

The importance of finding “purpose”

A configurational approach to understanding veteran community reintegration

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Table 1. CCM Solutions for More Successful Reintegration

Pathway	Consistency	Coverage	Cases
Pathway A	Gender ₍₊₁₎ *Life ₍₊₂₎	0.83 (10/12)	0.56 (10/18) 102, 123, 134, 135, 146, 156, 158, 160, 161, 169 (10)
Pathway B	Gender ₍₊₁₎ *Life _(+1,0,-1) *MILT _(+2,1,0)	0.86 (6/7)	0.33 (7/18) 101, 103, 105, 124, 133, 153, 154 (7)
Overall Solution	(Path A + Path B)	0.84 (16/19)	0.94 (17/18) N = 17
Other case with Reintegration = 1			121

Consistency = percentage of cases with the outcome and covered by the model compared to all other cases.

Figure 1. Conditions & Outcomes in More Successful Reintegration

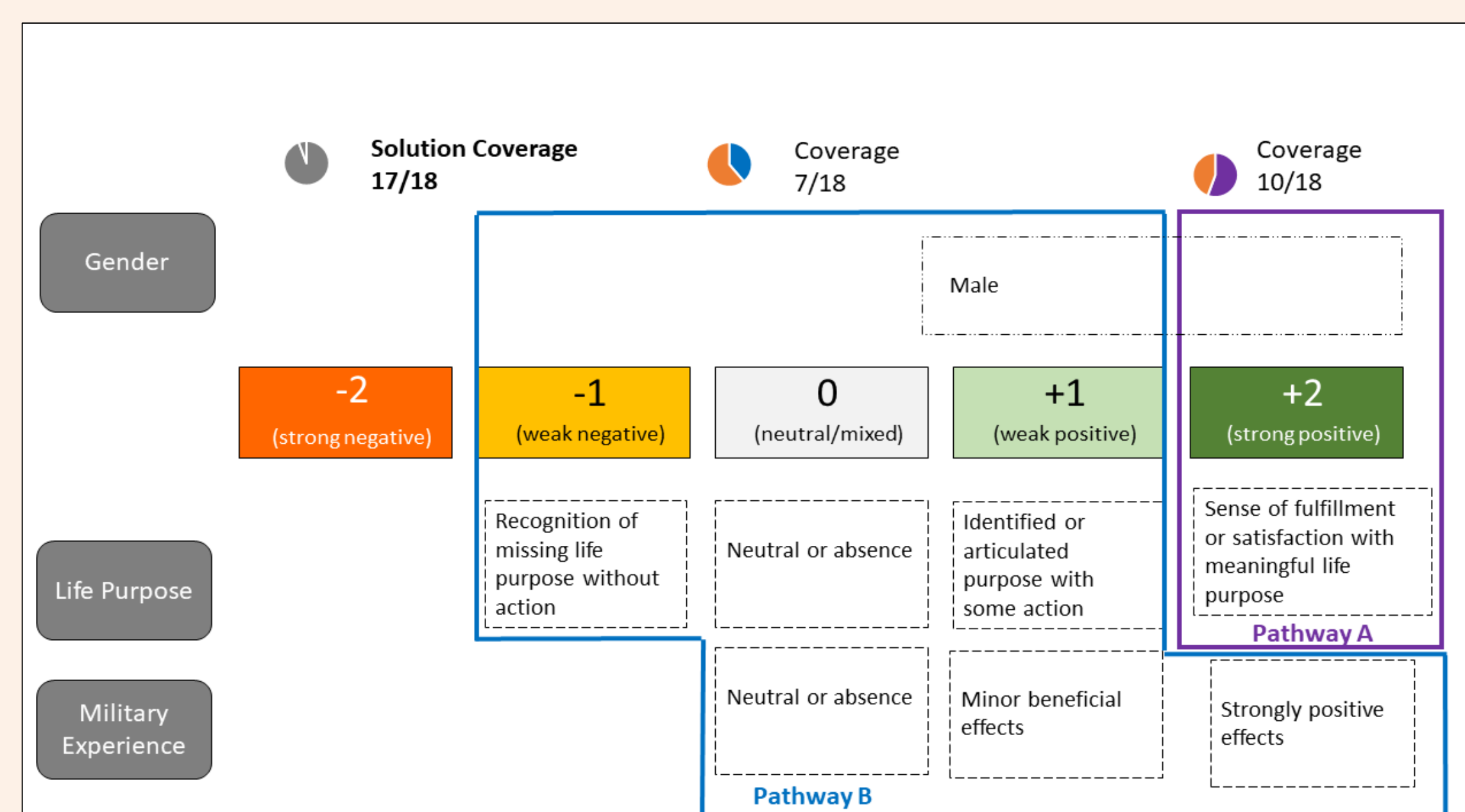
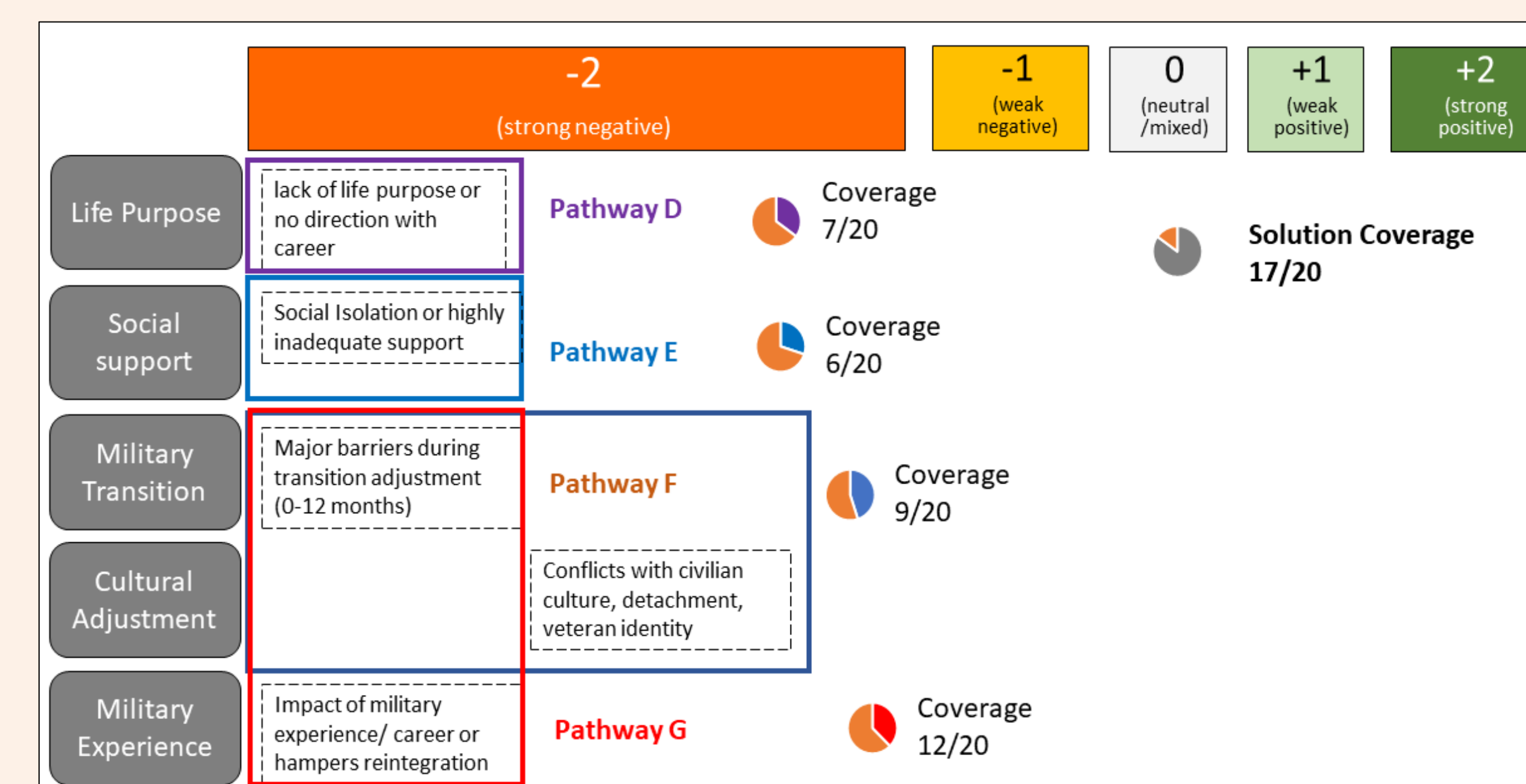


