

Blinded Veteran Brothers and Sisters:

When I became legally blind about ten years ago, I began asking if the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) had anything written about coping skills that would help blinded veterans. When I received no answer for five years, I began to believe that if there were to be anything like that, maybe we should be the ones to create a guidebook. It took me several years to get my act together, learning to ask the right questions along with the tools to record responses during interviews. I have just published 32 awesome stories of blinded veterans coping, now available free at Amazon. Chapter One in this book describes the themes that emerged in these interviews.

However, during this pandemic, a high stress and anxiety-provoking time, I am offering a new overview to share, teach, and mentor specific stress management skills: tips, recipes, and practices gathered from a lifetime of both practice and teaching.

My primary aim is to reach my blinded veteran community and their caregivers, but I would like to offer help to the entire veteran community, especially our extended veteran caregiving community. With no end in sight, no medicine available, and no vaccines until next year, these are perilous times. This is not to mention the horrific examples of unjust police killings of our black brothers pointing to systemic racial injustice, thus fueling weeks of widespread protests.

I will address all aspects of well-being: body, mind, and spirit, and will call this project “Resilient Wellness.” Mentoring in skills for resilience has been my project for the past 40 years. In my **Resilience of a Dream Catcher**, (Amazon, 2012) I use some 30 chapters to unpack a resilience attitude in coping with three life traumas, including stage four metastatic cancer, now 28 years in remission and counting.

Brief background: I have practiced these skills personally and taught in professional consulting as a pastoral counselor, family therapist, and psychologist. In writing and in community-wide projects for 40 years. I am weeks away from my 91st birthday, still swimming two miles weekly, still being productive in helping blinded veterans cope, and still passionate about giving back.

Both of my recent books, **Living with Gratitude: Highways and Byways**, and **Blind Veterans Coping with Loss** are, in fact, outlines that can lead one to resilient wellness and successful stress management. The “Resilient Wellness” project distills those learnings into a timely stress management framework.

I am also pleased to offer several chapters by blinded veterans who have been involved in helping other blinded veterans, thus offering a unique perspective for the huge tasks facing us today.

So, please follow our “Resilient Wellness” project. We will be posting new content to this page regularly.

Yours in Service,

Paschal Baute

www.paschalbaute.com/resilience