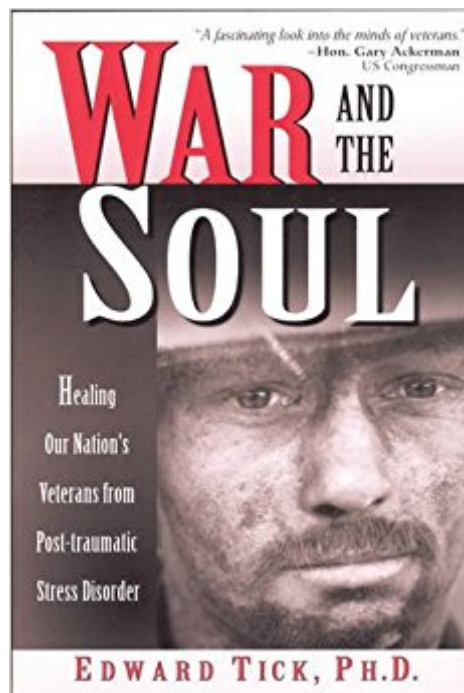




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# War And The Soul: Healing Our Nation's Veterans From Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder



## Synopsis

War and PTSD are on the public's mind as news stories regularly describe insurgency attacks in Iraq and paint grim portraits of the lives of returning soldiers afflicted with PTSD. These vets have recurrent nightmares and problems with intimacy, can't sustain jobs or relationships, and won't leave home, imagining "the enemy" is everywhere. Dr. Edward Tick has spent decades developing healing techniques so effective that clinicians, clergy, spiritual leaders, and veterans' organizations all over the country are studying them. This book, presented here in an audio version, shows that healing depends on our understanding of PTSD not as a mere stress disorder, but as a disorder of identity itself. In the terror of war, the very soul can flee, sometimes for life. Tick's methods draw on compelling case studies and ancient warrior traditions worldwide to restore the soul so that the veteran can truly come home to community, family, and self.

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## Customer Reviews

Edward Tick, Ph.D., is an expert on post-traumatic stress disorder. A practicing psychotherapist for more than 30 years, he is a nationally recognized authority on the psychological, spiritual, historical, and cultural aspects of war in the healing of PTSD. Dr. Tick specializes in transformational work with war veterans, survivors of severe trauma, and all those in need of deep psycho-spiritual healing. Dr. Tick has extensively studied both classical Greek and Native American healing traditions and successfully integrates those methods into his modern clinical practice. A writer, educator, and overseas journey guide, Dr. Tick holds an M.A. in psychology from Goddard College and a Ph.D. in

Communication from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He is a clinical member and has held various officer positions with the American Academy of Psychotherapists and the American Holistic Medical Association, as well as many other professional organizations. He is also an ordained interfaith minister. Dr. Tick began treating Vietnam veterans in psychotherapy in 1979 before PTSD was a diagnostic category. Since that time, he has treated veterans and survivors of WWII, the Holocaust, Korea, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, Central American conflicts, Lebanon, the Balkan wars, the Irish civil and religious wars, the Greek Civil War, the Middle East conflicts, and the Iraq War, among others. He has also served as a consultant to numerous community, church, and organizations on the treatment of veterans and the training of staff for such work. Dr. Tick's extraordinary work takes him on healing journeys, spiritual tours, lectures, educational classes, and workshops around the globe. He is cofounder of the Sanctuary International Friendship Foundation, a nonprofit agency that directs and raises funds for projects to help heal war-torn Viet Nam. He resides in Albany, New York, where he and his wife Kate Dahlstedt are directors of Sanctuary: A Center for Mentoring the Soul and Soldier's Heart®<sup>®</sup>, a non-profit program designed to create veterans' safe-return programs in communities across the country. Dr. Tick's last two books are entitled *The Golden Tortoise: Viet Nam Journeys* and *The Practice of Dream Healing: Bringing Ancient Greek Mysteries into Modern Medicine* (Quest 2001). His first book, *Sacred Mountain: Encounters with the Vietnam Beast*, was published in 1989.

I enjoyed the spiritual look at post war PTSD as well as the historical look at how warriors of past generations and cultures dealt with the psychological aspects of war but once you've read the first 3 chapters the material just starts repeating itself over and over. This book is basically a magazine length article stretched way out to make it book length without the substance.

