

PUTTING ONE'S FINGER ON THE
PRICELESS VALUE OF CHERISHED AND
ESTEEMED FRONT-LINE WORKERS THE
INFLATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT OF
PSYCHOLOGICAL CIRCUMSPECTION AND
DIFFERENTIATION BETWEEN WARRIOR
VETERANS & CHAMPIONSHIP SPOUSES
HOW SPOUSES PROVIDE A NEXUS AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE
GRANDEUR OF THE ILLINOIS VETERANS HOME

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We are amid the most unprecedented catastrophic and barbarous time of our lives, perhaps ever to be recorded in the annals of history. Here at the Illinois Veterans Home, as we gaze and imagine ourselves beyond 210 plush acres into the other side of the world, we listen and hear about our planet earth about to be wiped out by a diabolical plague which, for the most, has decimated most of the world. We listen to the heart-breaking stories of loss and despair, desperate pleas, cries and protests of the people and children as they look upon empty supper plates, loss of jobs and income, unceasing no-holds barred racial disparity, and our religious statues sacrilegiously destroyed. Yet, within our protective barrier, we stand tall, proud, undaunted, protective in belief and culture, but somehow, fiercely enigmatic as to what the future holds in store for us. It is within this realm of such catastrophic, and barbarous time of our lives, that we give thanks, honor, praise and glory, for all that we have. It is within this time of our lives when we humbly kneel down, and bring forth out of obscurity into the world of luster, radiance, splendor and reality the significance of those people whom have given us the strength to move forward, and of whom have completely restored our faith in humanity itself, empowering us to do so.

Within the Illinois Veterans Home, we have a diverse community of chefs, housekeepers, technicians, administrative personnel in a variety of departments, activity directors, social workers, a beloved priest and chaplain, a variety of state health care workers, nurses, and nurse practitioners, all of whom serve a very unique and individual purpose. Without them, all of them, we, would be nothing. Of course, there are different levels of health care within the Illinois Veterans Home, and at this particular moment, it is the goal of this article to primarily concentrate on Hammond Hall, a nursing home, and upon the recent 30 day quarantine period spent there; thus capitalizing upon the sheer awe-inspiring phenomenon of the hard, dirty work, stamina, tenacity, drive and perseverance that these state health care workers, nurses and nurse practitioners daily match strength with and go for broke.

Starting from the very daybreak of a new day, each resident is daily bathed, given their meds in accordance with schedule, timely coddled while being lovingly fed.

Thereafter, attention and a systematic sanitary approach is given by the housekeepers conducting the making of beds, cleaning and mopping of floors while the resident patients are being wheeled from the dining area into the dayroom area in which to watch television. One by one, the resident patients are strategically lined up, side by side, one by one, as if in military formation, each one content and satisfied to watch whatever program pops up on the screen. The resident patients are always well-dressed, clean, very, very content and happy with their lives, and no one will ever witness any of them as having a look of neither despair, nor hopelessness as they grapple with each successive day of their life as they know it. Their look of facial countenance is a resplendence, a revelation, something to behold, and indeed, a picturesque moment to recapture. The very idea of how very well taken care of, we as veterans are, as well as our spouses, enable us to foresee ourselves as existing in a formidable manner; making sure the inevitable last concluding chapter of our lives is tremendously gratifying, uplifting and thereby providing us with the much-needed security, respect, dignity and safety and last stretch of independence that all of us strive for. When giving up everything we worked hard for all of our lives, our homes, everything we ever knew about, heard, or ever had, we didn't know if we would embark into unforgiving, uncharted territory destined to wear Angola black & white striped shirts, or if by chance, we would encounter a paradise.

