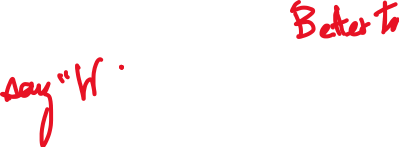
D.MIN. Project/Dissertation Prospectus



Caring For The Killers: Mental Health and Chaplaincy Collaborating in Care for Veterans



Submitted by



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Doctor of Ministry Research Project

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**A Concise Statement of the Problem/Issue/Need/Research Question**

**Concept-based Dissertation**

In this concept-based dissertation, the research question that will guide this study is, how chaplains can become advocates for military veterans experiencing mental illness. This area of pastoral care needs to be studied because veterans and those serving in the armed forces are experiencing mental illness in great numbers. Moral injury is an issue that plagues the mental health of veterans, locking them in a world of emotional instability. This researcher has confronted this topic due to experience as a chaplain and serving in the armed forces as an officer.

**Goal for Study**

The goal for this study is to find a way to bring veterans out of the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) that is leading them to suicide, murder-suicide, and loss of hope by better preparing ministers/chaplains with the skill set to recognize and address their specific needs. This issue needs to be studied because as of 2018, the Army reported that 138 soldiers die as the result of suicide, which marks the highest number of suicides of active-duty since 2012 when the total was 165.[[1]](#footnote-1) This researcher believes that spiritual care is crucial in the lives of military personnel. By training trauma-informed chaplain’s moral injuries can be addressed promptly, preparing soldiers to return home in good mental health.

Veterans and serving women and men need continued support fortheir service. There will be no surplus in the care that we give to the individuals who protect us all from harm. Thus, Dr. Edward Tick’s commentaries on the care and support that should be commensurate to their services are, at best, minimal, considering the permanence of the damages that they bear for us all.[[2]](#footnote-2)



**The Biblical/Theological Basis for the Project (Study)**

**Mental Health**



Emphasis must be placed on the effects of mental illness to bridge the gap between chaplaincy and the mental health of veterans. Why does the mental health of veterans matter? Military persons are asked to stand and fight for those citizens in foreign and domestic lands who can not fight for themselves. As the military personnel carries out their duties while in combat, many lives are lost. There are military chaplains made available to those who serve our country, but there is a void in chaplaincy when it comes to helping the service-person come to terms with the role they may have played directly or indirectly causing the death of another.



Acting in obedience to the command of their faith that “all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God” (Romans 13:1). Hence, giving allegiance to the authority of the state is an extension, as much as an expression, of belief in their God. Doing that also meant that these soldiers might be contravening detractors and critics who would condemn participation in the war. Take the Jehovah’s Witnesses, for example, who do not participate in military services nor condemn those who do. The Witnesses believe that their doctrines are patterned after the lifestyles of early Christians, who according to *The Encyclopedia of Religion and War* “rejected war and military service,” providing historical reference points from classical times.[[3]](#footnote-3)



From the preceding, one deduces that if the reason the early Christians declined participation both in war and military service was due in part to their conviction that the violence that these represent or produce negate the love and faith that Jesus taught, Christians are expected to give much more care to those who truly need it. There must be urgency in the manner that we respond to the care that war veterans require, an immediacy that reminds us of Luke 19:31, where Jesus says, “If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it’ say, ‘The Lord needs it.”



**Ministry**



Jesus’s ministry provided ample examples of healing. He had no time or need to interrogate the victims on how they got themselves into unpleasant or unhealthy lifestyles, give love and healing. According to Major General Clay T. Buckingham, Jesus was perfect in the following ways:



He loved people. He had compassion for people. He loved helping people, healing people, giving to people. He sought the very best for everyone. He was not a getting person. He was a giving person—giving life, hope, and encouragement.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The absence of discrimination in his love means that he forgave all, provided for all, and healed all that were oppressed of the devil because he was anointed of God (Acts 10:38). A statement credited to Peter Meinhold, a German Luther theologian-scholar, reads thus, “Being a Christian and a soldier was considered irreconcilable.” Now that we cannot argue about the realities not only of soldiers around us, we are also dealing with the consequences that result from soldiers participating in the war. It is now not about whether they should go to war; by far, we are dealing with the more serious and greater consequences for living in more complex times and era.



