped keep the seizures at bay.

These days, I have to take 24 pills a day to stay well enough to function everyday. Sometimes I feel so helpless that I don't want to get out of bed. I get very tired and have reactions from the meds I take. I have persevered and made an effort to get up at 5:30 am each day in order to attend the CRP program which helps me from feeling helpless.

By Joel

There's one time or another that we all feel helpless.
And there are times in our lives that we feel very blessed.
When there's climatic changes, and the weather acts up.
We have to take whatever comes, and drink from the cup.
We are helpless when situations occur, that we can not control.
Sometimes we want to hide and did a big hole.
When we are helpless there are two ways to turn.
But which way we deal with our helplessness, we must learn.
When we're down and out, we must turn to others for our need.
And take their advice, so we might get better indeed.
When situations occur that are beyond the help of man.
We need to humbly seek God, pray and ask for His hand!

By Ron S.

SECURE

When I think of secure, I think of a safe place to be in. CRP is a safe place to be in. The more you come to CRP, the more reliable CRP becomes and the safer you feel. The staff is very dependable when it comes to solving problems you might entail. I recommend that all vets try CRP for a time. It will leave you with a very secure feeling

Anonymous

These are strange times we live in. Besides a war on two fronts, we as a "secure" people have been tested by outside sources to try to bring our financial security and the security of our southern border with Mexico under better control.

It's getting so bad in my opinion, that if the "right" person is not elected to the presidency next November, the feeling of being secure through the efforts of our government will be out the window. Don't get me wrong. I love my country but don't trust the government. There has been too much danger and the safety of our country has been slowly jeopardized over the last 5 years. There is plenty of room for doubt of the dependability, reliability, assuredness and certainty that in a crisis to expect our government to remember Katrina and know when another disaster strikes, we must first be secure in ourselves and help others the best we can before the outside sources come to the rescue. I felt more secure while in the military than I feel these days. I wonder why that is!

By Joel

When I grew up as a kid, I had a great life and I was secure with my surroundings. I played sports, went to school and did yard work and raised or fed animals in my back yard. I kept busy and free from danger by keeping busy. I was able to have a lot of fun with family and friends. We all went to church on Sunday as a family, and I was free from doubt and also relied and depended on the family that I lived with. I was secure with my mom and dad and my sister's family lived down the street. And in those times, I was very secure and happy growing up. I also went to B.W. baseball teams that I played on and participated in Woodbridge recreation. I went to Amity School until 8th grade while I was living in Woodbridge.

By B. D.

I felt secure being free from worry, self doubt and having a safe place to store my belongings and a roof over my head. Having had a crime free community to live in was the best thing to happen to me. Also, knowing that the things I do are appreciated by the people I socialize with. These things that I do help me to feel more secure in my life. I pray to God that nothing will upset my sense of security and well-being. Being a part of vet to vet, gives me a social situation that enables me to work on my mental illness.

Thanks again for letting me be a part of this community.

By David K.

Being secure is something that many don't understand or have these days. Danger is always there. It's like a battle out there, where there are no lines or fox holes to hide in.

Doubt is something that we can often see in the eyes of others. Each day there are shocking scenes of deaths and shoot-outs seen on the news . No wonder there is a disease call P.T.S.D!

By John. G.

It's crazy how the world is today. Too many people rushing, and running to get things done, never to have the time to stop and contemplate. Car accidents, domestic violence, murders, and frequent break-ins on any given residence.

These are just some of the things in life seen by the average citizen. No two days are the same, and not one day is a peaceful uneventful day, while no one seems to have a solution, not a prime minister or a president.

While driving a car is a risky task, since too many on the road go so fast. Does anyone know what they are fighting for?

Chaos is an event that occurs throughout the day on a daily basis. People always on the edge, arguing, acting like they are running in the races. No one seems to stop, relax, and be grateful about what they have with their families, like looking up at the stars.

11 p.m. on any given night, do you know where your children are? Everyday you go out, going about your daily business, are you resting assured, that you feel secure?

By T.J.

To be secure in this day and age is next to impossible with the way our government is handling things, and sometimes our families and friends abandon us as well.

The only thing I can feel secure about is my own personal beliefs in knowing I tried my best, and I still believe in God. And one day, God will make things right for me. As long as I stay secure in God's standards and not follow the standards of the world.

By Ernest K.

OPINION

It is my opinion that being a part of the Writer's Group, is the best group of the Week. You get a chance to express your personal views about being a part of CRP and Vet-to-Vet through writing your opinion about a certain word identified with our treatment of our mental illness.

It is my opinion that coordinators and facilitators are the best that the psychiatric department at the V.A. could ever have. You are the best of the best, thank you for being there.

David K.

A personal visualization of any situation,
Put into written or vocal interpretation,
Sometimes with detailed description,
If about people, they might provide an imitation.
It happens every day, in all nations.
Some will use discrimination,
While most people are engaged in normal conversations.
Many brought together by relation,
Getting along using socialization,
Or in fact actuation.
Mixed with individuals of different generations,
You could find these types of views in books or on the news and on television.

They are called opinions

By T.J.

Some while back, perhaps too long ago to matter to some, my opinion didn't really matter, nor get asked. Of course. I was only 12,13,14, etc. to 20 years old. I felt totally left out and alone based on the position I was forced to take because I was too young to know and considered the least knowledgeable enough to ask about anything.

I began to think that if I had to stand before a class of students and give my opinion about a book or write an essay, I could at least offer my opinion at home on any subject that I thought worthwhile to talk about. It seemed when this did occur, I was asked "Who wound you up?"

It was then I began to withdraw from expressing my thoughts about anything and had a difficult time to express in my classes what my thoughts were, especially in history and English classes all through high school.

Even in the military my opinion wasn't necessary. I was told what to do, when to do it, and how it was to be accomplished.

Only after I returned home from the Army 1961-1971, I had been (finally) asked what I thought of this or that by family and friends.

Even today, I have difficulty in writing daily in a journal. And when I do, it is my thoughts and ideas and opinion(s) that really count.

I am so thankful for the programs at CRP, whereby I can ask questions and offer my opinions and ideas without feeling displaced and pushed aside because my opinions don't coincide with others.

This is America, and you can give your opinion to anyone. Just be careful to whom you give it to!

By Joel

My opinion never matters, so I wait until it happens. That way it can gain some leverage, and settle within like your favorite beverage.

If I voice my opinion before I know, then it becomes like fallen snow. I try not to voice for show, or to entertain my ego. So I take my time before I let people know what I've gained by looking thru the window.

By Robert B.

Every day someone, somewhere has something to say about a topic that's hot. Usually people give their opinions whether we want them or not. In today's news, experts are always around to give us their view. But we must be careful of what they say and what may ensue. If you don't like an opinion, and there are plenty around. You can ask anyone you like, and search until one is found. Some opinions are good, while others may be very bad. But it's up to each individual to decide or he may be had. Regardless of what you may hear or what has been said. Just remember, don't be stupid, seek the truth, and use your head!

By Ron S.

Opinions come as part of change for most people. You cannot see the danger that comes from war! There is much conflict in war. In the civil war, there were many opinions. From the K.K.K. to the Hells Angels, they had their opinions.

This is happening right here in our national culture. No matter where you go, these characters don't stand alone. Do you know which side of the street a vet can walk on?

By John G.

ANTICIPATE

Many times throughout the day we all anticipate.
Things beforehand that happen, we contemplate.
For every action there is a reaction, you know;
Therefore, we need to anticipate what will flow.
Expecting something to happen, can bring exciting things
But often what we expect, is not what life brings.
It's always good to anticipate something we look forward to.
That way we have a future and keeps us from becoming blue.
So always anticipate, and keep on living for the day.
And hope will be yours, as you wait and anticipate, come what may!

Ron S.

My mind is blank.
It feels closed up, contained like a tank.
It's hard to think,
When your thought process sinks,
You try to get it back,
Not realizing its concentration you lack.
It's usually simple for me to write.
About any word or subject;
I most never have to worry
About getting it right!
With everything I do, I rarely am late.
When I am writing, it's something I don't tend to anticipate.

By T.J.K.

The idea that I expect to interact with fellow citizens is more than a liking of me and them, but a understanding of human nature at work. We have a way of foreseeing each other's path.

Some of it is because we like each other and the rest is anticipating each other's day.

Anonymous

At one or two times in my life I thought I could anticipate a long military career, but it was cut short. Another time, I was to anticipate a career in law enforcement, but was shut out because of affirmative action.

The only thing I can anticipate now is to live out my remaining days on social security. So I'll be anticipating my end instead of being afraid of it, because the end down here can only mean the beginning of a beautiful new existence of life after this life is over.

Being with Jesus will be better than this life because my next life won't be full of disappointments like this one has been for me.

By Earnest K.

DILEMMA

I find each waking moment a dilemma . . . what / how to think and subsequently do. The only thing I find that works for me is my belief system in a holy, life-giving, universal spirit that guides me and optimizes my spiritual and action paths. By my own methods, I would always run from fears, which promote anger (frustration). The life-giving spirit gives me my best opportunity to max out my days and sometimes grinding, though steadily moving forward.

By Howard S.

How many times have I had a dilemma in my life.

Most of the time it was a difficult choice that caused me great strife.

When there was a war going on in Vietnam, I didn't know what to do.

As luck would have it, like many others, my number came up too.

Little did I know that I was going to be sent to the war zone.

So I enlisted in hopes of staying safe, but orders came for Nam and I gave out a moan!

I am sure that there were many others that during that war era, who had to make a choice.

But, some went North, burned their draft cards, and protested the war with a loud voice!

However, I don't regret going into the service and doing my duty to God and our country.

For we live in a great nation, and it's because of men in uniform, we can all remain free!

By Ron S.

Dilemmas are certainly not the choice of being a part of. In fact, a dilemma can cause more heart ache than the wonderment of being free of a terrible situation.

I sometimes reflect on the terrible days of my life when I was between 6 and twelve, living at an orphanage for 5 years. And later, I found myself in another dilemma

which came to my astounding awareness that I was about to live with a man (my future foster father) who (when I was 4 years old), had an argument with my biological father, and nearly ran my father off the road while I at age 4, sat in the pickup truck and cried out to not hurt my father.

He nearly did. And I had a flashback at age 15 while driving the Driver's Ed car, I nearly ran off the road into a reservoir. If it wasn't for the dual breaks on the car and the Driver Ed teacher putting the breaks on, I really don't know what would have happened.

There are more dilemmas that occurred in my life than I can explain here. Perhaps one day, I will write about them and find the resolve to let go of the dilemmas that have affected me since I was 4, and maybe, just maybe, I can get some relief from this manic/depression that has been a great part of my life.

For today, I have 6 medical issues that seem to keep me in a grip of have to take 24 pills a day to stay well.

The dilemma is taking the pills and I remain sick, and without taking the pills I will be sicker.

My dilemma is a two way sword. I only hope I can remain one step ahead of the sickness(es) I am going through. I take it one dilemma at a time.

By Joel

SUPPORT

Support comes in many ways. It's a two way street.

Sometimes we give more support to others than we receive, sometimes the opposite is true.

I have had plenty of support from others when I least expected it. Then there were times when I gave more support than I ever thought I could or would give to others when I was age 9 to twelve.

For the most part, I found the best support given to me was when I joined the Army and as time went on, support was given especially for my job as a photographer (no-pic, still, and lab work), because the work was during 1968 to 1971, and was a never ending source of demand for motion and still pictures to be seen by many higher ranking people, even the U.S. President.

I loved that work. That was when I learned that my writing and picture taking skills really mattered because those pictures that went into the Stars and Stripes and Army Times news papers mattered a lot. Plus all the events for the post at Stuggard, West Germany, and the Stuggard Zietung News of West Germany.

Support to endure the times spent on the East German border, operating the Ground Surveillance Radar, was a class act. Security was so tight it squeaked. Really!!

And now, the support I receive from CRP staff and other vets here is a welcome measure that makes my life better suited to endure all the anguish moments, I must endure as long as we stick together and support one another.

By Joel

For some reason, I feel my support system does not do much to keep me from worrying about my psychosis. Sometimes I feel comfortable without my state of mind being out of control and other times, control is out of the question.

Sarcasms during group conversation makes me feel awful. My support system seems to breakdown and leaves me nervous and confused as if I've done something wrong. The thing I think I should be talking about, I'm afraid to voice it for fear of rejection or upsetting the apple cart.

My support system could use some help.

By David K.

Support can apply to many things that help us be.
Some are material, and others are for invisible things we can't see.
We can get material support from those around us who care.
They a people with big heart, who have a lot to give and share.
But the one support we can't go without for too long,
Is it's for one who knows what we're going through, and understands our song.
Material support we can see, and we all need food, shelter and clothing,
And after that, we still need close relationships, and the emotional support it brings.
It's good to have someone that we can lean on when things are tough,
Because in life, there are many bumpy roads where the going gets rough.
One of the best supports I know, is to give someone a hug, I've learned;
For it's one gift we can give, as well as receive it in return!

By Ron S.

Support has been very trying to me before / during and after my last military duty.

Before then, I worked 40-60 hours for USPO and made a good living. I had another 30-40 hour job which also provided me additional support for my family and investments. I had a house and 3 cars fully paid for, and no mortgage debt. I was able to support my parents, sisters and their debts and loans. I gave to my church and organizations.

I supported the salvation Army and Goodwill (constantly buying for the needy and always changing around my furniture and household goods for re-donating). I discovered so much affection, admiration, respect. I felt like a modern day Robin Hood, I enjoyed being called on for comfort and counseling and this didn't all change while I was in Iraq war, though the members of my assigned unit at first acted like bullies, all showed high regard/respect and affection when they finally got to know me.

Well things didn't go well after returning from Iraq. I lost everything. Today, someone told me I should say "I have nothing, but I have "my life". Now more than ever I need support. I hate asking for support. The only ones helping now is the V.A.

I've leaned to live with little to nothing. I lost my inspiration life and now I'm unable to support myself. By Gladys

ENDEAVOR

Although you made me marvelously, and your favor is always there to sustain me, I walk this godlessness waiting the day of the Lord.
This is my time and my cross.

Heeding help from family and friend, not wanting to give up, trying to endure to the end.

Finding any day is a special day to receive what God will send. No this is not a comfortable condition so please Lord hear my petition.

This is just my time, my cross.

When I get broken down to my knees or out on the street begging please. I realize I don't have holes in my hand or a spear in my side. No one has ever placed a crown of thorns on my head. So I try to be strong through this frustration I ride, just wanting to be a servant, till the day I die. I know your hands and angels surround me daily encouraging me in this life, though it's not easy. I guess this is just my time, my cross.

Truly I desire to be the apple of your eye, the commandants I've learn I desire to try. At times I feel I'm living in a besieged city feeling like broken pottery, and no one to have pity. Still I strive to make something out of this loathsome situation, not giving up on doing the correct things without hesitation. Trapped in a space where I must take shelter under your wing. Shattered, I'm feeling, but in my heart, a love supreme is the song I sing. Cause this is my time, my cross.

By Skipper

Effort - show more effort, please boy put in work,

Focus - stop run down skirt.

Self proclaimed - I am an expert doing this from birth.

I endeavor to do better - from my goals I won't divert. Believe me - it hurts - to know that your partner is a flirt - Still we endeavor to make it work maybe just for what it's worth.

By Morris

I "strive" very hard to make my presence here pleasant and peaceful. Through communication and interaction with my fellow vets, I endeavor to get my sanity back. With an added amount of patience, will power, and cooperation from my peers, I manage to get through the days I spend here at CRP.

My life would be unmanageable and I'd probably be stung out on street drugs and homeless. So I have stayed clean for 44 months. It is my endeavor to add 44

more to the list. If I keep going, with prayer, dedication and commitment, I will stay clean and sober.

By Dave K.

Through life there were so many things I endeavored to do. There were failure in trying, but there were successes too.

There's one endeavor in life I believe is key, and that's the motto "We should strive to be all we can be!"

Some endeavors are small; others are huge and we give out a sigh. The easy ones are no problem, but we grow by giving them a try.

Life is full of hills and valleys as you well know. It's how hard we strive that will indicate how far we'll go.

We must continue to endeavor or a least give it a try, because in life we'll always have to endeavor, until the day we die.

By Ron S.

Endeavor has a few descriptions that brings out a reflection on how one can endeavor as in trying to do something, as I kept trying to become a photographer in the Army.

My first job was an effort by "Uncle Sam" to make me a missile mechanic.

However, I just could not see myself chasing "enemy missiles" or "jets" across the skies on a radar screen at Fort Bliss, Texas.

I began taking picture when I was 12 years old and continued on the rest of my life. Now, this started back in 1956. After I quit the missile school half way through, I continued to strive toward becoming a photographer; that was my goal.

I was sent to Heavy Weapons Infantry, 11 Charlie. Having finished that 8 weeks training at Fort Ord, California, I was sent to West Germany, October 1964. By the time the U. S. was at war in Vietnam.

Continuing as an infantry man, I start out a stick sleeve private (E-1) and by June of 1966, I moved from assistant ammo barer to a gunner on No. 2 Guns and Spec 4 (base gun for the other 3 guns), and during my infantry training teaching I made the effort to receive the Expert Infantry Badge (EIB), that only those in the infantry can accomplish with 13 weeks of training.

Those in the infantry during combat, a year at lease, earned the Combat Infantry Badge. (CIB). I give my blessing to those who have earned the CIB. I know that only 16 out of 75 in my company Hg. & Hq. Co. made the EIB in June of 1965.

Further, only 140 of a battalion (2,500 men) made the EIB. At least half of the 140 went to Nam, and who knows how many returned home. By June of 1971 I was a photographer, Spec-5.

I have had many quests that have required me to attempt and strive and try to endeavor to accomplish the missions I set out to achieve. The ten and a half years I served in the Army were never lost for my chance to do my best for God, Home, and Country.

By Joel

The last boy made it up the hill. He reached and pulled and stepped his way through the bush. The search for the meaning of his endeavor was coming up short.

Two deer startled by the noise ran off. They were chewing on juniper berries and the boy got an idea.

The juniper berries were bitter and gross so he spit them out and kept on his way. This adventure was starting to stink; then he was eaten by a bear.

By James T.

It's not the critic who counts but the person in the ring who gets dirty, bloody and knocked down again and again, but still gets up time and time again.

Those who simply try . . . and whether they fail or succeed, deserve all the credit. "I will always endeavor to uphold the prestige, honor and esprit de corp of being a ranger.

What does it take a person to cross that threshold? To try something new, something fearful? To make an attempt at change. What does it gain a man to win at all costs, but lose his soul?

A simple effort to simply live a simple life.

Anonymous

INDEPENDENCE

In the United States, Independence Day commonly known as the Fourth of July is a Federal Holiday commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, declaring independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain. Congress approved the wording of the Declaration on July 4 and then sent it to the printer. Whether John Hancock, as the elected President of the Second Continental Congress, or anyone else signed the document that day is unknown, because that document has been lost presumably destroyed in the printing process. On August 2 in the following month, an engrossed document was signed by Hancock and other delegates.

Independence Day is commonly associated with fireworks, parades, barbecues, carnivals, picnics, baseball games, and various other public and private events celebrating the history, government, and traditions of the United States, but is often also viewed as simply a summer festival, apart from its patriotic overtones.

In 1777, thirteen guns were fired, once at morning and again as evening fell, on July 4 in Bristol, Rhode Island. Philadelphia celebrated the first anniversary in a manner a modern American would find quite familiar: an official dinner for the Continental Congress, toasts, 13-gun salutes, speeches, prayers, music, parades, troop reviews, and fireworks. Ships were decked with red, white, and blue bunting.

In 1778, General George Washington marked Independence Day with a double ration of rum for his soldiers and an artillery salute. Across the Atlantic Ocean, ambassadors John Adams and Benjamin Franklin held a dinner for their fellow Americans in Paris, France.

In 1779, July 4 fell on a Sunday. The holiday was celebrated on Monday, July 5.
In 1781, the Massachusetts General Court became the first state legislature to recognize Independence Day as a state celebration.

In 1783, Moravians in Salem, North Carolina, held the first celebration of Independence Day in the country with a challenging music program assembled by Johann Friedrich Peter. This work was titled "The Psalm of Joy".

In 1791 was the first recorded use of the name "Independence Day".

In 1870, the U.S. Congress made Independence Day an unpaid holiday for federal employees.

In 1941, Congress changed Independence Day to a paid Federal Holiday. The residents of Vicksburg, Mississippi, celebrated Independence Day for the first time since July 4, 1863, when the Siege of Vicksburg ended with a Union victory during the American Civil War.

Most of history is full of people seeking independence from others. Sometimes it even involved fighting against our sisters and brothers.

Nations have risen up against nations and went to war. Because one nation wanted control and that's what they fought for.

Our country was at first controlled by England and its King. But we sought independence and the freedom it would bring.

There was a revolution fought against England to free this land. Many people fought and died, while others lent a hand.

Our flag stands proudly as the symbol of independence of our nation. So let's all get together on the 4th of July. and enjoy it with fun and celebration.

By Ron S.

PEACE

Lately, as of the past month or so, I have had somewhat a sense of peace within myself. And attending CRP, I try to stay with that sense of peace and calm that permeates from the groups I attend.

Every once in awhile this sense of peace and calm, gets sidetracked by my physical wellness, turned illness, pain I am experiencing and the joy of calmness and tranquility suddenly lost to aches that stay with me for a week or so, then finally leave like another season vanished without a "word" of good-bye.

I welcome the lack of aches and pains that sometimes take away my concentration of keeping track of appointments and my medication ritual.

Peace I hope will be soon from the war in Iraq. Even though there seems to be a lull in the war at times, I don't see an easy and peaceful way to leave Iraq when the time comes.

If we were to leave starting today, it would take the rest of this year and all of the next to leave without any incursion from our enemy, some of whom are already here in the U.S.A.

I say to find a time of peace can be acquired by the mid 2010. Then, have a 4th of July parade in every city and town, all across the U.S.A.

Give a big thanks to our troops when all are home safe and sound. We love our vets too much to let a least a generation grow up in peace and not war before committing to another foreign war we don't need.

By Joel

Peace can come in two forms.

Physical or mental are the norms.

Is one better than another, I'm not sure?

But when mind and body work together, it's a cure.

Peace of mind does not come easily in this time and age.

There is too much confusion today and people are in a rage.

Why have there been so many wars where peace does not exit?

Just look at the differences people have, and it's too many to list.

However, when two or more people can agree on one thing.

Then peace often follows, along with the tranquility it brings.

One can achieve inner peace regardless of what is about to unfold.

Just put your hand in God's, and know that He is in control!

By Ron S.

A flower a bottle, a baby, a needle, a tranquil state or something to hold on to.

Inner peace is reliant on a crutch.

A fix. I lean on something

and problems are easy.

Marred with mediocrity; my people at war

was play out without firing a shot.

There were lives to be saved

not taken away.

I want to eat rice and emit sulfur,

so I can prove I am worthy of a parade.

By James T.

CONSUME

Through my ministry completely guided by God, I must consume, which means to absorb the written and spoken word, so that I can effectively minister to the lost, the bewildered, and the hurting masses.

By Charles W.

I think of consume as a method of taking on a challenge as I often do, to cope with pain I am enduring each day. I have a brace for my left hand to help prevent putting my thumb in a disposition that causes me severe pain.

I also have 4 different exercises I do each day in order to strengthen my back muscles at the lower back area, next to my lower spine area, that causes me to feel the ache from standing more that 10 to 15 minutes.

Even though the exercising is fine, I have a return of pain that causes me to hesitate to exert more exercise when I am experiencing pain.

I don't take pain meds for this pain. I was taking codeine and it was a halfway help in the matter. Having just turned 65, I know the pains I experience can consume my life, but I cope with it the best I can.

I am thinking of getting a letter from my primary care doctor in order that I can use the exercise room downstairs at least twice a week for an half-hour each day.

I try to eat properly, sleep 6 hours a night, and keep up my exercises as long as pain doesn't stop me. I try to get absorbed in my hobbies of coin collecting, photography, stamp collecting and reading. Also, I listen to classical music, which I find relaxing and collect CD's of jazz, R& B, Rock n' Roll, Blues, and DVD's of movies I want to see as soon as I have the DVD player in operation.

By Joel

Too many people this day and age are consumed by material things. They're so engrossed, they forget the problems it brings.

If we don't pay cash for what we have, we certainly go into debt. For little do we realize what we buy, must be paid yet.

Foreclosures and bankruptcies are the norm of the day. We lose what we have when the cost is too much to pay.

We need to know there is a way out of this mess. It's simple, count your cash, and purchase and buy less.

Debt can consume us completely and we may have no where to turn. So It's time to go back to finance 101, to manage and learn.

Ads are always trying to attract us into buying what we don't need. So don't be sucked in, save your money, and remember you have people to feed.

By Ron S.

CARE

Guardianship or custody means to take ownership, and to guard because God has given me guardianship or custody of His word, because I can give out His word, but I don't own it and I can take care of it, because it is more precious than silver and gold.

By Charles W.

C - Is for care and concern for others and/or things,
so that we can see the goodness it brings.

A - Can make us anxious, in hopes that there will
be a good outcome not bad; because no
one likes to see failures that often make us
sad.

R - In care, gives us reason to get involved,
because there are so many people who
need help, and problems that need to be
solved.

E - Is for experience that results from caring for
others, for it's in giving that we experience the love of our sisters and brothers.
By Ron S.

My latest care and concern has been very special to me and my family. The reason being that two great granddaughters were born into this world by two of my grand children. Both of them are healthy and beautiful.

It's going to take a lot of caring and loving for both children in this mixed up world. I'm sure they will survive just as their parents and grandparents did.

It's all about caring!

By Bill B.

INTUITION

Deciding to participate in Vet to Vet group was the best thought I could have thought of: having feelings about my well being, left me a little distressed and paranoid. I fear for my sanity and safety. My intuition tells me that I don't have anything to worry

about. Just put one foot in front of the other and with my reasoning power, I will get over this. I must go on the way I'm going. To jump off now would drive me crazy.