Hammond Hall, as well as both Somerville and Anderson Barracks, represent the "Taj Mahal," of it all, a symbol of love and power. It is a paradise; the one big difference being that between the type of care from Hammond Hall versus the Barracks is that of nursing care only; backed-up by 3 shift (around the clock) state health care workers and nurse/nurse practitioners truly destined for the work that they are doing. As with all, these state health care workers and nurse/nurse practitioners are all young, feminine, and very attractive women whom you would expect to see wearing filed, manicured fingernails bedecked in bright emblazoned red fingernail polish, fancy attire, nice clothes, and like Cinderella, their prince charming awaiting them with glass slippers in which to slip onto their dainty, small feet. Quite the contrary: While these women continue to stand out and draw attention in every respect, they are there to work. Their main function and purpose in their life is their intrinsic quality, ability and expertise to nurse. It is their calling. It is what they were made to do mind, body and soul. They were destined to do what they do, and how very lucky we are to have them. It is not just a job. It is not just a paycheck. The resident patients are not just statistics. They are real live people. They are your daddy, your grandpa, your grandma, your uncle, your sister, your veteran, your spouse. It doesn't matter. It's just as if Our Lord held his arms, outstretched, and embraced this magnificent class of people and spoke to them while his fiery wand touched each one of their shoulders and said, "Go Forth and Heal." "Heal," is what they do, body, mind and soul. Veterans and spouses, this is what you must look forward to when the time comes when you are entirely dependent upon others. This is what your reward is. You served your country. Now, your country is serving you, without doubt, without hesitation. All of this kinetic energy and unparalleled patient care is daily and continually conducted in style, manner and grace unlike that of any Finishing School; always topped-off by daily telepathic transmission and sense of concern, loyalty, warmth and endearment, equally shared by all front-line health care workers and recipient therein.

Now, let us not forget the spouses within our community: They tend to somehow feel that they are not worthy enough to stand beside us at the Illinois Veterans Home. Do not ever feel this way:

While the Veteran was trained to do as directed; to rush out into open fire without a second thought; to sacrifice; to endure countless periods of social retrogression and physical hardship, extreme climate and treacherous terrain; To be subjected to contaminated water supplies, carcinogenic chemical warfare at all costs, a variety of highly infectious diseases primarily stemming from inadequate resources within foreign countries; to be separated from your family while at the same time thinking what a failure you were because you could not be with them, you, dear spouse, experienced your very own war, within your very own soul and very own unfamiliar world:

For one thing, appraising what is now about to be said strictly from a psychological standpoint of view, think about how much, and to what extent the veteran could have accomplished with his time in service had it not been for their spouse whom had to deal with an entirely different culture; a subservient culture where caution, obsequiousness and mannerisms of the spouse had everything to do with her veteran husbands' forthcoming rise in rank and stature. Think not solely about the wartime enemies but about the many times it became a matter of simply becoming browbeaten within an authoritarian society, culture, coterie; a close-knit infra-structured environment whereas your uncanny wit was forced to take over just simply to survive and maintain your very own individuality much-less having to serve such an important role in your husbands' life. Think about the raising of the angelic child into the hair-splitting precocious rebellious teenager whom thus needed a firm, stable hand, non-staggering guidance and a sense of morality more than ever before, the strategy, discipline, guts, morality and above all, the faith that it took to do that. Think about your very own desires; there being no one to cuddle up to at night and lovingly cress your face and hair; think about how you did all of these things all on your very own, and upon how you serve as living proof and testimony to it.

Yes, dear spouses, do not forever in one minute, think that you do not deserve to be where you are. While you may not have been in a battlefield, you were in the background, stable and long-suffering. You eagerly awaited the love and companionship of your veteran husband and passionately stood by him from day one. You stand by him now, in his memory, for which you will forever hold dear to you. You are eagerly wanted, loved and needed here at the Illinois Veterans Home. Whatever fears you have about this now, or in the past, your fears are allayed. You are "Home."

In addition to the above, and with climactic coercion and potency, we state, city and summarize the Code of Military Justice on behalf of all spouses and dependents as follows:

Be it failure of either dependent or spouse, "Failure to Control Dependents," is an automatic cause for discharge of the veteran from service. In totality, this is the Kicker. The Military Code of Justice states that "Failure to Control Dependents," is a key factor in the ultimate embarrassment, humiliation, ignominy, and untimely discharge of any

Serviceman regardless of branch, or rank. So, for all those spouses whom sit among us at the supper table, this extremely important role of a spouse that you had, continues to serve as a benchmark to all. Also be aware of the fact that there is no veteran, neither alive nor deceased, whom does not relish the thought knowing that his loved one, his wife, whomever, will be able to live the rest of her life under the protection of everything they both fought for, sacrificed for, admired and loved. We thank the entire staff of the Illinois Veterans Home from the bottom of the totem pole to the top of the totem pole for providing us with this nurturing epitaph as we continue heading forward to the very last page and chapter in our humble and complacent lives.

