

Associate Facilitators:

Anthony D. Allen, MDiv, BCC



is a Mental Health Chaplain Clinician with the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System. He is a NAVAC Board-Certified Chaplain and graduate of the Mental Health Integration for Chaplain Services program. He holds a B.S. in Business Management and a Master of Divinity, and is a lifetime member of the Church of God in Christ. Anthony retired from the Army Chaplain Corps after serving 27 years in the U.S. Army.

Scott Bennion, MDiv, WHC, BCCC, BCPC



served in the military for 13 years and is currently a Clinical Chaplain at the Phoenix VA Medical Center. Scott is also an ordained minister in private practice as a Board-Certified Pastoral Counselor, a Spiritual Director (Companion), and Whole Health Coach. He is currently pursuing a Doctor of Ministry degree with an emphasis on the integration of spirituality and mental health. Scott's participation is supported by the Phoenix VA Chaplain Service.

Joel Larson, MDiv, MAHS, BCC



is Aurora Behavioral Health System's Manager of Chaplain Services. He retired from the Arizona National Guard as the Senior Chaplain Assistant after serving for 20 years, including a deployment to Mosul, Iraq. Joel has worked as a mobile crisis therapist for EMPACT- SPC and also facilitates the Crosier Community's veteran healing program called CrossWalk.

Graciela Marroquin, BA, MSW



served 14 years in the military in the U.S. Navy, Army & National Guard and was deployed to Baghdad, Iraq as a combat-medical. Graciela is currently conducting post-graduate work towards a doctoral degree in clinical psychology, with an emphasis on trauma, stress, resiliency and moral conflict/injury. She is the Program Manager for the Healing of Memories Workshop for Healthcare Workers, and a Lead Facilitator for the Healing of Memories Workshop for Veterans.

Chris Melvin, BS, MDiv



has served in USAF and the U.S. Army for the past 24 years and now serves as a Senior Army Chaplain with the Arizona Army National Guard. He has been deployed on two combat tours to Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa as an Army Chaplain. Chris is a graduate of the Mental Health Integration for Chaplain Services (MHICS) VA/DoD program and is actively involved in relationship retreats, counseling, as well as Moral Injury and PTS work.

José Olagues, BA, MBA, MDiv



served in the U.S. Army as an Administration Instructor. He finished his BA and spent his early years teaching high school, then received an MBA and worked in the corporate world. He later obtained a Master's degree in Divinity and became an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church-U.S.A. He is also a Facilitator for the Healing of Memories Workshop for Veterans.

Troy Parson, MDiv, DMin, BCC (APC & NAVAC)



now serves as a Clinical Chaplain at the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System. Troy served in the U.S. Army for 20+ years as Military Police and an Infantry Chaplain, of which included deployments across the globe. His doctorate research was "Efficacy of Pastoral Interventions with Inpatients Diagnosed with PTSD," focusing on moral injury with active-duty patients.

Steve Wales, BS, MC, LPC, RYT-500



served as an Officer in the U.S. Navy from 1962 to 1965 on a destroyer based at Pearl Harbor. He is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Yoga Instructor, Certified Sound Healer and Yoga Nidra Facilitator. He worked with veterans at MANA House for many years. He also volunteers at the Counseling Ministry at the Franciscan Renewal Center and is a member of their Casa Veterans Ministry.



The purpose of the Casa Veterans Ministry is to respond to the spiritual and emotional needs of service members, veterans and their families offering a welcoming and compassionate environment.



Franciscan Renewal Center

Peace. Renewal. Good.

Nestled in the lush desert valley at the base of Camelback Mountain in Scottsdale, Arizona, the Franciscan Renewal Center (also known as "The Casa") is a unique and engaging venue. With comfortable sleeping accommodations, flexible meeting spaces, and exceptional food, the Casa nourishes the body, inspires the mind and soothes the spirit. For close to 70 years, the Franciscan Renewal Center has been renewing lives through spiritual growth, healing and transformation, and service to others.

5802 East Lincoln Drive
Scottsdale, Arizona 85253
480.948.7460 phone
800.356.3247 toll free

thecasa.org

All Are Welcome

Franciscan Renewal Center

The Casa Veterans Ministry at the Franciscan Renewal Center has been vetted and approved by the Arizona Coalition for Military Families and received the Copper Eagle Award from the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Society in 2019 for its efforts to help our veterans heal from their wounds of service.

