



# Military Outreach USA Stand By Me Heroes

3020 Milwaukee Avenue, Northbrook, IL 60062

September 2021

## OUR MISSION

*Military Outreach USA is a faith-based Judeo-Christian organization focused on Veterans and First-Responder Communities, regardless of their denomination or beliefs, demonstrating the compassion, love and healing of Christ our Lord*



WHEN YOU CAN'T RUN YOU WALK,  
WHEN YOU CAN'T WALK YOU CRAWL  
AND WHEN YOU CAN'T CRAWL  
WE WILL CARRY YOU.



## A message from the General

**MG (Ret) James H. Mukoyama**  
President & CEO

The month of September is National Suicide Awareness Month and with the recent events in Afghanistan we are keenly aware of the increased pressures and stress on our military community - Actives, Reserves, Guard, Veterans of all eras and their family members. Many of our military community who were already dealing with the effects of the invisible wounds of war, especially PTSD and Moral Injury, have had those feelings exacerbated with the fall of Kabul with scenes reminiscent of Saigon.

Our programs to specifically address these needs, since writing our book in 2014 on Moral Injury - [They Don't Receive Purple Hearts](#), have dramatically expanded in the past year and a half through the blessings of God. It began with the addition of the Stand By Me Heroes (SBMH) faith-based non-profit to Military Outreach USA. As you have seen in our past newsletters, under the leadership of our Executive Director, Chappy Ferrer, the SBMH founder, we now have SBMH chapters in numerous states.

This momentum increased through the continued partnership with the Crosswinds in Birmingham, AL, the producers of the DVDs on Moral Injury: [Invisible Scars and Honoring the Code](#). Early last year, Crosswinds Foundation produced a program called Centers of Hope with a supporting

manual that addresses Moral Injury and provides a training course that Chappy and I attended. This material and training program filled a gap in our offerings that has enable us to develop our Foxhole Soul Counselors (FSCs) in our state chapters.

I am pleased to mention another recent exciting development. We recently assisted Crosswinds Foundation in the production of a new DVD that will specifically address the needs of the families of our military community for loved ones dealing with PTSD and Moral Injury. This will provide education, comfort and hope to our family members who serve our nation along with their loved ones. We will keep you informed when it is released. Please continue to pray for our service members and their families.



## A message from Chappy

**Chappy Ferrer**  
Executive Director & Operations

Our operations are focused on our Military, Veterans and First Responders who are guarding the gates of our freedom. No matter your faith, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability or age we honor your service as a grateful nation. Military Outreach USA serves our communities through its Veterans Exiting Homelessness Program (VEHP) and Stand-by-me Heroes (SBMH) local chapters operating in 100% unanimity as servant-leaders or not at all. Visit our webpage, read our newsletter and join our mission.

**Stand-by-me Heroes Chapters.** Despite COVID our chapters in AZ, FL, HI, IL, MO, NC, NJ and UT are pressing forward. Our Foxhole Soul Counselors provide a framework to restore lives of those struggling with Moral Injury and Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome. Our focus is on mind, body and soul: leave out one of these elements and it feeds into the 22+ suicide rate. Therefore, we are focused on the total person.

**Free Training.** We offer Foxhole Soul Counselor training, via Zoom, to Veterans, businesses, houses of worship and individuals to reach all communities. Our newsletter contains training materials with a framework of recovery and continued success in this life. Our mission remains to reduce the dark number of 22+ Veteran suicides per day. Our grass-roots approach with 1:1 engagement continues to have life-saving impact. We will not lose this battle that affects all communities across our nation. Trainers include Dr. Sawtelle, Dr. Beeman (Marine), Leah McCool's (Air Force) *Worth While Women* and more.

**Recruitment.** We seek folks with a calling to serve our Military, Veterans and First Responders. Our volunteers provide 4-10 hours a month and include civilians and Veterans. Our best practices and grass-roots approach have proven effective as our volunteers are people of action not words.

Send us an email, visit our website and volunteer in a most challenging area to change and save lives. We have optimized plans and processes and ready to

mentor. <https://www.militaryoutreachusa.org/>

We are blessed!

