



Starting Your Vet Life Community

All leadership and life coaches must be veterans (for family meetings, family members of veterans may be life coaches). Positions are volunteer positions. Below is an outline of steps to initiate a Vet Life Community (VLC).

First ...

1. Establish Vet Life Team
2. Structure Your Community
3. Receive Program
4. Complete Life Coach/ Program Director Training
5. Install, Register and become familiar with Software

1 - Establish Vet Life Team – Although a team of three is recommended, it is possible for one person to assume 2 of these roles. *It is not recommended that one person assume all three roles.* The leadership team should be a “team” with at least two members. All members of the leadership team must complete both Life Coach and Program Director training.

- **Administrative/ Program Director** - Manage the assessment software. This position will schedule and direct weekly community meetings. May also act as a life coach.
- **Life Coach Coordinator** – Appoints or advertises for Life Coaches. Should be available to train, advise, direct and support the Life Coaches as necessary. This person will also act as a Life Coach.
- **Community Outreach Coordinator** - Responsibilities include community relationships, outreach and events, program advertising and promotion, advertising for clients (veterans and family members) and fundraising for your local Vet Life Community.

2 – Community Structure– Unless you are planning to establish your community as an outreach of an existing non-profit organization or through a church, you will need to apply online to create a new organization for the purpose of securing a tax ID number and then setting up a checking account. You may wish to set it up as an [unincorporated association](#), limited liability company, or as a corporation. *If, however, you are working through an already established organization, or church, as an outreach then this step will not be necessary.*

3 - Receive Complete Vet Life Program – Please complete the online application first so that we know how to contact you and where to mail your training materials. After your application is received we will call you for a telephone interview.

After your telephone interview, select materials to be purchased. All VLC Programs include the Life Coach Training materials plus materials you select for your Vet Life Community. You may wish to begin with materials for male or female veterans only then add other veterans, family members or youth materials.

Donations cover cost of materials, initial tech support and training. Shipping is free. You may receive refills separately, as necessary.

In order to use the online training materials you will need to create a free account on our website. Go to **“My Account”** on our home page, and create your account. Also, after your telephone interview, a new tab will appear on the menu at the top of the website when you are logged in. (**Member Resources**)



After confirming your account and order we will send your Life Coach Training materials plus your Step By Step Journals.

For new Communities that are not near an established Vet Life Community, leaders will need to be trained by Life Renewed Staff. The Quality of Life Assessment Software download is included in the *Complete Vet Life Program*, and found on the Member Resources tab.

Donation costs are not to be passed on to veterans attending meetings; meetings and services are to be at no cost to veterans and their families seeking help; however, members may donate to Vet Life Communities.

4 - Complete Program Director / Life Coach Training to Become Certified - After your account is confirmed, a “Member Resources” tab will appear on the Menu at the top of the Home page. Click on the Member Resources tab. You will need to look at the *Life Renewed Life Coach Training* and the *Vet Life Community Program Director Training*. (If you are setting up a new Vet Life Community without the aid of another Certified Vet Life Community Program Director, a Life Renewed Staff member will go through the videos with you.) At the conclusion of these videos, you will need to complete the Life Coach Certification Test and pass with a score of 80% or above. You will be assigned a mutually convenient time and take your Life Coach Certification Test remotely with one of our staff. Those with a score of 80% or above will then be emailed a Life Coach Certificate with your own personal certification number. *Upon completion all Program Directors and Life Coaches must sign a confidentiality agreement and newly established VLCs must sign an Affiliation Charter.*

5 - Install and Register Software – Upon completion of the Life Coach Certification Test, your new Vet Life Community will be emailed a Software Registration. Instructions for download and registration of software, as well as a software tutorial, are on the Member Resources Tab on the website menu. Our staff will be available to assist with the download and registration if necessary.

Second...

1. Meet with your Vet Life Leadership Team to plan.
2. Find a place to hold weekly meetings.
3. Hold a Community Information meeting to gain local community support.
4. Recruit and Train a sufficient number of Life Coaches to meet the needs of your VLC.

1 - Meet with Leadership Team to establish a timeline for your Community meetings. Decide who will be responsible for completing certain tasks: 1) Community outreach and media; 2) Training and supervision of life coaches; 3) Coaching Veterans 4) Administrative details.

2 – Find a Meeting Place - Many churches or community centers will allow you to hold weekly meetings at no cost.