Building Spiritual Strength:

A Program for U.S. Service Members,
Veterans and Phoenix-Tucson
VA Healthcare Workers

October – November 2023

Franciscan Renewal Center
5802 East Lincoln Drive
Scottsdale, Arizona 85253

"I just wanted to tell you how meaningful this program has been to me. The material was powerful, but it was also your leadership that took it to a much deeper level."



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What is Building Spiritual Strength?

Building Spiritual Strength is an eight (8) week integrated group process led by trained facilitators designed to support veterans and active-duty service members as they explore their spirituality in a safe, non-judgmental manner, while honoring the participants' faith tradition and practices.

Building Spiritual Strength has been found to be helpful for veterans and service members, many of whom come from a variety of faith backgrounds and who may suffer from moral injury or spiritual distress. Many may have wandered in and out of various spiritual practices, or may be interested, or are being moved, to explore their spirituality more fully.

Who Should Attend?

Building Spiritual Strength is open to U.S. military veterans and active-duty service members who have been referred to us by a peer counselor, mental health professional from a Vet Center, VA psychologist or social worker, or a military chaplain.

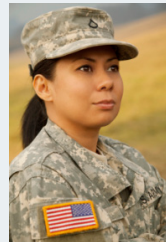
In partnership with the Phoenix and Southern Arizona VA Healthcare Systems, *Building Spiritual Strength* is open for VA Healthcare workers to participate. This recognizes their close relationship with our veteran population, as well as help them to move through any spiritual distress or moral injury they have faced over the last three years due to the COVID pandemic.

In addition, potential applicants will engage in a phone interview with a mental health professional to determine their suitability for the program. This screen will include a review on one's current PTSD status, medication review, substance use review, safety concerns and ability to socially interact appropriately in a group setting.

It is helpful (but not required) if one has already attended a healing retreat or veteran wellness program similar to those offered at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, AZ, the Spirit of the Desert Retreat Center in Carefree, Arizona or the National Veterans Wellness and Healing Center in Angel Fire, NM, or one has participated in a program such as Honor House or Veterans First in Phoenix, AZ.

Empirically Supported and Sanctioned by the Veterans Administration and the Department of Defense.

Building Spiritual Strength is an empirically supported program developed by Dr. Irene Harris, Ph.D., L.P. and Rev. Tim Usset, MDiv, MPH at the Minneapolis VA Health Care System. *Building Spiritual Strength* is in use by the Veterans Administration, Vet Centers, and the Department of Defense.



The program has been slightly modified, with the authors' approval, for an on-line delivery by the Casa Veterans Ministry at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Arizona.

General Information

The program is FREE of charge. Two groups will meet two (2) hours each week for eight (8) weeks as follows:

- **Mondays from 6-8 pm** on October 2, 9, 16, 30; November 6, 13, 20, and 27.
- **Thursdays from 6-8 pm** on October 5, 12, 19, 26; November 2, 9, 16, and 30.

Participation at **all** sessions is required, along with completion of weekly assignments. Each group will be composed of 4 to 6 veterans, service members, and VA healthcare workers. They will be accompanied by two facilitators; a mental health professional; and a clergy, spiritual director, or military chaplain.

Sessions are conducted online using a computer, laptop or tablet. A strong internet connection is a **MUST** (cell phone use not recommended). Sessions will be conducted using both audio and video via Zoom.

*"I cannot be more appreciative. The course helped me achieve goals that I was not able to accomplish myself for 6 or 7 years. I could not get results on my own. **THANK YOU!**"*

To Register

To register, or for more information, please contact Linda MacLeish at macleishlinda@gmail.com. The deadline to register is **FRIDAY, September 22, 2023**.

Please note: This program is not psychotherapy, nor is it suitable for those who may be seeking therapy for their wounds of war.



Lead Facilitator:

Linda MacLeish, BS, MC, LPC, RYT is a Licensed Professional Counselor and Yoga Instructor. She has been involved in the treatment of trauma using mind-body-spirit approaches for many years. She is a member of the

Casa Veterans Ministry, the Casa Counseling Ministry, and created/coordinates several veteran retreats and workshops. She was raised in a military family, was a military wife and is able to integrate those experiences into her work.