Should we ignore providing the care that soldiers need because we do not believe participating in military exercise or going to war to be the right thing? God forbid! That compounds the evil that we are supposed to confront and demolish, and such behavior would be irresponsible as much as it diminishes the faith that we profess. As Buckingham noted,

What was Jesus like? Jesus was the very epitome of integrity. Unlike the hypocritical Pharisees, Jesus lived what He taught. He taught what He lived. His teachings reflected His character.

Meinhold Buckingham writes that “Jesus was a doer and not just a hearer of the word. His life and teachings were the same.” Again, while noting the consequences of war cannot be denied to participants or warriors, in *War and the Gospel*, Jean Lasserre observes that the Christian ethic is a morality of gratitude. Translated, this would mean, therefore, that although we may uphold diverse and contradictory views and opinions about war, we must all accede and acknowledge that whatever the frame of the beliefs that we hold, and however diversified they might be, our Christian ethic must be “founded on the faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”[[5]](#footnote-5) This Christian ethic as a morality of gratitude is what helps the believer to understand, by a revelation, that “God gives grace to the humble,” (James 4:6), but lovingly rebukes the hypocritical, as narrated in the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18: 10- 14). In his voluminous work, *The Modern Age*, Hughes Olddemonstrates the workings of faith and love in national life as he notes that “faith could be a strong bond to unite the war-tone nation.”

Unlike Jehovah’s Witnesses who outright reject participation in war or military service to the nation, in his book *Refuting Jehovah’s Witnesses* Randall Watters illuminates the possibilities that Christians may, in fact, participate in military service and war, highlighting, for instance, that John the Baptist’s ministry acknowledged, rather than condemn, those in military careers. Disputing *Jehovah’s Witnesses* positions on war, Watters posits that,

In the first century, we find believing Israelites who were soldiers (they may have been Romans who converted to Judaism or Jews under the service of Herod Antipas). When the people came to be baptized by John, they would ask him questions about whether they should make changes in their lives (Luke 3:10-18), and he would give them the same kind of advice that Jesus later gave. When soldiers asked him, "And what about us, what shall we do?" he answered, "Do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse anyone falsely, and be content with your wages." (Luke 3:14).[[6]](#footnote-6)

The fact that John had the “perfect opportunity to tell them to resign from the military, but he counseled them instead to be content with their jobs,” for Watters, unarguably and incontrovertibly refutes any notion that participating in the war or military activities was unchristian. Watters cites the Bible book of Acts of the Apostles, in verse 35 of chapter 10, which tells the story of a Roman centurion Cornelius, “a man who feared God and prayed continually.” Additionally, citing 1 Corinthians 7:24, Watters states that, Apostle Paul never admonished any of these people to abandon their duty posts simply because they were now “new creations” in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). Rather, the believer is encouraged to remain faithful in their position of duty, which is a stark contradiction from Jehovah’s Witnesses or even Meinhold’s position.

In the Bible book of John, chapter 8, from verses 1-11, the account of the woman who was taken in the act of adultery is instructive for a conversation on veterans in postwar traumas. Just as the woman’s accusers gathered and built a case against her, so do the memories which the veterans participated in to represent a focus of accusation in their consciences. Well, there is no shortage of prescriptions on adultery. According to Pope Benedict,

Jesus does not enter into a theoretical discussion with his interlocutors on this section of Mosaic Law. He is not concerned with winning an academic dispute about an interpretation of Mosaic Law, but his goal is to save a soul and reveal that salvation is only found in God’s love.

Whereas by the posturing of the adulterer’s accusers, they intended to ensnare Jesus, too. However, since Jesus intention was not to record a win over mortals, he remained calm and focused. This attitude helped him to concentrate on divine justice rather than the human indignation which emerges from the initial punishable act.

The Bible book of Romans chapter 13:1-4 explains the power of the state and government to impose such penalties as it deems fit.

Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except God, and those which exist are established by God. 2 Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God, and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. 3 For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same; 4 for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it bears the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil.

In Acts 25:10-11, the Apostle Paul wrote about an experience he had with the power of the state to effect punishment for what it considers iconoclasm. Narrating his order, Scripture records that,

But Paul said, “I am standing before Caesar’s ﻿﻿tribunal, where I ought to be tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you also very well know. 11 “If, then, I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die; but if none of those things is true of which these men accuse me, no one can hand me over to them. I ﻿﻿appeal to Caesar.

**Bridging the Gap of Mental Health and Ministry**

While these encounters with the state’s instruments of law and judgment are specific both to classic encounters and contemporary reality, this project argues that persons who had served in many capacities in a war in the behalf of the nation deserve to be accorded special places and care. The project includes recommendations on how best to treat and care for such individuals.

Dr. Tick lifts up that the “golden rule” serves as a common thread in world religions, spiritual and ethical traditions.[[7]](#footnote-7) The bible teaches Christians to do unto others as they would have them do unto them. That is a theme that most are taught from grade school. It is by following the Commandments of the bible that “protect and improve our own souls by doing right.”[[8]](#footnote-8) In the book of Numbers, the Prophet Moses insist that “purification after battle is necessary and required after the warriors return home.” If that was true in biblical times, should it not still be just as crucial in the present? Instead of purification rituals and ceremony, our morally wounded soldiers come home left to their own devices to cope with the residue of war.[[9]](#footnote-9)

When providing care for those who serve in amed forces there is a need for mental health providers and mininsters to work together to provide wholistic care. Each provider must be aware as to when their discipline has reached its limits and its time refer or consult with the other. There is a thin line between spiritual warfare and mental illness. Its not always easy to distinquish between the two, which is why this project is necessary.

**The Project Location/Setting/Situation (The Rationale for the Study)**

As chapel personnel in the United States Army, I work with the 1st Battalion, 44th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, in Fort Hood, Texas; I am a chaplain. Humanity being a fragile and impermanent phenomenon, recognition of my membership within the human family helps me to empathize with my clients. These are women and men who have been victims of relational, social, psychological, and economic devastations. The location for this ministry setting is the United States Army Office of Chaplaincy.

Most of my clients have been in battlefronts. But those who have not may have been in life-changing circumstances such as relationship abuse. I prayerfully work to provide these necessary healing, encouraging construction of workable bridges. In her observation, Myles Werntz notes that “the symbol of God functions to orient and inspire human life in liberating ways” which can only be attained by “a radical sense of divine transcendence and immanence.”

Caring for veterans and active servicewomen and men entail addressing the systemic and now endemic problems that inhibit excellent care to our warriors. It was in the bid to address some of the challenges that a hearing uncovered that Congress noted that,

Communities that try to partner with VA should not get the response that a group in the Dallas-Fort Worth area received. When Mental Health America of Greater Dallas and the Mental Health Association of Tarrant County were awarded half-million-dollar grants to work with veterans, they organized a community education conference and invited the VA to talk to them. The VA didn’t show up.

As military chaplains, we are called to provide spiritual care to those who serve. The chaplain is responsible for standing with the solider in sacred spaces offering moral support to the troops. It is the charge of the military chaplain to “listen deeply to our warriors’ pain” and to be honest about the moral inconsistencies of our country.[[10]](#footnote-10) The spiritual care of the chaplain can greatly impact the lives of those who serve.

**The Project (Study) Purpose**

This project explores the nature of the challenges which veterans go through after their service in the military to find the most appropriate ways for caring for them. It uses as a backdrop the recommended texts in this course (that is, *War: Four Christian Views*, edited by Robert G. Clouse and *What It Is Like to Go to War* by Karl Marlantes), but delves deeper into procuring of healing for veterans who witness Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder from the activities of war causing moral injury. For the latter, Edward Tick’s *War and the Soul: Healing Our Nation’s Veterans from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder* is used as a core text in unraveling the mandatory psychotherapeutic requirements for veterans.[[11]](#footnote-11)

The project makes use of a textual analysis combined with research and video and film analysis of the consequences of war, including a holistic discussion on healing the wounds of war. Consequently, a critical aspect of caring for killers is to have respect for the arduous jobs that soldiers are engaged. Given the seriousness of wars and their aftermaths, Gordon Martel’s *The Encyclopedia of War,* a five-volume set that is a “comprehensive print and electronic resource are covering the history of warfare from ancient times to the present day.”[[12]](#footnote-12) This offering should provoke deep, critical, and humane approach to perceptions of soldiers, and the treatment meted out to them in pre- and postwar societies.

