Examining the relationship between personal values, interpersonal needs, and suicidal ideation in a Veteran population

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Suicide is a particularly pertinent issue among military Veterans. Research aimed at understanding factors contributing to increased risk for suicide in this population has been substantial, yet no studies have attempted to examine the influence of personal values on suicidality in the Veteran population.

Military Veterans share a distinct culture whose foundation rests on certain values and principles. For some, these values and principles continue to have a significant impact, long after their military service has ended.

Understanding the nature of these values and identifying ways in which these values can be applied to life outside of the military is essential in helping Veterans maintain a sense of purpose, efficacy, and connection to others.

Given the importance of values in contributing to a sense of purpose in life, research examining the relationship between values and various risk factors for suicide has several potential implications for the treatment of Veterans who may be struggling to identify or connect with reasons to continue living.

This observational study will examine the relationships between variables collected from the study measures.

The primary aim of this study is to examine if certain value dimensions (e.g., value importance and value success) are associated with suicidal ideation in a sample of U.S. Veterans.

This study will also explore whether or not certain value priorities (e.g., relationships, power, achievement) are significantly correlated with suicidal ideation and other potential risk factors for suicidality in a sample of U.S. Veterans.

Through this research we hope to understand which values (e.g., power, achievement, security) and value dimensions (e.g., importance, success) have the strongest impact on suicidality in this population.

This knowledge can be used to inform treatment, and may provide stronger support for the use of value-based interventions, such as acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) in the Veteran population.

We are currently recruiting and enrolling participants into this research study. We plan to begin data analysis soon.