

## READJUSTMENT COUNSELING SERVICE

Congress established the Vet Centers in 1979 out of the recognition that a significant number of Vietnam Era vets were still experiencing re-adjustment problems.

Vet Centers are community based and part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. In April 1991, in response to the Persian Gulf War, Congress extended the eligibility to veterans who served during other periods of armed hostilities after the Vietnam era. Those other periods are identified as Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, the Persian Gulf, Somalia, and Kosovo/Bosnia. In October 1996, Congress extended the eligibility to include WWII and Korean Combat Veterans.

The goal of the Vet Center program is to provide a broad range of counseling, outreach, and referral services to eligible veterans in order to help them make a satisfying post-war readjustment to civilian life.

On April 1, 2003, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs extended eligibility for Vet Center services to veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and on June 25, 2003, Vet Center eligibility was extended to veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and subsequent operations within the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). **The family members of all veterans listed above are eligible for Vet Center services as well.** On August 5, 2003, VA Secretary Anthony J. Principi authorized Vet Centers to furnish bereavement counseling services to surviving parents, spouses, children and siblings of service members who die of any cause while on active duty, to include federally activated Reserve and National Guard personnel.



## VET CENTER ELIGIBILITY

**War Zone Veterans** - all eras, including:

**World War II** - 7 Dec 1941 to 31 Dec 1946

**American Merchant Marines** - In ocean-going service during the period of armed conflict - 7 Dec 1941 to 15 Aug 1945

**Korean War** - 27 Jun 1950 - 27 Jul 1954

**Vietnam War** - 28 Feb 1961 - 7 May 1975

**Vietnam Era Non Theater** - 5 Aug 1964 - 7 May 1975 (eligible if seen prior to 1 Jan 2004)

**Lebanon** - 25 Aug 1982 to 26 Feb 1984

**Grenada** - 23 Oct 1983 to 21 Nov 1983

**Panama** - 20 Dec 1989 to 31 Jan 1990

**Persian Gulf** - 2 Aug 1990 to present

**Somalia** - 17 Sep 1992 to present

**Operations Joint Endeavor, Joint Guard, Joint Forge** - Veterans who participated in one or more of these three successive operations in the former Yugoslavia (Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, aboard U.S. Naval vessels operating in the Adriatic Sea, or air spaces above those areas)

**Sexual Trauma/Harassment Counseling** - veterans of both sexes, all eras

**Global War on Terrorism** - Veterans who serve or have served in military expeditions to combat terrorism on or after September 11, 2001 and before a terminal date yet to be established

**Combat Service Support** - Active duty, reservists and veterans who provided direct emergency medical, mental health, mortuary or unmanned aerial support services to personnel involved in combat operations or hostilities.

**Bereavement** - Parents, spouses, and children of Armed Forces personnel who died in the service of their country. Family members of Reservists and National Guardsmen who die while on active duty are included.



## PTSD

*Post Traumatic Stress is a normal set of reactions to a trauma such as war, which could be experienced by almost anyone. Sometimes, it becomes a Disorder (PTSD) with the passage of time when feelings or issues related to the trauma are not dealt with, but are suppressed by the individual. This can result in problems readjusting to community life following the trauma. A delayed stress reaction may surface after many years and include some or all of the following problems:*

- *anger, irritability, and rage*
- *feeling nervous*
- *depression*
- *difficulty trusting others*
- *feeling guilt over acts committed or witnessed, the failure to prevent certain events or merely having survived while others did not*
- *hyper alertness and startle reactions*
- *feeling grief or sadness*
- *having thoughts and memories that will not go away*
- *isolation and alienation from others*
- *loss of interest in pleasurable activities*
- *low tolerance to stress*
- *problems with authority*
- *problems feeling good about one self*
- *nightmares*
- *substance abuse*
- *Trouble sleeping*
- *anxiety*
- *paranoia*



## *Readjustment Counseling Services*

*ELA Vet Center offers free services to eligible veterans and their family members to include:*

### *Counseling services offered:*

- *Individual counseling*
- *Group counseling*
- *Marital/Couples counseling*
- *Family counseling*
- *Mandated domestic violence counseling*
- *Bereavement counseling*

### *Other services offered:*

- *Employment counseling, guidance and referral*
- *Assistance in applying for VA Benefits*
- *Medical referrals*
- *Substance abuse information & referrals*
- *Information and referral to community resources*
- *Sexual trauma referral services*
- *Community education*



## *Confidentiality and Privacy*

*Vet Center Staff respect the privacy of all veterans. We hold in the strictest confidence all information disclosed in the counseling process. No information will be released to any person or agency without written consent from the client, except in circumstances averting a crisis.*



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*Keeping the Promise*

**Barry A. Kelly, M.A., MFTI**  
Counseling Therapist

**East LA Vet Center**

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**Rosa Ibarra**  
Outreach Coordinator

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