By D. K.

There were times in my life where I had keen and quick insight or intuition. I will call them snap judgments, where a decision was made in the moment, which change or influenced my course of action.

Intuition, as I see it, is having to make a choice in the direction I could go. Like driving a car from point A to point Z, with multiple ways to get to Point Z. Some ways better than others, some longer than others, some more dangerous, etc.

I intuitively drive a car a certain way in hopes of avoiding any delays, traffic jams, road work, etc. When driving, at times, I must make a quick judgment. My intuition says go this way, not that way. I hardly ever used that road before, but it's like taking the "road least traveled", which at the conclusion of the trip, turns out to be the best!

By Ron S.

I stayed at home for a few hours and watched television, regretting how things went between my girl friend and me, and to the TV. I stopped paying attention. I have tried calling her on the phone to hope for some conversation. On the living room floor is my ripped up citation, that of which I received for hitting a curb with my car and it's tire deflation. I called my girl friend's parent's house, they said Sarah is out with friends and that they have gone fishin'. I was looking for a way to make it up to Sarah and to save our relations. I went to the lake's boat launch and I seen a group of people far in the distance and I started in their direction. As I got closer, I could see Sarah. She was looking at the water and it's reflection. I got close enough to call her name, and when I did, she looked over at me with shock and deception. Then, another guy came over to her and they hugged with relaxation. I had made an assumption, but found in the end, I was wrong. I should have considered other intuitions.

By T.J.K.

Divine. A peek into the keyhole of all knowledge and all seeing "people" always seem to say:

"My intuition spoke to me." I was down and out. I had no way to turn. I didn't know where to go. All of a sudden. . ."My intuition spoke to me". I was saved. I was rescued. "My intuition spoke to me". Who is this intuition fellow? Always has the right answers. Always knows the way. Pure knowledge - insight. Where was my intuition yesterday? Why yesterday my intuition had nothing to say? My intuition is a cruel master to make me suffer this way. "My intuition spoke to me". I didn't listen yesterday.

By James T.

FATE

I believe that my destiny is written in my Father And that my mental state of mind is only temporary, and that this nightmare will go away and I can put my life back on track and get some work done.

I hope that it is my fate about the future will be good and fortunate for me. As it is now, I can only hope and pray that fate is inevitably written in the future.

By D. K.

What is fate? Does it really exist?
Or is it better off not knowing, so we can live in bliss?

Who wants to know what's going to happen tomorrow?
It may bring good fortune or some terrible
sorrow.

Is it fate, or a lot of luck when we hit the jack pot?
Or was it our choice to buy the ticket, and give it a shot.

When things happen, is it predetermined by someone?
Who may have made the stars, planets, earth and the sun?

Fate really is something that's impossible to understand.
It's better to accept whatever, get on with our lives, and do what we can.

Are our lives really predetermined and our
destiny set in lead?
I believe we can know our destiny when we seek the truth, and use our head!
By Ron S.

DUTY

I think that I have the responsibility and moral obligation to my fellow veterans to share my experiences and knowledge about my mental condition with them in order to recover my sanity.

It is my duty as a vet, to be as honest and thoughtful as I can possibly be about my condition and communicate to them how important vet to vet groups can be to help our recovery.

By D. K.

Trying to be of service or good to each other is a challenge. duty is an ever lasting sense of doing good or being of service. Duty is not easy. We humans seem to be good to each other for a few days, weekly, or months-then. . . Well, duty lasts for a long time. How do we maintain duty?

The idea of long term dedication to goodness is duty. Some people try to do bad or they might be evil-they don't seem to last. Evil seems to eventually get caught in change. What is bad and dominant does not seem to last.

We must also ask for duty. Humans love to forget. Humans are lazy and love to not move as hard as many other animals. This laziness means humans can and do think. Thinking means that humans can forget because we don't have the routine of other animals. Daily reminders toward duty is important for humans. We can and do forget or we just get lazy.

Also, there needs to be an encouragement toward duty. People love to not be dutiful. Being of duty and/or service is important. being and acting dutiful needs encouragement.

Sometimes, humans are timid. Celebration of duty and dutiful acts are important. Realizing that we're part of great goodness or community of sharing seems to come out of duty.

All of us can become discouraged. Duty and the sense of sharing good with others keeps us from becoming discouraged. Vet to vet and peer support goes a long way to daily reminders to be dutiful.

My purpose in life, to be good to others. By trying to be of duty and service, I stay move toward goodness. I can be of duty with support and encouragement. Support and encouragement come through people who are my peers struggling not for survival, but wellness and goodness - Vet to Vet has helped me and answered many of my moments of discouragement - I have persevered because of peer support and some professional help.

By Moe Armstrong

My duty has change from time to time.
It's my duty now to write this poem and hope it rhymes.
Duty, I believe comes with responsibility,
And it's usually based on age and capability.
When I was little I had small jobs around the house to do.
Sometimes it was nothing more than polishing my shoe.
As I grew older, my duties were many.
Taking care of things and counting my pennies.
The duty with the biggest impact in life was when I served.
It was during the Army, I received much more than I deserved.

I really didn't need to go to war, but I heeded the call,
and it was in Nam I became a war casualty and had a big fall.
Today I can honestly say our country is the best of all,
because they take care of veterans so we can stand tall.

By Ron S.

CONVICTION

I, minister Charles W., being a firm believer of the grace and glory of God, have the conviction to bring the Gospel, or should I say the Word, to all searching and thirsting for the knowledge of Him.

By Charles W.

Convictions are fixed beliefs, we get from some where?
I received many when I went to school, and they were taught there.
From time to time, I doubted what was told and said.
I then did my own search for truth, and started to use my head.
The search ended, when I found a book that I believed said it all.
It was the Holy Bible that convicted me, and I heard the call.
Now, I can say I know that there is a right way.
So my convictions are now fixed on the Word, which I can live by day to day.

By Ron S.

"I pray that I'm right!!" I have a strong belief that my present mental illness is going to get better, that is my slurred voice, and paranoid condition will go away, and I will live the rest of my life without the stigma of mental illness ruining my life.

I am convinced that my continued participation in CRP Groups and visits will help me get over my handicaps and I can live a more productive life.

By David K.

CHANCE

To take a chance is to be daring because of the risk involved. You may succeed but you may fail. CRP allows one to take small risks or changes with the support to

insure you succeed. However, you must be willing to take a chance in the first place. When you dare to take a chance it means you are not satisfied with your present existence, and are willing and ready to take a chance.

You are willing because things can not get any worse and it is worth the risk to make things better. CRP is good because you can risk and fail but get the support to risk again. Small chances bring about small changes which one can handle and progress for the better. Eventually, you will feel better about yourself as you are not alone with your problems. At that point you can become a bigger chance taker and really progress to effectively make a change that is noticeable. Then you will be on you way to new and better life without fear of failure but instead be willing to take bigger risk/ chances.

Anonymous

Chance - a gamble or risk.

This word chance can mean many things to different people. There are two things that come to mind. While deep in the throes of my crack addition 25 years ago, I would venture out late at night, sometimes two, or three in the morning, and find the dealer, never thinking that I could have robbed while procuring said drugs, or getting said drugs, and going home and using the drugs, and risk having a heart attack. And my most recent trip down memory lane, I could have had a heart attack because I'm older, and have a couple of health issues.

Anonymous

REWARD

To be rewarded is to be compensated for a deed well done. A gift of gratitude, sometimes money or a hand shake to show appreciation.

The best reward I get is coming to Vet-to-Vet and sharing with my fellow vets my appreciation of our interactions with each other. Also about our illnesses and how we leave each other with a smile and a sense of appreciation that our togetherness helps to make us feel good.

By David K.

Rewards are sometimes given to capture a person, alive or dead. Look at BinLaden, you can now get 50 million dollars for his head.

This is the way many people with bad reputations are caught. People will often get involved, or in other words, with money they can be bought.

Money talks and often moves a person to take action.
So when a wanted criminal is captured there is much satisfaction.

Rewards are given for other things we do as well.
In return for a service or a good work which we do so "swell".

Rewards can also have an intrinsic value within us.
And often we just feel good about doing some thing without making a fuss.

Rewards in a good sense often go with a job well done.
And whether we get a reward or not isn't the question, we ought to do what we do
because it's just fun!

By Ron S.

EXPECT

I believing in the true and living God, look forward to the day of His son Jesus Christ,
am expecting to receive my inheritance from Him. If I obey His commandment, for in
Revelation 22:12-13, it says "Yea I come quickly and my reward is with me to give to
every man according as his work shall be." So I am looking and expecting to live with
God and have eternal life.

By Charles W.

Sometimes we set out expectations way too high.
We want to be like a bird, which can fly in the sky.

Sometimes what we want or need, we expect to take place.
And we also expect this to happen with great haste.

Sometimes what we expect turns to be just the opposite,
And then we're surprised when it becomes a big hit.

It's okay to expect, but make sure it will come true.
Otherwise, you may become sadden and very blue.

Be like a child as they always want and expect good things,
And be happy for whatever comes and life brings.

Realistic expectations , as you know will go a long way.
For they're more likely to happen and make your Day!

By Ron S.

AMBITION

My ambition is to be as proficient as I can to expound on God's word so that I can hopefully help others to find Christ for themselves, and for them to get to know and love Him as much as I do.

By Charles W.

AMBITION

A - Achieving something that is desired and out in the future.

M - Maintaining a plan in order to accomplish your goal.

B - Being focused so what is sought after will eventually come about.

I - Interest for what one is working toward.

T - Type of achievement one may be seeking recognition for.

I - Intensity or energy one has for the work or activity.

O - Object, state, or result desired.

N - Nothing can or should prevent you from achieving your AMBITION.

By Ron S.

ATTITUDE

Attitude is how you view the world. Attitude is probably the most important thing you can do for yourself. For example, if you have a good attitude toward CRP or life in general, you can accomplish a lot by having CRP work for you.

If you carry a poor attitude toward CRP, you will always be a negative person working against CRP and getting little benefit from your attendance at CRP. CRP will soon become a chore as oppose to a benefit.

Keep a good attitude, stay positive and be happy - you will go a long way in this world.

Anonymous

Attitudes can be positive or negative you know.
But it's the positive ones that help us to grow.

No one like to be around someone with a negative attitude.
It's better to hang around with people who have lots of gratitude.

For these people are thankful whether they have little or much.
And they accept whatever comes, and they don't look for a crutch.

People who are thankful have developed a good attitude.
That's why you hear so often, they have a "attitude of gratitude".

They've learned their attitude is really a choice.
And you can tell by their actions and voice.

So develope an attitude that will get you through the day.
And keep your thoughts positive come what may!

By Ron S.

ACTIVE

I being a servant or should I say slave to the Word, I find it most exhilarating when I throw myself into learning more about Him. When I see the fruits of my labor trying to bring another soul to Christ, shows that I'm progressing into who and what God says I am.

By Charles W

Active mean movement such as exercise, proactive means to do it on your own without being asked or told.

When it comes to CRP you should be proactive and take advantage of the help CRP offers you. You should go to groups and pay attention as well as offer your opinions as opposed to sleeping through it and coasting through the day.

CRP offers much more than a free meal.

Anonymous

Motions exerted to work on a project or personal endeavor. Because I'm active in the groups here at CRP, I leave at the end of the day with a sense of accomplishment knowing that I have gone another day without drugs or drink.

As long as I'm active here at CRP, I can maintain my road to sobriety. CRP is the best place I can go to help me get through the day. I'd like to thank the social workers, staff, and clients for all the friendship and patience you have shown me with my recovery.

By David K.

It's good to stay active doing the right things.
Because it's healthy, and we can see the benefit it brings.
To stay young, diet and exercise is very good.
But that's a decision, whether or not we should.
Doing nothing and not being active, is like being dead.
So we need to get active now, and that takes using our head.
As long as we exist, we should continue to be active.
This way we'll be happier as long as we live.

By Ron S.

RESILIENCE

God has given me an opportunity to return to the position and right standing that we used to have with Him before the original sin, that Adam and Eve committed. His power does that for whomever believes in Him, and seeks His face.

By Charles W.

Some people are more resilient than others when they are ill.
They know how much faith, and a positive attitude is the best way still.
Even though they are going through some sickness and are unsure.
They have the resilience to recover and they'll be looking for a cure.
More likely than not, others have gone through this illness too.
Just look at their testimonies, and see what other people do.
If you're resilient you'll bounce back even stronger than before.
Then you'll look to God, thank Him, and praise Him even more!

By Ron S.

Thank God for the ability to return to my resilience about staying clean and sober. I have completed 45 months of abstaining from using drugs and alcohol. I'm looking forward to having 4 years this January.

I'm feeling proud of the fact that I did it all with my will power and my participation in CRP as a support system.

Thank you for being there when I needed your support.

By David K.

Coming back . . .well, I live with depression. Some days I don't know why I'm around. Then, I go back to what we read in mental illness anonymous - we live to keep learning. So I go back to living and learning.

I haven't felt like I have resilience. My life is more of a struggle - look outside and I am afraid to leave the house. Sunshine or rain, I still feel gloomy. My life is really continuing on. Sometimes I forget why, then I pick up a magazine or book and start to read. Every time I begin to learn . . .I remembered that I have to learn. I enjoy being with other veterans or people who I know. If I didn't get out and get with people, I would probably stay in the house.

For 3 years, a long, long time ago, I lived in the mountains as a hermit. That mountain life was not successful. There is still a world out there that can and will touch me.

I go back out and keep meeting people and learning. Reading, learning, discussing and keep living - that might be a form of mental resilience for me.

By Moe

To be resilient and bounce back.

"I get knocked down - But I get up again, cuz you never can keep me down."

I recover quickly. I forget where I went wrong and try and fix it immediately - try not to do it again.

Put things back in order.

By Adam

SIMPLE

When I decided to live and die for the Lord, I thought it would be a very hard thing to do. And when I started out it was. But the more I walk and talk with Him, and have a relationship, it gets simpler, and simpler, or should I say simple?

By Charles W.

Today it makes 10 months from that day I decided to get clean, get my act together and start a new life.

A day just like today I began my journey as a clean and sober, clear minded person.

To tell you the truth it hasn't been easy but I have a passionate desire to live a better life. I have learned from my fellow vets that as long as I stay focused on me and the good simple things in life for example, my health and being able to meet with a whole bunch of veterans whom day by day help me by giving me a little bit of their knowledge in life.

The simple thing about all this is that I don't have to be smart to listen to another fellow vet's advise. To make it simple I couldn't do anything with you guys and my faith in God.

By Johanna M.

Why is it so hard to do simple thing like holding a simple thought and conveying an idea about anything? Its so easy that it's impossible.

By David K.

Why do we make things so hard to do?
When in fact, they're simple, and easy too.

We know putting something together requires instruction.
But if we ignore them, it could lead to destruction.

So start from step one, and take your time doing it.
Because if you go too fast you could become angry and throw a fit.

"Keeping it simple" is something we all need.
So we can accomplish much, and let that be our creed.

By Ron S.

"Keep it simple stupid" the old military phrase, seems to be the motto of CRP. Go to groups, pay attention, and seek the right available help at CRP and you are on your way to a better life.

All you need to do is keep it simple-don't make it complicated to the point where you get disgusted and don't seek help but instead walk around and complain. Remember, CRP is here for you, not just a free lunch.

Anonymous

God lives in all mankind, but His teachings go unfulfilled because of selfishness and greed. His word is there for us to keep life simple and it is not complicated.

For as we go about life every day, God's will is there for us to understand and keep life simple.

By Bob F.

EXASPERATE

Sometimes I have a very difficult time coping with the phone answering machine. Like when it says "For English - press 1, For Spanish - press 2. Also for all the rest of the included options one needs to press a number and then it goes on to have you press more numbers for more options.

By this time, being on a cell phone and time being money, I have already spent \$1.50 and have bought nothing but feeling that this phone system incorporated in most business systems, causes one to feel "they" are giving you an exasperate moment to contend with.

My only escape is to just stop the call if I don't get an answer before I am put on hold, rather than waste more time and money, and my last court of resort is push "O" for the operator, hoping I will be connected sooner rather than later and escape being put on hold.

By this time I should be more calm and less irritated and provoked to a degree where I would like to slam my phone down or throw it across the room. I can always try later I tell myself, and that is what I end up doing to keep calm and in control. And guess what? It usually works.

By Joel

To exasperate is something I try not to do to someone. I never try on purpose to annoy people and try not to let people annoy me. People who do nothing but complain about their situation in life can be annoying. I would rather talk about things or topics that are pleasant or helpful to me or others.

I try to shy away from those people or subjects that annoy me. I have a problem that I don't want to hurt peoples' feelings by telling them that I am annoyed by them or what they are talking about.

Sometimes just the subject one is talking about can be exasperating. So it is best to avoid certain subjects of conversation.

By Bob F.

There are times when it's necessary to irritate someone in order to make my position clear on a certain matter for them to understand me. I try very hard to not

provoke the other person by choosing my words carefully. I try not to exasperate to the extent that the person I'm talking to finds fault with me and ends the conversation.

By David K.

Exasperate means to irritate or provoke to a high degree or annoy extremely. One should not exasperate over CRP. CRP is here to help you and has the resources to back it up. You should take advantage of CRP's personal wellness to help you be in group settings or finding an individual home, etc. To get upset at CRP is truly not to understand the process of help.

Anonymous

My lack of creativity is exasperating. I try but still nothing good comes to mind. I am now in my thirties and it seems as though my seemingly never ending well of good ideas has all but dried up.

All in all I'm getting older, slower and cranky. There's nothing you can do about it, and there's nothing I can do about it. So it sucks.

By James T.

JOURNEY

This past year has been a journey for me. I can chalk up 45 months of being clean and drug free. I am even more pleased because I did it with my will power and CRP to keep me on the straight and narrow. Group therapy and time spent with my friends at CRP help me a good deal of the time on my journey toward a life free from dependence on drugs and alcohol.

January is my Anniversary for 4 years of being clean and sober. I'm looking forward to it. I hope I make it.

By David K.

Journey by definition is to travel from one state of your life to another. As you journey through CRP, you should take advantage of this opportunity to grow and take stock of yourself. Whether it be to stay clean or the use of the 3 C's to stay calm, always use CRP as an opportunity to grow in your life time.

Anonymous

Once upon a time . . . NO! That would take too long to write. I'll keep it simple. Just a real short story.

Once upon a journey, I had a long time ago, I was on a troop ship the USS Rose. It took 9 days at sea to go from N.Y. to Bremerhaven, W. Germany. That was October 5, 1964.

I was 21 and just finished infantry school at Fort Ord, CA, heavy weapons (4.2 Mortars), and all the other infantry training at Leavenworth, with the 1st & 30th infantry battalion.

By June 4, 1965, I had gone from a sleek sleeve Pvt. assistant ammo bearer to SP4 and gunner on a 4.2 mm mortar inside an APC. Also, on this journey on foreign shores is when I as SP4 earned the Expert Infantry Badge on July 10, 1965, the day after my 22nd birthday. Only 140 out of the Battalion made it and 16 of my company Hq & Hq Co.. Also only 4 of the 42 in my platoon.

Journeys are like dreams. Some will give us nightmares and others will be a challenge to be a part of.

Later, my journey took me onward to become a motion picture photographer, still photographer, and photo lab technician. Then onward further to become a military Intelligence provider of ground surveillance radar, a platoon made up of 9 people. That was in Feb. 1978 to August 1981.

Here I am now at 65 on a journey to better my health and cope with the 6 different illnesses that I take 25 pills a day for.

My journey doesn't stop here. It's a continuum of life, until my journey ends.

By Joel

(My journey)

I arrive to group each Thursday and plough through the creative process. Each topic forces me to reflect and react from my own life events. I dig deep. I often can't remember, but I do my best in the short amount of time. Moments and event mixed with a bunch of crap making it seem interesting. We listen to each others work, comment on what we thought, then go about our day.

Anonymous

HONOR

Honor means to respect someone or something. With Veteran's Day coming up, we should consider honoring all our veterans, both living and passed on. You do this by living good lives on a daily basis and not just one day a year. Past veterans from the Vietnam era were treated poorly. This attitude should never happen again because most veterans went on to lead a decent life style in spite of the poor reception they received back home. Only through living decent on a daily basis proved the public perception wrong as years passed by. CRP has done wonders to accept all veterans and help all veterans regardless of circumstances. Try your best every day and honor veterans daily not just on veteran's Day. Anonymous

For all the armed services, on Veteran's Day, we see how much people care. And for me it was an honor to serve this country, even though there was no fanfare. There are parades and memorials honoring the dead, and there are even banquets and feasts where the living veterans are honored and fed. Veteran's Day honors all veterans who ever served, whether passed on or present, on this day, they get the recognition they deserved. Some veterans are distinguished because they went beyond what they had to do. Some were awarded the congressional metal of honor and received other metals too. Regardless, all veterans fought for freedom and Ol' Glory, and each one has his or her memories, and can certainly tell a story. I believe honoring our veterans is each person's duty nevertheless, because each person whoever served this country of ours, in my mind, are priceless.

By Ron S.

Honor can begin early in life. It is taught first by parents and then from others we come into contact with from preschool to a senior in high school, to professors of colleges and universities.

There is the honor veterans learn to acknowledge when enlisting in the armed forces and rising through the ranks and giving honor to those who are in ranks above them.

Honor is also acknowledged to those who served in combat and both survived the battles and returned home after a war has ended. Even those who served as noncombatants during a wartime era are honored, the same as those who fought and died during a war with military honors of a military burial. Those who express honor to others first have learned to honor those at home, parents, siblings, other relatives, then carry it all through their lives.

Here at CRP, I can see honor shared by the vets and staff each day. Veterans honoring veterans is about the highest level of honor one can give or receive.

To honor one's country is to have served and given all that was required and then some. I hope with all my heart and soul the next generation who are now in Iraq and Afganistan will be honored well when they come home and are out of harms way.

Even today, the torch of honoring a new president has been passed on. The greatest honor he can give is to keep the promises he made as best he can. That truly will be an honor to see.

By Joel

Honor to serve is a concept that has been forgotten. We used to think that to do something for America was special. It seems like honor these days is the quality of a house or luxury of life. Honor for me would be doing some good for someone else. When we die everything stays behind - even the house and all the material wealth. Our deeds and actions live on after us.

How did I start with honor. Well, when I came into the military, I wanted to fight communism. I was just ready to fight. I did not get to be a Navy frogman, so I chose to go into Marine Recon. Recon was good for me swimming and running all the time. But, I had to be a Medical Corpsman. I wanted to be a "Combatant". I did not want to be a corpsman. Yet, I was proud to serve.

I learned how to become a good corpsman and I tried. It was an honor for me to serve other people, even though being a Medical Corpsman was not the position that I wanted. Ever since then, I haven't been given some options in life, not the options I wanted.

When I am given a job or opportunity, I try to do that task. It's an honor for me to work and have opportunity to help other people. Honor and service seem to go a long way to turn back my anger.

Honor can show strength and kindness. I have learned to try to do the job I have with honor. I first learned that with the Marine Corps as a Medical Corpsman.

By Moe

THANKFUL

I have a lot to be thankful for. I am alive today! I'm thankful for fellow vets, and people who know how it is today in the world. I'm thankful to be alive and kicking.

Without God, this world would not be here. I'm thankful for others to be here.

By Ed. M

Thankful by definition means to appreciate. With the holidays coming up, we should show thanks, especially to our higher power and organizations such as CRP.

CRP helps vets openly without prejudice toward anyone or any group. We should be thankful that CRP helps the homeless and unemployed as well as provides groups to go to and meals.

We can help ourselves by donating to CRP whether it be our time or objects, like clothing.

God bless CRP.

Anonymous

To be thankful to me means to be full of thanks for the blessings which God has given to me. Like a strong and caring family, and doctors to help me with my illnesses. I am also thankful for my sobriety which for now is under control. I thank God every day for His guidance and love that He has bestowed on me.

I am thankful for the shelter and food I have and I am lucky to have God's grace.

I am also thankful for the good friends that I have here at CRP along with the staff at CRP.

I have learned through experience that good things come to those who wait. Time seems to heal all wounds.

I have to learn patience because like many virtues, I have to wait for it to occur. I also have to learn to count my blessings because I am happy to be alive..

By Bob F.

Can anyone go though a single day without being thankful?
If you say yes, I think that's a lot of bull.

Think of the air we breath, our food and shelter too.
And on a clear day, we can be thankful when we see the sky blue.

There's also people all around who are willing to give a helping hand.
Like here at CRP, the staff are willing and able to do all they can.

We should be thankful too when the day is all done;
And we shouldn't take life so seriously, that we have no fun.

So start each day being full of thanks, and say it every chance you get.
You'll be blessed many times over and I know you'll have no regret.

Now with the holiday season soon upon us all,
Use every chance you get to be thankful, and have a ball!
By Ron S.

INFORMATION

That's what you seek when you want to be better informed and given facts of a certain time, place, and event. However, I think at this day and age, there is a decisive and erratic plan by the powers to be, to keep us, those who seek the correct and honest truth no matter the subject.

Using the WEB, I have found a mix of information that can be challenged because of conflicting information from different sources. We are now in the age and have been for a while, perhaps 10 to 15 years of receiving disinformation and misinformation. Something I am well aware of and I hope you are too. There are enough resources to seek the truth on any subject. One must be careful from whom one gets information in order to survive in the world today.

I know for a fact that American children are being dumbed-down since the early to mid 60's, and even today that same idea is being used to give students just enough information to graduate, then move on to a nonplus world whereas they can never rise to the occasion to bring out the truth of their past history of events that transpired during their 12 school years.

I Know this to be true because I saw it in many of my college classes during 2001 to 2004, when I graduated. I hope it will improve for the generation that's now in 1st grade.

