Veteran Retraining Program (VRP) Course Catalog

These classes provide an opportunity to re-train yourself for better emotional health. In the service, we were trained to operate with poor sleep, suppress emotions, and use anger to get results, but this leads to worse long-term emotional health and relationships. We took to our training well and don’t know much else. These classes are Re-Training classes to provide foundational knowledge and different skills that are essential for improved emotional health. The classes are designed to add knowledge and skills to your existing toolbox to help live life fully.

Groups by Appointment

- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Symptom Management (Mon 1600-1700) - Virtual only**
  - This group focuses on providing education about PTSD and strategies to manage symptoms during the recovery process. The group is lecture based with some discussion from group members about strategies used to manage PTSD related symptoms. The group is 12 weeks long and covers topics such as nightmares, fight/flight/freeze response, how trauma affects memory, ability to concentrate, anger, sleep problems, avoidance, numbing, and difficulty experiencing happiness. In this group, members do not discuss their specific traumatic experiences.

- **Emotional Intelligence (Tues 1300-1400) - Virtual only**
  - This group provides education and support to assist in recognizing and responding to emotions. Group often begins with individual check-ins regarding current/recent emotional experiences and any questions or specific areas of interest that the group may wish to discuss. This group provides information about the origins and role/purpose of emotions, strategies for recognizing emotions, and ways to respond to and manage emotions. These topics are covered using relevant biological, physiological, psychological, social, and environmental information.

- **Mindfulness (Tues 1400-1500) - Virtual only**
  - This group provides education about mindfulness and an opportunity to practice mindfulness on a weekly basis. Most people participate for about 12 weeks, but members may continue if they feel it is still beneficial. During the education portion, we discuss the pros/cons of mindfulness, factors that make practice easier or more challenging, and set goals for our future mindfulness practice. Typical activities conducted in the group include mindful breathing, body scans, mindful listening, imagery, meditations, mindful eating, and more.

- **Moral Injury (Tues 1600-1700) - Virtual only**
  - This is a closed group (referral needed from provider) designed for Veterans who have experienced morally injurious events and are struggling with guilt, shame, and anger resulting from these events. Group is most beneficial for Veterans who are willing to discuss and explore the impact these morally injurious events have had on their overall quality of life. Group sessions will be comprised of psychoeducation, experiential exercises, minimal emotional processing, group discussion, and written assignments to enhance overall comprehension and application of material.

- **Military Identity (Wed 1100-1200); HYBRID- Virtual or in-person**
  - This group explores the impact of military service and how it shapes the way we view ourselves. Some Veterans have difficulty connecting with civilians after service and hold onto military customs/values very tight. Other Veterans exit the service and push away their military identity (i.e. grow long hair, a beard, don’t wear Veteran attire, avoid the VA). This group helps all Veterans explore their own sense of military identity and their sense of self. This group is particularly helpful for Veteran’s in transition out of the service, for Veterans who have struggled
feeling “lost”, for Veterans who feel they don’t deserve the title of Veteran, and for Veterans who only get along with other Vets. Active participation is encouraged.

- **Women Veteran’s Group (Wed 1400-1500) - Virtual only**
  - This group provides psychoeducation and support on psychological concerns unique to women veterans. Identity, coping, trauma, belonging, communication, relationships and reintegration are some of many topics covered. Women connect on shared experiences from time in service and as women veterans in the civilian world. This is an open group – all women veterans are welcome to join at any time. Active participation is encouraged.

- **PTSD Process Group (Wed 1500-1600) - Virtual only**
  - This is a closed group (referral needed from provider) designed for group members to discuss and/or explore their traumatic events and how their traumatic experiences have impacted quality of life. Group is also designed to improve interpersonal functioning, build emotional tolerance, and increase self and other intimacy. Group members are encouraged to support, validate, and provide constructive interpersonal feedback to each other in a respectful and safe manner. These interventions are a method to increase insight and awareness; and have a corrective emotional experience within a group context.

- **Boundary Group (Thurs 1000-1100) - Virtual only**
  - This group is open to any veteran who is interested in working with changing boundaries within their lives. The group will help veterans understand different kinds of boundaries within themselves and others, develop skills to establish and communicate boundaries, and explore strategies for when boundaries are crossed. Active participation is encouraged.

- **Sleep (Thurs 1600-1700) - Virtual only**
  - This group provides education about sleep and sleep concerns. Group often begins with individual check-ins regarding current/recent sleep and any specific questions anyone might have or topics they would like to discuss further. This group provides information on a variety of sleep-topics, covering relevant medical, environmental, and personal/psychological influences. Such topics include, but are not limited to: PTSD and sleep, sleep hygiene (i.e., ways in which you can change your environment and routines to promote sleep), the effect of medications and substances on sleep, sleep cycles, and sleep phobia.

- **Grief Group (Fri 1100-1200) - Virtual only**
  - This group provides education about the grieving process and guidance to help those struggling with grief, both recent and historical. This group will recommend activities to effectively grieve, work toward acceptance, and building steps to move forward. Barriers to grieving will also be explored. Participation is strongly encouraged for group members.

- **Coping with Stress (Fri 1200-1300) - Virtual only**
  - This group is based on the COPE Inventory (Carver, 2013) and educates members about different styles of coping. The group is partly lecture based to provide education about each of the 15 coping styles and encourages discussion from group members about how they have used/not used coping styles during times of stress. Group members are encouraged to choose healthier coping styles while the group focuses on increasing understanding and skills to help that process. Most group members to join for 12 weeks, but participation may vary depending on member progression.

**Drop-in Groups (No appointment necessary, Free of Charge)**

- **Veteran Support Group x 2 (Mon 1300-1400, Thurs 1730-1830) - Virtual only**
  - This group is unique from the other Veteran track groups because it is FREE and open to the public. It is typically facilitated by Veteran Track staff and is designed to provide a supportive environment for veterans who may need additional support. This group does not have a set
agenda, but topics typically covered include work conflict, relationship problems, anger at discharge process, lack of purpose in life, discomfort with military related holidays (i.e. Veterans Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July), road rage, and difficulty communicating with civilians.

- **Homefront Support Group (Mon 1200-1300) - Virtual only**
  
  o This group is designed for the support system of Veterans, whether family or friends. The group is FREE, open to age 13 and above, and is open topic forum. This group is designed to offer a safe place for those supporting Veteran’s to gain education, vent, and receive support from others like you. This group will be facilitated by a mental health professional with military experience and experience helping Veteran supports.

- **Veteran Yoga- IN PERSON (Tues 1800-1900)**
  
  o This group is designed to help enhance mental health recovery through the adaptive healing of yoga. The group is led by Jim Martz, a fellow Veteran and Master Yogi Trainer by the “World Yoga Alliance.” He is certified in Yoga for 12 step recovery and is a trauma sensitive/aware Yoga instructor. This group is intended for former and current service members only. No family or friends allowed in meeting. No affiliation with Advocate Aurora Health Care required.
  
  o This group is located in the Lighthouse building in the President Room on the Dewey Center campus (1220 Dewey Ave, Wauwatosa, WI 53213)

- **Veteran Alternative Healing- (Wed 1630-1730) - Virtual only**
  
  o This group is designed to provide education about different types of alternative healing. Come discover a private, safe, and free group dedicated to the exploration of different ways to approach healing, brief opportunities to practice, and get connected to local resources. You’ll find support from your military brothers and sisters as you learn about different ways to heal such as:
    - Equine / animal supported therapy
    - Energy work
    - Aroma therapy
    - Poetry / Songwriting
    - Chiropractic / acupuncture care
    - And more...