

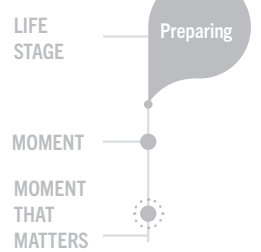
SURVIVOR JOURNEY MAP

This Journey Map highlights nine 'life stages' Survivors may encounter, from preparing with their Veteran to the end of their own life. The 'moments that matter' that are aligned to the life stages are experiences Survivors have that stand out to them and others. Similar to Veterans, not all Survivors are the same but there are a broad set of shared moments many Survivors will encounter. Different Survivor personas based on cause of death, relationship, and life experience will all alter the way a Survivor experiences and navigates these moments in their own varied and disparate ways. Using this journey as a guide to organize and align around, VA can plan for and design better experiences for our Veteran's Survivors.

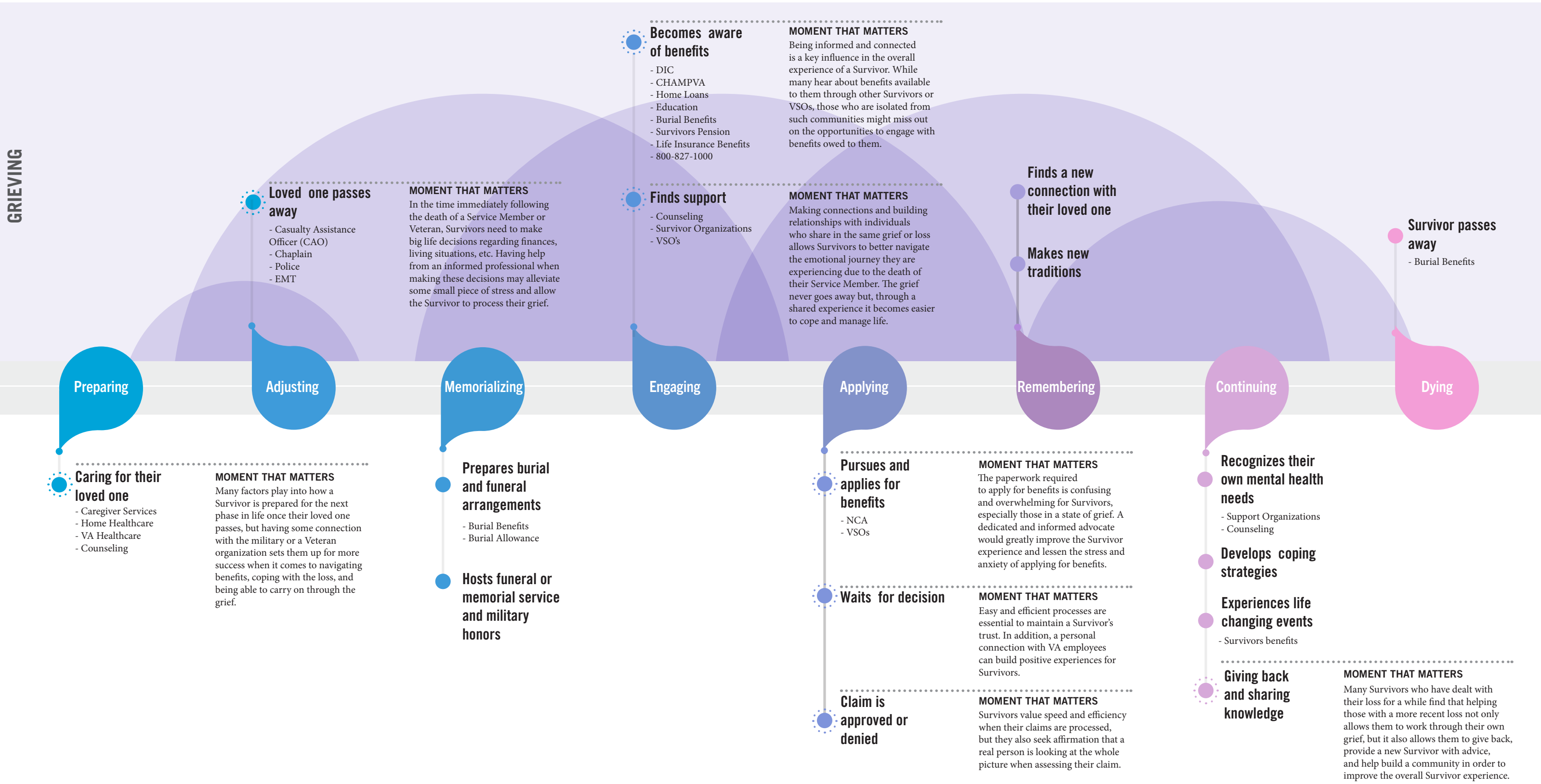
ACRONYMS

- VSO Veteran Service Organization
- CVSO County Veteran Service Office(r)
- CAO Casualty Assistance Officer
- DIC Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

LEGEND



GRIEVING



Preparing

Caring for their loved one

- Caregiver Services
- Home Healthcare
- VA Healthcare
- Counseling

MOMENT THAT MATTERS

Many factors play into how a Survivor is prepared for the next phase in life once their loved one passes, but having some connection with the military or a Veteran organization sets them up for more success when it comes to navigating benefits, coping with the loss, and being able to carry on through the grief.

Adjusting

Loved one passes away

- Casualty Assistance Officer (CAO)
- Chaplain
- Police
- EMT

MOMENT THAT MATTERS

In the time immediately following the death of a Service Member or Veteran, Survivors need to make big life decisions regarding finances, living situations, etc. Having help from an informed professional when making these decisions may alleviate some small piece of stress and allow the Survivor to process their grief.

Memorializing

Prepares burial and funeral arrangements

- Burial Benefits
- Burial Allowance

Hosts funeral or memorial service and military honors

Engaging

Becomes aware of benefits

- DIC
- CHAMPVA
- Home Loans
- Education
- Burial Benefits
- Survivors Pension
- Life Insurance Benefits
- 800-827-1000

MOMENT THAT MATTERS

