

# Hope for the Future: Career Counseling for Military Personnel and Veterans with Disabilities



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# Outline of Presentation

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- ◉ Introduction
- ◉ Issues within Military Population
- ◉ Connection to Career Counseling
- ◉ Intersection of Disabilities and Career Counseling
- ◉ Cognitive Information Processing Approach
- ◉ Application of CIP in Assisting Veterans with Disabilities

# Introduction

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- Program Director of Career Advising, Counseling, and Programming
  - Florida State University Career Center
- Experience Working with Active-Duty Military and Veterans with Physical and/or Psychological Issues
  - Career and Personal Counseling
  - PTSD as well as Traumatic Brain Injury
  - Adjustment

# Issues within Military Population

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- Roughly 1.7 million troops deployed to Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF; Berger, 2010).
- Recent engagements unique in that psychological wounds of war outstrip physical injuries related to military experience (Sammons & Batten, 2008).

# Issues within Military Population

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- Between 19 and 38% of recently returning veterans report having emotional difficulties (Katz, Cojucar, Davenport, Pedram, & Lindl, 2010).
- As many as 20% of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans and 27% of Vietnam veterans suffer from some form of invisible wound of war, e.g., PTSD or Military Sexual Trauma (Tanielian & Jaycox, 2008).

# Issues within the Military Population

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- Traumatic brain injury (TBI) - signature wound of these conflicts (Bagalman, 2011).
- High numbers of active duty military and veterans with various injuries such as loss of limbs, blindness, hearing loss, and disfigurement (Marchione, 2012).



# Connection to Career Counseling

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- Potential reorganization of one's life related to career.
  - Can I continue doing what I was doing before?
  - Will I be able to stay in the military?
- Often veterans entered military just after high school and have not learned the skills necessary to successfully engage the civilian job market (Clemens & Milsom, 2008).

# Connection to Career Counseling

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- Found to have a tangible benefit for those with TBI (Keyser-Marcus, Bricout, Wehman et al., 2002).
- Addressing career issues often reduces depression, likelihood of substance abuse, and other secondary deleterious outcomes (Wehman, Targett, West, & Kregel, 2005).

# Cognitive Information Processing

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- Help clients make an appropriate current career choice and in the process, learn improved problem-solving and decision-making skills which can be utilized in future choices (Sampson, Reardon, Peterson, & Lenz, 2004).
- Examines the “knowing” and “doing” associated with career problem solving and decision making
  - “Knowing” - Pyramid of Information Processing
  - “Doing” - CASVE Cycle

# Metaphor for Career Decisions

<u>Recipe for Career Decisions</u>	
<u>Ingredients</u>	<u>Steps</u>
1. Knowledge about myself	1. Realize I need to make a choice
2. Knowing my options	2. Make sure I understand myself and my options
3. Knowing how I make decisions	3. Expand & narrow my options (as needed)
4. Thinking about my decision making	4. Choose an occupation or field of study
	5. Implement my choice
<u>Knowing</u>	<u>Doing</u>

