

In Many Ways

What Blinded Veterans Teach Us About Coping

Research on blinded veterans who are coping with adversity demonstrates a basic fact in social science. The way we think becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. To grasp this is a stunning realization--that we are creating the world in which we live.

To employ this insight regularly is to become resilient, no matter what happens.

This is the truth that our blinded veterans are teaching the blind world, other veterans, and even the entire system of VA caregivers.

So radical is this fact of human nature that we must find many ways to describe it. One way we describe this fact is through our tendency to focus on the negative, which is done so naturally, instinctively, universally, and inevitably.

Therefore, in our book about blinded veterans, we spend five chapters on how we are hooked and blindsided by the negative, which is the dark side of reality. We then devote ten chapters to the positive and how to stay focused on the positive side of life.

Specifics about the Self-Fulfilling Prophecy, which can change our perspectives:

- ✓ How we frame the situation determines the world we live in.
- ✓ Not only is beauty in the eye of the beholder but ugliness also.
- ✓ Do we play happy songs, sad songs, or no songs?
- ✓ We create the world we live in by what we focus on.
- ✓ Optimists and pessimists choose daily to remain that way.
- ✓ We create our internal world by the way we choose.
- ✓ We will find what we are looking for.
- ✓ When we are angry, we will find things to be angry about.
- ✓ When we are sad, we will choose things to be sad about.
- ✓ When we are happy, we will find things to be happy about.
- ✓ The news we choose to listen to reinforces our belief system.
- ✓ We shape our reality every moment by the way we think about everything.
- ✓ We are constantly shaping our reality by our minds.
- ✓ Can you think of other ways to express this truth?
- ✓ What words will you choose to remind yourselves of this fact?
- ✓ I create my world, my reality, and my attitudes, so I live in a self-justifying reality.
- ✓ When I get up on the wrong side of the bed, my day will be unpleasant.
- ✓ Whatever is my personal story, I reinforce my belief every time I tell it or remember it.
- ✓ "Tis nothing right or wrong but thinking makes it so—Shakespeare.

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