

# VETS TOWN HALL

**It takes courage to stand up and speak.**

**It also takes courage to sit down and listen.**



Veterans of any era who served in any capacity are invited to stand before their community and speak for up to ten minutes about what it was like to serve their country.

Non-veterans are encouraged to attend and listen.

This event is non-political, and all perspectives are valued.

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There will be no question-and-answer period or debate on American foreign policy.

We will simply listen and learn about what it was like to serve in the wars that this nation has chosen to fight.

Vets Town Halls were originated by author Sebastian Junger (*War, Tribe*) with the aim of increasing communication and understanding between veterans and civilians in their communities.

**Not local to this event? Visit [vetstownhall.org](http://vetstownhall.org) to find or start a VTH in your area.**

# VETS TOWN HALL

**At a Vets Town Hall event, veterans of any era who served in any capacity have the right to stand before their community and speak for up to ten minutes about what it was like to serve their country.**

## The Concept

Some speakers may be proud, others may be angry and a few may be crying too hard to speak. But those feelings should be processed by the entire nation, rather than just by veterans themselves. Vets Town Hall events are a way to start making that happen.

This is not a political event. War is an inherently divisive topic, but the important conversation around how and when our nation goes to war has no place in a Vets Town Hall.

There are no “activists” or “patriots” at these events; no “liberals” or “conservatives.” There are just veterans who are willing to speak openly about their experiences, and community members who are willing to listen. Do not underestimate the incredible power of that process.

## Why a Vets Town Hall?

For most of human history, trauma was both experienced and processed in groups – family, village, tribe. As a result, humans are amazingly resilient when part of a community, and amazingly fragile when they are not.

In today’s America, servicemen and women are often more connected to each other than to the very families and communities they fought for.

Any stone age society knows that if you send warriors off to fight an enemy, you had better make sure to reincorporate them back into the community when they come home. But how can this be done in a huge, modern society? Simple – one community at a time. —Sebastian Junger

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