Often, the severity of war’s consequences on the soldier might mean that they lose the ability to process their environments properly; many suffer the loss of soul from self, a disconnect that creates a duality of identity in the same person. Generally, under some of these circumstances, because the warrior is unable to carry on with normal realities, they need to be helped to regain themselves consciousness-wise. This is why family, loved ones, and friends are helpful members in bringing about holistic healing. In showing care for Veterans and warriors, Honorable Akaka states that,

Spouses should have access to the tools and professional help that would hold their families together in these most trying times. I am hopeful that our second panel will be able to shed some light on the solutions to these problems.

The discovery of the dysfunction within the Veterans’ Affairs (VA) was both alarming and embarrassing for the government. Who could believe that after serving their country, placing their own lives and families in harm’s way, protecting, thinking that the had their country’s backing, soldier’s return home only to find out that they were not being cared or catered for? The trauma that emerges from the shock would be excruciating. For many who had already experienced the loss of soul which Art, Tick’s client described, they are experiencing further aggravation.

Edward Tick proposes that “when we listen to trauma’s symptoms instead of denying or suppress them, we hear what we can do...” Within the spectrum of the care that is possible, the author says we must do more providing job opportunity. To him, the care that the soul needs is much deeper than a lacuna which gainful employment may fill. Advocating a truly humanistic and holistic healing approach, Tick recommends what is perhaps a true and concrete methodology in penetrating the wounded soul, to towards “therapy and dehumanization” of our vets.

Recognizing agencies themselves are understaffed, Tick recommends that PTSD may also be translated as Post-Traumatic Social Disorder—in that the soldiers returning home from war often end up finding out that home is not what they assumed it would be. “We are not in a hopeless situation,” he assures.[[13]](#footnote-13)

In concluding this project, an examination of Tick’s enumerations is in order. He highlights at least 12 ways in which care for the killers may be expressed.



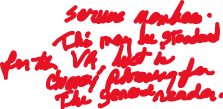
1. Find out who the vets in your community are and thank them and welcome them home, no matter what your feelings are about the wars they fought;
2. Offer immediate response to any soldier or veteran crying out in unbearable pain;
3. Create gathering places for veterans in every community;
4. Give our returning service people a safe, candid period of supported isolation for their critically needed to coalesce, rest, and renewal;
5. Create Veterans’ Councils to address and [sic] advise your community on veterans’ needs;
6. Create religious services that bring veterans spiritual cleansing and comfort;
7. Restore the true meaning, respect, and celebration of Memorial and Veterans’ Days
8. Create religious, educational and therapeutic programs by which veterans can seek out not just psychological but spiritual healing, cleansing, and forgiveness;
9. Create safe havens that are not only shelters for homeless or addicted vets but are true Houses of Initiation, where vets receive not just jobs and sobriety training, but education, therapy, and dehumanization processes;
10. Invite veterans into schools and community centers to educate our young and the public on the realities of service and war;
11. Create genuine therapeutic opportunities for deep expression and release;
12. Do not be afraid of veterans; do not be afraid of the intensity of their feelings but enter into a shared healing journey with them. [[14]](#footnote-14)

These seem to be straightforward recommendations, yet seldom have they been executed to the letter. Otherwise, the recent problems in the Veterans’ Affairs would have emerged as relevant or troubling. Regarding caring for others, Jesus says, in Mark 12: 30-31, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” Amplifying Jesus statement, in 1 Corinthians 13, the author, believed to be the apostle Paul, abundantly echoes the importance of love in the hierarchy of Christian duty.



