Integrating the Soul from War to Peace:

Required Capabilities for Just War, Moral Injury, and the U.S. Army Operating Concept

Chaplain (Colonel) Jonathan E. Shaw, D.D.
Command Chaplain, U.S. Army Europe
Integrating the Soul from War to Peace

Terms

• Imperatives
  – Functional Imperative: Accomplish the mission, to create the most combat-effective unit possible
  – Social Imperative: keep faith with society, to shape the unit to reflect society’s values

• Soul
  – That component of the human being which is the locus of moral, spiritual, and religious identity, faith, and action
  – Sometimes called spirit, the animating force for the body and mind
Integrating the Soul from War to Peace

Just War

• *Jus ad bellum*: how the state decides rightly to go to war
  – Criteria: Legitimate authority, just cause, last resort, just intent, public declaration, proportionality, reasonable chance of success

• *Jus in bello*: how the military rightly prosecutes a war
  – Criteria: Discrimination and proportionality

• *Jus incurvatus in se* (justice curved in on itself)
  – When the warfighter takes life as the instrument of justice, how should the warfighter justify to himself or to God his own violent actions?
  – Where does the peacemaker find peace?
Integrating the Soul from War to Peace

PTSD and Moral Injury

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triggering Event (A1 Criterion)</th>
<th>PTSD</th>
<th>Moral Injury</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actual or threatened death or serious injury</td>
<td>Acts that violate deeply held moral values</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual's role at time of event</td>
<td>Victim or witness</td>
<td>Perpetrator, victim, or witness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predominant painful emotion (A2)</td>
<td>Fear, horror, helplessness</td>
<td>Guilt, shame, anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reexperiencing (B Criteria)?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance or numbing (C Criteria)?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physiological arousal level (D Criteria)?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What necessity is lost?</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Trust</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Integrating the Soul from War to Peace

PTSD and Moral Injury

• Standard PTSD treatment
  – Targets trauma to the body and mind through cognitive behavioral therapy, prolonged exposure therapy, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing, and medication, but bypasses moral and spiritual injury

• Moral injury
  – Must be addressed in its own terms, which are chiefly moral, spiritual, and religious
  – Problematic for the military, whose resilience, fitness, and medical concepts focus almost exclusively on the neuro-biological; does not officially recognize moral injury
Integrating the Soul from War to Peace

Moral Injury: Functional v. Social Imperative

• S. L. A. Marshall, *Men against Fire*
  – Only ¼ of WWII soldiers fired on the enemy when engaged
  – Morality v. combat efficiency

• Dave Grossman, *On Killing*
  – “Killing is what war is all about, and killing in combat, by its very nature, causes deep wounds of pain and guilt.”
  – “The force of darkness and destruction within us is balanced with a force of light and love for our fellow man. These forces struggle and strive within the heart of each of us. . . . We cannot know life if we do not acknowledge death.”
Integrating the Soul from War to Peace

Moral Injury and Theology

• *Media vita in morte sumus* (In the Midst of Life We Are in Death)
  
  In the midst of life we are in death;
  From whom can we seek help?
  From You alone, O Lord,
  Who by our sins are justly angered.
  Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and merciful Savior,
  Deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.

• Werner Elert’s *Urerlebnis* (the primal experience of God)
  – The soldier’s confrontation with taking life implies his own moral complicity and mortality—before himself, his community, and God
  – Makes room for brokenness and then healing by confidence in a revealed God who delivers the self-condemned by participating in their pain, taking their punishment, and overcoming it
Integrating the Soul from War to Peace

The AOC: Win in a Complex World (2014)