What is hoped for from this article, and what is derived from this article by all is unknown, the subconscious fact is that it is wise and judicious to examine one another's extremely foremost important role and characterization within the Illinois veterans Home: The psychological circumspection and differentiation of culture between veterans and spouses; the specific goal of such examination thereby being to bring about unity, congruity and equality into its proper perspective.

As all of us know and are aware of the difference between the civilian sector and the military culture. WE realize it is humongous and astronomical, and that being said:

Military personnel do as directed. Civilian personnel do what they want to do. Military personnel are accustomed to making quick decisions, good or bad. It is what they have been trained to do. Many times, it is gut instinct alone, and nothing more than that. Spouses, however, tend to have more time in decision making because their time is their own, and they simply have the atmosphere in which to do so. While it is indicative of women to think of men and children in general in terms of social grooming and good practices such as, "Hey! Hang-up your Clothes," it is also indicative of men to nightly visit the pub to indulge in a cold stein, to think in terms of hunting and fishing, or to play golf for that matter. As women, it seems we are somehow noted and stereotyped for quite a few "hang-ups," cited within our male counterparts. An underlying fable, perhaps, as within the political arena of today, is that of men whom think of women not necessarily as spouses, but playthings, and in sharp contrast think of women as being that of the weaker sex and therefore not capable of neither playing, sharing, no having important roles in life, especially inherent when living or existing within an exclusive male warrior environment where stance and "Saving face," become a mission versus that of being conductors of the "daily activities of Living."

Quite ironically, Veterans feel that they are being "henpecked," when in fact, they have played the dominant role in more than one society and culture and feel the need to expound. They do their best to adapt and adjust to being encapsulated and surrounded by a predominant female society and are forced to step back and relinquish the only roles in life they have ever known since getting out of High School. Some veterans feel as if spouses simply do not neither deserve, no should be residing within the Illinois Veterans Home. Some veterans felt that I, a 34-year-old former female veteran and soldier under the Delayed Entry Program in the US Army, should never have been in the military, nor should have ever been employed within a man's world. There was a time and a place, indeed, when in the midst of running during physical training, a soldier from behind, forcibly tried to kick my boots off. Not only did I continue running, however, the entire 3

mile run on rugged cobblestone streets was completed even though my stride was in no way, comparable to male counterparts. The whole idea of this type of strategy is hurtful. It is very hurtful because patriotism doesn't manifest itself neither in gender, age nor race. Here again, this only recalls the comparable demonic tactics of Hitler and his quest for the ultimate regime and race. This is the same form of ostracism, and racism, we are now witnessing. It may be in a different format and form, but the malevolence and misdeed are thereby disproportionate for the good of all, and a sound reason to re-think and calculate our misgivings, who we are, and where we came from. We were birthed by woman. We were created as Adam and Eve. Let us not trespass by means of encroachment. Let us give Thanks.

On the other hand, Women in general, however, whether it be spouse, ex-spouse, girlfriend, whatever, tend to be leery of men; just as if they, themselves, were out in a battlefield, they calculate the general picture and proceed with caution knowing that subsequent entrapment involving a variety of circumstances can, and might possibly prevail. Because we are persnickety by nature, we tend to view men as an everlasting obstacle course to deal with rather than viewing them simply as humanoids or veterans. It appears that only when a person becomes gravely ill does, he become fully sensitized and aware of his surroundings and the profundity of whatever aftermath subsequently follows. In this retrospective context, we must learn to co-exist and deal with one another in equality; our frailties and successes, and with the utmost respect. We must capitalize on objectivity versus that of subjectivity; thereby viewing each other as a distinct contributor rather than a middle-person and distributor of peremptory challenges.

In summarization, let it be known that it is a distinct disadvantage to many, many veterans, that the Illinois Veterans Home is not being publicized to a greater extent and degree:

There are countless veterans whom have never heard about the Illinois Veterans Home, and it is felt that if they did know about it, or had known about the Illinois Veterans Home in the past, (such as I), this author, the main gates would be/would have been, bombarded with veterans and spouses lined-up in droves indicative of the Great Depression Era.