**Recipes**

**Recipes**

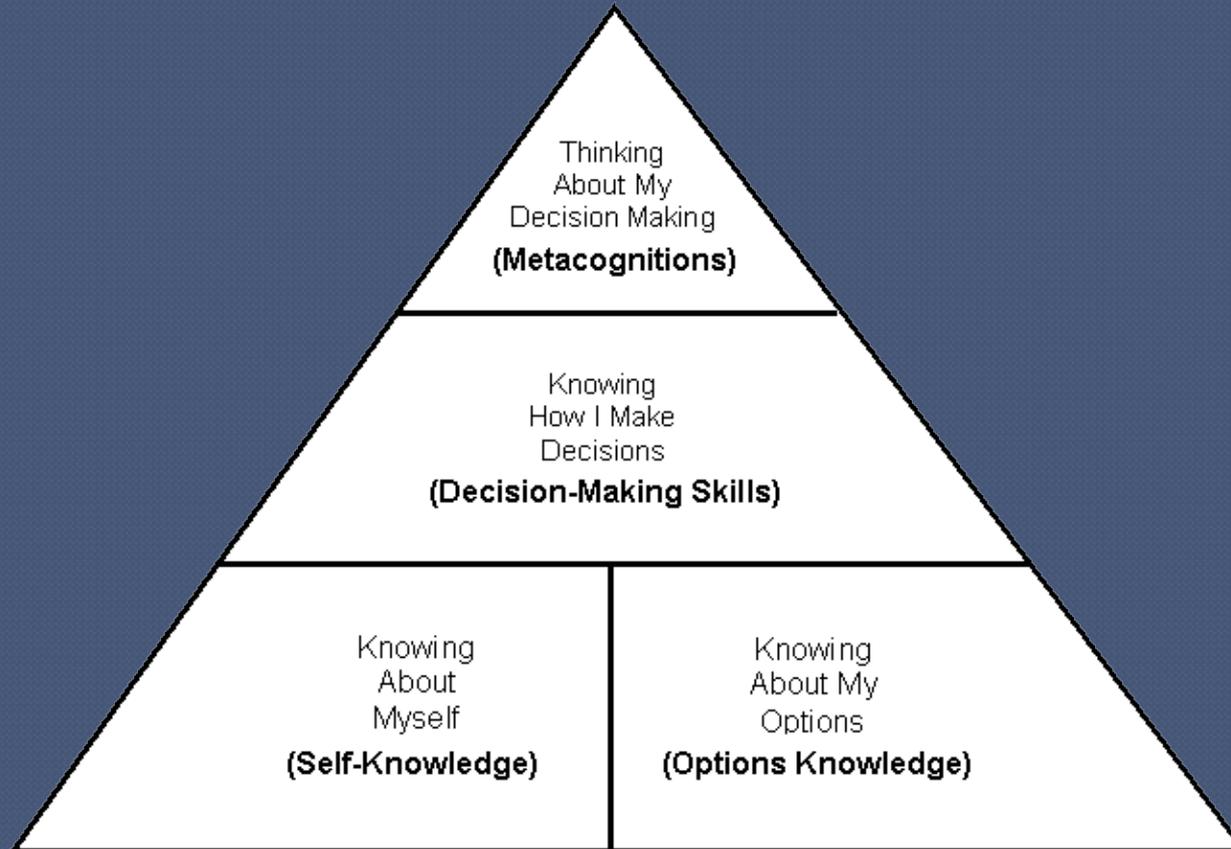
# Cognitive Information Processing

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- Cognitive-Behavioral in nature
- Focus on career problem solving and decision making process
- Assess readiness--adapt interventions to client needs
- Expand knowledge of self, options, and decision-making
- Intended to empower client to effectively engage in career problem solving and decision making

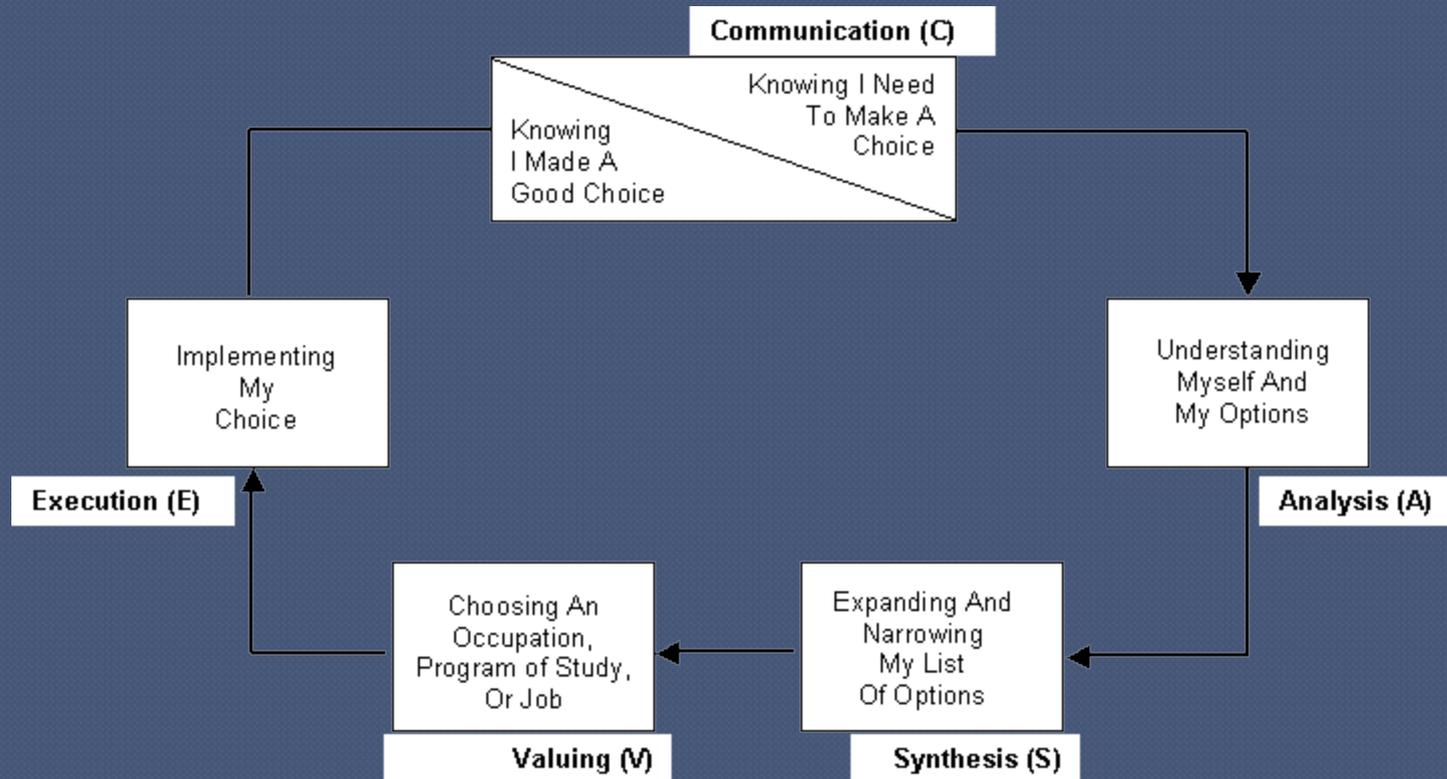
(Sampson, Reardon, Peterson, & Lenz, 2004)

