

My Testimonial – An Open Cry

Colonel Antonio P. Monaco
United States Army
December 2006



Noble Warriors!!

I must confess I can no longer remain silent, it's time to speak out. We have banded together in the face of adversity before and once more we will.

There is a new battlefield!! Too many of us are bringing the enemy home; distressing our loved ones.

At an Army clinic, I ran into one of my Soldiers who was having stomach problems and no one could figure out why. Quietly, he confessed of having a recurring image of a dead Soldier he had zipped into a body bag. Later that week, I read a U.S. News & World Report article dealing with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) which featured a friend of mine, COL Kathy Platoni, a combat-stress team psychologist.

I keyed on U.S. News & World Report's account that the core problem is “Reimagining the trauma again...” Forces exist to demoralize us and lead us to an unwitting path of self-destructive behavior. These recurring images lurk within us to take us down.

Are you Stressed? Depressed? Isolated, Angry, and full of Resentment? Who will take care of us if we don't? There is no need to struggle alone and in darkness.

Even the renowned psychologist and founder of analytical psychology, Carl Jung, acknowledged, “What you resist persists.”

Seeking professional help is always advisable. What I discovered is a very private, simple, non-intrusive Exercise called, “Be Still and Know.” It has helped me immensely in overcoming extreme adversities. It is confidential, effective and powerful. And I have freely shared the Exercise with my family and colleagues alike.

How does it work?

Imagine that you have gone to the movie theater and we are sitting together. As the movie begins, you get caught up into the action and before you know it you're living the movie. Lost in the imagery of the movie, you feel the action and react to the excitement of a kiss, a chase, or a fall.

If I hit your arm and you react to me, it breaks the imagery of the movie and you remember that you're in the theater. Not only is the imagery of the movie broken, so is the emotional bond that held you. The power of the imagery fades away into nothing.

The Exercise works on the same principle. Simply put, it breaks the endless loop of thought sustained by emotional energy. It sets you free from “Reimagining the trauma again...”

Your thoughts rage into a battle, keeping you confused, lost and emotionally charged, and worse yet, causing you to seek escapes (to feel better, e.g., drugs, alcohol, sex, outbursts).

Being aware is effortless. There is nothing to study, nothing to learn. Just be still, aware, and the reoccurring images with their assorted pains wither away.

All you have to do is sit in a straight-backed chair and listen to the Exercise. The narrator walks you through it.

[As you sit, you'll become aware of your hand and it will tingle just a bit until a thought pulls you away and the tingling will stop. It's a mini-battlefield between being in the Movie (caught up) or the Audience (aware).]

Day-by-day this simple Exercise breaks the shackles of your mind, and you're no longer reliving the past. As you see it, and watch it, the thought will simply fade away.

The Exercise delivers results. It is not an escape, just to make you feel better. It is designed to set you free; empowered.

Dr. George Hayter, Psychiatrist and Diplomate of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, says the Exercise "...is the only program of self-therapy which achieves the desired end-state of therapy; to lessen the dependence on the therapist – the goal is self-awareness." Also,

he says, "It's the only approach that I have ever seen in the whole field of psychology which allows you to become independent, competent and effective."

The Warriors difficulty of overcoming the stigma of weakness, or asking for help, is apparent. Everyone acknowledges PTSD and knows of someone else with the problem, or at least having troubles. There is a strong cultural resistance to admitting or seeking help. Even so, several Soldiers and Army civilians have asked me for the "Be Still and Know" Exercise, including a General Officer and a Chief of Staff. Check it out; it's very private. Just log onto www.PatriotOutrech.org for the download or call 800-877-3227.

"Patriot Outreach" provides grants (at no cost) to all military Warriors, vets, retirees, government civilians, battlefield contractors and their families.

Let's not bring home the enemy. Working Together...Making A Difference. HUA!! Let us cherish the sweet joy of life. God Speed!!

Colonel Monaco's Epilogue (November 2007)

As their loved ones enter harms way, several family members have asked me what they can do. Can the Exercise "Be Still and Know" help? ...Absolutely!!

The Exercise is for everyday life. Your work! Your family! Your kids! Your health! Even road rage!

Keeping with our movie theater analogy above (How does it work?), using the exercise before, as well as during a deployment (or stressful operation) is comparable to being told the ending of the movie. It spoils it! How many times has this happened to you?

Knowing the ending, being aware, negates a lot of the suspense, emotional bonds and intrigue, and therefore the cause of many common stress reactions. Overcoming stress, anger, and fear not only on the battlefield, but also on the Homefront will bring us joy, and a more productive and happier life.

Download the exercise! Try it! What do you have to lose? Moreover, many have found comfort in Psalms 91. Together, with God's Blessing, fighting for each other will make a difference.

It is an honor to be of service to our country. Help get the word out!! God bless!!