• Emphasizes capabilities that are broad and adaptive due to the range of assigned missions, the multiplicity of partners and domains, the diversity of security challenges, and especially the unknowable and changing future
• Seeks to develop soldiers who are resilient and adaptive
• Focuses on human performance optimization
  – “Advances in cognitive, behavioral, and learning sciences will improve critical thinking, increase cognitive and physical performance, foster intuition and social empathy, improve health and stamina, facilitate talent management, enhance leader training, and strengthen unit cohesion. Human performance technologies will help the Army develop adaptive leaders, resilient Soldiers, and cohesive teams that thrive in uncertain, dangerous, and chaotic environments.”
  – Calls for a fuller understanding of what it means to be human
What capability is required to build character in soldiers, to build resolve against all odds . . . to empower soldiers to find trust after moral injury, to find peace when the demands of justice curve in on the warrior, to find affirmation when faced morally with guilt, spiritually with emptiness, and unequivocally with death?
In battle and in the face of danger and death, he discloses those divine attributes which his Maker gave when he created man in his own image. No physical courage and no brute instinct can take the place of the Divine help which alone can sustain him.”
Peer-reviewed Quantitative Research

RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE
Active Duty Army

No Preference
Atheist / Non-Theist
Recorded Religious Preference
Unknown

2/3 of all research studies before 2010 show the religious have:
- more positive emotions
- more social connection
- healthier lifestyle
- less emotional disorders

28x physical mentioned
10x mental mentioned
0x religion mentioned
1x spiritual mentioned

MORE RELIGIOUS ARE
57% less likely to make a suicide attempt
LESS RELIGIOUS ARE
5x more likely to commit suicide

90% of studies indicate that as religious involvement increased alcohol abuse decreased

87% of studies show a significant positive correlation between participation in religious communities and marital stability.

Slide Developed by Chaplain (MAJ) Brian Koyn
Integrating the Soul from War to Peace

The demands of justice curved in on the warfighter, the distinctive nature of moral injury, the complexities and ambiguities of the AOC, the philosophical and theological depth of what it means to be human, the historical understanding of battlefield empowerment, the volume of peer-reviewed quantitative research studies, and even the Clausewitzian theory of war all underscore the strategic requirement to strengthen the soul of the warrior. The soldier requires moral, spiritual, and religious empowerment for mission success and personal resilience.
Integrating the Soul from War to Peace

Recommendations

Doctrine

1. Adjust the Army Human Dimension Strategy beyond human performance optimization to include empowerment from moral commitments, spirituality, and religion. Broaden the understanding of what it means to be human.

2. Adjust the Army Ethic to include the soldier’s foundational moral, spiritual, and religious beliefs and values, built on an understanding of the human as body, mind, and spirit. This will provide a basis for addressing just war qualms, moral injury, and spiritual empowerment.

3. Adjust doctrinal terms throughout the Army lexicon to honor moral injury and sacrifice, reducing dehumanization. For example, change “ramp ceremony” to “fallen soldier farewell,” or “boots on the ground” to “soldier presence.”
Integrating the Soul from War to Peace

Recommendations

Organization

4. Resource chaplains and religious affairs specialists at every battalion and higher echelon, and in the garrison base, to strengthen the soldier’s soul and ensure Title 10 religious support.

Training

5. Train soldiers on the military’s commitment to combat effectiveness and moral healing, to reduce rates of just war qualms and moral injury. Conduct this training during initial entry training; before, during, and after deployments; and during transition from the military.
Leader Development

6. Educate the force on quantitative research documenting how religious and spiritual practice within communities of faith correlates positively with health, relationship stability, and positive emotions. Broaden the Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness program to include this research and offer links to faith communities.

7. Adjust leader development curricula during career education and pre-command courses to include discussion of religious, spiritual, and moral resources to address just war qualms and moral injury.
Policy Changes

8. The DoD officially recognizes and celebrates religious traditions.
   – Use a recurring DoD observance to honor the military contributions of soldiers of various faiths and support spiritual empowerment for mission success and personal resilience.

9. The DoD officially recognizes and resources treatment for moral injury.
   – Moral injury may overlay traumatic stress, but must be recognized and treated on its own terms. Place a chaplain on the PTSD/moral injury treatment team. Use a recurring DoD observance and a new award for moral courage to highlight this commitment to soldiers.

10. The DoD includes religious, spiritual, and moral elements within medical treatment protocols to ensure holistic care.
    – Medical teams should ask patients if they self-identify according to any faith-specific beliefs or practices, ask if they have any related concerns or requests, and then consider appropriate referrals in treatment plans.
Back Up