



Beneath the Redwood Canopy

Storytelling as a Path to Veteran
Success

About Us



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Objectives

Explore storytelling as a powerful method for transformational learning aiding Veterans in their transition, reintegration, and identity formation.

Demonstrate how sharing personal experiences and academic insights facilitates healing and new perspectives.

Learn best practices for creating Veteran-centered peer support groups utilizing storytelling principles.

Introduce the *Journal of Interactive Veteran Experiences* at Texas State University as a platform for capturing and sharing Veterans' stories.

Please Introduce Yourself

1. Your name
2. Institutional affiliation
3. Inspiration for being here
4. One word: what storytelling means to you



Ground rules and purpose:

Code of Conduct:

- Be respectful of those around you.
- Participate in a constructive and active way.
- Exercise consideration and respect in speech and action.
- Listen, pause, reflect, and attempt understanding before speaking.
- Refrain from demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behavior and speech.
- Be mindful of your environment and fellow participants.

Purpose:

- To create a safe, respectful space for sharing and active listening.
- To understand that storytelling can be a vulnerable space and participants should practice respectful repetition as they share their conference experiences outside of this room.
- To practice openness and potentially restraint when sharing ourselves.
- To remember that while this is a small group, we cannot control the narrative that moves beyond this space.

Post-Military Transition

Understanding the challenges: Identity loss, reintegration challenges, mental health struggles

The Power of Storytelling

How storytelling aids in processing experiences and fostering new perspectives

“If you want to know me, then you must know my story, for my story defines who I am. And if I want to know myself, to gain insight into the meaning of my own life, then I too must come to know my own story” (McAdams, 1993, p.11).





Reflection

What feelings or thoughts did the video evoke for you?

Transformational Learning Theory

“Transformational learning shapes people, they are different afterward, in ways both they and others can recognize” (Clark, 1993, p. 47).



Disorienting
dilemma



Critical
Reflection



Perspective
Transformation

Interactive Session

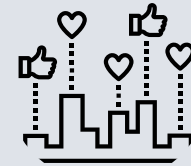
Discussion about topic and themes

Personal Experience Prompts

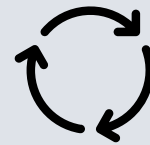
We invite you to open-up
about your personal
experiences



Can you recall a personal story that led to a significant change in your perspective?



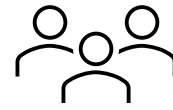
What is a lesson you've learned from an experience that you feel could benefit others?



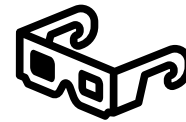
How has your personal narrative evolved over time, especially during significant life transitions?

Impact of others' stories

Reflect on stories shared by others

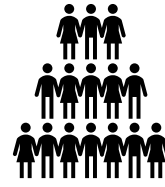


How has sharing or listening to stories impacted your understanding of others?



Can you share a moment when someone else's story deeply impacted you or changed your perspective?

Cultural and Community Aspects



What role does
storytelling play in your
life?



How has it affected you
personally?



In what ways do you
believe sharing your story
can contribute to healing –
for yourself or others?

Group Reflection

Common threads, impactful moments,
revelations

Journal of Interactive Veteran Experiences

Capturing
the full
spectrum

Freedom of
expression

Bridging
the gap

Inclusivity
in
publishing





Questions

1

How can higher learning be a resource for the veteran community? ¹

2

How can we create space for students to express themselves?

3

How can we balance tradition and innovation into something meaningful?

4

How do we gain the support of our colleagues and campus communities?

5

How can we help students develop useful skills for their lives in and outside of academia?

Identifying the need

Happy Monday!

Thanks for the reply Isabelle. To clarify, I am interested in supporting veteran students and community members in creating a space where we can share stories, poems, art, etc. Once I graduate, I would not have access to share and upload on OER? Im thinking of starting an open source Journal for Veteran Experiences. Thanks and have a great day!

Respectfully,

Heriberto

Good Morning All,

Thank you so much for the feedback. I am honestly so surprised by the possibilities! I just defended my dissertation last week on April 4th in the College of Education department and one of my recommendations was to foster and create more spaces of inclusion within and outside of higher ed to support veteran stories.