By Joel

Information is always needed when you get lost, then you have to go get information. You go to the information desk and ask for where to go.

By Edward M.

Information is to help us gain knowledge from others that normally could not be attained in a short amount of time a person has in his life time or time to give for research.

By Todd S.

Information is news from another person to inform me or tell me something about something that they are familiar with that I should know. Regardless if I know about the information or not, it's communication between two people who have something to inform each other about regarding any subject.

By David K.

Information is knowledge gained through study and communication. CRP is loaded with information, both groups on how to live as well as assistance like housing area. CRP can only help you if you attend and participate regularly. You must also want to get better truly and accept the assistance. If not, you will be wasting the time of CRP as well as yourself.

Anonymous

We can receive information in many ways. Through out lives, it comes to us all our days. Through schools, TV, newspapers, books, magazines and friends. It seems we're bombarded daily and there is no end! How do you sort out all that you hear and see, much of which has no impact on you and me? Sometimes what we hear is really good information. Other times it's distorted and that could lead to disinformation. So be careful of what you see, hear and do. For information does matter, as long as it is true!

By Ron S.

GIFT

Now is the time of year called the Holiday season. In America we celebrate the Holidays. Usually the atmosphere is festive, but to certain people Thanksgiving and Christmas is just another day on the calendar. To those I advise to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas. Christ is born. Celebrate with friends and family and don't get caught up in gift giving. To be alone and say bah humbug to the Holidays is definitely the wrong approach. If for no other reason be thankful you're alive and well.

Anonymous

Sometimes we don't take time to celebrate.
Is it because we have too much on our plate?
There's a lot to do when Christmas comes around.
Going here and there, buying gifts, and other things I found. It seems time is limited, and we have so much to do, But we need time to rest, and kick off a shoe or two. It's good to be with family and friends this time of year. To share the Holidays with them and with lots of cheer. When it's all over, and the Holidays are in the pass, It's time to gather our strength and fill up with gas.
So get ready, because celebrating is part of life.
Just keep down the stress and lower the strife.
Enjoy the good times and don't be sad,
Inventory God's blessings and be thankful and glad.

By Ron S.

When I can back from Vietnam, I had a lot to celebrate coming back home alive and it went on for days and days. I partied for days to celebrate. Also I celebrate Christmas and New Year's birthdays and the birth of my son. We all celebrate all Holidays.

By Eddie M.

What's to celebrate? We as a nation and a people of celebration certainly celebrate plenty of times throughout the year. Starting with New Year's Day all the way to Christmas and not to forget our birthday, each to their own choice.

With all this celebration, I think it comes down to being aware of each day we have and celebrate each day we live. Being able to say at the end of each day that it was a good day to live in celebration of being alive and having found a positive element of giving another a helping hand in somethings or making a phone call to someone just to say hello and hope they are doing well.

Even though a time to celebrate can be of an observation of a special day or event, it truly makes a difference when people get together to celebrate a ceremony or festive occasion, sharing that time together can be a happy memory as time goes on and the occasion has long since past by.

Some times an occasion of past celebrations can be one that some people want to forget because of the harsh and sad memories it brings to mind. Believe me, I have

plenty of those I try to cope with when something said or asked of me causes me to cringe at the memory of loss or hurt that can't be dealt with anymore.

However, I like to celebrate each occasion of holidays or special event that will help bring folks together, especially veterans because they are the basis of keeping us free enough to be able to celebrate without fear of not being able to do so. We are the fortunate ones and I hope we can keep it that way!

By Joel

GIFT

Gift by definition is giving voluntarily without payment in return. CRP can be our gift. After all CRP gives to any veteran without asking for payment in return. Everything at CRP is free. We should be thankful for the gift of CRP and not abuse it. We should learn from CRP groups and grow to be better people even if this means sharing with others our knowledge learned here, so as to continue the gift of CRP.

Anonymous

Christmas is a time of giving to others;
To family and friends, our sisters and brothers.

Sometimes giving can be a hassle this time of year.
You can feel compelled to give to others out of fear.

But there's many ways to give where it doesn't have to cost too much.
Just sending a card or making a phone call is all that's needed to stay in touch.

Giving a gift should be given from the heart.
And not expecting something in return is always smart.

God loves a cheerful giver, so don't frown.
Giving should make you happy and not get you down.
Gifts are things or memories that can always be treasured.
It not the size or cost, but the thought that should be measured.

Gifts are really blessings to you and me.
And thanking the giver is all that's necessary, and that's the Key!.

By Ron S.

"Coming back home from Vietnam, is a "Gift of Life".

By Eddie M.

Time with others and listening to them in earnest is sharing experiences together. Giving to others, be it material or your efforts towards increasing others quality of life without looking for something in return.

Compassion for other whether it be enemy or friend is to treat others as you'd want to be treated would be giving to others without being earned.

Anonymous

EDUCATE

I have a 10 grade education. But I become more educated by listening to other people. I can train other people also in education of things that I know how to do.

BY Eddie M.

When I started my first job as an adult, I was confronted with the task of learning how to carry out the mechanical application to become a pipe fitter, and working with other men as a crew. I didn't have class room instructions and had to rely on my participation and limited instructions and guidance from the crew members to learn how to put mains and services that supplied gas to customers.

Most of the workers were remnants from the "Old School" and did not like to give guidance and show you how to do their "Jobs". It was frustrating in the beginning having to watch and participate in the work without formal instructions. It was taxing and frustrating, but I manage to educate myself in the art of a pipe fitter to class A leadman.

By David K.

To educate in my opinion is to learn from someone else or even to find out for yourself, to learn about a subject you would like to know more about, and thus be educated enough to tell others about that which you have learned and what you intended to do with what you have received.

Sometimes, we as a whole nation, state, city, community, and family and finally ourselves, have to educate ourselves on a particular subject in order to be satisfied of the information we chose to learn about. And then again, we may be chosen to teach others on a subject that is required during our life experience in order to satisfy a job requirement or self understanding.

There is much to lean in this ones world we have to learn from. Most times we lean from each other without realizing it.

When I made the grade of E-5 in the Army, I was required to teach a class on a particular subject (1 of 13) that were required to be taught by E-5's and above.

There is a famous quote I am sure most educated people know, "When the student is ready, the teacher will appear".

By Joel

When do we stop getting educated, I really don't know. As I continue to walk through this life, I seem to grow and grow.

There are books to read, programs to watch and maybe a TV show; and one can go to school at any age and learn what he doesn't know.

Talking to informed people is also a good to do each day. It's a quick way to learn and continue to grow by the way.

We really never stop becoming educated whether we know it or not. Just read the newspaper and look at the news to see what is hot.

Time brings about change and we need to stay up-to-date. So we can take advantage of the "New" things and the best way to do that is: "Educate!"

By Ron

Educate? For the entity of one's total being, Being able for a personal critiquing of all which one has indulged upon for digesting of personal knowledge and learned behavior.

By Claude W.

JUSTICE

I lived my younger years to build a firm foundation for my older years. "Now" I worked hard and tried to save a little money. I brought life insurance, attended college, and tried to plan for the future and prepare my body with hard physical work to insure that my health continues to be good.

I was totally unprepared for the stumbling blocks that were placed in front of me. They were subtle and underhanded. And when I realized what was going on, I was close to a mental break down and wound up in the hospital and out of a job.

Now 63 years of age and a disabled veteran, I feel that justice for my condition is at hand.

By David K.

Deserved punishment or reward - I believe in pay it forward. I welcome the world when I awake.

Regarding moral principle determining just conduct - Standing on just principle alone can be more trouble than it's worth. It's better to let go.

Quality of being just, righteousness, equitable, or moral rightness. - The quality of being morally correct is simplistic for me.

Anonymous

“Pay me now, or pay me later”, is a very common saying.
For justice soon comes to those who are delaying.

There’s all kinds of justice that one must consider.
For if no justice takes place, it could make a person bitter.

“It’s not fair”, we hear when justice goes unheeded.
In order for some closure, justice is often needed.

Justice is something that we have to administer too.
That’s why there’s laws, courts, jails, and prisons up the wazoo!

Today, too many people get off the hook without paying the price.
They don’t want to play the game, and say no dice!

We all have to know that some day, I believe we all will be judged.
If not in this life, then the next , where nothing can be fudged.

It’s there will receive our punishment or reward, come what may.
So do what is right always, and let justice rule your day!

By Ron S.

EXECUTIVE

Top Banana, big guy, the go to man, this is a
person who exemplifies the wants and needs of government organization or business.
It is he who runs the show, hold’s it all together, and leads the way.

Though sometimes the path is wonderful and there maybe a fork in the road,
remember, without his cabinet, vice presidents, or constituents to lead and show the
way, he is but one all alone.

By James G.

The executive of CRP is Lourie Harkness. She is number one person who effects all of
CRP and the people involved with CRP, both staff and veterans. You should know this
because of what she does for us usually goes unnoticed, unless someone has a
complaint. I advise all veterans to take a walk around and see what staff does for the
veterans of CRP. You will find there are staff never seen, who directly effect the
veterans needs and daily policies, such as groups, etc. It pays to be knowledgeable.

Anonymous

Every 4 years we vote for a new president, to take over and be executive of our country.

By Ed. M.

Every 4 years in this country, we choose a new executive chief.
To some, this change is needed in hopes it will bring relief.
We now have a new man in office, and soon time will tell.
Whether his promises come true, then we can all ring a bell.
For our chief executive, many things in this country have to be done.
It will take a lot of hard work, and difficult decisions will be NO fun!
Hopefully, the changes made for this country will be good for all.
Because if not, tension may arise and we could be headed for a fall.
In any case, there's One Supreme Power, who is above all the rest.
So we need to pray to Him for the man in charge, and hope for the best!

By Ron

We have a new executive in the presidency of the United States. A new person and the first "African "Black" American. It is my hope that he will execute his authority as chief executive to make the necessary changes to improve our economical position at home and abroad.

I have high hopes that he will make me, a "black man", proud to have him as chief executive of the United States.

By D. K.

There are those who have a top position in the executive echelon of business and representation of a particular state or government.

Those in this particular position have a greater responsibility to those they represent than the lesser type of state or government representation.

Anyone who has an executive type job has a job to represent the people of a state of society characterized by their formal disposition to be sure to bring equality of rights and privileges for those they represent.

The words spoken upon taking the executive position in government clearly states that they must be certain to understand the position they have acquired.

I once had the job as the training NCO for 5 companies; Hq Co., A, B,C, and D companies.

The schedule I typed on memo-graph paper was what this particular collection of military companies would follow on a daily basis.

Because an IG inspection was due, I had to be sure an outline was written for the thirteen subjects the Army taught on Saturday's by the E-5 and above. This was during March to August of 1968.

Some nights I would be typing until twenty-two hundred hours. Reading the FM's and TM's to be sure the outline was correct. I enjoyed the work. It was worth every minute.

By Joel

--

I was supposed to be an executive. The VA paid for my education. I ended up with a Masters Degree in Business Administration. I wanted to be a social worker. Laurie Harkness is a social worker who is an executive. My life as a helper in mental health has happened anyway.

My life has some executive responsibilities. I go to different sites and see other veterans across the country. I help insure that people get help to implement and continue peer support. So I ended up with some elements of being an executive and social worker through peer support.

Now, I must admit that some people have power by being an executive. I still have trouble with power. I would say that my deficits still seem to be getting along. I don't react well. So when people with power trip me, I tend to over react. If people are too brusque or pushy. I do not do well with them. So, I am trying to learn how not to be brusque or pushy myself.

Funny, how what we don't like is sometimes what we might be ourselves.

From going to school and learning to be an executive, we learn that good executives get buy in from education. Real direction comes from learning and pushing together.

So maybe, that is what an executive does - facilitates productively through direction.

In my life, I have only seen people talk of power. I have seen power almost celebrated.

Maybe, there will be new times and new executives based on coaching, mentoring, developing peoples potential.

Maybe!

By Moe

PERSISTENCE

I'm persisting in the quality of being persistent. I'm persisting in staying sober.

By Ed M.

1.) The ability to persevere toward a goal, over coming problems, attitudes, odds and other difficulties. To Overcome.

2.) Quality of being persistent

Rewards that come after, self esteem, health, life situations and others.

3.) Continued existence or occurrence.

Having the ability to use previous practice of persistence to overcome future problems, goals, life situations.

Anonymous

When the going gets tough, the tough get going. Set a goal and then try to make it come true, with persistence and courage. Sometimes it requires hard work.

By D. K.

Johnny laid in or rather under a weather worn dilapidated slat of wood partially concealing a paint peeled wall. He had removed a portion of the painted grayed cedar bench block wall removing some of the logs and constructing a tent shelter in the long forgotten building. He sighed, deeply, the tears coming unhidden, colorized movie fragments, screaming in slow motion once again.

His shelter, private, strong against the ice storm gave him some comfort. Little portions measured in galaxies. Johnny had a decision to make on this anniversary ending the war. He reminisced on the good times with his war buddies until the war scene forcibly pounded his senses. Yes a decision. He chose to move on, go see the docs, may get off the booze and drugs. He would celebrate the end of the war anniversary instead of all the war anniversaries.

Anonymous

To achieve a predetermined goal, requires a lot of persistence.
Because over time, one usually runs into some resistance.
There are many obstacles that occur as we go through life.
For it's nearly impossible to avoid all the strife.
Some tasks may take a lot of hard work when new.
And one will need to be persistent to see it through.
So be persistent by all means.
Or you may never come to see your dreams.

By Ron S.

ORDEAL

"Don't let him in". Those were the words that flashed in my mind with a hallucination of a person I had the most respect for. I was under a lot of mental stress trying to get accepted in a group. Because I heard it, I was taken back to the beginning of the acceptance point of a group. The ordeal left me hurt and doubtful if I would ever be accepted. I keep coming to CRP hoping that I would be accepted.

By D. K.

Ordeals are common in life, and they come and go.
Why they happen to some and not others, is not for us to know.
Usually it's how we respond to a certain event.
Some ordeals make us stronger, others make us vent.
I found it's better to go along with the flow,
And accept whatever ordeals come, and use them to grow.
Ordeals may be severe trials or could be a test.
But we ought not to give up, but persevere and do our best.
Vietnam has left its mark on me, body, spirit and soul.
It's taken a long time to deal with it, and get out of the hole.
Thanks to the hands of so many people pulling for me.
I now have a future, and can be all that I can be.
Knowing God is with me going through ordeals, has made me stronger.
I can now walk in peace with Him, and fear no longer.

By Ron S.

Ordeal - has been a way of life for me. First, being a young person was not easy. There were ordeals growing up. I felt like I did not belong or fit. I was always writing. I wrote an article in the school paper called "Moe says". I wrote the school musical every year through all four years of high school. Yet, I was a football star and athlete. Sport guys don't write.

Next, I joined the Marine Corps. as a corpsman. I had my own office and did typewriting. I wrote poems, novels and plays before I went to Vietnam. I wrote a lot then. After the war, I was pretty destroyed and couldn't seem to write. I went through phases of some writing - sometimes. It was an ordeal by not writing. I love to have experiences and then I write them down. Then I started writing again around 1986. I had ordeals around me. The world seemed OK, but I was lonely, and kept writing - so I had no ordeals with writing. Then finally, came the late nineties. I had my own ordeal when the war started in Iraq. I was filled with memories of Vietnam over forty years ago. So the past eight years have been a strong and big ordeal because of that present war.

Today seems like at sixty five years old, I am making a full circle. I am writing poems, plays and articles. I did it watching movies. Seems like my life inside me is more what I wanted forty years ago. My life around me seems more unsure. So I don't watch the news much. Living today becomes an ordeal. Living in my inside world of words, images, poems, drawings and thoughts cuts back on the feeling of being in an ordeal.

By Moe

have an ordeal in just being myself and trying not to be tested by anyone.

By Ed M.

The continuing saga of Marna

Whoops - there went another gift I forgot to buy.

"Hi Dorothy."

"Come in, come in."

"Your house is decorated so sweetly.

I love Christmas" said Dotty.

"Merry Christmas" - with that, she handed me a present. "Oh Dot. I didn't get you anything."

"That's OK". I opened it to read the new Martin Van Cook Book. "Thank you", I said.

She's always trying to show up. She knows I can't boil water.

Tea and cooking comes next.

I like her anyway.

By Corky

PROCRASTINATE

Procrastinate! Seems to be a word associated most often as a negative action. Stop! And think, that if more people thought about the action before hand, we might not have so many bad reactions, or outcomes.

So I'll just try to procrastinate a little more.

Thank you.

By Jim G.

I should procrastinate. Learn how to live a little smoother. My buddy just died last fall. I got busy. Started working and then overeating. That doesn't work any more. I need to learn how to slow down. I need to learn how to rest. I used to think that taking it easy was procrastinating. Now, I need to learn to set aside time. Do what I can do. Rest.

Seems like I need extra rest. Never thought I would say that. (Learning how to rest).

Next I need to learn how to eat less. Drink more water. Weigh and measure my food. I used to think that not going full blast was procrastination. Now. I move slower. I need to slow down. Do what I can do during the day . . . what I thought was procrastination might be self-preservation.

By Moe

"He who hesitates is lost" is a very common saying. Because there is usually a cost associated with delaying. Some times we don't know till later, what we just missed. We may have seem an opportunity that we just dismissed. Other times it's okay to put off until tomorrow. As long as it doesn't bring you or someone else sorrow.

To put things off and not have a chance again, could lead to regrets.
In that case, we lose out, and there goes all our bets.
As we get older we learn to choose better what to do.
Because if we tried to do everything, our face would turn blue.
“Don’t put off till tomorrow what you can do today” - is a good.
But remember you only have so much time to do what you should.
So chose carefully what you defer, delay or put off today.
For tomorrow it may haunt you, and then you’ll dearly pay.

By Ron S.

BALANCE

A long time ago I use to balance myself on my
hands and walk on my hands. That takes a lot of balance and equilibrium to do.

By Ed M..

To me a balance is necessary in your life, mentally, emotionally, physically and
spiritually.

When one or more of these categories is off you become off balance.

With out balance in my life, I become out of sync for a while, then I start fixing
what needs to be done to balance my life again!

I find it very difficult for me to obtain and keep a healthy balance. But I strive for
it everyday until it is achieved by using tools I have learned, and keep at it until I get it
right!

By Misty

There’s a lot of things in this life that can weigh us down.
If we let stuff get to us, we might walk around with a frown.

It’s easy to get out of balance if we do too much of this and not of that.
We need to keep from overloading or we may end up out flat.

We could be out of balance and not even know;
But others will see it, and a fit they will throw.

It’s good to set aside time for the things that need to be done.
Or we could get knocked off balance and that would be no fun.

I like to stay balanced in the mental, physical and spiritual aspects.
That way, I can stay healthy, wealthy, wise and balanced in all respects.

By Ron S.

ADVISE

Advise - All of the above, and I need some advise at times and sometimes I need a lot of it. I also can give advice to others that need information.

I also need information at times about different things like the Motor Veicall.

By Ed M..

Advice is something I don't take for granted. It is advice that I learn from other people whether it is spoken or written. The advice that I hear or read from other people is taken in and observed in my mind and used or discarded. I don't care for advice that is negative in my way of thinking.

I try to give advice that is well thought out and from my experience. I don't give advice if I don't know the subject or the details of it.

To be called an advisor is a title that I don't understand because that sometimes means a know-it-all, and I don't listen to those kind of people.

But a true advisor is someone who is an expert on the subjects that he or she advises on, and are depended on for their advice.

I think that advice given in a true responsible way can be very helpful in life.

By Bob F.

There's such a thing as an advisor who gives advice.

There are also military advisors who protect our country and that's nice.

All through my life, I have met people who liked to advise me.

My mother and father advised me, and at times I wished they'd let me be.

Then I found out I should have listened because they were right.

When I did things my way, it could easy end up in a fight.

No matter where I go and what I do now,

I believe I have to choose for myself what is best somehow.

You need to trust the person who is giving advice now a day.

Any one can give advice, but be careful, it may not pay.

To be advised is having learned to do what is best.

That way you don't blame others; and you'll get plenty of rest.

By Ron S.

Information you look for when you ask for it. Especially when you are in a dilemma. Advice can be helpful especially when you are shopping and trying to decide on a particular piece of clothing or a washing machine. etc.

Most of the times when you ask for advice, it is usually your wife that answers your call and she can't make up her mind. And the advice you get is usually your own.

By D. K.

Here we are, as a nation of people, at the beginning of a new century where we find a new president who is doing a tough job of getting this country out of a time of recession bordering depression.

I could say President Obama has been given plenty of information from his cabinet members, who advise him of the situations that are causing this enormous change in our country's situation.

I couldn't advise President Obama on what to do, to make the necessary changes to help our economy increase in productivity and added prosperity. His first 100 days in office are the benchmark of what he can do as a president and head of state of this great nation.

It is terribly important that our nations' leaders be advised as to the changing situation, not only in our country, but also around the world.

All of us at one time or another need to find good advice from others in order to avoid troubles we cannot foresee.

And, to give advice to others when asked. Plus, sometimes to give advice when not asked, like having an "Ah ha!" moment that might save a life. One never knows.

By Joel

So people advise me, and I tend to listen. Over the year, I have met many people who offered me advice. I took it.

My first person to advise me was a person who warned me how my substance abuse was killing me. I didn't believe him. His advice finally sunk in and I quit using drugs and booze.

People giving me advice has been great for me. I was rebellious as a kid. I didn't take advice.

Today, advice is part of my acceptance. I need all the help I can get. Some people rebel or react to me. Now I find that interesting since I used to be the person in rebellion. Advise me. I want to hear.

Implementing the advice or seeing full value of that advice might be difficult even today, even for me.

Still, thinking about it, I'm glad that people care enough for me to advise me. That is really positive.

By Moe

ENJOY

I come here to interact with my fellow vets and enjoy each other's commentary about today's experiences with each other. I can't truly experience my fellow vet's thoughts, but I enjoy being with you and share stories about our own experiences, and insight about our mental condition. I enjoy the groups and look forward being with you tomorrow.

By David K.

To enjoy being alive and well is something that is very self satisfying. To enjoy the air that we breath and the sights that we see is also very enjoyable.

An enjoyable event like a birthday or a particular holiday can make us happy. To be with someone that makes us happy can also be enjoyable.

I also enjoy comming to CRP because it is a positive thing to do during the weekdays. I like to see my fellow vets and interact with them in an enjoyable setting.

To have a relationship with God is my utmost enjoyable thing that I have in life. The sense of feeling at ease with myself and my God makes me feel that my life has a purpose and meaning.

By Bob F.

Like all children do, they look forward to a toy.
And when they receive it, it usually brings them joy.
Through out our lives we continue to seek that which brings us pleasure.
Hopefully it's something useful and the joy will last forever.
Some things make us happy, but only for a short while.
Like when you see someone you know and they give you a big smile.
Don't get too wrapped up in stuff you enjoy today.
For it could be here today and gone tomorrow I say;
But "enjoy" each moment and live each day as your last.
In that way you'll be surprised how time goes so fast.

By Ron S.

Griffin was born in my closet. He's a cat. A litter was born over a day and the he the next.

Over the years he provided warmth, entertainment, and fun. Never a nick, scratch or bite. He was boastful - a liclas point Siamese cat.

He's now 18 1/2 yrs. and my Griffin and I feel pain. Yet we still have companionship and comfort. He has an irregular heart beat, arthiristis, lost of bowel control and can only walk a few feet at a time.

Yet, as long as he is comfortable we'll hang in and so will we. When he goes, we'll grieve, yet we have enjoyed the many years together. Griffin is born incarnate.

By Bruce.

We have this world and all it's splendor and goodness to enjoy.

Life and all its best and worse, plus mistakes made along the way to resolve or let go of, never to resolve until years have gone by.

Then, that trouble takes its toll on the mind and body. Never to find the joy of living a good life. To find a way to enjoy the small and greater things life has to offer.

Long ago, when I was in fifth grade and at 10 years old, I dreamed of being a writer, that's what I told my teacher.

Later, when I was 13 and 14, I knew that I wanted to be a photographer and writer. Much more down the road, I found myself at age 23 being a motion picture photographer and writer of the films I took. Even if it was only 1,500 of film, I had to write a foot by foot description of the film I shot.

Even the still pictures had to have a caption written of who, what, where, when and why. I enjoyed this time of 5 years of being a photographer and lab tech in order to develop the film and pictures for the Army Timer and the Stars and Stripes newspapers.

I don't believe that anyone could enjoy the work I did as well as I had. Even when I left the service in June of '71, those picture taking days were the best of my life.

Rather soon, I will go to Gateway Community College and earn an Associate Degree in Photography. Something I enjoy doing these days with a digital camera.

By Joel

FUN

I like to paint. I painted a picture during the week. Just painting a simple picture of red roses in a vase on a table with a background, was fun to do. I used water soluble oil paints. Mixing the paints was fun and easy. There are different shades of colors you can create. From red, yellow, blue, white, green and brown.

It's fun to paint and I like it a lot. It gives me something to do and create, and it's a great activity because creating something on a blank canvas and detailing it is really special.

I learned this in my group, Giant Steps Group., which I go to on Mondays and Wednesday afternoon. I still have a long way to go and learn about painting but I'd like to continue because it inspires me. I'd like to inspire other people through my artwork because it helps my illness and it might help others also. Painting is an ongoing passion of mine that's fun to do and I like it.

By Chris A.

At times a personal adventure, other times a shared joy, games, movies, or a special toy.

Playful entertainment, maybe teasing or pleasing, Groups , singles or couples with the same thought in mind.

All with the end result, to have a good time!

By Jim G.

Fun is complaining about other people's stupidly. That way I don't get angry. Fun is the opposite of being angry. So, I try to have fun in life. I want fun for these two years.

I said that I would work in Connecticut at the Errera Community Care Center for these two years.

Work has to be fun. So, if I don't like going to work here, I won't have fun. The first two months have been interesting.