Chappy

We are looking for part-time volunteer or contract admin support and/or grant writer to help with fundraising, building databases, placing beds for Veterans and other support functions. Can be done remotely during hours that are conducive to you. This is a great opportunity to support our ministry, get involved and make a difference! Please contact Sue.Brown@militaryoutreachusa.org for more information.

## *Veterans Exiting Homelessness Program (VEHP)*



### *BEDS-for-VETS Program*

**Veterans Existing Homelessness Programs** includes Our Beds-for-Vets program. Since our effort began through August of this year we have purchased 1,979 beds, ensuring our heroes are not sleeping on the floor. Basic household items valued at \$1,282,016 have also been provided as move-in-essentials (MIE) to Veterans moving from homelessness into housing. WOW! So far this year through August 350 beds have been provided to Veterans.

We partner with Veterans Administration (VA) HUD-VASH Program and other organizations and individuals to supply new beds, pillows & linen as no hero should move from homelessness into a residence and sleep on the floor. Certain SBMH chapters include a Move-in-Essentials (MIE) sub-program supplying household fundamentals needed to more successfully move into a residence.

### *Move-in-Essentials Collections*

Houses of Worship and other organizations and groups provide hope and encouragement to local Veterans transitioning from homelessness into subsidized housing through a program called Move-in-Essentials (MIE) coordinated by Jim Dunne's team of volunteers for Military Outreach USA. To date, we have distributed items valued at \$1,282,016 to Veterans with the help of Jesse Brown, Edward J. Hines and James Lovell VAs in the greater Chicago area.

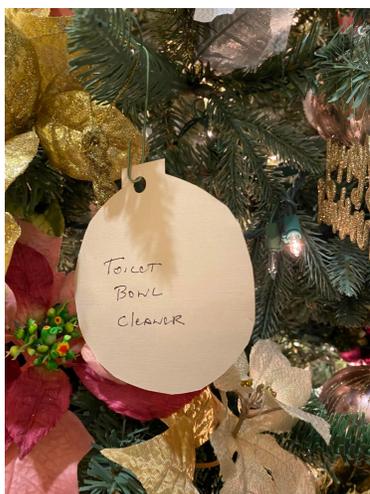
**Looking for a project for donations over Christmas?**

Debbie Smart, manager of Briarwood Properties in Arlington Heights IL, last year got creative and made paper ornaments - each one had the name of a practical item needed by Veterans in transition from homelessness into housing.



She put these on the Christmas trees in the lobbies of her buildings. Residents were able to pick and choose which items they wanted to donate - rolls of toilet paper, brooms, cleaning supplies, personal hygiene items, towels, shower curtains, coffee makers.

They collected over \$750 in items which were picked up by a team from Military Outreach and distributed to Veterans through our local Chicago area VAs.



**What can you do in your neighborhood, family or organization?**

### **PERSONAL HYGIENE KITS distributed monthly**

Here's another creative way to help Veterans in your area.

Kathy Tabak, Mary Bottie, Julie and the crew at Project Hope (St. Anne's Church in Barrington IL) decided to coordinate donations of zip lock packages containing personal hygiene items on a monthly basis.

The members of their congregation donate designated items, assemble the packets and we pick them up monthly and distribute them to our local VAs. What a generous and simple way to encourage Veterans and a monthly reminder to the congregation to remember those who are serving our nation!

Eight families in a suburb of Chicago neighborhood recently held a yard sale to raise money for Military Outreach USA. Many had family members who served in the military and two that are serving in the Navy right now.

"When our 'customers' heard that all proceeds from the sale were going to support Veterans through Military Outreach USA, they were happy to pay our asking prices and often gave us more! Your work with Veterans Exiting Homelessness touched us deeply and we would like our donation to support that work. Thank you for all you do."

They were able to raise **\$1,400** for their efforts - enough to supply **beds to 7 Veterans** transitioning from homelessness into housing.

## ***A Hero's Story***

No greater love was demonstrated by the following 13 American soldiers and approximately 3,846 American servicemen and women, knowing freedom is never free.



