

The Military: Is The Military Good for You?

My Grandfather was in the American Army. My father was in the American Army. My brothers were in the American Army, and, *yes*, I was in the American Army.

I *hated* the Army. Many people do. Now, though, it's years later and I think the Army was a good experience for me. Some people think that sending a 'trouble' kid (that's a nice way of saying a 'bad kid') to the military is a good way to 'make a man out of him.' (And that's a nice way to say: the military will teach him to do what he's told, and to behave.) I don't know if that's true.

For me, the Army was good in two ways. First, even when I hated it, I liked knowing that I was doing a lot of the same things that my grandfather had done. When I was little, my grandfather was a hero of mine, and I liked the connection to him.

Second, as a bookworm, I wasn't a very 'active' person before I joined the Army. But, in the Army, I learned to push myself in a way that only athletes do. And, even more, I learned to work as a part of a team, and to do difficult jobs, even if I didn't want to.

Later, in college or in my first jobs, it was good for me to have been in the Army. Where I had to get up at five in the morning in the Army, an 'early' class in college was at eight. And the jobs that I had as a student were difficult and frustrating jobs, but they only went for eight hours.

From my Army experience, I knew that I had 'what it takes' to do these things that other people thought were so hard. And from that knowledge, I got a kind of self-confidence that I'm still very thankful for.