

## Lead-in

**Green grass** [individual]

Play **some relaxing music**.

Students close their eyes and imagine the answer to your question:

**What makes the green grass grow?**

Ask them to keep the reply secret and note it down in 1-2 sentences.

Students put their answers aside. Promise to reveal yours later on.

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## Part I

**1. A perfect sweetheart** [whole class]

Show **slide 1** [photos of Pickerington]

**Welcome to Pickerington, a small town in Ohio.**

Show **slide 2** [photos of Pickerington`s girls]

**These two girls were born and live here, Kelly and Sharon.**

**They are both single and dreaming of starting their own family.**

Show **slide 3** [Andy`s profile]

**Read about Andy - a young man from Pickerington who is also looking for his sweetheart.**

**Which of them would be a better match for Andy? Why?**

*Andy Chambers comes from Pickerington, a town in Ohio. He takes pride in his sense of honour and kindness. His life experience slightly altered his sense of humor and he can curse a bit too much, but he knows what makes the green grass grow. While categorically not a morning person, when he is able to finally pry his eyes open, he always thinks to himself that he would rather be fishing. Most of his days are filled with coaching softball, country music and thoughts of the family he hopes to be able to start soon.*

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## 2. Idiosyncrasies [pairs]

Explain or elicit what 'an idiosyncrasy' is.

**idiosyncrasy**

*a person's particular way of behaving, thinking, etc., especially when it is unusual; an unusual feature*

<http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/idiosyncrasy>

Ask students to speculate.

**Andy has some idiosyncrasies.**

**There were certain things in his past that are hard to understand. For quite some time, driving along the streets of his home town was a challenge for him.**

**How would you explain it?**

Show **slide 4** [quote]

"Going through my family's neighborhood, I drove in the middle of the street in fear that the side of the road was gonna blow up and kill me."

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## 3. Criticism [same pairs]

Get students to speculate.

**Andy also faced some strong criticism about his past.**

**Who do you think said these words?**

**Why?**

**What happened in consequence?**

Show **slide 5** [quote]

"Your experience is a double-edged sword. It makes you a threat to society."

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## Part II

### 4. Flashback one [groups of 4 = 2 pairs]

Encourage students to find out more about two incidents from Andy`s past, which could shed some light on the reasons for the criticism he faced. Ask them to develop their scenarios, based on that.

**This situation had triggered the critical comment mentioned earlier.**

**How come Andy had a gun?**

**Why do you think he means when he says: “I snapped.”?**

Show **slide 6** [quote]

“One night, an argument erupted over a girl. Someone pulled out a knife and I snapped. I pulled out my pistol. I moved through the room in a tactical manner, clearing the room, laid everybody on the ground. I took the knife from him and I began beating him. “

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### 5. Flashback two [groups of 4 = 2 pairs]

Ask students to develop their scenarios even further, by revealing yet another incident.

**Let`s go a bit further into Andy`s past. This is what had happened a few years before the assault incident.**

**What do you think the chaos was all about?**

**Why was Andy laughing?**

Show **slide 7** [quote]

“I woke up. In the middle of all this chaos, I could hear somebody laughing and I thought to myself, ‘Who could be laughing at a time like this?’ and then I realized it was me laughing.”

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## 6. Flash-forward [groups of 4 = 2 pairs]

Tell students that there are two missing elements they need to work out Andy`s true story.

Show **slide 8** [timeline]

**This timeline shows you the actual order of events in Andy`s life, the events we have discussed so far.**

**One more fact you need to know is that Andy is in prison now, serving a 10-year sentence.**

Ask students to work out the entire story, by answering your question:

**In court Andy pleaded guilty. But his true story makes me believe he isn`t guilty. Look at the timeline once again.**

**What do you think happened?**

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## Part III

### 7. Video – take one [individually, then whole class]

**Zaption** is an app which makes any online video interactive, thanks to the questions, explanations, images and pauses you can embed. Students can answer embedded questions on their own devices in real time, or you pause and elicit answers from the entire group or individuals.

Tell students it is time to check if they got their answer to the lesson`s lead-in question right. Give them time for the actual impact of the revelation to sink in.

Play **the Zaption`ed video** up to the green grass image [the 0:32 mark].

<http://zapt.io/tvsup7sx>

Ask them to explain what this short fragment tells you about Andy`s past.

Explain or elicit the context:

Andrew 'Sarge' Chambers gave this TEDxtalk in 2013 at TEDxMarionCorrectionalSalon (a TEDx event held in prison) and he got a standing ovation.

