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We are surrounded by heroes, people who go out of their way for us. They are often our family, our friends, our neighbors. They are also strangers, people we have never met. Every day they wake up and make a conscious choice to fight for freedom. They fight for our freedom and defend our privileges, but it comes with a cost. Veterans have to leave their families and their homes for months at a time, without knowing if they will return. But every time they oblige; they do it for us. Over 250,000 people join the military every year, and about 2,400 don't come back. To learn that so many families lost their loved ones is devastating. I feel honored to know that there are so many people defending our freedom. Their great deeds are often overlooked by many and it breaks my heart. I am ashamed some Americans care more about someone winning a gold medal in the Olympics than a Veteran and their sacrifices for our country.

Veterans sacrifice everything with little reimbursement. They go through many difficult and trying times while away from home. Over and over again they make sacrifices for America. While they are away they not only fight for our freedom but spread the idea of democracy. They constantly do more than help American citizens, they also help the citizens of other countries. From providing security to war-ridden countries to helping people with their basic needs.

What they do for us is unbelievable. They represent less than 1% of our population. Their courage is inspiring, for they defend our country by choice so the least we can do is thank them for it. They leave everything behind for us and it is beyond my

comprehension that these men and women can make the choice to fight for strangers.

They are the true heroes among us.