My heart-felt thanks to Dr. Tick who understands why so many wounded warriors remain wounded. He also knows why previously used methods have failed and so many warriors have chosen to end their own lives upon returning home. I cannot thank this great man enough for his determination to find a way back for those whose wounds have been too painful to talk about. This book should be required reading for every chaplain working with our wounded warriors, no matter their years of service, just beginning the path to chaplaincy and even approaching retirement. This is pure gold that can bring healing. I would also recommend this book to pastors as they will face our returning warriors and their families at some point. Don't let this book pass you by, get it and prepare to be changed forever.

Edward Tick captures not only the sense of grief that veterans of combat experience, but he points to a possible solution to the problem of PTSD by categorizing it as an identity disorder. As an identity disorder, PTSD becomes not simply an anxiety disorder, but a destroyer of soul. The soul is concerned with issues of being, morality, and ethics. When a person enters into combat and the killing grounds, even if he or she does not actively kill, something inside the soul begins to crumble and die. Tick points out that ancient civilizations coped with these issues by carrying out elaborate rituals and by not turning war primarily into a means of killing as many people as possible. Further, war was kept to a minimum and opposing warriors met in personal struggles against one another. Modern warfare has destroyed these ancient rules of war and technology has depersonalized not only the act of killing, but allowed for mass murder to occur on unimaginable levels. Warriors simply become an extension of technology and are left to deal with the remains of war on their own. Some continue to experience grief and guilt for the rest of their lives. Unable to leave the battle field, they live between universes---post-war civilization and the never-ending horror of waking nightmares---that cause them to see two worlds at once. Tick's proposal is that until the soul is allowed to grieve properly and to tell its story, until it is allowed to perform the rituals needed for completion of the killing, it will continue to suffer. Essential to that process is the act of storytelling, of confessing and laying to rest the deeds of the past. His proposal is one that is both practical and of universal use. His research into warrior culture across time and place speaks of the need for such practices. War may never end, but a warrior's grief and guilt may, in time, be assuaged so that he or she, at last, may return home.

Edward Tick gets it. Few others get it. Maybe John Shay and Dave Grossman do. A number of our soldiers returning from wars in Vietnam, Iraq, or Afghanistan who suffer from PTSD also suffer from Moral Injury. This is more than guilt for what they have done or what they have witnessed by way of torture or atrocity. Moral Injury can include the collapse of the very moral universe by which standards of love, justice, and dignity are measured. With the collapse of this moral universe, the soul disintegrates. The PTSD soldier experiences anomie. Anomie leads on occasion to suicide. Tick, like Shay, sees the connection between today's soldier and those of yesteryear, even soldiers in the Trojan war. Nevertheless, today's soldier deserves special attention: his or her soul needs repair. The United States has become a nation that destroys the souls of those who do not first die in our wars.

one of the most profound books i have ever read - and i read alot. i grew up at the tail end of korea, watched vietnam on tv, then grenada, beirut, cambodia, the hutus and tutsis, iraq, afghanistan and on and on it goes. i have never read anything like this before and by the time i was done i wondered how in god's name these young people we send off to war, ever come home again, how they heal and is it possible for them. i now believe that it is possible, but to be honest, i am think that the price to them and the world is just too high. probably the best book on wars and the people we send off to fight them.

An eye opener into the cruelty of war and the destruction of man's soul. The victor and conqueror of today's world, United States of America, is not really so when it is able to crush it's own men and women soldiers and return them home from war into the hell of being a lost soul within a culture that doesn't care for anything that is not measured in dollars. No love, no family, no life, no hope. How can "long live America" when it's bleeding to death through its veterans?

This book gives a whole new meaning to post-traumatic stress disorder. In fact, after reading it I would say that the author would be more likely to call the affliction post-traumatic SOUL disorder. And rather than approaching it from the typical perspective, Dr. Tick approaches PTSD as an identity problem. In other words, he maintains that combat turns an individual into a completely different person, who therefore inevitably has different relationships with the culture and people he or she left to go to war. And therefore traditional methods of treating PTSD don't work, and we must go to non-traditional--for instance, Native American--rituals to cure PTSD and TBI. People familiar with the work of Post-Jungian writers like James Hillman and Barbara Hannah will grasp the concepts in this book immediately.

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