My pulse started bouncing around, so the doctors wanted to put a pacemaker in me. So, I started off my two years in the emergency room. This was not fun. I am walking. I am breathing. I feel better. I can feel better if I am well! Not feeling well is not fun.

Fun starts when I have a sense of well being. Fun for me is:

- 1) Walk in the fresh air
- 2) Listen to music
- 3) Write some stuff
- 4) Talk to people
- 5) Read some things
- 6) Watch some videos
- 7) See some things.

By Moe

When I was a child I had lots of fun with just about anything.

It could be a box, a toy, or whatever someone would bring.

Fun was also playing outside with my best friend.

On those days I wished it would never end.

As I got older, things were different and my fun may be taking a hike.

I can go to parties, play games, and do whatever I like.

Having fun is a necessary part of life for good health.

You don't need a lot of money to have fun, or a lot of wealth.

The most important thing is knowing fun is no cure.

But having "good clean fun" will make you happier for sure

By Ron S.

PERSEVERANCE

To persevere in life is something that takes the ability to not give up on things. I used to be able to persevere more when I was younger and well. The mental illness I suffer from makes it harder for me not to give up. I don't have the confidence in myself to continue what I happen to be doing at any one time. I will start something like a book and not be able to finish reading it to the end.

I think confidence plays a big role in being able to have perseverance. When I was younger before my disability, I was more determined to not give up on things that I attempted in life. Playing sports or running a distance came to me more easily and with more enjoyment.

In the service I was able to perform my duties with more confidence because of a more reckless style of my thinking. I didn't worry about the consequences of my style of performing the duties I was asked to do. I wish I could get back some of the younger days to get back the perseverance that I seem to have lost.

By Bob F.

Every day we must keep going on because the Lord blessed us to see another day. So we must keep going when sometime trouble may come our way. But we can't give up because Life goes on. We must learn how to deal with our problems. The things that come our way is part of life. We must give thanks to Jesus Christ.

Some days are good and some days are not so good. We can't give up or stop. There is always a way out if we pray to God. I was homeless, but I never gave up because I believed somehow some thing would work out, and it did. I do not complain because it doesn't help.

By David C.

Perseverance is hard work. Especially when you don't feel good and your symptoms are unmanageable. Sometimes just getting up in the morning and coming to groups is hard. It's hard to get going and it's easier to quit and just go back to bed and rest. But to keep going and not to give up when things seem bleak, confusing, and impossible with your symptoms is perseverance. That deserves credit and respect for yourself. It means that you can be in pain emotionally and not give up. To pick yourself up and carry the load of depression and other terrible symptoms are a constant struggle and battle.

One example I turn to is Jesus Christ when things get tough, he persevered and kept going for all of us. For each one of us out of sheer love and discipline. I try each day to persevere the best I can. Sometimes, I don't always line up to my expectations. But something inside keeps me moving and keeps me going. Maybe it's faith in my higher power. A higher power for all people in this world. I know I like to be with my higher power some day and when I get there, I won't be suffering anymore.

For now, I must persevere and survive the storm of depression and my terrible symptoms. But there is hope!

By Christopher A.

GENERATE

To generate is to produce, achieve, accomplish goals for every action there is an equal reaction or response. My belief is these actions will produce a positive or negative response. It is my hope that my actions generate a positive action or response, not only for me, but also for others.

By A. B.

To generate is to be able to originate unique thoughts, communication of an old thought into new ideas, and actions and procedures to better understand our universe and each other.

I wake up every morning with the hope that new ideas would help me generate a more positive out look for life and happiness.

By Dave K.

In CRP I would like to see friendship and brotherhood generated among the veterans. For example, attending Vet to Vet for help among ourselves not just relying on staff to accomplish our goals. We should be able to pick ourselves up and stay motivated if we stick together.

CRP should run itself and rely on staff for guidance only, and not rely totally on staff to do everything for us. We should not blame staff for our failures but instead we should learn from the veterans who have been at CRP longer then we have so all succeed and no one is left behind.

Anonymous

When I think of generate, I think back to the days when I was an infantryman and earned the EIB Badge (Expert Infantry Badge), also the many pictures I had taken for the PIO office, and the many motion pictures I had to take for different needs. The still pictures went to the PIO; Army timer, Stars and Stripes newspaper and the Stuttgart Zietung German newspaper.

I also created many pictures from negatives produced in the photo lab where I worked with 6 other E-5's and above. There is also the 105 poems I wrote over a time of ten years.

During my writing spree, I wrote 12 essays and fifteen short stories. One poem of 4 pages and 247 lines, 16 stanzas I made into a 20 chapter, 35 pages short story. I could write it into a screenplay and who knows what else.

Each day all of life can be a time to generate something into a marvelous part of our time and effort. Even getting well from the many illnesses we are subject to can be a time of generating a new and better, healthier folks.

I sure wish more vets would join us in the Vet to Vet writing group. One never knows what can be produced from the heart and minds of so few for the many.

By Joel

Generate time. There seems like there is not enough time. How can I get more done? How to stretch my ability to do more? Well, somethings have to go. I want to read more. I don't have time to read.

Here is what I realized. Some people wait to retire and travel. I'm traveling now so when I finally slow down, what I want to do is read and watch DVD's. I love to read. I love to sit around the house and see picture books. Read biographies, and watch movies.

So to generate time for me is to understand the time I have. I can share time, or I can reallocate time. Those are the ways to generate time, by saving and reallocating. Trying to find a way to generate time is also to become more organized.

Another way to generate time is to cut travel distance to work and home. Today, I will take the train to New York, and while on the train, I have audio books. I can get information and knowledge from listening to books while I am traveling. I love sitting around listening to audio books.

These are ways that I am generating time today.

By Moe

PLEDGE

I pledge my support, time, and money to many causes. Pledging to support a child in Mexico is critical for me. There is something about getting something from people who I pledge with. The child from Mexico sends me letters all the time. I appreciate that. Pledge is loyalty. I am loyal to the United States. I have learned to have another perspective.

Pledging means I am loyal but not always in agreement. Being loyal and loving someone or something else - means that I have to disagree with people who are taking a path which might not be safe or secure. When I disagree with someone or something, my disagreements are out of concern for direction and not to get even or have personality differences. I am a pledging kind of guy. I am loyal.

I do not mind being loyal. Saying that I want to stick with someone or something is an honor. Someone would have to do something very extreme for me to break that pledge.

Over the years, I have tried to be faithful. Pledging myself to people and situations seems to be the way to keep me loyal.

By Moe

Being a veteran there was a time when I first entered the Army and gave a verbal promise and pledge to defend the constitution and follow the orders of those appointed over me. Having done so made me feel satisfied that I could be a part of an organization that made the promise I gave even more fulfilling than I ever expected. Later on, when I reenlisted for the second time at age 34 and had previous service time of 7 years, I felt obligated to be somewhat an observer of the tasks and details assigned to a few of us who volunteered to do a certain job for the day and be satisfied with the completion of the same.

When someone started to complain about the work he had to do and I took charge and was assigned as the one to supervise the work detail, I carefully reminded the complainers of the oath of office he took when he enlisted. That being a pledge of office and duty accepted into the service as a member who would do as asked and not complain about the circumstances of the work detail.

Sometimes when I think of the time I spent in the Army, I remember when I first began on my Army career and had to do as I was told. I gave my word and pledged to serve my country the best I could because I promised, and pledged to do my best.

By Joel

I think about the times I took an oath throughout my years.
Sadly to say, I wasn't able to follow through on some and this led to a few tears. In the school I went to, I was taught what to do and say.
And much emphasis was placed on rules to keep and commands to obey.
When I joined the Scouts, I pledged on my honor to do my best to uphold the laws.
Regardless of what I thought, or regardless of my flaws.
When ever a solemn oath or promise is broken,
The ones that really hurt are the ones that are usually spoken.
So I found it wise to be careful whenever a pledge is used,
For many lives could be affected and others could be abused.

By Ron S.

CYCLE

During the cycle of a weeks time, from Monday to Friday, I encounter groups here at CRP that keeps me on the straight and narrow. And participating with fellow Vets helps me to stay away from using drugs and the void that I used to have when I was abusing myself with marijuana and cocaine and alcohol.

Thanks to God I come here. I plan my week by coming to CRP and have a routine to give me stability with my recovery.

By D. K.

Cycles can be followed through by observing many things that happen around us. I think of the cycle of the planets that travel around our nearest star - our sun.

Then there is the cycle of the time of planets that are closest to earth, that travel around the Milky Way over a period of 26 to 30,000 years.

In fact, we are getting out of one of the Zodiacs and progressing to Aquarius that is the 11th sign of the Zodiac.

Another cycle is when the Milky Way goes around the entire cosmos every 40,000 years.

We are now where we were 40,000 years ago in the cosmic universe. Also, at the same point in the Milky Way 30,000 years ago and at the cusp of changing from Capricorn Zodiac to Aquarius.

Remember the words to the song "The age of Aquarius . . .", well here we are again, having gone 26,000 miles from the edge of Capricorn to enter the Aquarius Zodiac.

I think this recycle of events is a wonderful event. By 2010, we will be out of Capricorn and fully in Aquarius. That will be the change that is coming, not an end to the earth and our nearby planets. Apocalypse is when good triumphs over evil. A time when people will have a greater insight to the peace and joy between mankind as it should be.

By Joel

My life has been a series of cycles. Here in a cowboy shirt today was like being in a cowboy shirt yesterday,

My cycles used to be going back to New Mexico. Back to the South West. I had always wanted to be a mountain man.

I found peace in the mountains living in the wilderness. That was my dream. Indians (native people) took me in. They taught me to live. So I would come back and get renewed in New Mexico.

Now, at this present time, I can renew myself without going back to the mountains. I am able to withdraw, rest, heal and go forward without falling apart. The pain in my life never went away. The cycles never stopped. I am able to live through and go with these cycles. My life has been filled with cycles. Now, I continue on.

By Moe

This time of year, Spring time, I think is the best.
Because we just came out of a cold winter's rest.

The air is fresh, and the birds are now singing.
You can also see the pretty flowers that Spring is bringing.

Three month go by, and we're right into Summer.
To some it gets too hot, and this is really a
bummer.

Fall quickly follows Summer, with its crisp, cold air.
The leafs drop and the winds blow and mess up our hair.

Winter is shortly upon us with its sleet and all the snowing.
The daylight is short, and the nights are cold with Arctic winds blowing.

But thanks God for the four seasons, that make up one year.
For each season has its purpose, so le rejoice and enjoy, with good cheer!

By Ron

When I saw the word cycle, I thought of bicycle, bicycle, tricycle, tricycle.
In a group I was in this morning, we talked about the cycle of the Milky Way, and the galaxy, and the universe.

I bought a book once, back in 2006, that told me our lives come in cycles. And that I was in my second cycle - about to get to my third cycle, that was in December 06.

I've had psychic letters come to me in the mail which talked about cycles. I guess I don't necessarily like to believe in cycles as much as I like to believe that we determine our own fate, and not that my life is bound to cycles.

I have some days that happened to me that had happened before. Yes. But I believe that is partly because I didn't have enough time to complete what I needed to

do. So I started the process of doing the work that I didn't have time to complete originally.

In a relationship, I don't believe it's about cycles. It has to do with time. To concentrate and focus on what is important and learn that I am not the only one on the planet, but to have compassion. I love for others as well as myself. And when you grow up and learn, that's growth, not a cycle.

By A. S.

EXCHANGE

An exchange is to pass on comments or communicate an idea to another during a conversation. It could be a worry gesture to a friendly hello in response to a "good meaning" gesture from another person. It's an exchange of a greeting of good will or sets the page for what should or could be the beginning of a good day.

I hope that such a pleasant greeting between two people would insure that the day will be a pleasant one.

By D. K.

Exchange by definition is to receive or give another thing for something in return. It doesn't only mean physical items. The best things you can do at CRP is to exchange ideas and values with your fellow veterans. You do this to show that you are not alone in this world and also to learn how to accomplish your goals in life.

Exchanging in the veterans experience will show someone is always worse off than yourself as well as someone has already gone through what you are going through. You should learn from others experiences so you don't have to learn through the rocky road of trial and error. Exchange of experience is free, and is the most valuable asset in CRP.

Anonymous

The best exchange I know is the gift a good hug.
It comes in all sizes, and it's not hard to lug.

And a hug can be returned to the person who gave it also.
It doesn't require much strength or cost a lot of dough.

To exchange a smile is also a good thing.
You never know what pleasure it may bring.

When a smile is returned, it makes you feel good.
Because I know everyone can give one, if they only would.

So the best exchanges are the ones that come from the heart and are sincere.
They cost nothing, and they can always be exchanged with nothing to fear!

By Ron S.

JOURNEY

Four years ago, I made the decision to clean up my act and become a clean and sober person. I stopped immediately. I didn't want any marijuana or cocaine in my house or on me. I didn't want to use any more. I was determined to quit. After wrestling with my cigarette smoking for three years, I quit them too. It took some time for me to fight off the cravings, but I'm through with street drugs and cigarette smoking today.

It's been a journey I don't want to repeat by relapsing. I will continue my journey toward a life free of drugs and full of happiness.

By D. K.

Places to go to and perhaps to return from. Not all places and people travel to, do they return. Remember the story of "Amityville Horror"? When that family left, they didn't return. Their journey away was final.

Beginning a journey of my life, I was taken from my mother at the age of 3 months and put into a foster home with my sister who was 1 year and 3 months old.

From there, at 6 years old, I was sent to another foster home, then another and then I made a journey to an orphanage to live there for 5 years. Then I moved to another foster home. There I finally finished high school and journeyed to Tennessee with my foster mother and dad to build a house in 1963. It was the winter of '64 when I enlisted into the Army. My journeys since I was 3 months old took me a long, long way.

While in the service, I made journeys to 24 states, 9 countries, and 1 ocean crossing by a troop ship.

After my first service time, I traveled to Connecticut. Then I moved around until I went back into the service (Army) in 1977.

When I returned and was discharged in 1981, I traveled from Washington, DC., to CT, and eventually found myself at the CRP program since Dec. of 2007, for the second time where I was at CRP from Nov. 1999 to Jan. 2001.

I have had many journeys in my life time. However, I wouldn't change the many places I have been and the many things I have learned. There are still more journeys I need to make. I don't know where I will be going, only that I will be gone one day from CRP and perhaps never to return. One never knows what life's next journey will be.

By Joel.

We all are on life's journey one way or another,
But if you don't know where you're going, you're in big trouble brother.
It's good to have a goal, dream or a vision to know where you're going.
Otherwise, you'll be tossed around like when the wind is blowing.
Some Journeys are long, and some are short to travel.
Some are easy to follow, as long as they don't unravel.
The journey of life is from womb to tomb, it is said.
As to what one does will follow you, once you're dead.
Some travel through life, and their here today and gone tomorrow.
But it's better to leave your footprints for others to follow.

By Ron S.

EXPECTATION

Being here with my fellow Vets is the expectation I look forward to each time I participate in groups or interact with other Vets.

Anticipation about the morning meeting "AM Focus", wakes me up in the morning and points me in the right direction to complete the day.

Living the experience of CRP and sharing the experience with others, makes me feel good.

My expectations may not always be answered, but just being here is inspiration enough to keep coming.

By D. K.

I expect there are many things in my life I have yet to see.
And I really would like to travel throughout our country.

My expectations are to behold all the beauty of its nature.
So I can take pictures of places, and this I'll do for sure.

I anticipate travelling by bus, boat, plane or car
To take me to spots that are either near or far.

I expect to meet people who are of the same mind.
Who travel too, never knowing what they will find.

There's a certain thrill going to places you've have never been to before.
And once you've done it, you'll surely want to see more.

So expectations or anticipation can be something that is big or small.
But just make sure you have good reason to expect something, that's all!

By Ron S

COMPATIBLE

Coming to grips with my psychosis and not doing any drugs or alcoholic beverages, I compromised with myself. A situation which I'm proud to be a part of. Being here at CRP is the choice I've made for myself to help me maintain my sobriety and fight insanity and falling victim to drugs and self abuse.

Every morning I thank God for waking me up and steering me in the right direction away from self-destruction. As long as I can get up and come here, I have a chance at becoming a self-respecting individual.

By D. K.

Compromise is something that is not always easy to do. But it is a word that effects both me and you.

Finding equal balance between two people is a challenging act. With compromise between two people, confusion will come and there is a promise of that.

Peace, joy, and harmony is the best way to live. Practice compromise and negotiations will be the things that one can give.

Compromise is a balancing act. It's healthy and fair to give and that is a fact.

Life will be easier on one to act more mature. Compromise brings less stress and conflict, and that is for sure.

By Kin B.

To compromise is to bring balance about an agreement between two opposing things. Sometimes the settlement keeps the peace, other times conflict it brings.

To compromise a lie for something that is true could cause a lot of trouble. Especially when one finds it out, it could really burst your bubble.

By not saying anything or compromising about an important issue, Could make you sad, and surly then, out will come the tissue.

And remember, laws are written and should be kept without fail, Because if they are broken or compromised one could wind up in jail.

By Ron S.

When dealing with others you have to compromise to achieve anything, in that - compromising is a good thing. (Give and take if you will.)

On the other hand, compromising one's self (for me) is not such a good thing. Compromising an oath is compromising yourself. Going down the road you swore to avoid.

God grant me the wisdom to know how and when to compromise.

By Wayne

To compromise means to some folks to settle an argument or find an agreeable settlement of a conflict, as in neighborly arguments or nations at a settlement of issues that would prevent a war, or to be the one to help the other when needed or asked to bring a helping hand upon a severe attack upon a situation that that person or nation cannot settle at the time of the conflict.

There is much happening out there, beyond CRP, as in the Democratic control of our government.

I foresee an issue of grave separation of our freedoms from our constitution being breached, even as I write these words.

When one pays close attention to the talk shows, one will hear about the attempts of the Democratic Party to make our free nation a National Socialist Party, where there will be no compromise.

Something that causes me to sit up and take notice of our freedoms that soon may be taken to a limit of a non-compromise state.

Sometimes we may find a need to compromise a situation that could become a terrible time for two or more people, especially up at the VAMC, dealing with our primary care physician, and nurses; a time when our medications don't seem to work, or our physical needs are not being approached by other doctors in a way that will help us feel better or at least feel well enough to function day by day.

Sometimes a compromise has been reached in order for both sides to understand how our medications work and maybe don't work.

Keep the thought of using a compromise to settle an issue. One never knows when it will needed

By Joel

ADJUST

Need to change attitude about living a life and being sober, make better plans in living arrangements by being sober and loving everything better and having Higher Power, who I chose is God in adjusting to a life in being sober. Amen.

By Ed M.

I had to adjust to a future of not drinking and drugging to save my life. After thirty years of destroying my health, I realized if I didn't stop, I would eventually kill myself. I made the choice of living instead of dying. Now I have the monumental task of making new friends and maintaining my sobriety. These past two years I'm beginning to learn to interact with my fellow vets and coordinator to become the good person I would like to be. Thanks for being here and being patient with me and my paranoia. I'm beginning to loosen up and become a part of the CRP family.

By Dave K.

Upon relocating to new surroundings, the first thing I'd do is not to go into the community. By doing this process I'm most likely to maintain my sobriety. As to adapting to my surroundings, I'd attend Church and attend A.A. and N.A. daily, and reaffirm my commitment to recovery.

By Chas J.

As you may see in life, USA isn't a Disneyland. End conspiracy after each war. Last year over 300 murders in Philadelphia and this Iraq war, over 3,000 men and women killed. Now can you adjust to that pattern. Some of us can hardly adapt to the desert condition .

So please set down and adapt to this on coming heat wave? And look for the change of more fly patterns. As the old saying goes - Look up in the sky, is it a bird or planed, i.e. not superman.

By John G.

Adjusting is undergoing some kind of change.
Some times in life, it becomes necessary to rearrange.
We have to adjust to the weather and the conditions around us.
So be ready for whatever comes, and stop making such a fuss.
Adjusting can be hard, and other times it's easy.
But it's usually the unknown that makes my stomach queasy.
Now there's one change to me that can really make a dent.
And that change to me is an "Attitude Adjustment".

By Ron S.

Adjust by definition is to “conform or adapt to new conditions”. As a disabled veteran, I find myself adjusting all the time to fit in. Sometimes the adjustment is easy like at CRP. CRP has many disabled vets, so it is easy to blend in and have a good day. The hard adjustments are when I leave CRP and travel home for the remainder of the day. Here you are in the quite “normal world”. You have to deal with people no matter what you do or where you go. I try to run a pattern daily so at least I’m dealing with the same places and people. I try to keep the adjusting to a minimum so as to remain as comfortable as possible. I am less likely to do something stupid if I am calm and in familiar areas where I know what to expect. Adjusting is a challenge, but I found it is not impossible to over come and lead a good life.

Anonymous

To adjust means to be flexible.
To be able to zig as well as zag.
Not to be a box wrench but a pair of pliers.
To be universal, one size fits all.
A little bit republican blended with a little bit of democrat.
To be grey. Not to be brittle.
Not too much, nor too little.
To be forever seeing, not seen.
To be perpetually changing.
Adapting to all the circumstances around us.
To be absolutely FREE!

By Sid A.

This means to change a code of behavior from war to peace. It was easier after WW II. When I came home in ‘73, I was considered a loser. This, because we never took Hanoi. We were told to sit and take it and become a target. One thing I found was hard to do was to turn it off. I wish I could turn off the switch, but it’s the only enemy I know. To be ready at all times. To do my duty first. I hope the soldiers coming home today can adjust in an easier manner than what was there for me. But as for me, I’ll stand ready as long as I see that flag waving.

By Ernest K.

There are many things that are difficult for me to adjust to. My surroundings is a big one. People, places and things. First of all, I have to understand what is my adjustment factors. Then recognize what my resources are in terms of adjustments are, then take action. What actions? I have to meditate on them, research them, then apply the actions to my surroundings. This may take me some time. My main course of action is spiritual, praying, reading the bible and being plugged into my church community.

Anonymous

(Comical Story POEM)

Jill - Dag nab it Tommy, why do you have to always bicker and fuss?

Jill- Why can't you get off your lazy butt - Adapt! Adapt!

Tommy - Look who's talking and why should I listen to you, or even trust?

Tommy - Your life is a broken record, a fall-out, a bust!

Jill - Okay you got me there, just do it for yourself, can't you see it's a must.

Tommy - Look here, I'm old as rust, back-blasting dust, conversation through and no more discuss!

By Sam R.

PATH

There are many roads or paths an individual can take to either build or destroy one's life circumstances. The path will come to "the choice" at "the crossroads" of "this way" or "that way". When one reaches this point one must certainly be prepared for the "outcome" of their "choice". Sometimes, an individual might not think things out clearly and choose incorrectly. Perhaps, it might or sometimes turn out okay even with little thought or haste. Unfortunately, at times it can end up for the worst.

The "Path of sobriety" has been very rewarding for me. I thank God for all the people He has put in my life to get me where I'm at today. This path is a continuous hope of clarity that I now know I hold dearly to my heart.

By Sam R.

Path by definition is "a road or way made for a particular purpose". The pathway to CRP is open to all veterans. The pathway through CRP is what you make of it. For example, there are many groups and activities such as the computer room. If you take advantage of these paths you will find all the help you need here at CRP; especially from the staff. If you show up just to hang around and accomplish nothing, you have chosen the wrong path.

Anonymous

I'm making a straight path in recovery to staying sober. 6 months and 8 days today, and counting also and being happy about it and healthier, knowing I made the right choice to do so.

By Edward M.

In life, I know I've been on many roads going many different ways.
It was when I was on the "Broad Way" and "Wide Path", then I really had to pay.
I would get lost in this wide path, it gave me too much room to stumble.
It was when I took the "Narrow Way", things began to change and I became humble.
For this is the "Straight Path" were it is said very few will find it.
So it is my prayer that others will find this path, and they too will be humble and submit.
By Ron S.

My path begins with me getting the help I need for (PTSD). My treatment begins on 30 Jan. 07 at the PRRP program in Newington. Its three months, and by then I will have four months sober. From there I will be making preparations for work and to begin the fall semester at ECSC in which I will be attending the Computer Science program there. Hopefully, by then I will be successful enough to go back to SC to help my family out down there, and to try to set up a type of stability in my life. Right now, I haven't drank in about two months, and haven't used in three weeks, and part of my path is to stay sober.

By Carlton D.

Jesus and God like a track.
Jesus and God like a way made by footsteps.
Jesus and God like a road.
Jesus and God like a way made for a particular purpose.
By Larry P.

"Who knows where the road is going? Only a fool would say; but if you let me love you, I'll be sure to love you, . . . all the way." From a Frank Sinatra tune (1950's).
That's the "true" path.
By Howard S.

Path is the route we take.

1) Sometimes finding the path means we get lost. I got lost today. Found the VA hospital in Newington after I was lost. Most of the time getting lost means getting found. I got lost and stuck with Sammy in Los Angeles once. Lost in the city. Stuck in the traffic. There is no end to the chance to discover. Discovery can happen on the path and/or off the path. I love to know where I am going. Sometimes going places does not work out. Being off the path is still a chance to discover.

2) My trouble is not becoming discovered. I might be off the path but eventually - usually through luck not skill - I get back on the path.

The path - or a path is what i would prefer to be on. Sometimes things don't work out the way they should or the way I hope. I still get back - "back to the path".

By Moe

TRANSACTION

I come every day to CRP hoping that my participation in the groups will help me with my psychosis and paranoia and be able to get along with the vets. The exchange of greeting a light conversation makes me feel good and accepted. I've come to rely on CRP as my way out of a very long scary and depressing situation. I'm looking to trust my fellow vets and coordinators. I can't think of any other place to spend my idol time.

Thanks for having me to be with you!

By Dave K.