Here is the original talk, before it was Zaption-ed: <https://youtu.be/X6AYmzunPIQ>

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## 8. Video – take two [pairs]

Play *the entire Zaption-ed video*.

<http://zapt.io/tvsup7sx>

Pause for students to answer the embedded questions in pairs.

Make sure you pause to explain what PTSD is. The basic explanation is embedded in the video.

Info about PTSD here: <https://maketheconnection.net/conditions/ptsd>

If you choose to watch the 'raw' (= not 'Zaption-ed') video, here are some questions from the listening comprehension part:

1. How come Andy joined the army?
2. What are his best memories from the time he trained for the army in Central America?
3. What does he remember about the laughing incident on his way to Fallujah?
4. Why did he volunteer to stay for the second tour?
5. Why does he start crying?
6. What made his transition home 'difficult to say the least'?
7. What kind of help did he ask for and receive from the military mental health clinic?
8. What does he remember from the incident which led to his imprisonment?
9. Why did the judge say: "Your service in Iraq is a double-edged sword".?
10. What is Andy's call to action? Is it a good one?

At the end, let students compare what they have just learned about Andy with the stories they made up earlier.

Have them answer your questions:

**Do you trust Andy? Explain why.**

**Is he to blame? Explain why.**

**Was it a good idea to lock him up? Explain why.**

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## 9. Discussion stations [3 groups]

Set up discussion stations in three corners of the room.

- Each station has 1 problem to solve/1 issue to debate through a set of questions/ prompts.
- Groups circulate between stations, in the chronological order (1-3).
- Students spend up to 5 minutes at each station discussing things.
- They swap stations when they get a sound signal from you.
- During discussion, they use functional expressions from the list on the board:

**ASK FOR OPINIONS:**

What are your thoughts (on all of this)?  
Wouldn't you say?

**STATE OPINIONS:**

If you want my honest opinion, ...  
The way I see it, ...

**AGREE:**

I have to side with ... on this one.  
No doubt about it.

**DISAGREE:**

I'd say the exact opposite.  
Not necessarily.

**INTERRUPT:**

Is it okay if I jump in for a second?  
Sorry to interrupt, but ...

**SETTLE ARGUMENTS:**

Let's just move on, shall we?  
Let's drop it.

**STATION 1**

1. What was the transition home like for a soldier after WW2? How did it feel?
2. What is the transition home like for a contemporary soldier? How does it feel?
3. Which transition seems easier to bear? Why?

**STATION 2**

In this excerpt from his poem, Simon Armitage, a British poet, refers to the contemporary war veterans as *The Not Dead*:

Show **slide 9** [poem]

**The Not Dead – Simon Armitage (excerpts)**

We are the not dead.  
In battle, life would not say goodbye to us.  
And crack-shot snipers seemed to turn a blind eye to us.  
And even though guns and grenades let fly at us  
we somehow survived.  
(...)

We are morbidly ill.  
Soldiers with nothing but time to kill,  
we idle now in everyday clothes and ordinary towns,

blowing up, breaking down.

(...)

We seem changed and ghostly to those who knew us.

(...)

Neither happy and proud  
with a bar-code of medals across the heart  
nor laid in a box and draped in a flag,  
we wander this no man's land instead,  
creatures of a different stripe – the awkward, unwanted, unlovable type –  
haunted with fears and guilt,  
wounded in spirit and mind.

Source: <http://www.amazon.co.uk/The-Not-Dead-Simon-Amitage/dp/1904590187>

1. What do you learn from the poem about the difficulties a contemporary veteran faces after his/her transition home?
2. Why do you think the poet calls the contemporary war veterans *The Not Dead*, rather than *The Alive*?

### STATION 3

1. What can be done to help reintegrate war veterans to society?

Discuss the potential changes which could be implemented on the three levels:

- individuals and small groups.
- Institutions, on the national level.
- Institutions, on the international/global level.

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### FOLLOW-UP

Students watch a *Brave New Films* video "Bad Paper" about Marine Corps veteran Josh Christmon, his struggle with PTSD and his fight to regain lost benefits.

Background info: [http://www.bravenewfilms.org/about\\_badpaper](http://www.bravenewfilms.org/about_badpaper)

Video: <http://www.bravenewfilms.org/badpaper>

Their task is to prepare a one-minute talk to answer the questions:

**Who do you side with, Josh or the military officials who decided to withhold his benefits? Why?**