

SOLDIER'S heart

Soldier's Heart is a veterans' return and healing project addressing the emotional and spiritual needs of veterans, their families and communities. Soldier's Heart promotes and guides community-based efforts to heal the effects of war based on strategies presented in "War and the Soul".

Newsletter

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Please note that **all of our contact information has changed**, phone number, address, website and email addresses. (See above.) Our mailing list has remained intact. However, it does not include your names, just your email addresses. If you would like to update your contact info and give us a name to put with your clever, though anonymous, email address we would be most pleased. Just go to our website www.soldiersheart.net and sign in!

Soldier's Heart's New Website

Our new (and improved) web site www.soldiersheart.net is up and running thanks to our friend and colleague, Andy Himes, Director of Voices In Wartime, and his assistant John Roth. Thank you Andy and John! The new site is easy and interactive and allows you to post articles, reviews, etc., as well as keep up on our activities.

Ed To Speak At Walter Reed

Soldier's Heart Director, Ed Tick, has been invited to address the staff of **Walter Reed Army Hospital** on Oct. 5th. The hospital has ordered 350 copies of WAR AND THE SOUL to give to staff at the facility and officers abroad. The all day presentation will be simulcast to all U.S. military facilities around the globe! This is a really big and important event for Ed and for the Soldier's Heart mission!

**Healing Veterans from PTSD:
A Three Day Workshop for Soldiers, Their Loved Ones, and Helping
Professionals,
September 13–16, 2007
Olcott Campus near Chicago IL
Register soon!**

'Healing Veterans from PTSD' is an intensive healing and training workshop to provide experience in the groundbreaking healing techniques developed by Dr. Ed Tick. The workshop is open to veterans of any war and their families, counselors, therapists, chaplains and clergy.

The workshop is co-sponsored by Quest Books and Soldier's Heart. It will be held at the Olcott campus of the Theosophical Society, 1926 North Main St., Wheaton, IL.
<http://www.theosophical.org/events/conferences/soldiersheart.php>><http://www.theosophical.org/events/conferences/soldiersheart.php>.

To register, or if you have questions, please call Christine Pomeroy: 800-669-9425, ext. 350, or email cpomeroy@theosmail.net.

"Returning from a Soldier's Heart Retreat feels like coming back to base camp from a long trek in the bush. Or maybe like flying so many missions that your bones vibrate at the same frequency as the chopper." Larry Winters, Vietnam veteran

PTSD – A Confession

By Ayelet Berman-Cohen
Veteran, Israeli Army Special Forces

The walls of my dreams are falling.
And I know that my story is not my story.
PTSD comes to me in dreams.
It took root in my young soul while growing up in Israel.
And came back to show itself to me in dreams and visions.
My story is not my story.
PTSD is like a big tree - monster
that takes root in the hearts of the ones who are sent to war or live in it.
The one that tasted the nectar (oh sweet nectar) of war.
And it sits behind the chamber of my (your) heart.
PTSD is hiding.
It is the language, the images that we hide
behind our civilian words and daily appearances.

PTSD, the God of War itself, is dwelling within us,
beyond the closed door of our physical existence.
We are the host.
PTSD is our hidden language.
We hide our devotion to war, our love for it,
and the horror, the horror that the war inflicts on our inner being.
We would not tell our true story of PTSD.
PTSD is private, demanding, and asking for deep devotion.
We keep our stories, our shame, our killings,
our wild dance with war, hidden.

We were chosen, sent, to meet the war
on behalf of millions of others.
We are the chosen ones.
We danced and killed and participated
in wounding the heart of the world.
We are the chosen ones.
The ones that danced with war, and now,
behind the closed and aching chambers of our heart,
with fierce devotion and determination,
we capture the virtue of war,
the way we know it, the way we love her.
Our beloved, demanding God of War.

PTSD is our legend, our hell, our Garden of Eden.
PTSD is collecting us into her long arms.
We are both captive and holding on,
we are entangled in the tight grip of her arms,
we belong to it, we love it.
The web of war is closing on us.
It is the end of a day. We lie in the arms of war.
We swore not to tell her story, our story.
And we fall asleep hiding in the breath of war.
And we're comfortable.
This is what we truly know.
This is our mother.

The Aftermath Of War: A Report From Europe

By Ed Tick

During June, Kate Dahlstedt and I had the honor of attending the annual conference of the International Deep Memory Association (IDMA), meeting this year in Austria. This association teaches and practices deep regression therapy to access “psychic residue” that we all carry from trans-generational and historical experiences of our ancestors and ethnic backgrounds. This year’s theme was “War and Human Memory” and I was the keynote presenter. Participants came from 11 different countries.