- Marine Corps Lance Cpl. David L. Espinoza, 20, of Rio Bravo, Texas
- Marine Corps Sgt. Nicole L. Gee, 23, of Sacramento, California
- Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Darin T. Hoover, 31, of Salt Lake City, Utah
- U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Ryan C. Knauss, 23, of Corryton, Tennessee
- Marine Corps Cpl. Hunter Lopez, 22, of Indio, California
- Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Rylee J. McCollum, 20, Jackson, Wyoming
- Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Dylan R. Merola, 20, of Rancho Cucamonga, California
- Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Kareem M. Nikoui, 20, of Norco, California
- Marine Corps Cpl. Daegan W. Page, 23, of Omaha, Nebraska
- Marine Corps Sgt. Johanny Rosario Pichardo, 25, of Lawrence, Massachusetts
- Marine Corps Cpl. Humberto A. Sanchez, 22, of Logansport, Indiana
- Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Jared M. Schmitz, 20, of St. Charles, Missouri
- Navy Hospital Corpsman Max W. Soviak, 22, of Berlin Heights, Ohio

These heroes, rapidly deployed in an emergency to Afghanistan, were focused on saving American citizens, allies, friends and supporters after they were callously left behind and stranded. The impromptu rescue mission is what soldiers prepare for in service to their country. These 13 American heroes and over a hundred Afghans were killed by a cowardly suicide bomber. These fallen heroes and too many others, if they rose again, would gladly volunteer again and again to save lives. Our prayers are with all the Gold Star families who will grieve until they are reunited with their loved ones. Let us not forget other heroes including tens of thousands of Afghans and their families who gave their all for freedom. We honor all who served and died for the cause of freedom and liberty.

We also recognize and continue to pray for civilians from Glenn Beck to the former US soldiers who quietly left home, using their own funds, and are now infiltrating Afghanistan to free US and Afghans citizens. Many of these patriots continue to clandestinely operate within the country as missionaries at great risk, freeing many left behind and stranded, escorting them to adjoining countries and to freedom.

Heroes are those who simply do! They are exceptional and foundational to freedom - not just debating, pondering or researching possibilities. These men and women believe in God and freedom and live by their word, commitment and soul action to do what is right - not focused on the danger.

The world is filled with these heroes. We pray for their continued success and hold them in our minds and hearts as they remain focused on saving others first before thinking of themselves. Chappy Ferrer, Executive Director



Our Foxhole Soul Counselors (FSC) from our SBMH Chapters attend events and engage any who ask for 1:1 Soul Counseling. Not only are those who lost comrades continuing to hurt, but we must not forget the families and friends. We hear souls crying out for someone to ‘Stand-

by-me.' Our Foxhole Soul Counselors are there to speak with anyone suffering from a soul pain, moral injury or PTSD.

Foxhole Soul Counselors focus on faith, not religion, to restore one's whole person and to walk with them as friend, as family. Help Line (847) 378 – 8262. Conversations are private, names are never released and you can use call sign.

## *How you can reach us!*

**SBMH Help line - 847-378-8262**

**For additional information please email us at [Info@militaryoutreach.org](mailto:Info@militaryoutreach.org) or leave us a message on our website by [clicking here](#).**

## *Stand by me Heroes (SBMH) Chapters*

### SBMH Northern Illinois



Kevin Morrison, Commander of the VFW Post 3579 from Niles, IL presented a certificate at the 70th Anniversary Memorial Ceremony to commemorate the service and sacrifices made by the Korean men and women who fought for our country.



Commander George Gandara, VFW Post 8741 Libertyville IL. General Mukoyama and Bob Phillips were honored to attend the Seventh National Gathering of Native American Veterans and the First Pow-wow this past summer.

**Support Over Stigma** is one of our partners, founded by Zoeie Kreiner whose son lost several military buddies within a period of days to suicide. Her team of volunteers provides care packages to deployed troops, socks, gifts, and more to our Veterans to remind them that they are not alone and give Squad Snacks to local First

Responders. Each care package, gift, snack and visit includes cards and letters of encouragement and resources on where to find help if they or someone they know is struggling .

**Christmas is coming:** Support Over Stigma is currently collecting items for care packages to homeless Veterans, deployed troops, Veterans in VA/nursing homes and Sailors and Marines at Great Lakes Naval Station in North Chicago who will not be able to get home for Christmas. In addition to the items we collect, each Care Package contains information on how/where to reach out if they or someone they know are battling PTSD or Moral Injury.