Texas State University Veterans Resources

Listed below are resources for student Veterans at Texas State University:

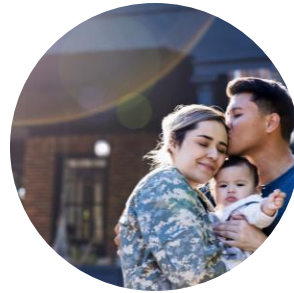
- Office of Veterans Affairs <https://www.va.txst.edu/>
- Veterans and Military Connected Students Resources Page <https://www.txst.edu/veterans.html>
- Counseling Center <https://www.counseling.txst.edu/>
- Veteran Academic Success Center (VASC) <https://www.txst.edu/slac/vasc.html>
- Veterans Advisory Council <https://www.va.txst.edu/about-us/vac.html>
- Veterans Alliance of Texas State (VATS) <https://studentinvolvement.txst.edu/involvement/programs-and-services/vats.html>

- Lack of cohesive Veterans services (online or on campus)
- Lack of space for Veterans students to come together

-
- 21% of Veteran students reported injuries negatively affecting learning
 - 53% of Veteran students reported mental health negatively affecting learning
 - 50% of Veteran students reported high levels of stress negatively affecting learning
 - 27% did not feel safe/comfortable accessing campus-based resources to help ³

Understanding the Background

Exploring existing narratives and beliefs about Veterans, Veterans transition, and Veterans as a vulnerable population.



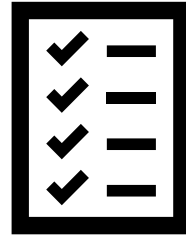
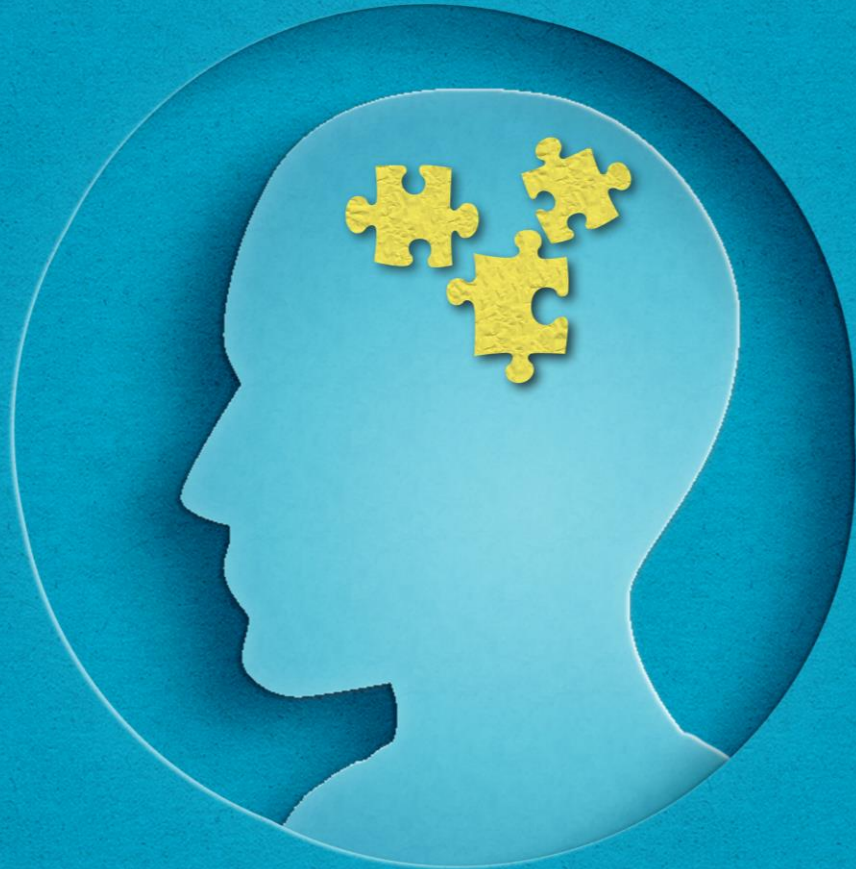
Reintegration
& coming
home

Integration of
various
identity
narratives

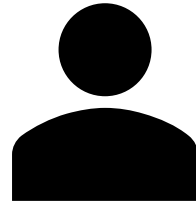
Storytelling
as healing

Creating a
Public
Pedagogy

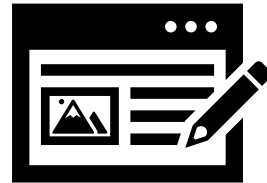
Desired Outcomes



Digital Object



Identity Formation



Publishing Literacy



Community Building



Greetings. I am Doctor Heriberto Arambula,

Goals

2024-2025

Journal of Interactive Veteran Experiences



Structured workflow



Submission examples



Check-ins and training



Website design



Personal to professional narrative development



Partnership with Writing Center



Mentorship program



Community partnerships in and out of TXST

Other Community Veteran Projects

1. Tex Vet Legacy Grant

Partnership with VA, Texas State Library, and School of Social Work

2. Veterans' Stories of transition and transformation (Book)

25 stories, co-edited w Dr. Robert Turrill from USC.

3. Patriots Hall Dripping Springs

10-acre retreat and veteran resource hub



Thank you!

Questions & Feedback