# Pyramid of Information Processing



Adapted from: Sampson, J. P., Jr., Peterson, G. W., Lenz, J. G., & Reardon, R. C. (1992). A cognitive approach to career services: Translating concepts into practice. *Career Development Quarterly*, 41, 67-74. Copyright © National Career Development Association. Used with permission.

# CASVE Cycle



Adapted from: Sampson, J. P., Jr., Peterson, G. W., Lenz, J. G., & Reardon, R. C. (1992). A cognitive approach to career services: Translating concepts into practice. *Career Development Quarterly*, 41, 67-74. Copyright © National Career Development Association. Used with permission.

# CIP - Readiness

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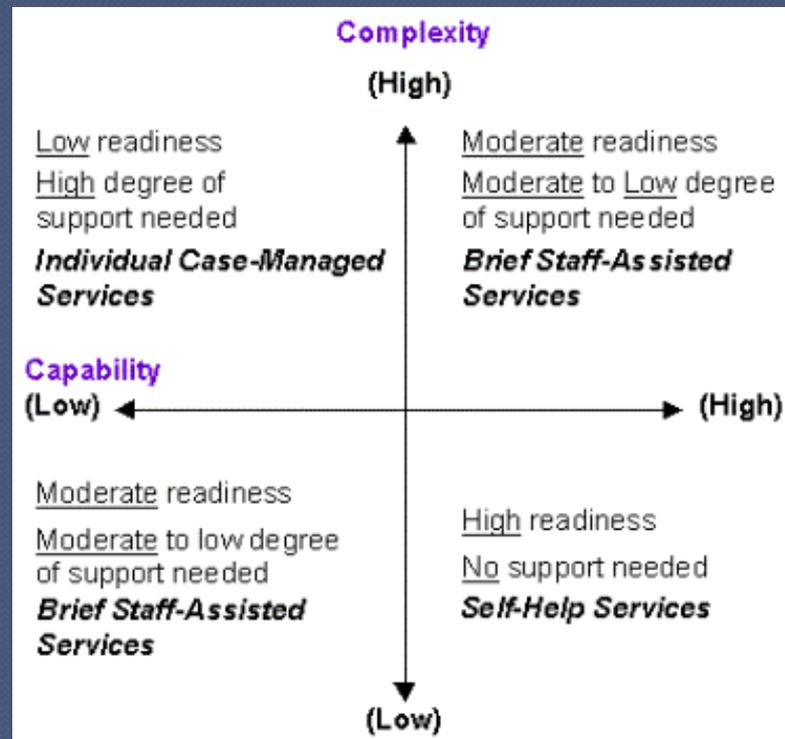
- Important to assess readiness for career decision making.
- *Capability* - refers to the cognitive and affective capacity to engage in effective career problem-solving and decision-making (Sampson, Reardon, Peterson, & Lenz, 2004).