Some items we are collecting: travel size toiletries (shampoo, conditioner, lotion, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.), grab and go protein (i.e., beef jerky, protein bars, nuts, trail mix, tuna, etc.), games/books (i.e., Sudoku, crosswords and puzzle books, card games, travel-sized games), and cards and letters of encouragement.

Want to shop and have it shipped to us? Visit [Wishlist-Support Over Stigma](#)

If you or someone you love is struggling with the War that followed them Home, please reach out to Support for Stigma. They will connect you to a Battle Buddy, provide resources that might interest you and remind you that you DO NOT fight alone! They are here! [Visit their website](#) or call 630-492-0308

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Here are links to some events you might like to attend in the Chicago area:

**Sept 25 and 26:** St. James Church in Arlington Heights will host a **Move-In-Essential drive** in their school parking lot (behind the school) at 820 N Arlington Heights Road from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm on Sept 25 and from 7 am to 12:45 pm and 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm on Sunday, Sept 26. All proceeds will go to local Veterans.

**Sept 24-25:** Palatine Township has an **MIE drive** scheduled for Friday 9/24 (8:30 AM-7 PM) and Sat 9/25 8:30 AM to noon. Accepting new or gently used items suitable for Veterans moving into one bedroom apartments. Drop off at 721 S Quentin Road, south entrance in the blue bin or staff can help you unload.

**All Fall:** Jesse Brown VA needs volunteers to help out at the COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic. Looking to have 4-6 volunteers on duty Mon-Fri 7:30 am-4 pm - be available for a minimum of one 3-4 hour tour per week. Bring a copy of your vaccination card on the first day. Call 312-569-5334 or email [Patrick.gleason@va.gov](mailto:Patrick.gleason@va.gov) for more information.

**Oct 1-2** Harmony Fest in downtown Arlington Heights IL Family fun - live music, 50 local business booths including many popular restaurants. [Harmony Fest](#) Need volunteers to serve as marshals on Oct 2.

[Information and registration to marshall the event](#)



Salutes SBMH Chapter founder Toni Wineinger, a civilian never serving in uniform, full of heart, compassion and action, is transforming the lives of veterans in West Plains, Missouri (Howell county) and surrounding communities.



Toni and the Salutes SBMH Team in Missouri



Billy Cockrum, Director Salutes Advisory Board, WWII and Korean Veteran at the Salutes SBMH Wall in West Plains, Missouri where all visiting Veterans record their names.

August was a key date for the first meeting of the Salutes Advisory Board. Multiple community leaders attended the meet and greet at the Salutes facility. Toni and team, now in a larger facility, are working on completing dorm rooms for female and male Veterans, showers and training lab. Though there are unfinished projects, homeless Veterans are constant and cannot wait to move from sleeping in alleys, under bridges and in the woods.

The community's Salutes Advisory Board has agreed to operate in 100% unanimity as a 501(c)(3) across all decisions and processes. Together, in unison, we expect to continue to improve the lives and outcome of all Veterans across Howell and surrounding counties. This ongoing story only confirms that we are a blessed and a grateful nation.

West Plains, Missouri is chartered as the first national model for this and future Salute chapters across the country as they help our Veterans recover, prepare, get back into the workforce and live in their own residences independently. The result of this freedom, ongoing recovery and forward momentum is what we need for this nation to succeed.

Interested in making a difference? Are you a doer or just a talker? Needed are doers, volunteer carpenters, plumbers and tradesmen and women to complete the expansion of bathrooms, showers and training lab in the Missouri facility. Give Toni a call if you are interested in helping to make this happen (417) 861-6967.

If **you** would like to sponsor a Salutes SBMH project in your state and change the lives of Veterans, please contact Chappy Ferrer at Military Outreach USA. To begin a Salutes SBMH chapter we would need to raise \$75K and locate a building or warehouse we can convert and maintain. The facility would include a thrift store, kitchen and dining areas, training lab, food pantry and male and female bedrooms and bathrooms. We know this works because Toni and Ben, using their own social security

checks, started the first Salutes SBMH chapter as retired civilians. With the right dedicated patriots, we will always succeed.

Any SPONSORS interested in this adventure to change lives, please contact Chappy Ferrer@MilitaryOutreach USA. Highlight ABOUT, CONTACT and send a message. Do not expand your barn, but share the blessings.

