

**Suicide Prevention is our Cause**  
**By Terry D. Flood**

I've had 5 friends who took their own lives  
They were brothers' sisters' sons' daughters and wives  
Soldiers' leaders and mentors of mine  
They seemed normal and I didn't notice the signs  
I sit and I wonder why  
These great people had to die  
Men and women with so much pride  
Made the decision to end their lives  
The pain I feel and the tears I've cried  
I didn't prevent a suicide  
The guilt I feel won't subside  
I think of them all the time  
Preventing the next one is on my mind

The hurt that they caused their families and friends  
Is a pain I don't want to experience again  
This epidemic must come to an end  
We must protect our fighting women and men  
Active duty, reserve, guard or civilian  
Everybody is somebody to someone  
Our work towards prevention is not done  
We can't stop to the fights won  
Regardless of who you are or where you come from  
Think about your friends and loved ones  
Suicide cannot be undone  
Don't be afraid to ask for help  
Nothing to be gained by harming yourself  
I will now tell you a story of how a Soldier evolves  
And can only be saved if you get involved  
Suicide affects us all  
Suicide prevention is our call

They don't understand him  
How could they  
They don't know what it's like to be in harm's way  
They think he is a savage  
They think he is crazy  
They think he is mean  
They think he is angry  
He doesn't understand them  
How could he  
They don't know that freedom isn't free  
He thinks they are soft  
Or just lazy  
Way too sensitive

They are acting like babies

He doesn't want to discuss what happened over there  
He doesn't want to relive the anger or despair  
He lost a lot over there  
He had to be strong he couldn't be scared  
They don't want him to sit in his own silence  
Somehow he became numb to violence  
He has nothing good to say so he stays quiet  
He tries smiling to keep from crying

He doesn't even know who he is anymore  
He was young he was great  
He was innocent the night before  
He was strong he was brave  
He changed he went to war  
They taught him to use speed and audacity  
To fight hard and treat casualties  
To seize the initiative and maintain the advantage  
To establish fire superiority through violence of action  
That his weapon was an extension of himself  
To put the welfare of others above anything else  
To conduct personal hygiene in austere conditions  
To pay the smallest details the greatest attention  
To fall back on his training and accomplish the mission

You learn to appreciate things others neglect  
The moon the stars the sunset  
You learn not to let petty things get you upset  
To honor the fallen and never forget  
To laugh at the things that others take seriously  
Life limb or eyesight are what you hold dearly  
War is a place where females perform well  
Simply put war is hell  
War is a place where men can be men  
Throw rocks, pee outside and tell jokes with friends  
Mourn their dead, refit and go fight again  
He won't lose he will win  
He has to make the nation proud  
And console the mother who lost her child  
War shows us how dark life can get  
And you'll see things you can't forget

So what do you do when your tour ends  
No war to fight so what do you do then  
A shell of himself he misses his friends  
Get in or stay out a tough decision

Adapting to civilian life is a huge transition  
Do they expect you to just flip a switch  
He's not broken just dinged up  
Not looking for a hand out  
Just a hand up

He reconnects with family but it's not the same  
Things have changed since he went away  
He expects everything to be just how it was when he left  
He feels isolated and left to fend for himself  
While he was gone the world kept spinning  
His children kept growing his family kept living  
And he feels slighted it hurts his feelings  
Don't they know what he's accomplished?  
He was gone for a year engaged in conflict  
He wants to be the king in his home  
This is his castle this is his throne  
But they've grown accustomed to being without him  
They no longer know anything about him  
He wants to be near people he can relate to  
He feels as if your family just betrayed him

They want him to open up and laugh at their jokes  
He keeps resisting and giving up hope  
Military trained him to impose his will and not take flight  
When faced with adversity he must fight  
This is what he knows and how he survived  
He thinks the enemy is pressing him but it's his wife  
His anger boils up he hurts inside  
It gets hard to distinguish wrong from right

He seeks counsel he has a problem  
He sees a dr. he can't solve them  
Regurgitating things they taught him in college  
He's not much help it's not working  
He is tired of being angry  
Tired of hurting  
He wants him to know he isn't crazy  
Angry yes paranoid maybe  
Dr. tells him this is a natural reaction to unnatural events  
He says that sounds smart that makes sense  
He tries explaining this to family  
They won't listen  
What a travesty  
This relationship is beyond fixing

No longer proud he's madder than hell  
Dark thoughts cross his mind like harming yourself

Can't they hear him screaming for help  
Oh they can't because you hit them down  
Pushed them around and cursed them out  
22 veterans a day commit suicide  
American heroes losing their lives  
Defeated the enemy but defeated by life  
They don't ask for help because of pride  
In their mind it's dark inside  
A place where desperation and despair and fear collide  
They want someone to hear their cries  
No one truly wants to die  
Take the time to learn the signs  
For those contemplating suicide  
Give me the chance to help you realize  
You have so much to offer  
We will help you survive  
And deal with what hurts inside  
Nothing is ever as bad as it seems  
We will help you help yourself  
In your current state it is hard to believe  
He wants it to all to end  
He wants to be free  
He has no friends

There are people who love him dearly  
He is going through a storm  
He can't think clearly  
He is not alone  
Right now he is his own enemy  
Just pick up the phone  
Help is available don't get discouraged  
Asking for it takes some courage  
You are valuable although you feel worthless  
You've paid your dues thanks for your service  
Remember the lessons that kept you alive  
You will make it through this  
You will survive  
They taught you to be selfless not to be selfish  
You may need help but you are far from helpless  
As long as you have breath you have hope  
You are a good person this I know  
So talk to someone and take their help  
Nothing good comes out of harming yourself  
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Spiral out of control if we don't get involved  
Whoever you are large or small  
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