**The Project Goals (Learning Goals of the Study)**

The project goals are to shed light on the conversations that need to transpire between mental health practitioners and those in ministry. We serve the same group of individuals and need to refer out when the issues the client is struggling with shifts into the “others professional lane.” The goal of this researcher is to develop a protocol/guide that will include resource information for military chaplains regarding moral injury and the specific spiritual care needed for servicepersons. At this time there is no centralized tool that military chaplains can easily access outlining resources, services, and details surrounding the care required for servicepersons.



**The Details of the Project (The Plan of the Study)**

*The Chaplains Guide for Mortal Injury Spiritual Care* will be the product developed by this project. The research conducted for this dissertation will produce the foundational information surrounding this concentration of care leading to the material that will be included on this final offering. This resource will be a pamphlet that will be created and shared through an array of mediums to effectively share with others in the field of chaplaincy that may encounter warriors who have returned home in need of specialized care. This pamphlet will include:



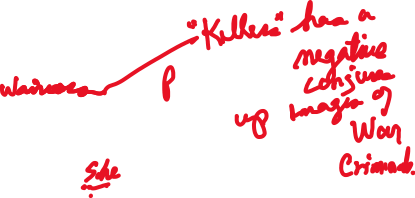
* Definition of Moral Injury
* How PTSD and Moral Injury overlap
* The needs of warriors/individuals encountering Moral Injuries
* What national resources are available for those experiencing Moral Injuries
* Scriptures that can be shared with those in pain

This tool will shared be in electronic and print format. Their will be a link developed that will be made available on the internet by this researcher so whomever is in need of the information can readily access it.

**The Literature Search**



**Caring for Killers**



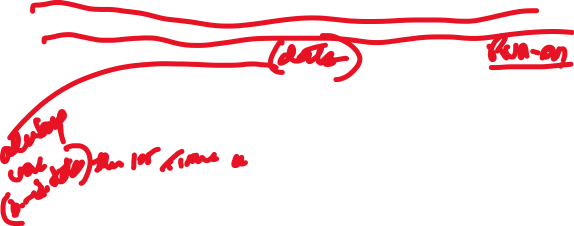
“Why do people care more about the perpetrators than their innocent victims?” This was the question Dr. Samuel L. Rieger asked himself from enduring the lengthy process of seeking justice in the behalf of his daughter, Melanie who was brutally murdered in their Connecticut home on May 24, 1994.[[15]](#footnote-15) Rieger and his wife Wanda had just arrived from an outing when they found out that Melanie had been “brutally strangled to death.” Melanie’s parents’ true desires are that their daughter’s murderer gets the lengthiest and most painful death for the crime of snatching their child away from them in such a brutish manner. While their wishes are not out of order, this project takes a second look at a different category of “murderers,” killers, who had courageously pursued a life in the paycheck of the state. These are women and men that care for the military strength and defense of the nation.



In his introduction during a lecture at Oregon Humanities Center, Dr. Edward Tick quotes Aeschylus as saying the following trite statement: “In war truth is the first casualty.” Before American forces went into Iraq in 2003, the total justification for the war was that the Iraqi government had in its possession Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). For a government which had been viewed as a rogue state since the Persian Gulf War, it was an easy sell for the Bush administration to convince the American community that the invasion of Iraq was, in fact, one of the ways of saving “Western civilization” from the oncoming annihilation by its enemies. Consequently, according to Samuel Huntington,



The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation-states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.[[16]](#footnote-16)



Going by Huntington’s hypothesis that “civilizations will be the latest phase in the evolution of conflicts in the modern world,” it should, therefore, not come as a surprise that a corresponding market for killers emerges. The logicality of his postulation opens up a grave and imminent concern that demands the protection of a “civilization,” which in this instance is western civilization. In *Clash of Civilizations* Huntingtonargues that,



Political leaders and scholars can not ignore the unfortunate truth in these old truths. For peoples seeking identity and reinventing ethnicity, enemies are essential, and the potentially most dangerous enmities occur across the fault lines between the world's major civilizations.[[17]](#footnote-17)

As Tick observed during his “War and the Soul” lecture, every one of us is affected by war. A moving account published in the *Independent*, of Fergus Anckorn, a member of the 118th Field Regiment Royal Artillery and member of the Magic Circle, narrates the ordeal of a Prisoner of War (PoW). In that account where Ancknorn tells about the brutality and death which he encountered at the hands of the Japanese in Singapore, Childs reports Ancknorn as saying the following: “I was blown up, I was shot, I survived a massacre, I was buried alive twice, and I was up in front of a firing squad twice. Apart from that, it was all right. Ancknorn’s story has been recorded in his memoir, *Captivity, Slavery, and Survival As a Far East Pow*, by Peter Fyans.



