

## What Does an American Veteran Mean to Me?

### A·mer-i·can

Pronunciation [uh-**mer**-i-kuhn]

**-adjective**

1. Of or pertaining to the United States of America or its inhabitants: *an American citizen.*

### vet·er·an

Pronunciation [**vet**-er-uhn, **ve**-truhn]

**-noun**

1. A person who has had long service or experience in an occupation, office, or the like: *a veteran of the police force; a veteran of war.*

Shown above is the official definition of an American veteran. However, these words do not even begin to describe the meaning of an American veteran to me.

When many people think about American veterans, they think only of old men. Men, like my grandfather, that you might see sitting at the coffee shop, eating doughnuts and exchanging old war stories, are obviously veterans. The thing that most do not realize is that veterans can come in all shapes and sizes. The middle-aged father at the supermarket could be a veteran. Women can be veterans. Those who have survived a war are not the only type of veterans either. They are all different; however, they are all brave.

Veterans have to be extremely strong. Surviving in a war, would take immense mental and physical strength. I can't imagine risking my life for my country, whether as a firefighter, police officer, or soldier. That would take more pride and courage, than I can even fathom.

Veterans also have to have an extreme sense of persistence, and a positive work ethic. They must be able to overcome difficult situations to reach a common goal, and use hard work to get there. Also, veterans must be able to work as a team. As soldiers, firefighters, or officers, they must become a sort of family, and act like one as well.

There is one thing that I learned from my father concerning veterans. Always thank them when you see them. Our constitution promises freedom of religion, the right to bear arms, the right to a fair and speedy trial, protection against unreasonable searches, and many more. I love the endless freedoms that I have. People in other countries do not always have these freedoms, and I have my American veterans to thank for giving them to me.

Definition Source: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/veteran>  
<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/american>

Tilyn Bell  
St. Francis Community High School  
P.O. Box 1110  
St. Francis, KS 67756  
Teacher-- Mrs. Gibson

367 words