

WARRIORS AND THEIR FAMILIES IN SOCIETY

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“No Family Left Behind,” March 2014

First keynote address outline

- I. Invocation: St. Francis prayer and story
- II. War Effects us all – group exercise

Honor vets present

Honor all others afflicted
Milton: “They also serve who only stand and wait...”
- III. What war does to the soul

PTSD is inevitable
Achilles, Francis, Saul & David, Geo. Washington, Patton

The deepest wounding is soul loss (W&S) – war afflicts all aspects of our being
- IV. PTSD is a social disorder
 - A. Impact on families - suicide, homicide, broken marriages & families, job loss, educational failure, substance abuse, legal and criminal problems – all 2 – 3x higher than civ.
KIA vs Suicide stats – VN, now
 - B. It can be different: Little PTSD in VN because of communal, moral and spiritual context

VN – 1. purely moral & defensive
2. Return to intact spirituality & community
3. Buddhism
 - C. Preparing the community – Olivia’s story preparing her community for her fiancé’s return

D. Social contract between warriors & civilians – Plains Indian & Buffalo models

V. Necessities of Return as given in traditional communities & application today

A. Isolation & tending: Acceptance & affirmation of destiny – tended by elder warriors & spiritual guides

B. Purification & cleansing – tended by elders & spiritual guides

C. Storytelling –

1. entire community, including arts & expressive therapies
2. release war memories & emotions in safety & for transformation

D. Restoration

1. community takes responsibility off vet and pledges to carry it

E. Initiation

1. entire community
2. it is for the community as it receives a new adult citizen, warrior and elder
3. warrior has new roles from now on

V. Transforming Our Communities to Heal our Veterans and Families

A. restoring social contract between warriors, families, civilians

B. read list of 25+ family & community based programs we can do for vets & families without professionals

VI. Closing affirmation –

A. We are all wounded. We are all together. Caring means sharing the burden. We are one people.

B. Closing exercise: Imagine our community circle with vets inside in every way every day. Community says to vets, “I will care for you. I will carry your story. Your story is mine and I accept responsibility for you and all you had to do.”