What is instructive in the above statement is the compulsive and mandatory production of “enemies.” Once these enemies are created out of the dichotomy of “us-against-them, the next line of business is also to produce the liquidating force of servicemen and women who would execute the biddings of war. These processes necessarily meant that souls are lost, not just on the metaphorical plane of interpretation. According to a scenario which played out during a conversation which Dr. Tick had with one of his client's Art, war affects the soul at a viscerally psychosomatic and spiritual level layer.

Beyond Art’s war narratives, Tick provided a focused and rapt attention for the veteran who was suffering from syndromes of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). On his soul, Art told Tick that his own was long “gone.” Interestingly, Art was immediately immersed in his memory narrations when he realized that Tick “believed” his story.

Evidently, from Art’s story, people seldom take veteran stories seriously, particularly when they appear to be too distant and farfetched from the normal. Thus, while it is far too easy for people to believe conspiracy theories about war and corporations sponsoring them than believing the actual stories of the veterans who themselves make the wars happen. Ignoring this critical aspect in constructions of war is dangerous to the social stability and health memory of veterans.

In *War and the American Difference: Theological Reflections on Violence and National Identity*, Stanley Hauerwas strives “to convince Christians that war has been abolished.” As idealistic as his thesis appears, Hauerwas himself knows that ours is “a world of war.” The ever-present dangers of war and its devastating consequences are the preoccupations of both Karl Marlantes’ *What It Is Like to Go to War* and the edited-volume by Robert G. Clouse *War: Four Christian Views*. [[18]](#footnote-18)

One of the key topics which the above-listed texts the authors and discussants focus on is the lurking, and many times, problematic endings of several persons who had been involved in the distasteful business of killing for a living. To that end, one question which emerges from the preceding is “what kind of care would one expect to be given to persons who themselves had been involved in taking of other peoples’ lives.” Naturally, à la Dr. Samuel L. Rieger’s struggles with the contradictions of giving attention to killers or “murders,” society—through its law and regulations—demands one form of punishment or the other for anyone who has taken the life of another person. Furthermore, in his lecture “War and the Soul,” Tick recognizes that,



The process of creating a soldier is arduous and expensive. It entails not just training but dehumanizing. One moment at soldier at Fort Drum declared, ‘Our soldiers are trained killers, and they don’t scare.’ This soldier voiced rage and dehumanization, and hunger for revenge or conditions they create trauma.[[19]](#footnote-19)

Tick asserts that our government does put enough investments into caring for our military in post-service life. While commenting on what men and women in the military have to endure to deemed fully qualified and efficient members of the armed forces, Tick states like this:

But military service is supposed to build, not destroy men and women. A healthy society needs warriors and guardians of honor and maturity who restrain violence, who admit fear, without being crippled by it. We do not have to dehumanize our troops to create good soldiers.

By calling out and engaging our system that operates at below the minimum level of expectation when it comes to veterans, Tick brings to the fore the enduring nature of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

**Trauma from War**

In a review of *War and the Soul*, James Lieberman writes that “At the tribal and national level, war represents divine will, participation in which requires subordination of individual will coupled with an elevation of the warrior to heroic status.” An observation that dovetails into Karl Marlantes’s point in *What It is Like to Go to War*, when, for instance, he writes that:

I used to hesitate to say this worried it would only further fuel the accusation that we Vietnam veterans were the sick baby killers we were being told we were. Maybe some veterans did feel horrible and sick every time they killed another man, just the way many people think they ought to. I’m also sure some of the people telling me they’d feel horrible and sick could very well feel that way if they ever had to do it. But they didn’t have to. I did. And I didn’t feel that way. And it makes me feel angry when people lay on me what I ought to have felt. More important, it obscures the truth.