Transactions happen often to make situations happen. The transaction of once being worst off has changed for the better in my life. I have reviewed this by counting my blessings in many areas of my life. Spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically, I can truly say I have grown. I am looking forward to the day with certainty, charity, and with confidence to regain everything once again in my life.

POEM:

Transaction may come, transactions may go.

But the greatest transactions are in the areas you grow.

By Sam R.

Jesus and God like - transactions

Jesus and God don't like the act of transacting.

Jesus and God don't like the fact of being transacted.

Jesus and God like the act of exchange.

By Larry P.

If there's any act of exchange that goes on, most likely it will not be the best of deals. Somewhere down the line of life, you need to look at yourself. But one thing you need to learn is war waits for no man! In the transaction you must buy the right car to get off the road and the upcoming war. After all, it's your life. So please don't lose it.

By John G.

Connor waited patiently for his contact to arrive at the corner of 42nd and 3rd, to get his package and leave the country never to return; because he was carrying close to 10 million dollars in diamonds. He would get a new identity and a new life with the money he was going to get paid for this last job.

Connor was a master jewelry thief, never been caught in the 21 years of this business he learned from the best and from other thieves mistakes. That's why he always made a point to work alone.

The moment for the exchange was getting close. Connor spotted his contact coming from the opposite side of the street, but he was also a master of street

exchanges. Without a second thought, Connor waited for the traffic light to change and at that moment his contact had reached the opposite corner - for the light changed and Connor and the contact crossed each other before the light was green. The exchange was done in less than 5 seconds. 10 million dollars in jewelry were exchanged for a new life and a new identity, and no one noticed what transpired in those 5 seconds.

None the wiser.

By Carlos M.

SOURCE

Nothing comes from nothing! What is the source of all sources? Did man evolve from an ape and did it really all start from the sea or Big Bang Theory? Is there a grand Creator of everyone and everything? These questions, I believe have been going on since the beginning. People have many theories on this, and have debated many tedious hours on this subject. Everyone is entitled to their own beliefs. I myself, have my own as well. Historians, scientists, theologians, pastors, etc. have all come to believe in something or someone. What is the source you have come to have peace with? Haven't you thought about this also?

By Sam R.

Where is the source that God Himself has found. With what source should we look for it foundation. It's powerful to hold and no human can hold its greatness. Just for me it's too much power for a person to have. All source flow from God. So let being there is where He Himself is Love. I think it's Love.

By John M.

After a lifetime of experiences, Norman was finally standing in front of the source, and he was joyful. He was standing before the Creator; finally. It was everything he expected and MORE.

By Carlos M.

The very first source was the Egyptians. The tombs and the pyramids. The symbols and signs were not words, but a source of symbolism and art. Expressed by slaves and Jews. People still ask, who am I? Where did I come from? Origin runs deeper and deeper into our universe even to this day. Mankind still does not understand his origin. The movie about the monkey trials only show a relationship and only a pattern. Have you seen any monkeys lead off into a war?

By John G.

It's my belief everything that exists on earth and above has a source.
And we can always ask the question "Why" of course.
If we look hard enough we usually can find a answer.
Even though the source may be hidden, I still know it's out there.
Evolutionists believe that people and animals just evolved.
But there's still too many questions that they can't solve.
Creationists believe that God, in the beginning created all.
And that the things we see today existed before and after the Fall.
Which came first the chicken of the egg?
Somethings we have to leave as is, I beg.
For we don't know the answers to everything yet.
But we will for sure, when we go to heaven, I bet!
By Ron S.

SACRIFICE

How powerful, great and stunning a sacrifice given to me.
The Lamb of God, on a rugged cross, who died on calvary.
Crowned with thorns, pinned with nails, blood running swift.
Drawing me into belief, confessing and granted a gift.
Eternal life, a solemn promise, who can give more?
Secured with my Father, Him with heaven I'm bound for.
By Sam R.

Because of truth in living out my life, I'm blessed by Jesus and God to set out to do something with my life, to influence society and the development of teaching. They have not put their path before me. In order for them to enlighten me about what they have for me. I must become more mature with my age and the responsibility they have in mind. I must go through this trial period that they started here at C.R.P. My actions that I portray here are being used to direct me to whatever they have to do. The sacrifices I must endure has their approval.
By Dave K.

Many times I had to give things away to help other people so that they can help others to continue on what is needed and live. I sometimes still give up and think of things I don't really need or want in order to survive for others.
By Edward M.

Sacrifices can be given in many different ways.
In church it's usually done with songs and praise.
We've all done sacrifices whether we know it or not.
It's a giving up of something whether it's a little or a lot.
For those who went into the military in our country to serve.
Many died for freedom and received the recognition they rightly deserved.
How and what we sacrifice is a personal choice.
It's our actions that will speak louder than your words or voice.
Many sacrifices go unnoticed and little thanks are given.
But there is a place where everything "good" is known, and that heaven.

By Ron S.

Personal need at time of self will maybe is all I have. Am I willing to give up my need for someone or others? Sacrifice is my will does not add up to what I John, can do for others and my United States of America.

By John M.

Jesus and God sacrifice.
Jesus and God with something given up or lost.
Jesus and God with destruction or surrender of something.
Jesus and God for the sake of something else.

By Larry P.

I need to sacrifice somethings so that I can understand certain things that I would help anyone who hurts my feelings. I need to sacrifice my money and be humble to the people who hurt my feelings. God bless the veterans who do not love me. God speed to the people of the vet to vets. Truly.

By Russell E.

The global warming trend. The heat of the automobiles. The reflection of the sun on the earth and on the buildings. Heat build up all around the equator, always pushing upwards. Even inside the computer chips.

Yes, heat stroke causes heart attacks, the sacrifice which we may have to pay for.

By John G.

VALUE

Life is a value. The price of life is not ending and keeps on going up and up, just like our taxes keep going up also with the cost of living. The value of life keeps going up and up. No end to the value of life. So live and let live!

By Edward M.

What is life if your value is lost?
Your hope, desire, and belief all have been tossed!
We all have value in our makers eyes.
His hope is for us to find it and realize.
There is a plan for you, granted to succeed.
If we put our trust in Him and confess and believe.
It is worth more than silver, this also goes for gold.
Reminding you, you have a value, whether you're young or old.

By Sam R.

The price I might pay for something I purchased. A principle I might hold up for myself to live by. The principle of my mortgage that never seems to go down. The standard I set for myself by keep coming to Vet to Vet. And most of all, I value these groups at CRP to hold me to the principles and standards I need to keep "Clean and Sober".

By Dave K.

I must put my wholehearted effort(s) mentally, spiritually and physically as I am able to realize the fruition of what I value to become utterly prophetic.

By Howard S.

There's one thing most people value, and that is life.
But when you look around, all you see is turmoil and strife.
Nation against nation, brother against brother;
Men so filled with hatred killing one another.
It's good at times, to see if your values are up to par.
Because if they're not accepted, you're not going to get very far.
In this country, we value freedom, as stated in our constitution.
Yet some people take that license to far and all we get is pollution.
It would be nice, if we could all value the same thing.
Just think of the love and the peace to the world it would bring!

By Ron S.

Value is the price for a commodity that is desireable, to pay for holidays. During holiday time, value is the price for merchandise and things I bought for my friends in vet to vet or my lawyer and his wife, Diane

By Russell E.

God and Jesus with value.
God and Jesus with a principle standard.
God and Jesus with quality regarded as worth while.
God and Jesus with desirable.
God and Jesus with a fair price.

By Larry P.

The principle has placed a value to our education. Passing grades and that diploma. Yes it takes years. Taking S.A.T.s and not looking for clues. Blue book for the essay. Writing has a value of getting across to all people.

By John G.

SPECIAL

What makes anyone or anything special. Is it the way it look? Or perhaps, it may be someone's or something's uniqueness being only one of its kind. A person can have many special traits such as a kind and gentle spirit. Or perhaps, a beautiful smile and joyous spirit which may encourage others to lighten up a little bit. Being special is in the eye of the beholder, seeing it and absorbing all of the aura. If one takes the time to reflect on this topic, special, I would say that each and everyone of us are "special". I believe God thinks we are, so why should we not believe this also!

By Sam R.

Life itself is totally special! Each breath, moment is an enhancement of the human experience. Keep living as best one can will reflect in perpetual abundance.

By Howard S.

Something that is unusual to the eye or behavior. Out of the ordinary and suspicious. Worthy of comment or action. I have to be conscious of the way I react or present my outlook on my behavior or it would be considered peculiar to others. I have a tendency to speak out with words to my self or make noises others would consider peculiar. They may be, but this is how I let off my anger amazingly.

By Dave K.

My rifle was an M-14. It took about 5 minutes for me to brake it apart. I found out that it was easy to assemble and also to disassemble. But my gun was a special instrument and is was not suppose to get wet, dirty, or muddy or else!

By Russell E.

It's nice to be special in somebody's eyes.
For it brings meaning and purpose to our lives.
A man who is married will cherish his wife.
For she is something special in his life.
There are many special people around us each day.
Some are people we meet, work with, and/or play.
I believe everyone is special as God made us to be.
But sometimes it's just hard for others to see.
It's nice to do something special to the person you love.
For everyone like surprises, like a gift from above.
God certainly surprised us when He gave His only begotten Son.
And because of that special gift, we can now all be one.
By Ron S.

The word special is one word used to describe an individual or group of individuals as taking part or being involved in a situation that escapes words.

I sit here with a group of men whose actions and experiences escape understanding by the general public: where at one time when we were very young and in the service to be issued combat gear and given orders which put most of us out of our right minds.

Today, people and family wonder why we are the way we are. To be on medications and half out of our minds. We were made this way when we were very young by orders we were told to carry out. They make war movies, but they fall short on saying why we are special. It is because of what we experienced and that we survived. It's because we survived that we're special. The closest thing to being special is from being part of a "Band of Brothers", where we lived, fought, and bled together. This is what makes us "special".

By Ernest K.

IMAGINE

IMAGINE

Can you imagine with no hope?
Throwing away all your blessings buying dope!
Can you imagine life with no love?
Not seeking our Creator up above!
Can you imagine life with no peace?
Always in chaos that doesn't cease!
Now, imagine all your dreams coming true.
Because you cleaned up your act, and know what to do!

By Sam R.

I can't imagine if this world or earth would ever come to an End and if it would ever blow up to nothing left but dust.

Maybe the earth can start a new beginning like God started it millions of years before and making man and taking a rib from man to make a women.

Can you imagine if that could happen again to have a new start in life and a better one than now, which has too much crime and hate today. Me, I can imagine it would be better to start a new life again for the good of us to be. At times I think we need a new start.

By Ed M.

God and Jesus like to imagine.
God and Jesus each imagine to make mental image of.
God and Jesus like for form idea of.
God and Jesus like conceive in the mind.

By Larry P.

Imagine looking for ways to get a picture to a thought in my mind. These are wisps of thinking. Trying to get my thoughts straight. People could pretty much dominate me if they only kept encouraging me. Discouraging, most of my life is discouraged. Clinical depression eats away at me. So I imagine nice things. Hopeful things, colorful things. I might not have hope all the time. I have to imagine feeling better or what I would like to do to help feel better. Some time imagining works, some times imagining doesn't work. I keep imaging in hopes that I will feel better or the life around me will become better. By imagining, I have learned to have some hope - some of the time.

Imagine that the war was over.
Imagine that there seems to be a future.
Imagine the world was and is free from strife.
Imagine that we can live together again.
Imagine that the troops were finally coming home.
Imagine just another day where the conflict was over.

By Moe A.

I can only imagine what the future holds,
In the Bible, many things about the future are told.
No one knows for sure what exactly lies ahead;
But we can learn from the good book what God has said.
It says there's a place called heaven and hell.
It's our choice where we will someday dwell.
I like to imagine heaven as a place of eternal light.
Hell is a place I imagine of torment, darkness and night.
Many people try not to imagine what death will be like.
But we can rest in peace if we know whose hands and feet were spiked.

By Ron S.

Imagine if Ronald Reagin was still president. We would've been out of Iraq three years ago, and there by letting Suni'a and Shihites Muslims fight there own bloody civil war. Just like when Iran and Iraq fought for eight years back in the 80's

Imagine those 3,800 soldiers that would still be alive from the war in Iraq. Imagine if president George W. Bush was impeached back in 2001 when we had the chance. Imagine if Bush had not stolen the election through the court in screwed up ballots and poll stations, both of which happened in Florida where Jeb Bush was Governor at that time.

Imagine if our constitution wasn't weighed with the most recent amendments which drained out the spirit of the constitution and gave it away to liberal views and ideas - like gay rights and other nonsense. Imagine if a person could still speak their mind on conflicting subjects and not be labeled a hate monger. Imagine if the people in Mass. had been allowed to vote on the subject of gay marriage instead of being told by the State Government "This doesn't concern you". Imagine if public schools could hire teachers they wanted instead of having the State butting in. Imagine if we still held dear the 10 Commandments and the Holy Bible, and we still followed God.

By Earnest K.

It is very important that we all understand our dreams. Missing out on the wrong interpretation could send you down the wrong path. At times your dreams can be very upsetting. The nature of violence has a ghost like effect. They call that PTSD or flashback. It happens mostly in combat - people dieing and being killed before your very own eyes. It's not your imagination. It could affect all of us by a flashback. Drinking may slow down your imagination, but sooner or later you got to wake up. The flashback is part of your imagination.

By John G.

STRAIN

STRAIN

Let the static out your attic, don't strain your brain.
Relieve yourself from the pressure, before getting mad or insane.
Kick back and take a deep breath and discern what's going around;
Before you find yourself in the prone position possibly on the ground.
You may not think it's possible or perhaps happen to you,
So think it as reality, discerning what to do.

By Sam R.

At times it seems like the very thing I want to see or like is not near. It's often far away and one has to strain their eyes just to see.

And then it's close and you see it for what it really is. And one would say I strained my eyes for this! Yeah! Moment!

Yeah, you see a woman and she looks good too, body nice and right, in all the right places. Straining eyes you know! Tap her on the shoulder to say hello! And this little old lady says "Can I help you sir!" Yeah! Moment!

By John M.

God and Jesus like strain.
God and Jesus like to draw.
God and Jesus don't like stretch tight.
God and Jesus like to exert, use.
God and Jesus don't like tax to the utmost.

By Larry P.

Some people with authority think that they can push us or you around a little too much. Give them an inch of it, they want a foot and give them a foot, they want a meter, and I know some people that think this way.

The more authority that they think they have, the whole lot more they want. So sometimes that puts a strain on me or us. We are the people who went to war with the strain on us to do service and help other fellow vets to do the same. If it wasn't for us, who knows what if: like what if is a big word.

What if there was another 9-11 back in those days with the help of Russia or China helping North Vietnam to fight against South Vietnam. It could of course, but it didn't. Now it still puts a strain on me. Always wondering "What if". At times I'm a worry head and that puts a thought strain on me. So now we got involved to help South Vietnam as advisors to teach them how to protect themselves. It wasn't a political war!

By Ed M.

Sometimes I feel like the life has been strained out of me. To feel like I'm existing but not enjoying life. I'm not alone in this. Almost all of us feel we lost part of ourselves "over there!"

We lost our innocence and we remember how alive we felt before going "over there", and we try to get that feeling of innocence back by drinking or pills or drugging.

It puts a strain on me, to stand at my favorite swimming hole and only to realize I'm thinking about something that happened 34 years ago. How I strain to recapture my youth!

By Ernest K.

Sometimes for me, getting through the day is a strain.
As I wake up in the morning and find I'm in bodily pain.
Other times, during the day, I am pressed to use my brain.
And as some put it, I have what is known as a brain drain.
There are things that happen each day that I disdain.
Like being cut off on the road, and then I'm forced to restrain.
Even though I'm taxed to the utmost, to me it's very plain.
If I take revenge, I'll lose the peace that I worked so hard to gain.
No matter what happens I must keep my mind to stay sane.
So I find there's no better way than reading God's Word which is plain,
Because there all questions to life can be explained.

By Ron S.

How many times I've seen this on most back packers. Really the strain is on your back. Some people just keep stuffing and stuffing. It is something you may pick up in the service or camping school. The added weight of packing more stuff on a hike is added pressure on your back. Your bones can only take so much weight, and you feel the bones cracking. So now you have back pain.

This is just too much, but the back pain comes and goes. Just rolling over is painful. That's why you shouldn't over pack your back pack. Because over the years that added weight places a big strain on your back. Soldiers and kids like to collect things to show others what they got and how they got it. So think before you start stuffing your back pack because the pain never goes away!

By John G.

LIMIT

Have you ever set a limit that you regret?
That you wished you never planned, but rather forget!
Some limits are reachable, others seem far.
But persistence is needed, to reach that star.
So pace your limits and take it slow,
And soon one day that limit you'll know.

By Sam R

Limit without boundary? Is a real life worth living? Expectations of others, now!
Here are some real expectations. The person limits you to do something or be something. They themselves are incapable of being or doing what they ask the other person to do or be. They are incapable of giving you this answer. They are limited or stuck with limits at this point.

By John M.

I relate the definition of limit to the Iraq war. It doesn't seem that a time limit was put in place for operations over there, in Iraq, a country where projection controls perception.

The projection is that the U.S. Government poses an image that either our troops pull out and leave Iraq to deal with their own problems, or our troops stay a little longer, and try to turn things around. The perception is, that most of us Americans believe we've been over there too long, or that we should have never gone there in the first place. This is a major issue because, rightfully so the war can be argued both ways. We have a job to do over there, but it's so drawn out it makes you think mixed feelings about our purpose over there.

The media tends to play a key part in the "projection" of the war in Iraq - since 90% of everything you see on the news is negative things about the war. To the media, there is no limit to war we are in, and they don't see the seriousness in the fight against terrorism. They believe there should be a "limit", which is good to believe, but they don't see both sides of the war.

By T.J.

In our society people and pressures set limits on what we say, what we do, and what we think.

We had some limits back in the service in the 70's. The only real limit I could feel smothering me like a blanket was to get the job done. It didn't matter how tired we were or hungry or how filthy we were. We didn't stop until we heard two words: "Mission accomplished".

This drive never left me. To push until the matter was resolved. This is one reason my family never understood me. "I want the matter resolved today!" I was viewed as too forward by them because I would not be content waiting until tomorrow. I didn't like limits, especially when it comes to jobs. Anyone who's able to do the job should be allowed to do the job, with no limits or race or gender.

By Ernest K.

“The Sky’s the Limit” is a book I once read.
It’s all about what you believe and put into your head.
If you limit your growth and think small;
It’s very likely you won’t accomplish much at all.
If you say you can’t, you most likely won’t try.
Then you won’t take the risk to try and touch the sky.
If we say we can, then we can get in and run the race.
And give it all we got with the help of God’s grace.
So be positive and don’t set limits on some things,
Because our minds can soar as if on eagle’s wings
There’s really no limit on what we can learn or know.
Just read as much as you can, and see how your mind can grow.

By Ron S.

God and Jesus like limits.
God and Jesus like the point, line or ends.
God and Jesus like where something ends or must end.
God and Jesus like where something ends or boundary
God and Jesus like where something ends or border ends.

By Larry P.

CYCLE

The cycle of life may be rough to many who have endured many struggles in their life time. Now imagine, perhaps those who are poor without many provisions as good housing, medical, clothes, food, and jobs - this outlook has much hardship.

On the other hand, this cycle might be overlooked by perhaps being born wealthy and everything you need or want is at your disposal. Then there are those whose persistence and dedication gets them through whatever comes their way. Still in all, “The Cycle of Life” of being born into a world of uncertainty and many challenges is quite overwhelming. Thank God for His grace and mercy that endures forever giving us all an opportunity of hope in life everlasting.

By Sam R.

A person’s age is a definite number of years, used as a measure of time. The recurring period is the silent steady achievement of reflecting success and failures in life with a positive attitude and a clear conscience.

By Richard S.

God and Jesus like cycle.

God and Jesus like a recurring period of a definite number of years used as a measure of time.

By Larry P.

My thoughts seem to go in cycles; positive to negative in various refinements / proportions in mostly recurring themes. For example: at one point in time my attitude toward an "impact" person in my life can be quite good; moments or so later, I view my relationship and I see that person in a darker ever sinister way. Hopefully the trend is upward.

By Howard S.

Life is full of cycles, or so it seems.
How each day has its night and daylight sun beams.
The seasons go from winter, spring, summer, fall.
There's no way to stop this yearly cycle at all.
Some cycles we know, we can do nothing about.
But others are the result of our doing and clout.
Like we can cycle our day as we want it to be.
This gives us more time for ourselves to be free.
Cycles are good, and they make life more predictable.
We can look forward to them, and life will be less despicable.
Cycles, cycles, cycles, they never cease to end.
Just when we think we know them all, here comes another my friend!

By Ron S.

DIGNITY

When I see the troops come back home, marching down Main St., from every theater of war operations through out U.S. history, - except Vietnam, where's the dignity in that? - In having your dress greens spit on by protesters, being called a baby killer, saying you're no good.

I still know I did my duty the best I could. So I could still feel some dignity and worth, in spite of other peoples attitudes. During these times it's more important on how I feel about myself and knowing that I did my job the best I knew how.

If I didn't object and instead had fired on innocent civilians near Xuan Loc on order by captain, I never would've gotten in trouble and would've had 30 years of pension by now. Instead I got an article 15 and article 37a for disobeying a lawful order.

But I refused to fire on them, my conscience is clear and in this I can hold my head up because I chose conscience over duty.

By Earnest K.

Dignity something you lose in touch of in battle! There are people who will not step down into any war. because we have churches and schools to go to. People have a set of standards from the Bible, like the Ten Commandants and always that very dark cloud of world war I and II. These two world wars had a legacy of endless violence. I had a hot night with frontline news on CPTV and M.E.K. violence. Is this world war III?

By John G.

Once we set the tone! Did we find ourself all alone or in a zone?

An appearance state of well being.

Life on Life's terms we wake up greeting.

All alone or by myself,

or with another.

Live life with dignity = great wealth!

By John M..

It would be nice if everyone could be treated with respect and dignity.

But in this imperfect world today, that's not a reality.

There is still too much hatred and prejudice going on in the world today.

Where one sees oneself as better than another, regardless of what others say.

And whether a high ranking person, or a person who has little stature.

It would be nice if we treated others as we would want to be treated, and that's for sure.

So I believe the quality or state of dignity really depends on the person doing the giving.

And then the person receiving will feel worthwhile, and know his life is worth living.

By Ron S.

God and Jesus like dignity.

God and Jesus like quality or state of being excellent, poised, or formally reserved in appearance or demeanor.

God and Jesus do not like a high rank, office or title

By Larry P.

GRATTITUDE

The good things people have done for me, far exceed what I know.
Sometimes I just took things for granted, and little gratitude did I show.
But now after being in CRP, I understand how much people care.
They do more than I ask, and help me by just being there.
Veterans Day we show our gratitude to the veterans who heard the call.
Because it goes without saying: "All gave some, and some gave all".
So as each day goes by, it's good to look back and reflect.
For there's always something to be thankful for in retrospect.
But the person who deserves the most thanks I believe is the Man from above.
There just isn't enough we can do to thank Him for the way He demonstrated His love
By Ron S.

The psychosis I went through to get to where I am today, I am grateful to be a part of CRP. Before I was a wandering mind trying to make sense of a desperate situation not knowing if I had a higher power or a psychiatrist in my corner, and I mistrusted the people that did try to help me. I am truly grateful that you did not give up on me. For as long as it takes, I hope that you'll keep the door open for me. There is no greater gratitude that I can have than you having me here.
By D. K.

The feeling of contentment without guilt. I'm grateful for the things I now have.
Fortunate of living in the United States of America for the large amount of opportunities it has to offer.
By Richard H.

This month thanksgiving will be coming up. I think I will eat only the dressing because we do not know how the turkey is feeling on November 22, 2007.
How much picking will a turkey eat, for all that E.coli was the turkey's picking in Elizabeth, New Jersey. Or is this bacterium of E.coli O157-H7 from Wyalusing, P.A.
The Recall of one million pounds of ground beef, and what about the Mad Cow stuff back in the 90's
By John G.

God and Jesus like gratitude
God and Jesus like thankfulness
God and Jesus like kindly feeling because of a favor received and a desire to do a favor in return.
By Larry P.

Existence of an individual; period of birth to death. Before now, life as John sees it, had gotten the best of this old boy. Just lived life as free as a bird. And then life gets real about the age of seventeen (17) [No more free life!]

John do this or else this will happen. Things, rent, cost of living and you're old enough to pull your own weight around here, rings our of people's mouths like words you never heard before. Now I know life is not free and it costs to be the Boss! Life.

By John M.

I have been lucky to survive this far considering some thing or some one has been trying to take control of my living. My life, mentally, has been plagued with hallucinations and disappointments. Friends and therapists tell me that my psychosis are a result of chemical imbalance in the brain. The lack of chemical substances has caused me to become skitzoid, and some what like a zombie.

It's only after I stopped drugging and drinking that I'm able to acknowledge that my life was chaotic and I could get control of my life. The number one thing I did was start here at CRP. If it was not possible for me to come here, I'm quite sure I'd be dead or bogged down with drugs. Thanks again for allowing me to take part in your rehabilitation.

By D. K.

Life starts with birth. I was lucky to see my son born.

My life was so called great for many years, growing was a trip, kids played, no matter the color types, just fun. My house was a good place for this. Big yard and ball games of course. The Poquonmock River we could fish, crap, and clam most of all.

In to school, things seem to change, people get different, sometimes color and race come into play. My dad being a hard working man always wanted better, so we moved, not far, just across the river.

It was like night and day. Nobody wanted to know the project kids, gangs started popping up. School, high school, got to have two or three classes of kids. It really stunk, My high school had 4,000 kids and graduated class of 750.

So you were pretty well molded by then. Tough guy, mod kid and big clicks.

And then the Draft. The rest is as is!

