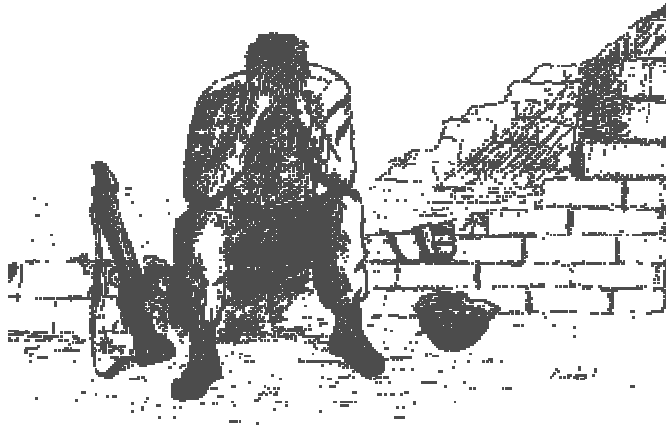


Invisible Wounds of War

Sources: "Coming Together to Fight for a Troubled Veteran," by Erica Goode, The New York Times, 7/18/11; "Cost of Treating Veterans Will Rise Long Past Wars" by James Dao, The New York Times, 7/28/11.



As **staff Sgt. Brad Eifert** returned home from Iraq to Fort Carson, Colo., in 2006, his uniform covered with medals, he knew something was wrong.

He was haunted by memories: friends being killed; the day he shot up a house filled with women and children, killing many of them; another when he watched a truck full of military contractors burn and did nothing to save them.

He no longer believed in the war or in his recruiting job. "Everybody I put in I know is going to get deployed," he kept thinking, "and I have to look their parents in the face and be like, 'It's not that bad, look at me, I'm great after two deployments. Your son will be fine.' "

Feeling like a failure, he hated his life. After a second suicide attempt, he told his commanding officers that he needed help. "**I'm tired of drinking, I'm tired of feeling hopeless, I'm tired of feeling depressed, I'm tired of feeling angry,**" he said he told them. "**I'm tired of my life.**"

Sgt. Eifert is sickened with the invisible wounds of war: post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Nearly **one in five** service members returning from deployment suffer PTSD, according to a study by the RAND Corporation.

On Aug. 9, 2010, Sgt. Eifert grabbed three guns and went into the woods behind his house. Four police officers came, subdued him with a Taser and arrested him.

"**I was just so angry, I wanted to die,**" Mr. Eifert, 36, recalled. He was discharged from the Army. By a stroke of good luck, he was spared through a novel court program, and has been under treatment. His mentor keeps a close eye on him saying, "**We're a long way from this being over. The demons that haunt him are still pretty deeply embedded.**"

Bring our troops home now from the senseless wars, and heal their wounds.



Join our 457th Peace Vigil to help end the wars!
Every Saturday, 1-3 pm, at Rte. 59 & Middletown Rd. in Nanuet, NY

For info: www.rocklandaction.org

08/20/11

Rockland Coalition for Peace & Justice