**Contact Salutes SBMH by phone at (417) 861-6967. Follow Salutes SBMH on Facebook for announcements, donations and needs.**

## SBMH Florida



Chapter directors: Phil Jelen is in Englewood; Rick and Leah (Gwen) McCool are in Seminole FL



### **Well done, good and faithful servant.**

Jim Powell was a graduate of West Point, served in the US Army for 31 years and rose to the rank of Colonel. He was a Christian gentleman, a Past Grand Knight in the Knights of Columbus and did a lot of volunteer work in the Englewood Florida

area. Jim will be missed by many.

## The Chaplain's Corner

### **A Message of HOPE from Chappy Ferrer, founder of Stand-by-Me Heroes**

The Chaplains Corner is a challenge, a mission to restore, to guide and help any endure the outcomes of traumas and negative influences. There is HOPE We are mind, body and soul and there is a simple framework toward restoration of the three elements that make us each unique people. A faith-based approach has worked for millennia. Everyone is fearfully and wonderfully made, uniquely gifted, by our God and capable of overcoming all obstacles seen and unseen. Veterans and First Responders suffer from moral injury, PTS and TBI. For millennia a faith-based approach began the healing process, added stability to mind, body and soul. With a little help from a Foxhole Soul Counselor, and a grass-roots approach, we have helped

ourselves and others suffering and seeking restoration. This simple grass-roots process has, for millennia, resulted in an internal and external healings. Why fix what is proven to work?

The events in Afghanistan, August 2021, will be remembered as one of the most difficult and horrific memories for the next decade just like 9-11 and the exit of Saigon. Americans are taught from childhood that our word is our bond - the most important trait of true character and success. Today many active duty and Veterans are in pain after so much loss of blood and great effort. This is not a political statement; it is fact among past and current warriors, many who have given their lives for freedom and liberty. Our military has never failed a mission, though often victory has been lost by very poor decisions; but we will always endure. Together we will push forward, overcome and lift others, foreign and domestic, as this America and who we are, an exceptional nation.

Chaplains and leaders across the nation have held forums, town halls and 1:1 sessions with many angered souls. To my brothers and sisters, we will push through despite the failures of others. Press onward though others have failed. Push onward though not all has been lost. Press through as fear is the only liar in this world.

The events of Afghanistan will be a wound that will not heal for a while, just like Vietnam. However, let us NOT forget our heroes' great efforts of freedom and liberty that will impact, not only this nation, but many surrounding nations that have tasted true freedom. The spirit of America has never failed and is clearly defined to the men and women who even now, despite the danger of being out-numbered and out-gunned, privately and quietly continue to free American and Afghan citizens left behind. Behold who we truly are! Before the bomber killed 13 of our own and over hundred Afghans, freedom reigns. America will continue even if leaders abandon us.

The concept, the taste, the life of freedom and liberty cannot be diminished or extinguished by any in power as the American spirit always finds a way, will always provide hope in our God and in one another. I call on my Vietnam brothers and sisters again as our America, Gold Star mothers and wounded Veterans need our help to heal. Brothers and sisters we are "E Pluribus Unum!"

We are Blessed!

**Contact us via email at [info@militaryoutreachusa.org](mailto:info@militaryoutreachusa.org) or call our Helpline (847) 378-8262. There is HOPE!**

**Leave a short message and let a Veteran return your call.**

**Foxhole Soul Counseling**

**MORAL INJURY,  
PTSD, SEXUAL TRAUMA**

September 17-19th Military Outreach USA and Support Over Stigma held our first **Great Lakes Mission Hope** event. Using materials from Crosswinds Foundation and our own materials and experiences, speakers Francis "Doc" Beeman, General Mukoyama, Chappy Ferrer and Zoeie Kreiner (Support Over Stigma) presented life-changing information and survival skills for Moral Injury, PTSD and Sexual Trauma to over a dozen men and women.

The Illinois Stand-by-me Heroes Chapter with our partners from Support Over Stigma, and our Foxhole Soul Counselors, completed a successful Great Lakes Conference on Moral Injury and Post Traumatic Stress. Attendees represented Rolling Thunder, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and civilians from the community and VA. The Great Lakes Conference speakers included: MG (retired) James H. Mukoyama, Zoeie Kreiner, Francis "Doc" Beeman and Chappy Ferrer, all Foxhole Soul Counselors. We are grateful to VFW Post 8081 in Warrenville IL and their auxiliary for hosting our event.