3- Community Information Meeting - *Before beginning the program, your Community Outreach Coordinator should hold a meeting to familiarize your Town/City leaders and citizens with the program to secure support. At this meeting explain your purpose and what you are offering. This meeting could be a private meeting of town/city leaders and interested citizens (by invitation), or it could be a public town meeting. Invitations / Advertising for the meeting should be done ahead of time. Local community support will be a valuable asset to your Vet Life Community.*

4 - Recruit and Train Life Coaches After your initial Program Director training, your Community will be responsible for recruiting and training enough life coaches to accommodate the veterans who need coaching. Materials are available on the Operation Not Forgotten website that will assist you in training new Life Coaches (see Training Videos on Member Resources Tab). Printed manuals for you to begin your meetings are included in the *Complete Vet Life Program*.

Third ...

1. Recruit Program Participants
2. Hold initial weekly meetings
3. Assign Life Coaches to participants
4. Life Coaches set up appointments with participants

1 - Recruit Program Participants. Send emails or flyers, post notices or advertise in local newspapers to recruit participants. Word of mouth is also good. Let friends invite friends. Many contacts may be made from the Community Information Meeting before the program actually begins.

2 - Hold Initial Vet Life Community Meetings. During the first meetings veterans may come to meetings out of curiosity. The timeline for participants to feel safe enough to begin with the Step By Step Journal, or the MAPS™ Life Coaching program varies. Some may want to just attend meetings for awhile. While participants should be encouraged to be involved, there should be no specific timeline to begin the Step By Step Journal or the MAPS™ Life Coaching Program. These should both be offered, but the desire to work on the Step By Step or to receive coaching should come from the veteran or family member.

What Should The First Vet Life Community Meetings Look Like?

Your first meeting with the veterans should follow these guidelines:

1. Following a brief introduction by the Program Director, each meeting is opened by reading the *Vet Life Community Meeting Guidelines* aloud. This will help set the ground rules for the meeting. It is important that everyone abide by these rules. Those who are unwilling, or unable, to follow these

guidelines should be taken aside for a personal discussion with a life coach. Briefly introduce the brochure and point out the website. Make sure everyone knows about the free online assessment.

2. Anyone who is obviously intoxicated or causing a disturbance should be taken aside discreetly, or asked to leave.
3. After reading the guidelines, the Program Director, or one of the life coaches may share his/her story. Questions such as *“What are some of the greatest challenges you faced coming home?”*, or *“How did things at home change while you were deployed?”* may be asked to start discussions. Additional questions can be pulled from the Step By Step Journal.
4. Everyone is allowed to share in the discussion. This meeting belongs to the group.
5. You may want to break for refreshments, or be free to get refreshments during the discussions.
6. If the group is large (more than 20 people), you may want to break into small groups for discussion. A life coach should be present in each group.
7. Meeting should last no more than 90 minutes. The meeting should be dismissed after 90 minutes by the Program Director.
8. After the meeting (in the next few days) the Program Director and the Life Coaches should meet to assess the quality of the meeting, and discuss what might make the meeting run more effectively. Notes (no names) should be taken to remember the number of participants and any interesting events.

3 - Assign Participants to Life Coaches. After the first couple of meetings, there will be some who want to proceed with the *Vet Life Step By Step*, or who would like to begin the MAPS™ program with a Life Coach. Assign Life Coaches on an individual basis taking into consideration needs and personalities.

4 - Life Coaches set up appointments with participants. Coaches set up mutually convenient times and places for coaching to take place. Coaches review assessment results and help the participant set goals. Goals and Measureable Steps should be recorded in the *Vet Life Journal*. The *Vet Life Step By Step* can be worked on with or without a coach.

Even after your Vet Life Community is up and running, it is important for the Leadership Team to continue meeting, and to also meet regularly with life coaches to receive feedback and discuss issues.



Complete Vet Life Program

Printed Supplies For Vet Life Community Meetings and Life Coaching

All Programs include:

Life Coach Training Guide

Life Coach Workbook

Please select one or more programs:

- Vet Life Step By Step for Men Veterans
- Vet Life Step By Step for Women Veterans
- Vet Life Step By Step for Families
- Vet Life Step By Step for Youth and
Vet Life Youth Coordinator's Guide

UNLIMITED ACCESS to Online Leadership Resources for Vet Life Communities

Quality of Life Assessment (Life Coach Version)

Quality of Life Assessment Tutorial Video

Quality of Life Assessment Profile

Life Renewed Life Coach Training Video

Vet Life Community Program Director Training Video

Vet Life Youth Volunteer Training Video and Printable Workbook

Vet Life Meeting Guidelines

UNLIMITED ACCESS to Promotional Materials For Community Involvement

Vet Life Community Meeting Video (to promote community involvement)

Vet Life Community Parent Orientation Video (for Youth Program)

Your meetings dates and times listed on our website

Vet Life Community Call to Action