By Ken

Life is fleeting that's for sure.
It's may go by so fast, it's like a big blur.
The best way to live life, I believe, is one day at a time;
And enjoy each moment, till you hear the toll of death's chime.
For some, life is short, for others life may last long.
It isn't the time that counts. It's how we had sung our song.
Life is full of up's and downs, and they never seem to end.
So it's better to be flexible, then no matter what comes, you'll be able to bend. That's
life!

By Ron S

The sequence of physical and mental experience from birth to death and one or more
aspects of the process of living. It is for me to be able for me to respect life in this
world and to be able to accept life as it is!

By Russel E.

God and Jesus like the sequence of physical and mental experience that make up the
existence of an individual.

God and Jesus like one or more aspects of the process of living.

God and Jesus like the period from birth to death.

By Larry P.

Life is a learning process of people, places and things. Be happy with yourself
as a person. Enjoy the things that you have, and the effort required to attain them.

By Richard H.

EXPECT

Expect to be merry and happy! No way! Can't walk the streets near
Pine Street and others? Spotting two pit bulls and it's family. Wow We! Can't make it
to the Blue Bus, maybe?

It is estimated that Connecticut totals 363 accidents so far this year! I like to say
thanks to the V.A. Shuttle for moving around all those stuff cars and G.I. cans. Over the
years, V.A. drivers have slipped and slided those eighteen wheelers.

Thanks to the Shuttle.

By John G.

I look forward to the writer's group so I can spill my thoughts about what I
perceive myself to be and where I want and expect to be in the future. Through writing

and discussion and reflecting on the pass and present, I can prepare myself for the work ahead of me.

Through groups interaction I expect to someday to put behind me my thoughts and actions related to paranoia and schizoid condition. It may not happen, but I can try and expect to overcome sometime in the future.

By D. K.

At the end of year we spend too much time expecting.
When it would be better if we spent more time reflecting.
The hustle and bustle of shopping and buying,
Can make us at the end of the day sighing.
We've gotten to the point where people expect too much.
And we end up spending our cash, and then needing a crutch.
Over the holidays, it's better to be with the family and expect nothing;
And enjoy the company and the free conversation it keeps bringing.
If we lower our expectation of what it is we'd like to come;
We'll hardly be disappointed, and certainly have more fun.
So then when this holiday season is over, we will be able to reflect.
How things turned out better than we could hardly expect!

By Ron S.

God and Jesus like expect.
God and Jesus like to anticipate or look forward to.
God and Jesus like to consider probable or certain.
God and Jesus like to consider reasonable, due or necessary.

By Larry P.

PARTY

Whenever a group of people get together to interact with each other to listen to music and dance, we usually refer to it as a party. There are many things that we bring along for the party like soda, liquor, marijuana, and social cocaine. Most of those who come to the party really do "party". Some of us can use these merry makers at the party, go home and forget about, "that is", until the next time they get together.

But for some of us the party is just beginning. The high they attain is a reason to "party!!". Because of the high, they fail to realize that they had made a mistake until years later. I know they were wrong for me. I have three years clean and sober and I hope I never return to using them again.

By D. K.

Party is a way to bring people together. We can all learn together there is no way to stop us from learning once we start enjoying our time together. So let's start enjoying learning.

So why isn't learning sometimes fun? Because we do not have a learning party. We do seem to have more interactive learning or party mentality towards education today. We still have some time to go.

By Moe

Most people like to go to parties that's for sure.
It's good to socialize and can be a good cure.
There's laughter and conversation and also entertainment.
And a party can be a time where you can let it all out and vent.
There are many different kinds of parties held throughout the year.
There are parties for all occasions that bring good cheer.
Birthday parties, engagement parties, wedding parties and others.
And Seasonal parties like Christmas and Easter where we get with our sisters and brothers.
I appreciate the parties here at CRP, where many people work hard to make it a success.
There hasn't been one I didn't like I have to confess.
So thanks to the staff and the others who came.
It warms my heart and keeps my fire inside aflame.

By Ron S.

God and Jesus like a party.
God and Jesus like a group of people who gather for pleasure or entertainment.
God and Jesus like a group of people associated together for a common purpose.

By Larry P.

Last Saturday my parents hosted a holiday get together for friends and family at their home. Over 50 people attended. People started arriving at about 3 and did not leave till after midnight. There was so much food that I could not see the counters in my parents kitchen.

Anonymous

IDEAL

It would be great if all the thoughts that cross my mind would be perfect, and hold me to a thoughtful and attentive way of dealing with my paranoia. It's not easy to share my ideas with others. It's difficult to just converse and keep a straight thought. They leave me confused and nervous and this makes me a poor conversationalist. I can't run

away from myself. It would be a blessing to be able to hold to an idea long enough to have a good conversation. That would be ideal.

By D. K.

There are many things we see that seem ideal.
Usually it's something to us that has a lot of
appeal.

There are times we like to dream of what is perfect and real.

But in a sense, it's only what we imagine or feel.

Man, in his nature, can never be perfect you know,

Because within us are many flaws which seem to flow.

All that man makes or builds may seem to us like
perfection,

But in actuality, all things break down, and need
constant inspection.

We can only work with what we have or what we got.

Only God has created what is perfect and ideal, and that is a whole lot!

By Ron S.

Wouldn't it be great if the world could be an ideal place to live? It's nearly that, and I suppose it is in some places on this place called earth.

Most people on this place called home can travel to an ideal place to visit and live. However, one must be either retired or have enough working skills to move where the "work" is and reside there until the place or persons there are of no value for further residence.

For me, I would find it ideal right where I am when and if I could diminish with the 30 pills I take every day. If I skip one or two times to take them, I suffer and need to take the next dosage as soon as possible. The most ideal I could find things would be somewhere where the weather is not drastic in temperature or other conditions not suitable for me.

The most ideal I am finding these days, I have right where I am. Where I live, attending groups at CRP, and going to the VAMC at West Haven for all my medical needs.

Although the costs for medial help has come to my immediate attention, I will do my best to pay what I can and do the most to make my life as ideal as I can.

I am taking things one day at a time. That's the best I can do.

By Joel

SIMPLE

Simplicity is butterflies that children marvel at,
the way they see a greater feat like jumping over cracks.
The innocence of a child is belief, how simple can it be. Like saying Daddy I love you is
simply hugging me.
No lights or bells, just humble gestures, fitted from the heart, a minor note, so pedal
soft, a smile that leaves its mark.
A sunrise changing night to day, so subtle in its move, and nothing else could ever
compare to this, " a lift in groove."
At times no words are needed, take the glamor from it all, you're left with untold purity,
like snow flakes when they fall.
No filthy lucri gained, and there's no motivated speech, just a willingness of "don't try so
hard" like sands upon the beach.
The pure uncut, uncorrupted, not tampered, no additives type of this, complicated as the
stars in heaven, yet innocent as a kiss.
The reason not to have a party or why there's no parade, the act of be not so
impressive then you make the grade.
No diamonds, rubies, pearls, just you and all I see you as, exquisite in your own unique,
the simplicity of pizzazz.

By Danny G.

Sometimes life seems so simple, yet is very complex, I try to live a simple life.
Even though it gets complicated and mixed up at times, I try to keep on doing my best
and striving to maintain a life-style that gives me less stress and confusion that I see and
understand the world around me. I am trying to maintain my health each day and live
as well as I can. Some days are more aggravating than others.

I do know how to seek help if my health turned toward a very complicated
situation. I have been there before and can recognize the symptoms before they get
too mixed up for me to handle alone.

Living a simple and well life is all that I seek. Even the groups I attend,
sometimes I can feel so lost and missing the simplest information given.

When I get that lost, mixed up and misunderstanding feeling, I try to get a copy of
the information (if available) and reread it at home so I can obtain some insight and
understanding.

If it ever gets too complex, I will find the person(s) who presented the group to
give me a review of the facts presented so I don't go home totally lost and left out.
Staying connected with others at CRP is as simple as it gets.

By Joel

You would think writing about simple would be easy.
But simple things or people can make me kind of queasy.
I wish things we do would be simple, not hard,
But like cooking a nice steak, it sometimes comes out charred.
Most directions we receive look simple at first glance.
But have you ever tried to put together a toy, you don't have a chance!
Sometimes a picture is worth a thousand words,
But maps can be confusing, and this you can be assured.
So to "keep it simple" as is sometimes said,
Is better put, by saying "just use you head!"

By Ron S.

Let me sing a brand new song today, and flash a ray of love, present to you my jewels
of ode', thus handled with white gloves.
This eternal flame that burns for you is passion born unleashed, and every passing day
goes by the flame shall never cease.
With this beloved remember me in rise and in my fall, and listen for my ghostly chatter,
in the wind I call.
No statue love is monumental, great within itself, a humble gesture of my you, not soon
tucked under belts.
To you I fashion walls of ivory regal as is jade, and it stands the test of time, like love
that fails to fade.
Beloved hear my ode' to you, to echo throughout caves, and may this echo stand
eternal, exciting beyond my grave.
The stone of towers reach the sky, on the face that's seen on cliffs, the same I render
unto you, my everlasting gift.

By Danny G.

Memorials are a grand and momentous occasion to remember events having
come about because of family, friends and events created by our nation's involvement
in wars of our past history.

Memorials can also be about family events that have become traditions
celebrated each year by reunions and other gatherings.

I have never had a family memorial to speak of. I am the last of my family with
my last name. Therefore, if I had an existing family to create a memorial with, I would
seek to share with my family, the holidays of memorial that this great nation expresses
throughout each year, a memory of those who fought and died to keep our country free
from those who would tear it apart, as in some cases it has begun to happen with the
taking away little by little our first amendment rights. And if no one has noticed over the
past 8 years, the Patriot Acts One & Two, are only the beginning of separation of people
with or without a mission beginning to erase the middle class.

We the people better come together, better than we are now. America has been
put down since 1960, and it continues on a greater scale today.

The worst is yet to come. From the information I have been reading from various sources and off the web, there is a terrible time coming to test our strength to stand together and risk life and liberty for a future that will be in our memories as a memorial that will be thought of as a time of good rather than dispute and discordance.

By Joel

“Thank God”, there is a “Memorial Day”. It’s a good day to have memorial for all Americans who worked and served in the military and those who gave all to preserve our freedom. You are praised and remembered for what you have done to protect our way of life. To those who are still in the military and those that are not, thank you for your service to this great country of ours.

By Dave K.

Once a year there’s a day on our calendar called “Memorial Day”. For many it’s a time of remembrance and for others a time to pray. It’s good we don’t forget all those who for this country fought and died; Because many have experienced the lose of a loved one and have bitterly cried. This country is great because freedom stands behind our flag. And to uphold freedom, requires the sacrifice of many, and that’s not to brag. Throughout this country you’ll find memorials for many a fought war. It seems there’s no end, and now another is knocking at our door. Some times many look at Memorial Day as a day off, and wish it would last; But let’s not forget, to take a few minutes, and reflect on those who gave so much in our country’s past!

By Ron S.

COMPATIBLE

Being compatible with someone who you share a relationship for more than 42 years means that there must be something right with my companion.

We share chores around the house like cooking for each other, going to the grocery store, putting things away and when we use them, we put them back where we found them.

We share a relationship that is unique to share. A life with love and respect for each other. God bless us and help us for another 42 years.

By D. K.

Compatible can mean different things to different people.

When we take a look at mother nature and see how compatible nature is, we can hope upon hope that mankind would assimilate natures' way of many things living in harmony and being consistent in each season of change, no matter what or where; nature takes care of its own.

There is much that mankind can do to present a compatible existence to all. Yet, we have too much disharmony in the world today. One only needs to see the front page of any newspaper to see the discordance that takes the promise of a compatible existence out of mankind's want; yet still needs.

However, all is not lost. I truly find that most (98%) of the world's population are compatible and do live in a harmonious existence.

It's just those who are not wanting an existence of peace and joy and living together in happiness and love; they are the ones who will spoil the greatness and goodness all of mankind has to choose from.

My one question is: why do all the bad people get the glory of being in the news and those who are doing good and great things to keep the peace and harmony between all, never have enough pronouncement in the news? We need to give those who are seeking a compatible existence, giving life a greater meaning that to just exist for the sake of being a better focus to remind all that there is compatibility in this world.

By Joel

To be compatible, one needs to exist and live with another or some thing in harmony.

If it's between two couples, they usually end up in matrimony.

When you look at nature, there's compatible things all around.

You see this in the world, where different animals and plants can be found.

They've adapted to living under certain conditions.

They're compatible with their environments and positions.

Today in society, man strives to make things compatible.

Because if not, our world wouldn't be habitable.

Food, cars, clothes, even though they are different.

They provide our needs, and everything is consistent.

It's good to be compatible with those around us.

That way we can exist in peace and that's a big plus.

By Ron S.

CAUTION

Caution should be taken when driving through a work zone on a highway or sharing sensitive information with another person.

The object is not to embarrass yourself or someone else. Proceed with caution or you may wind up with your foot in your mouth.

Over the past four years I have had to forgo some cautious situations trying to abstain from using street drugs and alcohol. I was tempted, but I withstood the temptation.

By D. K.

Proceed with caution! This is what you might see somewhere that has a hazard that can cause you harm.

If I said: "Go with caution on your trip to the woods or your camping trip, that in turn would mean from me, that I hope you have a safe and happy camping trip.

However, there is also an additional sense of caution that one must be aware of and that is to use prudence or being careful of your plans for the future. Some would say: "Be careful what you wish for". Sometimes the good comes to us, sometimes the bad.

Whatever anyone really wishes for can be obtained by understanding perhaps a misunderstanding of what one desires so much, that a hazard can obstruct the objectivity of the final accomplishment of ones' desires.

I have made many cautious decisions and found that it was the right thing to do. There is too much danger out there in the world today, Too many incongruous situations happening all around us everyday, no matter where we may go.

There is always, without preparedness, and that is normal, a situation where we must be cautious and not get involved or otherwise be a part of a situation we may regret.

One never knows, when alone or with family or friend, when and where one must be cautious and put caution first.

By Joel

It's good to be alert and cautious when you're driving.
Because it becomes a life and death matter for surviving.
There are road hazards, speeders, and signs all over the place.
There's also those pushy drivers who don't give you much space.
The stop lights we see are red to stop, amber to slow down and green to go.
But one ought to be warned and use caution, because you never know?
Someone maybe talking on a cell phone or wrapped up in a heated debate.
Unsure of what's going on around them, or what may be their fate.
So never sit in your car without first putting your seat belt on tight.
That's using proper caution when driving, especially at night.
Now when you see "Caution-Road work ahead",
Remember to be careful, slow down, and use your head.
Also if talking, please turn off your cell phone.
Because you never know, "The life you save may be your own".

By Ron S.

EXPRESSION

I was out yesterday talking to veterans across America. These veterans were all united at a conference in Hartford. They were an expression of the cross section of veterans from this country,

A veteran is a veteran, is a veteran - same yet different. What was the expression of sameness. We all loved the United States of America. We were all united to see and have a better country. We were all united to be of service to America.

We expressed ourselves differently by different regions. We expressed ourselves differently by how much we want to give back. Yet, everyone wanted to give back. We were as veterans all proud to express ourselves.

I expressed myself as a veteran by wearing my Vet to Vet hat.

Everywhere I go, people know I am a veteran. To be honest, I didn't like Vietnam much. Still I went, fought, and won't duck my head about my part in Vietnam. War taught me that peace is an expression of real change.

Peace change people by having some economic opportunity. Prosperity is an expression of potential happiness. Prosperity not over the top wealth.

So yesterday, meeting these other veterans was an expression of both me being a veteran, identifying with the veteran community, and expression of my love for a prosperous United States and the World.

By Moe

To bring an expression to light, I think of expression as a means to express a verbal enhancement of an idea in my mind that I want others to know about.

There are those, including myself, who suddenly think of the U.S. Constitution as our best expression of the principles of our rights as in the Bill of Rights. The preamble to the Constitution, which I memorized and still know, and how about the Gettysburg Address, do you know that by heart?

How about "We the people in order to form a more perfect union . . ." What happened to that more perfect union?

There are a consensus of people who are aware of the fact that our freedoms are slowly being taken away and freedom of expression is one of them.

Forty-five million Americans, the working class, are the true working force of America who are slow to the "awaking" of our freedoms slowly being taken from us.

When we, as a whole, start to realize what is happening, it may be too late. However, there is still time before our freedom of expression is diminished to near none at all.

Perhaps when tanks and trucks with soldiers are on all our streets, we will wake-up to an expressionless society where we don't have a freedom of expression even in art, music, clothing, cars and trucks; all will be controlled by the government like the way the government has already bought up the auto industry. What next? The banks, planes, schools, churches, and newspapers and magazines.

When did our right of expression become a national issue? Perhaps yesterday, when you weren't looking!

By Joel

We start expressing ourselves as a child as soon as we learn a word.
In hopes that people would understand what was said and heard.
Putting words together can form a powerful message to some.
But the message may not be welcomed or liked by everyone.
The freedom of speech is in our USA Constitution.
But unfortunately, it's starting to hinder our own expression.
They're laws and restrictions that legally block what now can be said.
So it's important to think before we speak, and use our head.
Now a days, one must be careful what is openly expressed.
Some may take what is said, and say they're being harassed.
So the best form of expression ought to encourage and build one up.
It helps one's self-esteem and can fill your cup.
Words, words, words, need to be said carefully with finesse.
So no one will be offended and there will be no arrest.
Always speak from your heart what you think and feel.
And be sure your expression is true and real!

By Ron S.

SERIOUS

The other day I was taking a walk and there were two guys having a serious discussion on the environment. The first man said: "I think more of us should pay more attention to how we take care of our planet more seriously." The other man said: "You can't be serious, how can you cut back on the use of carbon based fuels without making serious sacrifices to our way of life?" The first man said: "If you don't take this seriously, we will all pay the price. It's something we all have to take seriously."

As I walked by I said: "Your right", and walked down the path thinking "Wow that was serious!"

By R. S.

His character was very serious today.
He was in deep thought about who was going to replace him in the White House.
It was very important to give the requiring thought to this vote.
It was very serious to apply this application to this thought.

How many of us use, really, how many of us really apply this kind of concentration to anything?

By A. M.

I have been serious in my pass life having been raised in a somewhat serious environment.

My dad employed with the Connecticut company raised 3 children and supported a wife with a bus drivers salary. And a great amount of overtime was required for that.

I worked as a communication specialist on a major relay at Phu Lam, South Vietnam. I had a secret clearance and was very serious while working.

In civilian life, I became an abestos worker and insulator. This profession required a serious attitude most of the time.

Other peoples lives were in jeopardy and their safety as well as my own demanded serious actions and thinking.

Some of the places I worked were very dangerous. Such as nuclear power plants, chemical plants and industrial sites; sometimes working at very high heights.

Today I try to be as comical as life will allow as much as possible.

By B.W.B.

I hope that my four years and six months abstaining from drugs and alcohol will act as a catalyst to help me over the next four years.

The seriousness about this endeavor shows in my efforts I put into getting here to CRP and will show how serious I am about staying clean and sober. Keep coming.

By D. K.

There were times in my growing up years, 18 to 25, I didn't seem to be noted as to be serious about life in general during my teen years.

I found through others telling me that I was very patient about the measure of events when others were excited and anxious, where I was calm and patient.

When I graduated from high school under my picture in the year book was: "Patience is more eloquent then speed." That described me as a person who was serious about all that I tried to achieve while in high school and this characteristic carried over to my time in the service.

Some times I had a chance to take pictures during my "free time" when I was off duty and could go downtown Stuttgard, where I was stationed in W. Germany. I was in deep thought about what type of pictures I wanted to take and later developed at the photo lab where I worked everyday.

When I had a week of photo duty, which meant I had to take all the assignments called in during the usual work hours 7 am. to 5 pm., and on call for the rest of the days 24/7, which was a very serious job that entailed serious work.

The best part is I enjoyed taking all the pictures assigned to me. I kept a binder of the pictures for the Army Timer and the Stars and Stripes newspaper. Also, the Ziet Thug newspaper of Stuttgard, downtown. In 3 years, I collected 3 binders of pictures. Sometimes I would review my work and feel satisfied that I was serious about my work and patient enough to enjoy taking pictures.

By Joel

To be serious about any thing is really a mind-set.
And you've usually given it much though, I bet.

But try not to be serious about everything, use your head.
Or you may become overburden and could wind up dead.

Also you need to pay attention to your body and how you feel.
Because these may be serious symptoms, and they may be real.

Talking about something that is serious, is a weighty matter.
But don't ignore serious matters or you may become sadder.

So remember, there's a time to be serious, and a time not.
Just keep everything in perspective, so your day isn't shot.
By Ron S.

CONTENT

So many people are not content with what they have in their world.
Some would like to have more of anything that they enjoy and it may not matter if
it is spiritual or physical. A few people may want more of what they never had while
other people will not be content with what ever they may have.

There may also be the few who are content with whatever they have today. Even
after some people have lost what they thought made them feel content early in their
lives.

These people can be extremely happy with what few material and spiritual items
are left in their lives and being hopeful and willing to continue to grow and keep
achieving their reachable goals.

By B.W.B.

Content is being satisfied with my way of life. I should be content with my
routine. My days are half filled with participation at CRP. Even though I come every day,
I am not content and satisfied with my state of mind.

The other half, I try to keep myself happy by doing needed chores around the
house. I use the TV as a distraction. Even though I keep busy, I still have my down
moments with myself.

I still keep trying to cope.

By D.K.

It's funny how life works. One day you are content with your surroundings and
the next day you are discontent. It may be you were challenged by someone that is a
bully, and they want things their way and nothing else will do.

So what do you do? Do you give into their demands? This would make them content, but not you. Or do you stand up and tell them: "I'm not going to do that you big buffoon". That may make you feel content, but what about the buffoon?

By Who

I am content with or at peace with myself for seeking help when I needed it because Lights are going on in my physical condition.

Flags to my physical condition are calling my doctor to do more tests to see what is wrong and why. Why certain conditions exists or happen.

I needed help because my readings for diabetes was going off the books. My feelings toward my job I feel safe and I feel content in my environment.

Anonymous

The person who is content is usually a happy one.
I believe He takes life as it is, and has a lot of fun.
There are two sides of contentment, the haves and the have nots.
It's better to be satisfied whether you have little or lots.
And it's not the things you have that really makes you.
Even people who have everything, can become blue.
The contented person is content with what he cannot get.
They know better days are coming and life is not over yet.
So be satisfied, or content with whatever life brings your way.
That way you'll be content and at peace when you hit the hay.
Being at peace is also a good thing.
Just wait and see what a new day will bring.

By Ron S.

FLAG

FLAG

The flag of the United States of America is by far the most organized and colorful flags in the world. Seeing it displayed in front of government buildings and the homes of veterans and "good samaritans" makes me very proud to be an American and to honor such an ornament that symbolizes freedom to the whole world.

Thank you "Besty".

By D.K.

Our flag stands for many things good and not so good. But it's ours depending on who you talk to. For both sides of my people, we fought for what the flag stood for. But never what it stood for us. It never brought us any good, but we are a better people for it.

Some of us have no running water, no lights, no heat, but when the call goes out, both sides of my people are the first to come running. The other side of my people were hung with charges, but when ever the call went out we came running.

This is our land too. We don't care who don't like it. We will fight for it. A lot of people try to push us around but there were too many of us.

By A.M.

The American flag is a symbol of freedom to me. At times I enjoy watching a parade in town, such as Memorial Day or Veteran's Day. I remember "imagining", my partner Nancy and I were on a porch, and when the last marching one passed by us, she asked a question.

The question was "Why, when the color guard passes, why did you stand at attention and cross your heart with your right hand?"

My answer was "That is a symbol of freedom, and as a US Army veteran besides, it's my flag and I am damn proud of it!"

I was a man and I defended it. It's my flag and I'm damn proud of it and to honor it, and show how grateful I am for the freedom it stands for. I salute it!

By Harry A.

"She's a grand Old Flag"

Well, America has really changed since that song, what will it take to bring people together under one flag? What will it take to get misty about the flag again?

I have really come to think about what is a flag - our flag. The flag of the United States. Maybe, I became too sour after Vietnam for awhile. I didn't want to wrap myself up in the United States flag. For awhile, I almost got sick to my stomach thinking what this country had done to me and others.

Blue jeans, picnics and lakes with American flags - that seems to be coming back into my life.

I am not so bitter, and don't feel so betrayed by America. I enjoy seeing the American flag flying today, The American flag does not seem to be a banner of an Empire. The American flag is more like a sign of my home and my country. My reaction to the American flag has turned around 180 degrees.

By Moe

-

I always thought of a flag as a symbol of our great nation, like the one I used to pledge allegiance to in school.

I can remember seeing the flag go by in parades and feeling great pride that I lived in a country that represented the Republic to which I recall reading about.

George Washington replied to a newspaper man, when he asked him, as George Washington was leaving Independence Hall, after much time was spent putting together a constitution that would guarantee our freedom from the hold King George II had on us, until after the 1776 Revolution. That began our separation from the chocking hold England had on us.

George Washington replied to the news man, "We have a republic if we can keep it".

Imagine a flag that changed in the number of stars that represented each state as this great nation grew in size and stature.

I don't believe any other nation of this world can compare in the greatness and goodness our flag represents.

At one time in my ten and a half years in the service, back in 1965, I was selected to be part of the color guard that was part of the ceremonies of a Saturday morning pass in review, standard recognition of the troops serving at Swienfurt, West Germany.

I was also carrying the flag and gave the other 4 men with me, the voice commands during the ceremonies on the parade field.

I felt so honored to have that position, just that one time.

Later, in my life, 1976, I had the opportunity to carry the U.S. flag for the color guard of the Ancient Fife and Drum Corp. I was in. I participated for 3 years playing the music. I can remember the music I played on my fife, but I remember carrying the flag most of all.