Table 2. CCM Solutions for Less Successful Reintegration

Pathway	Consistency	Coverage	Cases
Pathway D	Life (-2)	1.00 (7/7)	0.35 (7/20) 111, 115, 126, 131, 132, 143, 163
Pathway E	Soc(-2)	1.00 (6/6)	0.30 (6/20) 126, 132, 143, 163, 166, 174
Pathway F	MTA(-2)*CUL(-2)	1.00 (9/9)	0.45 (9/20) 106, 108, 111, 115, 126, 131, 132, 143, 163
Pathway G	MTA(-2)* MIL(-2)	1.00 (12/12)	0.60 (12/20) 106, 108, 111, 115, 126, 130, 131, 132, 143, 144, 163, 168
Overall Solution	(Path D + Path E + Path F + Path G)	1.0 (18/18)	0.88 (17/20) N = 17
Other cases with Reintegration = 0			152, 170, 176

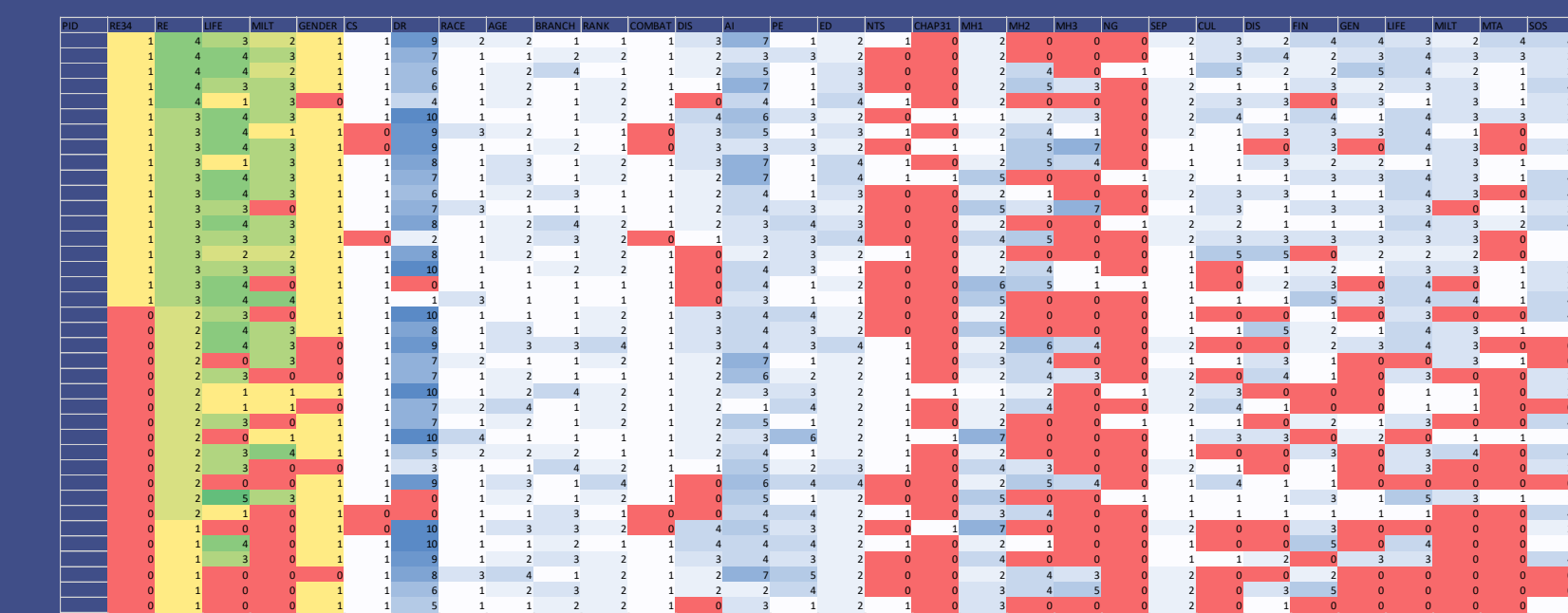
Coverage = percentage of all cases with the outcome and covered by the model compared to all cases with the outcome.

Figure 2. Conditions & Outcomes in Less Successful Reintegration



Configurational Approach

1. Thematic analysis of interview transcripts (Rattray et al. 2019)
2. Score each case on themes from “-2 to +2” and transform data into categories



3. Use “R” package to conduct coincidence analysis (“cna,” Baumgartner 2013)
4. Assess quality: consistency, coverage, exploring outlying cases

Summary

We examined underlying factors that affected community reintegration among US military veterans.

We drew on configurational comparative methods to understand how specific “recipes” or sets of conditions led to success or lack of success in reintegration outcomes.

Our multimethod analysis revealed the importance of establishing a sense of purpose, as well as the pivotal influence of gender, nature of military transition, and presence of social support.

