Returning soldiers need support

Every Nov. 11, we mark the sacrifices our fellow men and women made during times of war.

They are the honoured dead. The wreaths are laid, guns fired in salute, and jets make their fly-by. When the country calls, many answer and put their bodies and their very lives on the line. These are strong, tough, and committed individuals who love their jobs in the military.

We need to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice, but we also have a responsibility to help those who return. Their bodies have been violated and, in many cases, their minds have been affected by the trauma they have witnessed.

In some cases, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder does not manifest itself until many years after the traumatic events. Regardless of when or how these experiences have impacted our military personnel and their families, it is clear that more needs to be

Part of the problem may be the military ethos itself. The very nature of the profession requires obedience, toughness, strength and the ability to persevere under extraordinary, lifethreatening conditions. These behaviours are constantly being reinforced.

Andrew Tutty



Under such circumstances, it may be difficult for some to "self identify" their mental distress. By exposing their perceived weakness, they may feel they are opening themselves up to criticism or derision. Many are also concerned that such admissions will result in their termination for not being fit for active duty.

Other problems arise during their transition back into civilian life. If PTSD is not diagnosed and a treatment regime implemented, it becomes difficult to find and keep employment, maintain family and personal relationships or sink into alcohol or drug dependence.

The internet can be a resource in supporting Veterans who are at risk. The link offers 10 web sites that could help. http://www.familyforce. ca/sites/AllLocations/EN/Health%20 and%20Wellness/Pages/Mental-HealthandWellBeing.aspx





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