



# THE VETERANS METRICS INITIATIVE (TVMI) POSTTRAUMATIC GROWTH AND TRAUMA

Data collected from study participants at Wave 6 (~3 years post-separation)

Issue 15

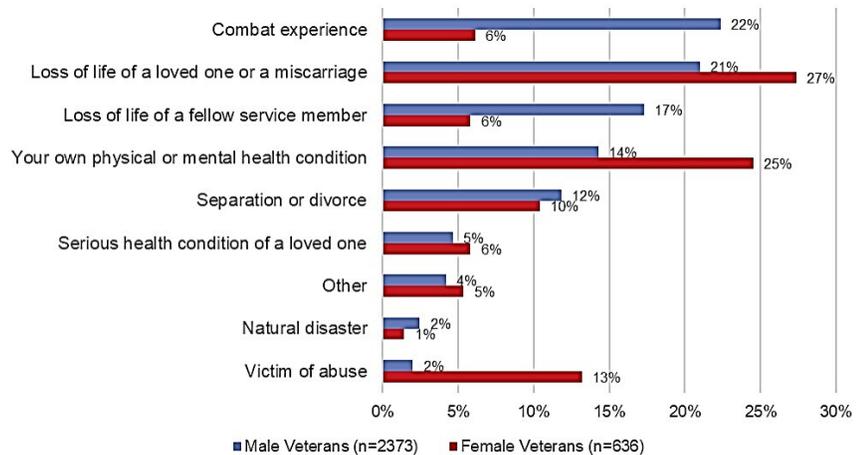
## BACKGROUND

In Spring 2019, 5,258 veterans participated in the sixth wave of the TVMI survey. At this time point, veterans had been separated or deactivated from the Active Component for an average of 33 months. Participants were asked whether they had different types of traumatic experiences and were asked about their posttraumatic growth, defined as the positive psychological change and higher functioning experienced as a result of adversity.

### Posttraumatic growth encompasses 3 dimensions:

- **Personal strength** (ex., I discovered that I'm stronger than I thought I was)
- **Growth in relating to others** (ex. I have a greater sense of closeness with others)
- **Spiritual change** (ex., I have a better understanding of spiritual matters)

## TRAUMATIC EVENTS



- Combat experience and being a victim of abuse were the strongest predictors of change in personal strength.
- Combat experience and a loved one's health condition were the best predictors of growth in relating to others.
- One's own health condition and combat experience were highest for spiritual growth.
- Separation/divorce had the lowest indication of growth.

## GROWTH EXPERIENCES

Types of traumatic events ↓, types of growth →	Personal Strength	Relating to Others	Spiritual Growth
Combat experiences	8.2x more likely	3.6x more likely	2.1x more likely
Loved one's physical or mental health condition	6.9x	4.9x	2.7x
Your own physical or mental health condition	6.8x	3.0x	2.4x
Loss of life of a loved one or miscarriage	4.1x	3.1x	2.3x
Loss of life of a fellow service member	5.0x	2.6x	2.0x
Separation or divorce	3.0x	2.5x	1.6x
Natural disaster, victim of abuse, or other event	8.5x	3.1x	2.1x

### Other factors related to posttraumatic growth:

- Personal strength: 2 times more likely if veteran has possible PTSD symptoms, 1.3-1.6x more likely for moral injury, 1.5x more likely if they experienced 3 or more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)
- Relating to others: 1.5 times more likely if a veteran has possible PTSD, 1.5x more likely for moral injury, 1.2x for 3+ ACEs, 1.4x if volunteering at a religious organization, 1.2x for regular religious attendance
- Spiritual growth: 1.5x more likely for possible PTSD, 1.3x moral injury, 1.2x for 3+ ACEs, 2x for regular religious attendance