I presented teachings and experiences on Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as an identity disorder and soul wound. I gave much information on the suffering of American veterans from Viet Nam, the Gulf War, Iraq and Afghanistan, and all our small wars. What surprised all present was that healers from Britain, Netherlands and Portugal chimed in with, "Us too!" All these countries have veterans suffering PTSD with identical symptoms, syndromes and conditions as our American veterans. British vets from the Falklands War also have had more suicides since the war's end than were killed during the war. The Dutch have vets with severe PTSD from their fighting in Indonesia until 1980, the Portuguese from fighting in Africa until 1975. All these countries have elevated violence, crime rates, homelessness and other social disorders because of PTSD among vets. And all governments deny the extent of suffering of their vets, deny them benefits, and do not know how to help their vets.

We see that PTSD is a universal danger among vets of these types of modern wars. PTSD may likely be associated with colonial and imperialistic warfare when troops are sent to invade and occupy countries other than their own. Leon Stiff Arm, a Viet Nam combat vet and medicine man of the White Clay People said, "Both the Vietnamese and Americans were warriors in their country's service. But the Vietnamese were defending their country on home soil while we were invading an overseas nation." As we have observed, there is little PTSD in Viet Nam and the Vietnamese never thought they were fighting Americans but only invaders. Is PTSD an invader's disturbance? More research needs to be done among the countries that were invaded to compare their levels of PTSD. However, there seems ample indication that PTSD is especially troubling to troops who were required to enter, invade and occupy homes and countries other than their own.

A second revelation from this conference was the extent of trans-generational wounding resulting from modern warfare. I invited all veterans into the center of our circle; only one World War II vet stepped forward. Then I invited all who survived direct exposure to war, including while in the womb, to step forward. Seven people entered. Some who had been born and carried during warfare shared the damage done to their developing psyches from such early exposure. These survivors were deeply moved, as they had never been publicly honored before.

Many participants discussed the impact of warfare on their nation's psyches. Austrian therapists said that they believed their entire country was still depressed from its alliance with Germany during WWII. Others discussed secret and unresolved wounds that their countries carry from WWII and Cold War activities. And many witnessed the disturbing dreams and other symptoms that their therapy patients carry that seem transpersonal, not related to their own life histories but to the history of warfare in their nation and ancestry.

I too was touched on this ancestral dimension. When I lead healing and reconciliation journeys back to Viet Nam every year, our veterans often feel a sense of dread and foreboding. They make statements like, "I know they've been waiting to get me." "They'll arrest me as soon as I step off the plane." "I've been avoiding my debt to this country for decades. Now I've got to pay."

At this conference, I was a Jew returning to a country aligned with the Nazis during WWII, and we passed through Poland on our way. My great grandparents were from Austria-Hungary, my grandfather from Poland. For two weeks before the

conference, I had an intense dread I could not explain. Finally, upon traveling, I realized it was a dread similar to what our vets feel on returning to Viet Nam. I feared they were waiting for me. I feared they still wanted to get me. As I climbed into the plane, I feared boxcars to Auschwitz.

The conferees were loving, receptive, and supportive. I visited sites in Austria important to its Jewish past. After our conference, I felt light, happy, at peace with my past. I had put something in my deep psyche to rest. The Europeans at the conference welcomed me home, as do the Vietnamese to our veterans.

There is so much good work we can do to heal that wounding in our past and in our own lifetimes. At the 2007 IDMA conference, healers from eleven countries worked hard together on our personal and collective wounding to bring a little more peace and healing to our world.

My Brother Is A Warrior

By Kate Dahlstedt

My brother is a warrior. He moves through his life wishing to mend broken places, to wash away despair with acts of kindness and integrity. My brother is a warrior. He takes the stand that helps the most, that prevents catastrophe, that protects us all. My Brother is a warrior who has much to teach the rest what desperation does to human dignity, who carries the fiery knowledge for us all. My Brother is a warrior. What am I...What am I?

Our next Viet Nam journey is Oct 21- Nov.6. Only 2 seats left. There's still time to sign on!

Links of the Month

For a delightful video:

<http://www.youtube.com/v/ervaMPt4Ha0&autoplay=1>

For an article by Brigid Brett about The Coming Home Project in CA

http://www.tricycle.com/issues/tricycle/17_1/sangha_spotlight/3996-1.html