

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Title The Lost Soldier: Understanding Soldier Identity

Short title Understanding Soldier Identity

Protocol number DDVA HREC 195-20; GU Ref No: 2020/078

Project Sponsor



Principal Investigator(s)

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Transition from the military is widely cited as a significant and increasingly important issue, which needs to be addressed. Previous research suggests that military beliefs and values may impact on individuals' transition experiences. The aim of this study is to investigate the beliefs that soldiers have developed during their military service and the extent to which these beliefs impact on well-being and transition to civilian life.

What does participation in this research involve?

We are seeking ex-serving Army personnel, who have deployed on operations during their service and who have transitioned from the Army within the last two years.

You are invited to participate in this research by completing an online questionnaire. It is estimated that the questionnaire will take approximately 90 mins to complete. You will be encouraged to take breaks throughout the survey.

You will be asked questions about:

1. you (age, marital status, number of children, current occupational status),
2. your service (Corps, length of service, number of deployments) and views on being a veteran (or being in the military),
3. your well-being, coping responses and your capacity to think in a flexible way,
4. how meaningful your life is and how satisfied you are with your life,

5. your schemas (fundamental views you have about yourself, others and the world around you), and your schema modes (moment-to-moment emotional states and coping responses people experience).

At the end of the survey, you will be asked if you would like to be invited to participate in further research, involving a face to face intervention being conducted in Brisbane. If you elect to be informed about possibly participating in further research, you will need to provide a personal contact (e.g. an email address), however that information will be kept separately from your responses to this survey so as to protect your confidentiality.

This Participant Information Sheet/Consent Form tells you about the research project. It explains the processes involved with taking part. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the research. Please read this information carefully. Ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about.

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary; there is no obligation to take part in the study. If you choose not to participate **any personal details, which may identify you in any way, will not be passed to the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Your answers will not in any way affect any pension, benefits or health services which you are entitled to from DVA.** If you decide you want to take part in the research project, you will be asked to provide consent.

Please download and keep a copy of this information sheet for your records.

Benefits

There are no likely direct benefits from participating in this research, however this research will contribute to our understanding of the psychological factors that impact transitioning military members. This information may assist Griffith University, as well as the wider research community, to understand and develop better intervention strategies for transitioning military members.

Risks of participating

No risks are envisaged from participating in this research. Some of the questions in the survey could cause discomfort and trigger an emotional response, such as anger. If you are triggered or become upset, angry or frustrated at any time whilst completing the survey, you are encouraged to contact **Open Arms Veterans and Families 24Hr Crisis Support on 1800 011 046**, your preferred health professional (e.g. doctor, psychologist, psychiatrist), Lifeline on 13 11 14, or other support contact.

If at any stage of the survey you become fatigued or would like to take a break, you can save your answers and return to the survey at a later time that suits you. You can do this several times. During the survey, you will see some reminders to take a break if you would prefer.

Withdrawal from the research

You may withdraw from this research at any time until submission of your completed questionnaires because after this point, it will not be possible to identify individual responses as data is collected anonymously. A decision to withdraw will not result in any kind of penalty or judgement or in any way impact upon your current or future relationship with Griffith University, the researchers, or the Department of Veteran Affairs.

Privacy and confidentiality

The information collected in this study is confidential and anonymous. Only summary results from the research will be reported and any quotes used will be anonymous. **Individual survey results** will **not** be identifiable to the researchers, or disclosed to third parties without your consent, except to meet government, legal or other regulatory authority requirements. Griffith University conducts research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans. Electronic data will be stored on password protected computers and research servers belonging to the research team. Data will be retained on these servers for the minimum period of 5 years following release, in accordance with Griffith University policy. A de-identified copy of this data may be used for other research purposes. However, your anonymity will at all times be safeguarded. For further information consult the University's Privacy Plan at <http://www.griffith.edu.au/privacy-plan> or telephone (07) 3735 4375.

Other relevant human research ethics considerations

The ethical aspects of this research project have been approved by the Departments of Defence and Veteran' Affairs Human Research Committee (195-20) and Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee (GU Ref No: 2020/078). This project will be carried out according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*. This statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies.

Guidelines for Volunteers

You can download a copy of the DDVA HREC Guidelines for Volunteers [here](#).

Dissemination of research findings

It is anticipated that the results of this research project will be disseminated via publication in academic journal(s), presentation at conferences and relevant newsletters. Results will also be written up as part of the student researcher's Doctor of Philosophy thesis. In any publication and/or presentation, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified. Only the summary de-identified results will be shared with the wider research community. If you choose, you will be provided with a copy of the overall research findings on your request.

Concerns or complaints

Should you have any complaints or concerns about the manner in which this project is conducted, please do not hesitate to contact the researchers through Megan Fry via email at megan.fry@griffithuni.edu.au, or you may prefer to contact the Executive Officer DDVA HREC, on (02) 6266 3807, or at ddva.hrec@defence.gov.au. Alternatively, you may prefer to contact the Manager at Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee, on (07) 3735 4375, or at research-ethics@griffith.edu.au.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The results of this research will be used by Megan Fry to obtain a Doctor of Philosophy degree. This research has been funded by Griffith University. No member of the research team will receive a personal financial benefit from your involvement in this research project.