By Joel

Flags are used as a symbol of a family of three roses stood for truth, justice, and honor of said nation flag. Sometimes they are for the destruction of a nation flag. Flags can bring on feelings that are negative. These negative feelings are how events get started Events like riots, assassinations and battles.

I sometimes dream of what my ancestors looked like on horses riding into battle under a flag of three roses.

Anonymous

Flags come in many sizes, shapes, colors and design.
And no matter what country you go to, their flags you'll see and find.
A country or nation without a flag is probably divided.
This country is split by people who have become two sided.
Flags come with a symbol of what that country stands for.
And on most clear days, you'll see them in public places, and more.
The flag of our country goes back to the founding of our nation.
There were 13 colonies united under one flag, and this was a time of celebration.
As time went on, more states were added, represented by a star.
Now the 13 states went to 52 states, both near and afar.
Countries are proud of their flags and what they meant.
We too are proud of our flag, which stands for freedom, which the stars and stripes represent.

By Ron S.

DECISION

Decisions are a daily, weekly, and monthly thinking process for me. Some may be good or bad. Some decisions are a learning experience for lessons learned.

Some decisions I make, I do put a lot of thought into hoping to make a good decision at the task at hand. For example: I made the hardest decision of my life and that was asking for help and now that I look back at, it was the best decision I could have ever make.

Deciding to come to CRP and Vet to Vet is one of my daily activities that has changed my life drastically and has helped me to cope with the stress of post deployment.

This week deciding to go to a social outing with CTI has also helped me to realize the person I really am. On a monthly basis, I decided I am a great person and I will strive for excellence in everything I do and say. Because I am happy with myself, I love myself and I am a motivated person to live to the fullest.

By Jaimee B.

Decisions may be one of all living creatures, actions that may be so different in final results there have been a lot of people put behind monkey bars due to bad decisions.

Many animals may have lost their lives due to unhealthy ones. Politicians may have won or lost elections due to theirs. All life in general may have had a range of very bad to excellent one's depending on the out come. I personally have made my best decision when I put the "Plug in the Jug" and stopped the abuse of all drugs.

Today My decisions are mostly made with a clear head ending in delightful experiences.

By B.W.B.

I am sure we are all too familiar with the headlines about 2002 presidential election "Decisions 2002". I recall a lesser decision that proved to be monumental to me.

I became an Irishman at Wake Forest in 1965. I chose that institution of higher learning in the great state of North Carolina as it had a good premedical program. (I never made it to be an MD, but made it as a doctor of another type.

Well, I reported to the campus in the Fall of '65 as an eager student. The academics were no problem, but I was a social misfit - I couldn't get into the "Southern living, aka "Stupliness". I called home about complaining that I was a social misfit. Coming home at Thanksgiving, I had a sit-down with my father. He encouraged me to finish out the semester at Wake.

Well, I stuck it out. Over Christmas, I had an epiphany - I decided to stay: even bought a pair of wing tipped loafers.

A good decision? You bet! Although born in Connecticut, I became a carpet bagger, and after the Army, lived in NC for 26 years. Com back, y'all hear?

By Harry A.

Four years and six months ago I made the decision to stop using marijuana and alcohol, and cocaine; and one year ago I decided to give up cigarettes. They were turning points in my life and I don't regret it because when I quit using, I was able to stretch my little pension from one month to the next and have a few dollars left over to put in my savings account.

I would like to thank the staff and patients at CRP for tolerating me and helping me stay clean and sober.

By D.K.

It was the decision of all the people in the school to have all of the blue eyed people to make all of the deciding votes on how to place other groups. It was always hard to make ones mind when trying to decide an eye color or hair color. But when making a determination we have to have all the facts.

By A.M.

What do we do with decisions?

We make a decision upon many to rise up each morning to greet the day and decide to get things done that are important to each of us.

In deciding to come to CRP each week day that is ours to attend, there is an important mindset to decide what is important and what isn't.

When I made a decision to enter the Army, I had already decided way back in 1963 that was my way of not only meeting the requirements of fulfilling my military

obligations, but also upon being in the military, I made a decision to become a photographer not a missile mechanic like the Army wanted me to be.

During my first tour to W. Germany, Oct. of '64, I waited until June of '65 to reenlist in order to get their motion picture photographer job I wanted.

Finally, after a year of waiting, my orders to go to motion picture school came through.

I was stationed at Ft. Huachuca, AZ., and after 15 months, I made a decision to return to W. Germany because a girl formally met before in 1965, asked me when I was returning to W. Germany.

I had a place all picked out. It was at Stuttgart and with 7th Corps.

Staying in Germany until June of 1971, as a mo-pic photographer and still photographer, and lab-tech, was the best decision I ever made.

It was the best duty because I didn't qualify for Vietnam only because I am the last of my family. Some decisions are for the best all away around.

By Joel

Decisions: we make them every day. We do them in the morning, at meal time (what we want to eat) and at bed time when we sleep, whether we make good decisions or bad decisions. But most of all, be at peace with what decision you make. Think them through plain and clear.

By Curtis

It was a hot summer day in late August. The humidity was oppressive and we decided to go to the movies to escape the heat. Fred went and got the local paper to find what was playing. When Fred returned with the newspaper, he said "There ain't too many choices", there is a picture that was a comedy and there was an action thriller that got good reviews. Also there was a kids movie. Fred said: "We should make a decision soon if we're going to make the early showings". Ralph said: "It is a tough decision, I want to see the comedy, I hear it's good". Then Fred asked me "What do you want to see?" "I don't know, I want to see both of the movies. Fred whatever you choose, that is what we will see." Fred said: "Wow, that is a tough decision, gee I just don't know." I thought a moment and said "What the hell, why don't we do both movies". "Yeah, that is a good ideal" said Ralph. So we all agreed to see both movies. Fred said: "That was a great decision." So we all piled into my car and went off to the movies.

By R. S.

Decisions, decisions, decisions, we all make so many each day.
They show up in our actions, and what we do and say.
Some are good decisions, others are bad decisions that we tend to make.
Sometimes the decisions we make stay with us, and are really hard to shake.
There's minor decisions and major decisions, and the ones in-between.
But regardless what they are, watch out for the ones that can be seen.
Some people make decisions for us, and this for some is hard to take.
But usually it can be very helpful, and can be for our own sake.
Regardless, be careful, and think about the consequences of each decision.
For they may cause heart aches, and could result in much division.

By Ron S.

PERFORMANCE

I feel that I am compelled to perform in a way that is pleasing to me and accepted by others (CRP members) during my visits to CRP program. Even when I don't participate in all the groups, I feel that my performance is expected to be one of respect and cooperation with my fellow vets and staff. Disrespect is not a part of my program and I hope that my participation and cooperation will be respected.

By D.K.

Will Bill stated, "I want to see a performance by a circus but I really do not want to see any filthy smelling animals." Pierre said "well I know a circus troupe where there are not any animals performing." Pierre suggested a trip to Seattle to see Circus du Solei under the yellow big top was in order. Will Bill was immediately entranced with the French Canadian music and high wire acrobats. A clown ask him to come on stage to be a part of the show and he was thrilled. Pierre and Will Bill both agreed that the best performance was by the Chinese contortionist, that twisted their bodies in unbelievable body contortions with their feet under her head and her back bent in curve. A performer smiled a Bill, while shifting into another painful looking position. Back at their Hotel room, both men fell to sleep dreaming of the pretty Chinese Contortionist with heavenly bliss.

By B.W.B.

It was the performance of a lifetime for me to see the WHO performing the rock opera quadraphenia. They were special guests that performed as different characters in the rock opera. Billy Idol was the Bellboy and his performance was over the top. There was also Gary Glitter and other performers to numerous to name. The performance was flawless from start to finish.

At the end of Quadraphinia, the band took a short break. When they returned to the stage they did an acoustic version of the sad man behind blue eyes. The place

went crazy. They performed several more songs. When the concert was over, my ears were ringing, but I didn't care. We had witnessed the performance of a lifetime.

By R.S.

I want to sing and act. Go back and do this. As a high school kid, I wrote and played in the school musicals every year. I would like to see a theater of veteran's stories performed by veterans. Maybe start with table top theater and cardboard figures, podcasting and performance.

By Moe

A performance as I know it, is a willing act.
And requires a set routine as a matter of fact.
Children perform to get what they need.
And it may be because it's their time for feed.
People doing jobs require them to perform each day.
Like an actor who must act, in order to receive his pay.
Everyone performs whether they know it or not.
Some perform a little, while others perform a lot.
I believe the best performance comes from always doing your best.
And striving for excellence is a quality we all should possess.

By Ron S.

I never thought performance would become a part of my life until I was in a 5th grade play at Christmas in 1953.

I played the part of Santa Clause and enjoyed it very much.

Then in the Spring of 1954, when I was 10 and chosen to recite a poem, it was my second time on stage. I enjoyed both performances.

Further along in my life, at age 35, I had the chance to be the NCVIC of the Fulda music and theater.

The first play presented was Neil Simon's "Wait until Dark", a drama in which I was asked to be the director of the play because the director of the theater was going to be in the play.

Then, another play was presented, another Neil Simon: "Plaza Suite". I not only directed it, I also played in it as the waiter in the first scene of act I.

I believe we all are in a type of performance each day of our lives.

What I am alluding to is the fact that we are in a performance each time we greet each other and in many actions and deeds we accomplish each day and the efficiency that most people try to accomplish that in which they are determined to bring about by doing a good deed for others without even knowing it was indeed a performance of a reaction to a situation that needed their assistance.

Those of us who have been in the military know of the performance expected of us, to be as excellent as possible, as we performed our jobs to the best of our abilities.

There is always someone watching us perform in our daily lives that which we must do in order to make our lives and the things we do worthwhile.

By Joel

OBSTINATE

The other day I was sitting on a big rock on the coast. As I sat there, I was pondering the past and one thing stood out. I had come to the realization I have been a stubborn or obstinate person. If things don't go my way I fight tooth and nail to resist change. I'm sure that there are times when being obstinate is good, but for the most part, it is not. It is something I need to change about me. I need to stop being obstinate about changes in my life and just get on with it.

BY R. S.

To be obstinate, is to be stubborn and unyielding.
You often see this in children who are squealing.
A person will take a stand and often will not bend.
No matter who tries to convince him, not even a friend?
Being obstinate is really not getting you way.
Regardless of what is true, and other people say.
Other people can be obstinate and stubborn too.
You can ask them to do something until your face is blue.
But persistence can often get what's needed to be done.
So then harmony can be achieved, then one can have fun!

By Ron S.

Billy Wynn could be very obstinate while he was working freelancing as a sports photographer. He did not like to follow official protocol and could be as stubborn as a jackass.

One of Billy Wynn's traits was to sit on the base line for college woman's soccer games, even after being warned by an official ref.

Svetlana was drilling the ball forward on her team while Danielle was looking for the pass. Danielle turned quickly running to catch up with the powerful pass from Svetlana.

Billy Wynn was in the process of shooting a spectacular picture. The next moment, Billy Wynn was laid out cold after receiving a hard blow to his chest from a kick by Danielle. She was accidentally running over the base line and missing the ball, but connecting with the photographer's chest.

The field official said the play was whistled dead after the collision with the obstinate photographer.

By B.W.B.

CAUTION

My opinion about this word is that it may be one of the most ignored words in the English vocabulary. This word sometimes is seen in public places such as on a public or school bus warning of the danger of crossing in front of vehicles after exiting. This word can also be used to warn people of the dangers of getting too close to moving parts of machinery.

I am excited to use this word to caution a mysterious anonymous editor who has been correcting this writer's group works with foul language which is not allowed in our pages. If you are willing to see for yourself what a positive group this is, we all in attendance welcome your input and invite you to experience this for yourself.

BY B.W.B.

The other day we were having a tough time deciding which movie to see. After a long discussion, we decided to throw caution to the wind and go see "Inglorious Bastards. We had heard it was a very graphic movie. Real blood and guts stuff. As we took our seats, they were running trailers of upcoming movies. When the movie started there was a caution message that there was strong language and violence. As we watched the movie the caution was correct. It certainly lived up to the director's reputation as a director of bloody films. He surely did not disappoint. When the movie was over, we went out and got some juicy burgers and discussed what we had just seen.

By R. S.

I try to err on the side of caution. Try not to take risks. I suppose that is caution - not to take risks. There are times that I leap out and try to do something out of the box. I am finding out what could be seen as risky. Fore instance, I think about what I need to do? Where I need to do things. I try to have a plan. That is healthy caution.

Not everything I plan comes into being. Being cautious does not guarantee success.

By Moe A.

To use caution in life, you have to be aware of situations that you happen upon in life. In some situations you have to understand the consequences if you don't use caution. Not using caution can cause trouble down the road. You should think out what you are getting yourself into before you commit yourself to any one situation. Just as the caution light on a traffic light tells you to slow down before you stop, using caution to slow down before you act is a good policy. Using caution to develop a keen sense of responsibility is also a good policy to get what you want out of life without the troubles that come with not being cautious.

By Bob F.

I feel that caution must be exercised whenever you disagree with someone about things you feel that are close to your heart. Not only could you open up your beliefs, but also let out information that might hurt you or come back later to hurt you.

Be cautious no matter what your point might be trying to make, especially when it is sensitive information.

By D. K.

Put caution in the wind when ever you go overseas because of all of the danger you might encounter because a lot of people don't like us.

In Vietnam we had to walk with caution because there were danger everywhere from tigers, snakes, charlie or children; you had to be alert at all times because you did not know who was who until it was too late. Now that we're home we have to worry about the gangs. Unless they are wearing colors, you don't know who's in one and who is not. We have to caution our children on who to hang with and on the danger of joining gangs or using drugs and playing with guns.

By Abdul

God cautions, warns us about the evil one. How he is like a roaring lion out to devour us, but God said to resist the evil one and he will flee. God also said He will not tempt us above what we are able to bare. So pray for strength to resist the evil one.

By Dave L.

Caution, caution, you see the signs everywhere.
Sometimes I wonder who put them all there.
Obviously they're there so we don't get hurt.
They are meant to warn us and keep us alert.
If you ignore cautions, you may be on thin ice.
You could fall on your face, and that wouldn't be nice.
We have to use cautions throughout the whole day.
But there is just to many that come into play.
There's cautions on streets where we drive.
And signs are put there to make it safe and keep us alive.
We need to use caution in what we say and do.
Like if we don't wash our hands, we could end up with the swine flu.
I could go on and on, but just be cautious and stay awake.
Because cautions are here to protect us for safety's sake.

By Ron S.

When you see a caution sign, take notice! It is there for a reason.

Even medicine bottles have caution written on them. Also, the coffee or other hot beverages you may purchase will have written notice that says: "Caution Hot".

Sometime there can be a situation that calls for you to be cautious, therefore you must use caution before you say or do anything.

I can remember when we had the grenade range to find how a live grenade is used and how to use caution to the max when the pin is pulled and you rear back to throw it over a wall and then duck before it explodes. I have heard of someone not holding on to the grenade and having it slip through his fingers because he was so nervous that the sweating palm caused him to lose the grenade when he leaned back to throw. It was good that the D.I. could grab him and pull him over a short wall while landing on the other side too.

You could say that he was very cautious and paid strict attention to the procedure that the raw recruit was doing.

I have seen times, while traveling on a city bus, when a driver would pass the bus even on a double line, when the bus had been stopped to let passengers on or off.

There now was a situation that called for extreme caution. But one could see that that driver threw caution to the wind and took a chance in passing the bus with no care in the world, about the dangers he or she was putting the driver and the passengers in; not counting the people on a sidewalk or someone crossing the street.

There are too many dangers out there where we live and work. Caution should be on our minds relentlessly. You may become the one who must use caution for someone else who can't do it on their own.

By Joel

SIMPLE

Simplicity is the butterflies which children marvel at, the way they see a great feat like jumping over cracks.

The innocence of a child is belief, how simple can that be? Like saying Daddy I love you is simply hugging me. No lights. No bells. Just humble gestures. , fitted from the heart. Minor note, so pedal soft, a smile which leaves its mark.¹

A sunrise changing night until day, so subtle in its move and nothing could compare to this, "A Life In A Groove."

At times, no words are needed. take the glamour from it all. You're left with untold purity, like snowflakes when they fall.

No filthy lucre gained, and there's no motivated speech, Just a willingness of "don't try so hard" like sands upon the beach.

The pure uncut, uncorrupted, not tampered, no additives type of this, complicated as the stars in heaven, yet innocent as a kiss.

The reason not have a party or why there's no parade, the act of be not so impressive then you make the grade.

No diamonds, rubies, pearls, just you and all I see you as, exquisite in your own unique, the simplicity of Pizza.

Danny G.

Sometimes life seems so simple, yet is very complex. I try to live a simple life. Even though it gets mixed and complicated at times. I try to keep on doing my best and striving to maintain a life style which gives me less stress and confusion that I see and try to understand the world around me. I am trying to maintain my health every day and live as well as I can. Some days are more aggravating than others.

I do not know how to seek help if my health turned toward a very complicated situation. I have been there before and I can recognize the symptoms before they get too mixed up for me to handle alone.

Living a simple and well life is all that I seek. Even the groups I attend, sometimes I can feel so lost and missing the simplest information given.

When I get that lost, mixed up and misunderstanding feeling, I try to get a copy of the information(if available) and re read it at home so I can obtain some insight and understanding.

If it ever gets too complex, I will find the person(s) who represented the group to give me a review of the facts presented so I don't go home lost or totally left out.

Staying connected with people here at CRP(This program) is as simple as it gets.

Joel

You would think writing about simple would be easy.
But, simple things or people can make me kind
of queasy.
I wish thing we do would be simple, not hard,
But like cooking a nice steak, it sometimes
comes out charred.
Most directions we receive look simple at first
glance
But, have tried to put together a toy, you
don't have a chance.
Sometimes a picture is worth a thousand words,
But maps can be confusing, and they can be
assured.
So to "keep it simple" as is sometimes said,
is better put, by saying just use your head.

Ron S.

IDEAL

It would be great if all the thoughts that cross my mind would be perfect, and hold me to a thoughtful and attentive way of dealing with my paranoia. It's not easy to share my ideas with others. It's difficult to just converse and keep a straight thought. They leave me confused and nervous and this makes me a poor conversationalist. I can't run away from myself. It would be a blessing to be able to hold an idea long enough to have a good conversation. That would be ideal.

D.K.

There are many things we see that seem ideal,
Usually, it's something to us that has a lot of
appeal
There are times we like to dream of what is perfect
and real,
But, in a sense, it's only what we imagine or
feel.
Man, in his nature, can never be perfect you know,
Because within us are many flaws which seem to
flow
All that makes or builds may seem to us like
perfection
But, in actuality, all things break down, and need
constant inspection

We can only work with what we have or what we
got

Only God has created what is perfect and ideal,
and that is a whole lot!

Ron S.

Wouldn't it be great if the world could be an ideal place to live? It's nearly that, and I suppose it is in some places on this place called earth.

Most people on this place called home can travel to an ideal place to visit and live. However, one must be either retired or have enough working skills to move where the "work" is and reside there until the place or persons there are of no value for further residence.

For me, I would find it ideal right where I am when and if I could diminish with me the 30 pills I take every day. If I skip one or two times to take them, I suffer and need to take the next dosage as soon as possible. The most ideal I could find things would be somewhere where the weather is not drastic in temperature or other conditions not suitable to me.

For the most ideal I am finding these days, I have right where I am. Where I live and attending groups at CRP and going to the VAMC at West Haven for all my medical needs.

All the costs for medical attention has come to my immediate attention, I will do my best to pay what I can and make my life as ideal as I can.

I'm taking things one day at a time.
That's the best I can do. Joel

PEACEFULNESS

Peacefulness is to be complete, satisfied of personal goals without having any barriers or impediments as physical, economical or social.

In other words, for fullness, you need to be peacefulness or visa versa. You can't accomplish a goal without having the stages mentioned above.

Example, you can have a peaceful life but can't have any easy life due to barriers that Impediments or issues made by ourselves. They do have a solution on our life.

E.C., Jr

The joy being shackle less, no pain in being
free
no heavy weight upon my shoulders, a dance
within my glee
A time to study war no more, but gaze upon the
sun
to smell the mountain daffodils where timid bunnies
run
the moment when I feel my saviour, deep within
my heart

to know I never walk alone, is strength to brave the
dark
My peacefulness.

How words do fail me, many savor such,
there somewhere peace is gained in money, yet I
don't have much

A deep still sense that all is well, and none else
makes this so
a tranquil "kiss of work free" is sun for souls to
grow
I close my eyes and peacefulness just comes to
hug my neck
a serenade of what I am, the calm of my expect.
The colors of a passing shower, echoing so soft,
the pondering of what love is, so deep my
thoughts are lost
This state of being, not soon replaced by

song or playful dance,
but that which takes you on a journey simply at a
glance
Hold on to peace, delight yourself and all will be
revealed
To think the very thought of peace, is time for
hearts to hear

Dan G.

Finding (peace-fullness) as a two word definition is somewhat challenging for me to find a way to describe a time when I had peacefulness in my life as a daily experience that made my life less of a struggle that it has been, especially over the past eleven years. I could write a short story on the non-peacefulness that has entangled my life. However, I find that there were peaceful times that seemed to pass so quickly.

Even these days while living at home at my apartment alone. I try to find a peaceful state of wellness that will carry me though another day and night. Sometime the peace I find is the music I listen to, a book to read, or just plain resting from a "long" week that has make me tired and weary from taking all the 33 pills a day, and constantly reminding myself to take my meds on time over the weekend. Being able to CRP each day helps give me peace of mind and certainty that I have or few people have. I can go to or call to get help should my well being become disrupted by physical or mental discordance by whatever occurs.

I try my best to attend groups and I participate in each the best I can. Sometimes, I am so tired and dizzy from my meds that I don't want to be anywhere or do anything. Sometimes, when I am physically sick, I stay home until it passes. Then, the next day I am better and so I get back to my usual routine and be glad and feel blessed that once again to be at CRP or get to one of my appointments that I know will give me a boost to the peacefulness I seek.

Joel

DELICATE

What if I were you, and you were me?
What would I know, what would I see
If I were you and you were me?
What if I were you, and you were me?
What would you know, what would you see?
Would our souls soar through eternity,
If I were you and you were me?
what if we exchange places,
change our sizes, changed our faces?

Would our goodness be replete?
Why do we always have to compete?
For you are you, and I am me,
An that's the way it has to be
But what if.....

Joel

Man, get up! Stop looking so down
and depressed, what is it that's keeping you from
making a sound?
You can't go through life acting so negative.
You have to stay positive-get through all the
road blocks, curves and crevices
You got to live your life, do the things you want to
do, and always keep your chin up, walk with a
purpose
Stay strong and keep the faith, don't take life for
granted, this is not a circus.
I know I'm young, but I know a little about
maturity,
and with self respect, discipline, integrity-I get
self security.
You can spend all your life seeing knowledge of
self,
monitoring the status of your wealth, and health is
not important but it helps.
You only get one life, don't let it slip.
you don't know if you will only get one shot,so
don't let it go or it will be gone in a clip,
Whatever you do in life, have fun with it, since life
is so great.
recognize how it also so delicate!

DIFFICULT

Mental Illness has caused a lot of difficulty in my life. From holding a job, to maintaining relationships, to keeping a residence for a long time. I have had dozens of jobs. I have had dozens of jobs. In my field people change jobs often anyhow, but I've had many jobs anyhow. Right now I am trying to change careers and get a job doing something else, but the economy makes it even more difficult. The only way I can cope with this situation is to live one day at a time as taught to me by AA, I worry about my future where I will live, my dog and finances. Again one day at a time is the only way I can

manage these issues. If I sit around and get up in worrying about the future it has a negative impact on my mental health. If I think I worry about these issues for very long, I project everything negative and go into a panic/depression cycle which is terrifying. So beside keeping in the present moment, I try to maintain a positive attitude best I can.

Ron R.

Expressing my thoughts on paper is “difficult” for me. This summer I’m going to attempt a difficult task. I’m planning on hiking the Appalachian trail, starting from Rte 55 in Pawling, New York to however south that I get. At this moment it is “difficult” for me to stay here in the VA because the weather is about to break and I can’t start my hike yet because I have commitments to make with my doctors.

While on my hike I want to write down my daily outings. I need to express my thought, feelings and what I experience for that day. Last summer I hike part of the the Southern Mass To Rte 22 Just north of Pawling, NY

Kevin K.

DEDICATE

Everyone uses it every single day at school, work or for a relaxing stay.

It’s a value of many the lives in our life, and how one stays with their husband or wife.

Gives us motivation to put long hours in at work, but if you use to much of it, you could end up getting hurt.

Between all the fathers and mothers, and sisters and brothers, grandparents and all the animals, you could stop and wonder who has more than the other?

Sometimes it can depend on the weather, or if not, then when? If ever.

I’m not one to brag and boast but I would say that our military uses it the most.

Since they are the only ones to protect our freedom-the country’s most valuable thing.

Obviously freedom is not free, sometimes the cost is high, but I say let freedom ring.

Some days, we might get tired, anxious or full of frustration and hate, but we need to remember this country stands for freedom, so with all we do remember to dedicate!

By TJK

We are constantly dedicating our lives, whether we know it or not
Some people only state what they dedicate, and they end up giving a lot
Soldiers in this country are dedicated to uphold justice and freedom
And they will fight for a cause, regardless of where they come from
There are many dates on our calendar dedicated to people and a specific event
And there's hardly a day in the month, Hallmark doesn't have a card to be sent
Our coins and paper money are dedicated to those who have lived in the past
It's one way to keep their memory alive, and this is one way it'll last
However, our best memories are dedicated to those we love
And, there is no better way to set your life apart then serve the one above.

Ron S.

DELIGHT

What's in Delight?

Delight is when you can help another vet be properly informed about a housing application method that you have been through in order to get the apartment you want and now have.

