

I. Introduction

1. Ground rules/Explanation of triads
2. Background of what will be covered during the groups
3. Participant/Moderator instructions
4. Information collected will be kept private to the extent of the law
 - a. Specifically emphasize personal identifiers will NOT be shared with anyone
5. Participant/Moderator introductions

II. What is “influence?”

To begin, everyone in this room has something in common tonight—you all have a close loved one who served in the United States military. And we’re going to be talking a bit more about that specifically later, but to begin...

6. Thinking about your loved one who served, what aspects of his/her life or your lives together do you have influence over?
 - a. What are some of the decisions that you’ve either made together, or given advice on?
 - b. Probe for:
 - i. Healthcare
 - ii. Insurance (and Estate Planning)
 - iii. Financial decisions
 - iv. Career/Job decisions
 - v. Educational decisions
7. And what role do you play with your loved one in these processes?
 - a. How did those conversations go?
8. [IF SPOUSE] How are decisions generally made in your household regarding health-related or financial matters? Walk me through that process.
9. Where do you and/or your loved one get information about these topics?
10. Are there certain things we just mentioned that are easier to talk about with your loved one who served than others?
 - a. Which are easy? Why?

- b. Which are hard(er)? Why?
 - c. What is the most difficult issue to talk about? How have you worked to overcome that barrier (if at all)? What was the FIRST STEP?
11. Give me an example of a time that you were able to “influence” your loved one to do something that related to health care, insurance, financial planning, or education?

III. VA Awareness and Association

Let’s talk a little about the Department of Veterans Affairs, or VA...

12. What do you know about the VA? What does the VA do? What does the VA offer?
13. What is your impression of the VA?
- a. Are they a *credible* provider of the benefits you just mentioned?
14. Has your loved one who served ever talked to you about the VA or the services they provide?
- a. If so, what did he/she say?
 - b. What VA benefits/services does your loved one use?
15. What other VA benefits/programs are you aware of?
- a. Probe list of benefits which includes: health care, life insurance, home loans, education and training, vocational rehabilitation, burial and memorial benefits, disability compensation, pension, benefits for dependents and survivors, transition assistance, prescription benefits
16. How did you get this information about the VA?
- a. Was it just based on what your loved one told you? Did you look on your own? Something/somewhere else?
17. Evaluate list of what the VA does—gauge reactions. How important/relevant do you think these are to your loved one as described?
18. Suppose you wanted to talk to your loved one about some of these benefits or services...
- a. Which ones would you want to mention?
 - b. And what would you say?
 - c. What kind of information or tools from the VA would help you to make the conversation easier? Why?

- d. How appropriate is it for the VA to communicate specifically to you, as a loved one of someone who has served?

IV. Other Sources of Influence

- 19. Aside from you—where else do you think your loved one goes to get information about these things we've just discussed?
 - a. Who else?
 - b. Where else?
- 20. And do you think [SOURCES OF INFLUENCE MENTIONED IN Q11] are more influential or less influential than you when it comes to your loved one making decisions?
 - a. Why do you say that?

V. Conclusion

- 21. Of all the things we've discussed and evaluated tonight—what stood out the most? Why?
- 22. Is there anything surrounding these issues tonight that we didn't talk about that you wish we had covered?
 - a. What is it, and why?
- 23. [Dismiss Respondents]
 - a. If there is another group ask them to refrain from discussing until they get outside so next group can come in fresh