By his own admission “that in combat all-out total aggression will help save your life,” Marlantes points us to the fact that, in addition to one of fighting for one’s own country, real war situation also meant that the soldier is fighting to stay alive. Hence, during the real war, it no longer matters whether people had favorable opinions or views about the military, generally speaking, or some soldiers specifically. What matters most is to, first and foremost, be alive; one must be alive to see victory. Unfortunately, as Tick remarks, what would have been victory turns out to be trauma and a series of painful memories when one considers the type of treatments that veterans receive:

And we spend almost no time, effort, or money to rehumanize them upon return. Short debriefings and arrays of medications to suppress the symptoms of pain and trauma cannot restore the hearts and souls of those who have seen combats, and cannot recreate successful post-service identity. There is a necessary and proper reciprocal relationship between any society and its warriors.

**Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

Lieberman finds it revealing that “Tick cites the fact that homeless veterans number some 270,000, most from the Vietnam War, and that suicides now outnumber fatal casualties from that war.” Besides, he reveals how Tick’s book shows that “PTSD afflicts not only the individual soul but that of a nation that once basked in the assurance of its goodness and now finds evidence of evil within.” Writing further on Tick’s assertions about PTSD, Lieberman states that:

Tick asserts that PTSD is an identity disorder that requires healing of a wounded soul. His method connects suffering from the healing power of myth, including reconciliation with the dead and, ironically, attaining the character values of a true warrior. The last four chapters explain this journey: purification and cleansing, the healing power of storytelling, restitution in the family and the nation, and initiation as a warrior.

With his client Art, Tick employed the kind of creative intervention which David K. Carson and Kent W. Becker discussed in their book, *Creativity in Psychotherapy: Reaching New Heights With Individuals Couples and Families.* Writing about it, Carson and Becker observe that “veteran clinicians know that creative therapy involves experiencing as much as talking, even though technically one might define talking as a type of experience.”[[20]](#footnote-20) The authors in *Creativity in Psychotherapy* unequivocally states that “these approaches increase the likelihood of hooking people into the therapy process because many of them have grown tired…”

In “The Role of the Prison Chaplain in Rehabilitation,” Jody L. Sundt, Harry R. Dammer, and Francis T. Cullen believe that “the results from the national survey indicate that chaplains are supportive of rehabilitation, see religion as reformative, spend a significant amount of their time counseling inmates, and place a high level of importance on this task.” In order words, chaplains view very highly the supportive and reformative roles which religion and spirituality play in the procurement of healing and care for at-risk individuals, especially those who are going through outs of PTSD in society, more so in the case servicewomen and men. However, Sundt, Dammer, and Cullen agree that the nature of this care becomes problematic when “the content of chaplains’ counseling session is ambiguous.”

**Counseling**

As Sachin H. Jain points out, “denial was far more likely to kill” than an actual illness. Denial may come from the government and the victims of post-war syndromes.[[21]](#footnote-21) When it comes from the latter there still could chance of dealing the root causes of the problems, provided there is the political will supported by financial investments in finding all types of solutions, from medical therapies to socially useful reintegration instruments, such as community group discussion/fora, religious/spiritual interventions, etc. Own Renik proposes that “it concerns the predisposing factors. Still, in operation, that analytic treatment can be helpful—as it was in addressing the longstanding unconscious guilt that underlay post-traumatic stress disorders.” While there is a consensus among psychoanalyst that urgent care is needed for veterans, and while determining “the content” of such care have not always been a straightforward or intuitive process, Peter Neary and J. L Granatstein give ample references on provisions for veterans dealing with issues in post-World War II Canada.

