

# Most studied Vietnam Era veterans spontaneously describe traumatic experiences in the telling of their life stories

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New research published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* indicates that Vietnam Era Veterans participating in the My Life, My

Story initiative, a national program to record the life stories of Veterans, spontaneously describe traumatic events in the telling of their lives.

When investigators analyzed the [electronic health records](#) of 231 older Vietnam Era Veterans participating in this life story intervention, they found that 71% of Veterans described at least one traumatic event. These disclosures included combat exposure as expected, but also [adverse childhood experiences](#) and the potential trauma of navigating a life-threatening illness.

The findings reinforce the ubiquity of hardship among older Veterans and the desire of Veterans to connect with their clinicians regarding their life stories. "This study has important implications for the clinician-patient relationship, the training of future healthcare workers, and the delivery of healthcare in an increasingly trauma-informed and person-centered manner," the authors wrote.

**More information:** Zachary Sager et al, Traumatic disclosures in the life stories of older Vietnam era veterans, *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* (2022). [DOI: 10.1111/jgs.17918](https://doi.org/10.1111/jgs.17918)

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