Sacred Ground, The Psychological Cost of 21st Century War: A Collection of True Stories

MD, PhD, Robert S. Brown



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Since the global War on Terror began, 2.6 million American military men and women have been deployed to the Middle East. Soldiers are carrying a heavy cognitive and emotional burden: 13 to 20 percent of Soldiers have posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms. The percent is four times higher for combat medics and mortuary specialists.

The media's focus on outlying incidences to portray affected Soldiers as violent, erratic, and dangerous is misleading. If the public cannot understand and empathize with the plight of thousands of suffering men and women, how can we welcome our Soldiers back into society as the heroes they are? How can we help them heal?

Robert S. Brown, MD, PhD, conducted 17,500 treatment encounters with active duty Soldiers, most of whom suffer from PTSD. In his new book, *Sacred Ground: The Psychological Cost of Twenty-First Century War*, he tells their stories of suffering, understanding, and recovering. Dr. Brown acknowledges his patients' sorrow, regret, exhaustion, and depression. He paints vivid pictures of each Soldier's "sacred moment," the instant when he or she understands the truth of the combat experience, and healing begins. The result is an empathetic and dignified exploration of a quiet, yet critical, American mental health crisis.

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