To know when the certain places are in West Haven so your friend(other vets) will not go to the wrong place and see the wrong people about housing. I was delighted this morning to help a fellow veteran with the answer to questions he had about who to see and who to call.

Joel

Delight was an ice cream I used to eat. I can not eat ice cream like I used to. I miss the taste. It seems like everything I eat turns into fat.

So I get pleasure, but then some things like ice cream do not bring me pleasure. Well they bring me pleasure but also sorrow. So here I am trying to lose weight and the best way is not to have delight.

Under the night delight

To speak with kindness to be spoken
With kindness is a delight

There doesn't seem to be kindness much
In this world these days

Maybe, that is why there is not much
delight

Delight is the opposite of sorrow

moe

Delight can be in simple things like taking a walk
Or seeing the birds fly in the sky, like a big hawk

Children can be delighted as they play with others,
and don't hurry

Because to them, time is endless, and they don't
seem to worry

Think of all the things that have been a delight to
you.

Like looking up at the stars, and seeing the sky
so blue.

Where would we be if we didn't take delight in
one thing or two?

We'd probably probably find life dismal, and may often feel
blue,

Children raised well bring great pleasure to a
parent, whether girl or boy.

Because they are delighted to see their children
grow up happy and full of joy

However, there are many things in this world that
don't delight us.

Just look all around, see the news, and all the
people making a fuss.

So really, to enjoy life, you need to maintain a
good outlook

Like reading the Bible, which is the book of all
books

Ron S.

Something as simple, like boiling off a hot dog on these cold days. Or, better yet, that cup of brown coffee, when coming across that cold winter winds. So much delight in the hot cup of coffee, really hits the spot! Special thanks to Ererra Community Care Center and their cooking,

John G.

I would always wonder what it would be like to feel a sense of satisfaction. I would delight in being treated equally.

I know it was twenty years ago, but I would've been more delighted if I was born in the 1850's instead of the 1950's.

Back then, you to earn your way rather than having things handed to you. Back then, you took care of your neighborhoods rather than let slip into decay. Back then, there was more at stake, like your word or your hand shake or your reputation. These three things were what you were inside.

You could hold your head up, you didn't need a gang. You too delight in walking with Jesus and had you own identity with him.

Ernest K.

I'm so happy to be alive and watch my kids grow up into young adults! Now, having grandchildren kidding around about the time in the military.

FP

COMPLIMENT

I feel good about myself because of the support that I get from some places like Community Reintegration Program. It's a nice place to be where I get a lot of benefits from the program they offer.

I hope that we can learn from this so we can go on in life doing the right thing. So everyone can be proud about one's self and others.

God bless each of you

Howard C.

To give a compliment to someone is very simple to do.

Just a few days ago, I said Hi to lady friend I knew from a while back, about two years ago. She was wearing a very nice hat and I noticed it as she was getting on the M2 bus at the corner of Chapel and Temple street.

I said, "That's a very nice hat you are wearing. It looks good on you. I can that you're a person who looks good wearing a hat.

She replied "Thank you so much."

Getting a compliment isn't always given to us everyday. it's one of those rare moments that your are looking your best with a new haircut, or new shoes, new clothes, or maybe even a new car.

When you read the newspaper, you might find more discordance given rather than compliments.

If you go to the society page, you may find someone receiving an award or a letter of achievement or appreciation.

I think there is a need to give out(from our heart) more compliments even to strangers, because it will make you happy and glad you did.

Also, there is a chance the complement you gave to someone cause a ripple effect. So much so, that you also may receive one from a friend, relative or stranger.

Compliments are much better than hate worlds or threats that demean someone. Even at a time when you in a stressful moment with someone, giving a compliment to someone each day. You'll be glad that your did

Joel

It's good to hear a compliment or two no matter who says it.

As long as it is deserved and the person has made a big hit.

Compliments for a job well done is good for the soul;

As long as it come across sincere in the way it's told

Sometime complements given are not received very willing

For a person may not think he did anything worthy of telling.

But a humble person who knows his worth will be modest to say the least

He's not looking for recognition, so he can keep his peace.

A compliment can be as simple as saying good bye or good wishes.

Or maybe, a show of affection given with many kisses

The soldiers of our great nation deserve the greatest complement

Because they answered the call for freedom, and thus were sent

Ron S.

A number of people did not show any respect when the troops came back from Vietnam. There has been no real greetings or thank you for all that was lost. Somewhere in history people do not show respect. People just don't feel for you when you come to vote and missing those New Haven buses. At times you feel that your have been set aside and put out of the way. Some people can bear the guilt.

John G.

QUALITY

Well, I was about 300 lbs when I joined the wellness program and I worked worked very hard. And in three months I lost 40 lbs.

Then they extended my wellness program. The doctor extended my consult when my wellness was over. I then joined the Armstrong Fitness Center for about \$300 per year. I lost another 100 lbs. I continue to work out now at the Armstrong Fitness Center.

David L.

Quality runs in our lives in most everything we do or even purchase. Sometimes others don't see or appreciate the quality of our attitude toward wanting to receive and recognize quality in others and expect more from others than we give ourselves.

Quality puts a stamp of approval and closer look at who we are according to what we say, do and expect of others.

Sometimes we expect poor quality without knowing that poor quality in action toward certain situation will jeopardize our lives and put us at risk, and will cause us harm, and make life terrible simple because the quality of someone or something will not be noted until it is too late.

Quality begins in our hearts and is freely given we we want it.

Joel

Quality

The crowd went crazy, making all kinds of noise when Bobby Labonte was shown to be in second position on the leader board. He zinged around the the track in his lime green Pontiac, slowing his speed so he could make the approach to the pit road.

Dale Jarrett entered through the gates near the garages. He stopped in his #88 decked out with Ford quality car logos. Talking his helmet and gloves off, he sighed in relief. "Man it's hot in there." He then turned around, his back against the car, his crew chief standing two feet in front of him and said "Dale looks like we are in for some competition."

His chief gave half a smile and said, "Don't worry old buddy, we'll get them." Dale looked up at the leader board. His #88 showing in the 11th position. He was then startled when a handful of his crew brushed by him , all patting him on the back, then pushing the car to the trailer. With one hand, he brushed back the his hair, rubbed his nose and quietly said to himself, "At least it was just qualifying and not the real deal." As he stared towards the trailer, on of his crew met him at the rear of the trailer and

said; "God job Dale, you'll get her done Sunday, her is the card for tomorrow's agenda." Practice is at 11:00 am, and we will be using last year;s Charlotte Motor Speedway car set up, it's going to do you good." The chassis is stronger and we just added the latest and greatest in shocks and it has newer-wedge adjustment settings, also."

Dale said with little interest. " But I blew that race at Charlotte last year!" "It's OK Dale, we have gone through it tooth and nail: it's gonna be good dude." Dale let out a deep breathe. "OKAY, Okay, I apologize. I get uptight sometimes. I will be fine come Sunday." "Come on guys!" The crew chief yelled. Dale said:"Thank you Bo, I knew I could count on you guys." "You are welcome Dale, the suspension on that Charlotte car is tough and has a lot of quality. It will serve you good on Sunday." "You are the best" They then both climbed up into the trailer and cleaned up to head out of the track's infield on that warm Virginia night in the fan's favorite Richmond International Raceway.

TJK

ANTICIPATE

Many time thought the day we all anticipate.
Things beforehand that happen, we contemplate.
For every action there is a reaction, you know;
Therefore, we need to anticipate what will flow.
Expecting something to happen, can bring exciting things
But, often what we expect, is not what life brings
It's always good to anticipate something we look forward to.
That way we have a future and keeps us from becoming blue.
So always anticipate, and keep living for the day.
And hope will be yours, as you wait and anticipate,
Come what may!
Ron S

My mind is blank,
it feels closed up, contained like a tank
It's hard to think
When your thought process sinks,
You try to get it back
Not realizing the concentration you lack,
it's usually simple for me to write
About any word or subject;
I most never have to worry
About getting it right!
With everything I do, I rarely am late
When I am writing, it's something I don't
Tend to anticipate

TJK

The idea that I expect to interact with fellow citizens is more than a liking of me or them, but an understanding of human nature at work.

We have a way of foreseeing each other's path

Some of it is because we like each other and the rest is anticipating each other's day.

Anonymous

At one or two times in my life I thought I could anticipate a long military career, but was cut short. Another time, I was to anticipate a career in law enforcement , but was shut out because of affirmative action.

The only thing I can anticipate now is to live out my remaining days on social security. So I'll be anticipating my end instead of being afraid of it, because the end down here can only mean the beginning of a beautiful new existence of life after this life is over.

Being with Jesus will be better than this life because my next life won't be full of disappointments like this one has been for me.

Earnest K.

OPINION

It is my opinion that being a part of the Writer's Group, is the best group of the week. You get a chance to express your personal views about being part of the Community Reintegration Program. and Vet To Vet through writing your opinion about a certain word identified with our treatment of our mental illness.

It is my opinion that coordinators and facilitators are the best that the psychiatric department at the VA could ever have. You are one of the best, thank you for being there.

David K.

A personal visualization of any situation
Put into written or vocal interpretation
Sometimes, with detailed description
If about people, they might provide an imitation
It happens every day, in all nations
Some will use discrimination
While most people are engaged in normal conversations
Many brought together by relation,
Getting along using socialization
or in fact actualization
Mixed with individuals of different generations
You could find these types of views in books or on
the new and television
They are called opinions

TJ

My opinion never matters, so I wait until it happens. That way it can gain some leverage and settle within like your favorite beverage.

If I voice my opinion before I know, then it becomes like fallen snow. I try not to voice for show, or to entertain my ego. So I take my time before I let people know what I have gained by looking through the window.

Robert B.

Some while back, perhaps too long ago to matter, to some, my opinion didn't matter, nor get asked. Of course, I was only 12, 13, 14, etc to 20 years.

I felt totally left out and alone based on the position I was forced to take, because I was too young to know and considered the least knowledgeable enough to ask about anything.

I began to think that if I had to stand before a class of students and give my opinion about a book or an essay, I could at least offer my opinion at home on any subject that I worthwhile to talk about. It seemed when this did occur, I was asked, "Who would you up?"

It was then, that I began to withdraw from expressing my thoughts about anything and had a difficult time to express in my classes what my thoughts were, especially in History and English classes all through school.

Even in the military my opinion wasn't necessary. I was told what to do, when to do it, and how it was accomplished.

Only after I returned home from the Army 1961-1971, I had been (finally) asked what I thought of this or that by family and friends.

Even today, I have difficulty in writing daily in a journal. And when I do, it is my thoughts and ideas and opinion(s) that really count.

I am so thankful for the programs at CRP, whereby I can ask questions and offer my opinions and ideas about feeling displaced and pushed aside because my opinions don't coincide with others.

This is America, and you can give your opinion to anyone. Just be careful, to whom you give it.

Joel

Every day someone, somewhere has something to say about a topic that's hot
Usually, people give their opinions whether we want them or not
In today's news, experts are always around to give us their view
But, we must be careful of what they say and what might ensue.
If you don't like my opinion, and there are plenty around.
You can ask anyone you like, and search until one is found.
Some opinions are good, while others may be very bad.
But, it's up to each individual to decide or he may be had.
Regardless of what you may hear or what has been said.
Just remember, don't be stupid, seek the truth, and use your head

Ron S.

Opinions come as part of change for most people. You cannot see the danger that comes from war! There is much conflict in war. In the civil war there were many opinions. From the KKK to Hells Angels, they had their opinion.

This is happening right here in our national culture. No matter, where you go, these characters don't stand alone. Do you know which side of the street a vet can walk on?

John G.

SECURE

When I think of secure, I think of a safe place to be in. CRP is a safe place to be in. The more you come to the CRP, the more reliable CRP becomes and the safer you feel.

The staff is very dependable when it comes to solving problems, you might entail. I recommend that all Vets try CRP for a time. It will leave you with a very secure feeling.

Anonymous

These are strange times we live in. Besides a war on two fronts, we as a “secure” people have been tested by outside sources to try to bring our financial security and the security of our southern border with Mexico under better control.

It’s getting so bad in my opinion, that if the “right” person is not elected to the presidency next November , the feeling of being secure by our government will be out the window. Don’t get me wrong. I love my country, but I don’t trust the government. There has been too much danger and the safety of our country has been jeopardized over the past five years. There is plenty of room for doubt of the dependability, reliability, assuredness, and certainty that within a crisis to expect our government to remember Katrina and know when another crisis strikes, we must first be secure in ourselves and help other the best we can before the outside sources come to the rescue. I felt more secure while in the military than these days. I wonder why that is?

Joel

When I grew up as a kid, I had a great life and was secure with my surroundings. I played sports, went to school and did yard work and raised or fed animals in the back yard. I kept busy and free from danger by keeping busy. I was able to have a lot of fun with family and friends. We all went to church on Sunday as a family, and I was free from doubt and also relied and depended on the family that I lived with. I was secure with my mom and dad and my sister’s family lived down the street. And in those times, I was very secure and happy growing up. I went to BW baseball teams that I played on and participated in Woodbridge recreation. I went to Amity School until 8th grade while I was living in Woodbridge.

BD

I felt secure being free from worry, self doubt and having a safe place to store my belongings and having a roof over my head. Having had a crime free community to live in was the best thing to happen to me. Also, knowing that the things I do are appreciated by the people I socialize with. Things that I do help me feel more secure in my life. I pray to Go that nothing will upset my sense of security or well-being. Being

part of Vet To Vet, gives me a social situation that enables me to work on my mental illness.

Thanks again for letting me be part of this community.

David K

Being secure is something that many don't understand or have these days. Danger is always there. It's like a battle out there, where there are no lines or foxholes to hide in.

doubt is something that we can often see in the eyes of others. Each day there are shocking scenes of deaths and shoot outs seen on the news. No wonder there is a disease called PTSD.

John G.

It's crazy how the world is today. Too many people rushing, and running to get things done, never to have time to stop and contemplate. Car accidents, domestic violence, murders, and frequent break ins on any given residence.

These are just some of things in life seen by the average citizen. No two days are the same, and not one day is a peaceful uneventful day. While no one seems to have a solution, not a prime minister or president

While driving a car is a risky task, since too many people on the road go too fast. Does anyone know what they are fighting for?

Chaos is an event which occurs throughout the day on a daily basis. People always on edge, arguing, acting like they are running in the races. no one seems to stop, relax, and be grateful about what they have with their families, like looking up at the stars.

11 p.m. on any given night, do you know where your children are? Every day you go out, going about your daily business, are resting assured, that you feel secure?

TJ

To be secure in this day and age is next to impossible with the way our government is handling things, and sometimes our family and friends abandon us as well.

The only thing I can feel secure about is my own personal beliefs in knowing that I tried my best, and I still believe in God. And one day, God will make things right for me. As long as I stay secure in God's standards and not follow the standards of the world

Earnest K.

HELPLESS

Helplessness is a feeling of defeat. Feeling helpless is not always a "bad" thing. When most folks hear the word "helpless", they feel that it is a negative or bad feeling. Helplessness interpreted as a "bad" feeling can affect our minds, emotions and communication styles, etc. These bad feelings are called "cognitive distortions." Cognitive distortions are thoughts that are embedded in our heads and beliefs about those thoughts. we as human being conjure up thoughts about events that may have never happened and it enables our ability to determine behaviors in our head.

Now, in order to change those negative "helpless" conclusions, helplessness can be a more more effective tool, for instance, helplessness can be a thought process in a bad situation. When we are scared, helplessness can help us to see the good good in life and raise our awareness of the the things we can be thankful in life. Helplessness can be a very frustrating thing. But, if used the right way, it can be very advantageous.

JB

I come to Vet to Vet to help me overcome some of my paranoia experiences. By being here, I can put aside my thoughts and feelings of helpless frame of mind, and try to change the outlook on life. Here I don't beat myself down with feelings of worthless, unfounded thinking and worry. Through the interaction of sharing thoughts and experiences with each other, I leave with a positive feeling of hope and confidence that I can overcome my feelings of helplessness with my mental illness.

DK

Back in May of '97, I had a grand mal seizure and two more seizures right after that. I was told that the medical people had to administer aide to me for three quarters of an hour before talking me to a hospital.

I woke up from three days in a coma and felt very helpless while laying in bed, trying to speak, read a newspaper, talk to a friend who was with me when I fell on the floor with my second time experiencing a seizure.

I found it difficult to read because the letters in the newspaper started to come together causing my eyes to feel tired and useless. I found it difficult to read, chew, speak, walk and spell. When I tried to eat, I had trouble chewing at my normal speed. I bit my tongue more times than I can remember. It was now at the point of not trying to accept any more effort than necessary in order to save my lips from being bitten and eyes from getting blurred. Even my coordination with the use of a knife and fork were a challenge to use. I was confined in bed and seen by two doctors who told me that I had pancreatitis.

No treatment followed for that and now I am recovering from an operation to remove a tumor from the pancreas and the removal of two lymphnodes that were cancerous.

I continued on with blood tests to find the right level of medication to keep from having any more seizures. Six years later, June 29, 2004, I had another seizure and a change in medication that helped keep seizures at bay.

These day, I have to take 24 pills a day to stay well enough to function every day. Some times I feel so helpless that I don't want to get out of bed. I get very tired and have reactions from the meds I take. I have persevered and made an effort to get up at 5:30 a.m. each day to attend the CRP program which help me from feeling helpless.

Joel

CONTEND

There's one time or another that we all feel helpless
And there are time in our lives that we feel very blessed
When there's climatic changes and the weather acts up
We have to take whatever comes, and drink from the cup
We are helpless when situations occur, that we can not control
Sometimes we want to hide and dig a big hole
When we are helpless there are two ways to turn
But which way we deal with our helplessness, we must learn
When we're down and out, we must turn to others for our need
And take their advice, so we might get better indeed.
When situations occur that are beyond the help of man.
We need to humbly seek God, pray and ask for His hand

Ron S.

Every day I contend, because I never know
What it will bring

Be it perfect health or suffering
But, this I know come toil or rest
God will send me what is best
It takes all I have to contend with the days
In and outs
But, with God all things are possible, of which
I have no doubt
So I do my best to contend for the prize which
is set before me.
For a day will come, where now my vision is
dim, then I will be able to see

Ron S.

God and Jesus will fight our battles as we struggle in daily issues. God and Jesus our
“Great Contender”

To contend with me is a four letter word. To me it means being expected to settle for
less than what I’m entitled. When in '87 my 97 was passed over for a lower scores
because of civil service, I was refused equal treatment for employment. I still haven’t
gotten over that.

My position in life, my opportunities being denied, made me righteously angry, but the
law prevents corrections from being made, so I have to “contend” with it or go to jail.

In '81 in my reps office, when told the civil service over the phone, “he is a US citizen
and has an “honorable discharge” and still I wasn’t hired.

It is rather ironic to be told “you’ve served your country well, but we will give police and
fire opportunities to people less intelligent than you who do not speak English.” We
don’t want the best and bright ones, we want to deny you and scrape the bottom of the
barrel and give others the opportunities you earned while they haven’t.

Ernest K.

Hey, what happened? Where am I? Take it easy, Mr. Brown, you are in a hospital
under going a few tests. Who are you, asked Mr. Brown unaware of his surroundings,
not to include what landed him to end up in the hospital. The director calmly introduced
himself-I’m Mr. Russell and I’ll be taking care of you. Your are in Fairfield Heights
Hospital in the lower end of South Jersey. The doc had to ask Mr. Brown a couple of

routine questions, such as do you know what day it is, the year, the month and so on. Mr. Brown couldn't answer none of the questions above. So, Mr. Brown had to ask Dr. Russell a few questions on his own. Like, what landed him there in the first place.

Dr. Russell took a deep breath and let Mr. Brown know the following. Mr Brown, you have been the number one contender in the heavy weight boxing division for the last year and half. Finally, you got knocked out in the fifth round

by S.

CREATE

Thank you God, for my wife and daughter-together with your help we created her. The on and only child of our joining together forty years of a rough relationship. I you and she had not had "Faith" and "Sticking" with me, my life would have been over a long time ago. With your help over the last 18 months, I've created a new perspective for the future-clean, sober, and drug free- with love and respect for many years.

Dave K

I create-because to become more secure person in the community-I have created opportunities for me like my present work on supported employment-a mental health practice. But, I need to learn how to keep going. This morning I woke up and said-How will I keep going for these next three to four years. Sick with diabetes these days my leg swollen up. Numb foot, sick and sweating-how will I keep going?
moe

Bring into being (usually something that did not exist) God created the sunset and flowers but I don't believe man could appreciate these things at first because it was written that the things of creation were "Good." When God created woman, man saw her beauty and man began to compare things around him to her beauty. Poetry was born, art was born, whole sections of man's culture are devoted to men see when they look at woman. Adman may have eaten the forbidden fruit after seeing that Eve had knowing that she would surely die. He may not have been willing to spend the rest of his life alone-not realizing that God could create another for him.

Anonymous

COMPASSION

I've been able to create things by changing
things around

It show up in the choice I've made, I've found
I've moved recently in one place, I can call my own
I was able to create my environment, where I live
It's shown
To be able to create, I have to use the resources given
Regardless of what I have, I can create choices for living
My real desire is to be, what God has created me to be

And creation, takes some time
So, we'll just have to wait and see
Ron S.

God created the birds, the animals, and also man and woman
Russell E

God and Jesus causes everyone to exist and brought everyone into being
Larry P.

Compassion is something that we all can give.
It's also something we can receive from others
As long as we live
Compassion we can learn as we go through this life
As we experience with others the things that cause
Great strife
Compassion can be felt when we have pity on someone
It leads to helping out others until the works is done
Sometimes nothing more to say
I've been there done that
It could be a common experience like sitting in a "hot seat"
We've both sat
Also, compassion is having sympathy for someone's sorrow
It help a person work through their grief for a better tomorrow
So never turn away an opportunity to show people compassion
It's been around for as long as man, and will never grow old fashioned
Ron S.

God and Jesus like compassion
God and Jesus like pity, feel for each other's sorrow
or hardship that leads to help
God and Jesus like sympathy

Larry P.

Having had the experience of both sorrow and hardship, and receiving help through another's sympathy and concern, has helped me understand how to cope with with other people's hardship and sorrow.

Take for instance, a friend suddenly dies and I feel the need to attend his funeral and offer my sympathy, understanding and condolences to the family, I may know well because of my friendship to my dear friend. Taking part of the final goodbye has a therapeutic effect plus the sharing of loss and feelings of grief puts to rest my hope that I can offer prayers and sympathy to erase the grief that they are discovering.

There is another type of compassion that will flow from us and hopefully, bring an ease of sorrow, grief and sadness that another person is going through. The worst time I ever had in offering my condolences and sympathy when my foster father father's died and I offered my condolences and I felt at the age of 14, deeply sorrowful and offered my condolences.

Joel

DANGER

I only sense danger when my paranoia takes possession of my mind which makes me nervous, instead of using my reason. A sense of fear of hostilities from others makes me fearful of harm.

I don't see myself in any danger although my minds says differently. I pray to God to keep my safe from any danger. I have no intention of hurting anyone anyone, nor anybody hurting me. So I don't let the worries of danger get the best of me.

David K.

As a mother, I worry about cars. Buying one! Even getting hit by one.
As an alcoholic, I'm faced with the fact that I could go into a blackout and kill myself or someone else in a car.
Trust the police, I guess that's all you can do in times of emergency.
I'll probably never own a car for the rest of my life or better yet never waste the valuable income I have saved on one.

Liquor kills!!!

Anonymous

What we learned in the morning group about aggressive behavior is knowing how to walk away from certain situations to avoid danger to self or others.

Richard H.

In life, we're all constantly in and out of danger. We've all experienced it in some way, in which I am no stranger.

In Vietnam, there was always danger all around.
You had to constantly be alert to each and every sound

When the rockets came in, there was no doubt
We all got together and woke up others
With a shout

When the danger was over and everything stopped
It was hard to go back to sleep, so I stayed up until,
I dropped

This went on for month and months, while I was there
It was an everyday danger that I had to bare.

When my tour in Vietnam was finally over, I had returned to normal life
But, there was one big adjustment involved to get me over the strive
Now, there's the usual dangers we all have to face
Now, I go my way, trust in God, stand and take my place

Ron S.

WORK

Work can be anything involving physical, emotional or mental effort. In many cases, work has a specific goal or rewards attached to completion. But, work can be so much more. It can be how a person defines themselves or how they are “compared” or measured against others, either inside or outside the of peer group.

Any it is defined, work is an expanding of something or some part of an individual group, such as team work. Work may be measured in time or by things more tangible, such as you would associate production with work. Work can also run the gauntlet of human emotions, satisfaction, frustration, anger, joy, confusion and even apathy.

Eugene

Making it through the day is work for many.
They may be in recovery, and have issues
a plenty
It's hard to get by in life if you don't work and just
sit.
For then someone else has to provide for you,
and that's just it
Everything we see around us is a direct result of
someone's work.
So it's better if you pitch in, and help out if you
can, but don't shirk.
We can't work when we're little, and when we get
old, the same thing.
We need then to rely on others for what we need
them to bring
Probably, the worst case is a person who can
work but will not
He wants others to work for him and still wants
what they got.
If a man does not work, then “don't feed him” it,
says in the Good Book.
So, if you have the ability to work, let's be happy,
eat and cook.
Work is work, there's no ifs and but about it,
so don't cry
Let's make work enjoyable, and then see how
quickly each day goes by Ron S.

RESOLUTION

I have made to resolution to come to Vet To Vet regardless of my mental illness. I am trying very hard to cope with my paranoia and participate in the CRP groups and meetings, to help me live a safe productive life.

The healing process I'm beginning to feel, points me in the direction of a new out look on life. I've been plagued with thoughts of fear and rejection and at a time they feed my paranoia.

I can see hope (light at the end of the tunnel). Slowly but surely I'm facing me dilemma and coming to grips with my schizoid condition. I hope that by coming to the CRP, I can get back to a productive life style.

Dave K.