Thus, to explore the contents and impacts of counseling sessions, Jody L. Sundt, Harry R. Dammer and Francis T Cullen state that counselors and therapists “place a great deal of emphasis on religion or spirituality during their counseling sessions.” Still, on the value of practical psychoanalysis on patients, Renik writes that

Even when suffering is set in motion by unmistakable traumatic events of overwhelming proportions—for example, when post-traumatic disorders result from horrifying military combat experiences—individual psychological factors are important determinants.[[22]](#footnote-22)

Writing further on the healing derived from the process, Renik states that “In the face of the same catastrophe, some people are more susceptible than others to becoming symptomatic.” As John V.H. Dippel observes in *War and Sex: A Brief History of Men's Urge for Battle*, beyond patriotic or nationalistic values, people are drawn to wars to prove their courage. Without barring other justifications for war, including those considered “Christian,” imaginaries of the Church are called to a higher standard, “charged with the task to be a witness in the world.”[[23]](#footnote-23)

While the preponderance of good speeches on great performances of servicewomen and men in the field cannot be denied, these notable words of “encouragement” may not substitute the practical care that is urgently needed for the men whose souls and inner cores have been altered by their participation in state-sponsored violence and bloodletting. For instance, Honorable Daniel K. Akaka, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs in 2008, said the following:

In closing, the VA must recognize that family support is an integral part of its mission. VA must overcome obstacles stopping it from incorporating family members into the care, rehabilitation, and recovery process. To paraphrase President Lincoln, we have an obligation.



**Pastoral Care and Practical Theology**

Pastoral care and practical theology are the processes used to articulate the results of this project. The discipline of pastoral care and practical theology has shifted over the past 20 years redirecting its focus from “applied theology” to “theological reflection.”[[24]](#footnote-24) This shift solidifies the field of professional pastoral theology and its critical reflection process when providing care to clients. Now, pastoral care is seen as a process and not merely a product that chaplains provide but a respected discipline. Theological reflection consists of activities and methods that allow the client to give an interpretation of their values and life decisions in a structured setting supplied by chaplains during their sessions.[[25]](#footnote-25)



*Images of Pastoral Care*, by Robert C. Dykstra indicates that the modernization of pastoral care began with Anton Boisen’s realization of the relationship between mental health and ministry after he experienced a break within his mental health.[[26]](#footnote-26) As a chaplain, I have also found that there is a need to address both the spiritual and mental health of the individual, to bring about emotional healing. Anton Boisen developed a pioneering model of pastoral care, “the living human document.”[[27]](#footnote-27) The living human document is a concept that defines the process of pastoral care that studies an individual’s life. Life is valuable and cannot be measured by a diagnostic manual.[[28]](#footnote-28) The chaplain and the client can glean from one another life’s experiences in this healing relationship. Healing occurs when they listen and observe one another allowing learning to happen.



Charles E. Hall in *Head and Heart: The Story of the Clinical Pastoral Education Movement*, outlines the changes in the history of Pastoral Care and Clinical Training movements. The standardization of the Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) training that are the “fruits of the pioneers’ labor,” remain today where professionals “trust the process.”[[29]](#footnote-29) As a chaplain, I am to avail myself to the client and render honest and spiritually grounded responses out of respect for them and my profession.[[30]](#footnote-30) I’ve learned that there is indeed an art to be a chaplain and I desire to offer support to fellow chaplains helping them to become effective caregivers.

In the book *Images of Pastoral Care Classical Readings* by Robert C. Dykstra, the author discusses how the “intimate stranger” should approach the field of chaplaincy.[[31]](#footnote-31) In intimate stranger role, the chaplain serves as a witness in the client’s traumatic life experience. As a chaplain, it is crucial for me as spiritual care provider to align myself with mental health professionals who will allow the client to decompress for the sake of maintaining good mental health.

**Projected Time Table From Prospectus to Dissertation**

The time-table from prospectus to dissertation will not be a very long process. The goal of this researcher is to have all research completed, data evaluated, and findings ready for submission by no later than January 31, 2020. The topic has sufficient resources available from an array of peer-reviewed articles and books on the subject matter. The plan is to have two chapters completed each month:

* Due October 31st: Abstract, Introduction and Chapter 1
* Due November 30th: Chapter 2 and 3
* Due December 31st: Chapter 4 and 5:
* Due January 31st: Completed document

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