PTSD:
THE WARRIOR’S JOURNEY HOME

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The Peace Prayer of St. Francis

- Lord make me an instrument of your peace
- Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
- Where there is injury, pardon;
- Where there is error, truth;
- Where there is doubt, faith;
- Where there is despair, hope;
- Where there is darkness, light;
- And where there is sadness, Joy.
- O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
- To be understood, as to understand;
- To be loved, as to love.
- For it is in giving that we receive,
- It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
- And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
THE WARRIOR

A Universal Archetype with a Unique Spirituality
FOUR TRUTHS OF SOLDIERING

All soldiers ask “Why?”

All soldiers feel guilt and shame.

All soldiers feel fear.

We must love them.

Chaplain (BG) Kevin Turner
Nostalgia
Homesickness
Shell Shock
Battle Fatigue
Soldiers Heart
PTSD
Military service is transformational

The service member is permanently changed as a result of the experience.

The change is even more pronounced for the combat veteran
Two Paths Home

* Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
  
  Civilian – Military – Veteran – Civilian

* Post-traumatic Growth
  
  Civilian – Military – Veteran – Spiritual Warrior - Elder
THE WOUND

“Rescue my soul from the sword.”

Psalm 22

“It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul!”

Shakespeare, Othello

“My soul has fled.”

Art, VN combat vet
TRAUMA

From the Greek, 
Τραυμα, 
a stabbing wound
Initiation

Rebirth & Rememberment

Death & Dismemberment
Initiation
INITIATION

• Separation from home and nurturing parents

• Teaching
  • Sacred ritual and objects
  • History and traditions
  • Responsibilities of adulthood
  • Skills required

• Test/Trial
  • The outcome is not certain

• Exclusive and sacred ritual where the individual assumes the role as “adult” and acknowledges his/her commitment to the community (tribe).

• Recognition/acknowledgement of the achievement and new status
Psychology of the Child

“My obligation is to myself. What is important is that I get what I want. Aggression and self-dealing at the expense of others is acceptable – even desirable.”
Adult Psychology

“My obligations are to my own well being, but equally important to my family and to my extended family – my community. It is my job to add strength and wisdom for the benefit of all. Part of my job is to protect the weak.”
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The Hero’s Journey

(Joseph Campbell)
The Hero’s Journey

(Expanded - Tick)

Return

Mastery & Initiation

Meeting the Beast

Descent & encounter with darkness

Departure
Soldier’s Heart
Transformational Model
(Tick)

The Warrior’s Vision

Old Self

Restoration in Community

Making meaning
Seeking Spirituality

Homecoming:
Grief
Loss
Culture Shock
Anger
Pain
Displacement

Leave Talking

Brotherhood
Sisterhood
Mastery
Transformation

Berserk
Beast
Horror
------
or not?

Fear
Guilt
Shock
Rage

Answering the call
Leave taking
Boot camp
Advanced Training

Assignment
Deployment
Arrival in War zone

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WHAT IS PTSD?

• Heart wound
• Moral wound
• Social disorder
• Interrupted initiation
• Identity crisis
• Love and intimacy crisis
• Stuck in the Underworld
• The Soul’s cry of distress
SITTING BULL

“Warriors are not what you think of as warriors. The warrior is not someone who fights, because no one has the right to take another life. The warrior is one who sacrifices himself for the good of others. His task is to take care of the elderly, the defenseless, those who cannot provide for themselves, and above all, the children, the future of humanity.”
Necessities of Return

• Isolation and tending
• Affirmation of warrior destiny
• Purification and cleansing
• Storytelling
• Restitution in the community
• Initiation as an Elder Warrior
“THE HOLIEST SPOT ON EARTH IS WHERE AN ANCIENT HATRED BECOMES A PRESENT LOVE.” A COURSE ON MIRACLES
Even the God of War is no match for love.

Plato
HONOR FOREVER
"Veterans are the light at the tip of the candle, illuminating the way for the whole nation. If Veterans can achieve awareness, transformation, understanding, and peace, they can share with the rest of society the realities of war. And they can teach us how to make peace with ourselves and each other, so we never have to use violence to resolve conflicts again."

- Thich Nhat Hanh
WAR AND THE SOUL

Healing Our Nation's Veterans from Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

EDWARD TICK, PH.D.

WARRIOR'S RETURN
RESTORING THE SOUL AFTER WAR

EDWARD TICK, PH.D.