Fig. 3 Contrasting Two Participants with Conditions and Quotations

Cases	Key CCM Conditions and Summary	Case Summary	Representative Quotation														
P161	<p>“Establishing a Sense of Purpose”</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>LIF</td> <td>SOS</td> <td>MTA</td> <td>MIL</td> <td>CUL</td> <td>M2C-Q</td> </tr> <tr> <td>+2</td> <td>+2</td> <td>-2</td> <td>+1</td> <td>+1</td> <td>2.31</td> </tr> </table>	LIF	SOS	MTA	MIL	CUL	M2C-Q	+2	+2	-2	+1	+1	2.31	<p>Combat veteran, 60% Disability. Turning point occurred when he got a job as a government contractor training those preparing to be deployed. Back to “problem solving”, which supports his “life purpose” to be in the medical field and work in high stress situations.</p>	<p>“[The job was] very similar to what I was doing while I was in the military - I realized that that problem-solving element had been missing, really in school and in work, and by getting back into direct patient care, hands on. Especially we were teaching trauma so if the patient isn't able to communicate you've gotta be able to figure out what's going on, and loved it. The more stress they added the easier it was for me to just kind of separate out what I needed to focus on.”</p>		
LIF	SOS	MTA	MIL	CUL	M2C-Q												
+2	+2	-2	+1	+1	2.31												
P170	<p>“Delayed Transition with Caregiving and Financial Burden”</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>LIF</td> <td>SOS</td> <td>MTA</td> <td>MIL</td> <td>CUL</td> <td>FIN</td> <td>M2C-Q</td> </tr> <tr> <td>-1</td> <td>+1</td> <td>-2</td> <td>-1</td> <td>+1</td> <td>-2</td> <td>2.9</td> </tr> </table>	LIF	SOS	MTA	MIL	CUL	FIN	M2C-Q	-1	+1	-2	-1	+1	-2	2.9	<p>Combat veteran, 100% Disability Disclosure issues with disability</p> <p>Reintegration process required big adjustments; Feels a lack of recognition for veterans. Financial issues and caregiver issues</p>	<p>“Like I feel like it's just been a short amount of time, and all of my guys feel like that. All of my guys do. Like that was a pivotal thing in our lives, and all of my guys have been lost since we've been back. <u>There are a few that have kind of excelled, but most of us are just treading water.</u>”</p>
LIF	SOS	MTA	MIL	CUL	FIN	M2C-Q											
-1	+1	-2	-1	+1	-2	2.9											

Methods

Design: Video-recorded observations (N=148) and cognitive Task interviews (N=35)

Study period: 3 facility visits at each site (April 2015 --June 2016)

Table 3. Study Sample Characteristics

Characteristic	Successful Reintegration (n=18, %)	Lack Successful Reintegration (n=20, %)	Total (n, %)
Gender: female n (%)	1 (5.6)	6 (30)	7 (18)
Age: mean (SD)	31.8 (5.4)	35.2 (10.3)	33.6 (8.6)
Mental health diagnosis n (%) †			
• Depressive disorder	5 (27.8)	10 (50.0)	15 (39.5)
• Mood disorder	1 (5.6)	1 (5.0)	2 (5.2)
• Adjustment disorder	8 (44.4)	4 (20.0)	12 (31.6)
• Post-traumatic stress disorder	12 (66.7)	10 (50.0)	22 (58.9)
• Anxiety disorder	3 (16.7)	7 (35.0)	10 (26.3)
Diagnosis of Traumatic Brain Injury n (%)	5 (27.8)	3 (15.0)	8 (21.0)
Combat Experience n (%)	15 (83.3)	18 (90.0)	33 (86.8)
Time Since Separation by Years Mean (SD)	4.0 (3.5)	3.7 (3.7)	4.3 (3.5)
Reintegration Outcome (based on analyst rating and M2C-Q score)	High 5	Low 16	
	Moderate 13	Minimal 4	

† Note: Totals are greater than 100% because participants had 1-3 mental health diagnoses.

Conclusion

Configurational methods can identify factors that contribute to greater or lesser success with veteran community reintegration. They can enable researchers working with particular outcomes to trace patterns across cases, and then to offer fine-grained explanations for emergent relationships. CNA distinguished pathways that more closely approximate real-world scenarios.

“Some of my friends leaving the military were able to just jump right into school and **find their niche** and go—that was **really frustrating** for me. Just a few months back when I would be working with guys **that I was able to get it together** and go to school and see how frustrating that was for them to not – to feel like they're some sort of failure for not being able to get it done yet. **Everybody else did, why can't they?**”

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