# CIP - Readiness

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- *Complexity* – contextual factors originating in various areas (e.g., family, society, economy, etc.)
- These factors make it more difficult (or less difficult) to process information necessary to solve career problems and make career decisions (Sampson, Reardon, Peterson, & Lenz, 2004).

# CIP - Readiness



Reprinted with permission from Sampson, J. P., Jr., Peterson, G. W., Reardon, R. C., & Lenz, J. G. (2000). Using readiness assessment to improve career services: A cognitive information processing approach. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 49, 146-174. Copyright National Career Development Association.

# CIP - Veterans

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- There has been discussion of the connection between CIP and veterans (Bullock, Braud, Andrews, & Phillips, 2009; Clemens & Milson, 2008; Phillips, Braud, Andrews, & Bullock, 2007).
- Negative career thinking found to be associated with negative factors: lower satisfaction, emotional stability, higher career worries (Bullock et al, 2009).

# Assessments

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## *Career Thoughts Inventory (CTI)*

- ***Assessment***
  - (Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders, 1996; 1998)
- ***Workbook***
  - (Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders, 1996)
- Measure of dysfunctional thinking in career problem solving and decision making
- ***Single global indicator of dysfunctional thinking*** in career problem solving and decision making.
- Subscales of Construct scores include ***Decision-Making Confusion***, ***Commitment Anxiety***, and ***External Conflict***

# Assessments

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## ***Self-Directed Search – Form R***

(SDS; Holland, 1994)

- self-administered, self-scored, and self- interpreted vocational counseling tool.
- one of the most widely used interest inventories (Spokane & Holland, 1995)
- SDS Interpretive Report (Reardon & PAR Staff, 1994)

## ***Additional Assessments***

- Decision Space Worksheet (Peterson, Leasure, Carr & Lenz, 2010), Card Sorts, Computer Assisted Guidance Systems, Etc.

# CIP Application

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- Important to deal with negative thinking
  - If negative metacognitions are present, everything else can be difficult
    - Career Thoughts Inventory (Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders, 1996; 1998)
- Veterans with disabilities often receive messages related to limitations associated with changes in functionality
  - Continual treatment can focus on deficits

# CIP Application

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## 1.) Establish working alliance

- Civilian provider
  - Need to be knowledgeable of military culture

## 2.) Assess readiness for career decision-making

- Complexity/Capability

## 3.) Develop Individual Career Learning Plan

- Analogous to Individual Transition Plan
- Co-construct goals and activities; connect the two
- Intermediate/Long-term Career Goals

# Individual Learning Plan

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Goal: #1: Determine marketable skills associated with military experience

Goal: #2: Enhance understanding of options related to interests, values, and skills

Goal: #3: Determine job options in civilian work related to helicopter pilots.

Activity	Purpose/Outcome	Estimated Time Commitment	Goal #
Transferable Skills Sheet	Determine transferable skills	1 hour	1
Complete interest inventory	Find jobs that match interests	1 hour	2
I will speak with doctor related to status of being medically discharged.	Learn if I will continue to be able to be active duty or enter civilian work force	2 hours	1, 3
Research options related to interests and skills	Find tangible opportunities tied to values and ability	4 hours	2,3

# CIP Application

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4.) Track progress on various activities

- Continually assess negative thinking

5.) Expand knowledge of self, options, and decision-making process

6.) Process CASVE Cycle and progress moving through the phases

7.) Conclude - client demonstrates ability to effectively navigate through career problem-solving and decision-making process with functional thoughts and emotions associated with the process.

# CIP Application

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- ⦿ While it can be important, obtaining work often seen as panacea for veterans with disabilities.
  - Focus on skills associated with career decision making and problem solving
- ⦿ Veterans with disabilities encounter several transitions within their lives.
  - Career, familial, social, etc.
  - Culture shock (Buzzetta & Rowe, 2012)

# Final Thoughts

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- ◉ View disability or injury as an experience as opposed to identity
- ◉ Focus on current and future skills
  - Rehabilitation on a continuum.
- ◉ Collaborate with fellow service providers to coordinate efforts
- ◉ Be sure to consider level of functionality and readiness when constructing ILPs

# Final Thoughts

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- Emphasize the client as the mechanism of growth related to career decision making and problem solving.
- While considering process and future decision making, still important to determine time-frame of current decision.
- If married, consider familial consultation to triangulate effort
  - TBI – issues with memory, perceptions

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