AFFILIATE-EXCLUSIVE BONUS #1

5 Ways to Get a Reluctant

Veteran to Open Up

Not every veteran wants to talk right away -- and that's normal. If someone in your life is hesitant, here are five approaches that tend to work better than asking directly.

1. **Start with a photo, not a question**
   Put an old photo in front of them and ask what they remember about that day. A specific image is a much easier door than an open-ended question about "their service."

2. **Let silence sit**
   If they pause after a question, resist the urge to fill the gap. Many veterans need a few extra seconds to decide how much to share -- rushing them often ends the conversation.

3. **Ask about someone else first**
   "Tell me about a friend you served with" is often easier to answer than "tell me about yourself." It gives them somewhere to start that isn't directly about their own feelings.

4. **Offer an easy out, every time**
   Simply saying "we can skip this one" before a hard topic makes veterans far more likely to actually answer it -- knowing they can stop makes it safer to start.

5. **Do it in short sessions, not one long sitting**
   Fifteen minutes every few days beats a single two-hour interview. It gives them time to think between sessions, and lowers the pressure of any single conversation.