Being informed and connected is a key influence in the overall experience of a Survivor. While many hear about benefits available to them through other Survivors or VSOs, those who are isolated from such communities might miss out on the opportunities to engage with benefits owed to them.

Finds support

- Counseling
- Survivor Organizations
- VSO's

MOMENT THAT MATTERS

Making connections and building relationships with individuals who share in the same grief or loss allows Survivors to better navigate the emotional journey they are experiencing due to the death of their Service Member. The grief never goes away but, through a shared experience it becomes easier to cope and manage life.

Applying

Pursues and applies for benefits

- NCA
- VSOs

MOMENT THAT MATTERS

The paperwork required to apply for benefits is confusing and overwhelming for Survivors, especially those in a state of grief. A dedicated and informed advocate would greatly improve the Survivor experience and lessen the stress and anxiety of applying for benefits.

Waits for decision

MOMENT THAT MATTERS

Easy and efficient processes are essential to maintain a Survivor's trust. In addition, a personal connection with VA employees can build positive experiences for Survivors.

Claim is approved or denied

MOMENT THAT MATTERS

Survivors value speed and efficiency when their claims are processed, but they also seek affirmation that a real person is looking at the whole picture when assessing their claim.

Remembering

Finds a new connection with their loved one

Makes new traditions

Continuing

Recognizes their own mental health needs

- Support Organizations
- Counseling

Develops coping strategies

Experiences life changing events

- Survivors benefits

Giving back and sharing knowledge

MOMENT THAT MATTERS

Many Survivors who have dealt with their loss for a while find that helping those with a more recent loss not only allows them to work through their own grief, but it also allows them to give back, provide a new Survivor with advice, and help build a community in order to improve the overall Survivor experience.

Survivor passes away

- Burial Benefits

PREPARING

MOMENTS DIRECTLY AFTER DEATH

APPLYING FOR AND UTILIZING BENEFITS

THE NEW NORMAL