A framework was delivered focused on health, the mission, obstacles, partnering, facing and owning our future. The two-and-a-half day conference focused on First Responders and Veterans managing and overcoming. The last day was our graduation and an opportunity to speak as to the benefits of the conference. There was unanimous agreement the conference was worth the time and effort. All believed they were in a safe environment and free to speak and address any issues. We had several times of emotions, as we welcomed our Vietnam Veterans home, others who suffered traumas thought they were not in a war zone and some were dealing with greater issues. However, by the second day it was clear we were family.

The success of any conference, focused on Veteran issues, is based on how the subject matter is delivered, the atmosphere of safety and openness and, most important, its outcome. Many Veterans carry chains about their neck and shoulders, often pleading from within for someone to "Stand-by-me." The attendees and instructors were open and all contributed to its success. Several testified as to the benefits and release they felt in mind, body and soul. Others were able to identify personal issues and how to address them moving forward.

Contact information was shared with all as the conference ended, and the support continues. Foxhole Soul Counselors will continue to be available with our 1:1 grass-roots approach, and a few attendees committed to join this team to help others on their journeys. Stand-by-me Heroes seeks to expand the Great Lakes Conference to other locations as the program's only mission is to reduce the dark number of 22+ suicides per day amongst our Veterans and growing numbers of our First Responders.

If you need to speak to our Foxhole Soul Counselors please call (847) 378 - 8262 or send an email [Chappy@MilitaryOutreachUSA.org](mailto:Chappy@MilitaryOutreachUSA.org) or [Zoeie@SupportOverStigma.org](mailto:Zoeie@SupportOverStigma.org) We are at the ready.

Consider a service dog for Veterans with PTSD [www.k9sforsveteransnfp.org](http://www.k9sforsveteransnfp.org) or call Annette or Mildred at Body Works for Vets 312-818-7921 [www.bodyworksforvets.org](http://www.bodyworksforvets.org)

The key is YOU MUST REACH OUT! One step, one phone call, one email ... reach out so those who want to help, Can Help!



## **Great Material, Great Facility and Great Food for body and soul!**

Our thanks to VFW Post 8081 and their Auxiliary for hosting our event and to Laura and her team at Mission BBQ in Downers Grove for supplying us with an amazing lunch on Sunday at no cost.



### ***Francis "Doc" Beeman***

*Doc Beeman is an SBMH director in the greater Chicago area and provides pro bono biblical counsel and soul care to active military, veterans, first responders and their families. His professional education includes general and surgical medicine, clinical psychology, neuropsychology, and group & individual therapy. Serving with the MACV-SOG in Vietnam as U.S. Navy Combat Corpsman, he experienced firsthand the impact combat has on a person.*

This month I'd like to talk about overcoming obstacles - those thoughts and habits that stand between you and the peace and calm you desire in your life. Overcoming obstacles is something you learned to do in the military or in your first responder training and daily practice. It's something you must do now, and for the rest of your life. Life is messy and from time to time requires that we shift gears. When the road to successfully attaining our objective is blocked, we go around the obstacle, or over it, or under it and we don't stop until the mission is complete. Remember those days? If you believe you will encounter road blocks, you will be vigilant and be prepared for them. You'll have a plan B, and probably a plan C and D too. Recall any challenge you've faced in the past and know that this is true.

We all encounter obstacles. I've rarely accomplished any worthwhile achievement in my life in which there were no road blocks or detours. The trick is to create a solution that overcomes the obstacle, and to persevere and not be discouraged in the process. Persistence and resilience are key elements to a successful completion of your mission. Your mission is to move from where you are emotionally, physically or spiritually to a life where you find peace and contentment: because of the way you're designed, the turbulence you experience is most likely a combination of all three components. Therefore the plan we develop is a combination of solutions addressing all three and the synergy they build when they blend together. We'll talk more about the "plan" in future newsletters, so stay tuned. This message is about overcoming obstacles, so let's get started.

We have named the objective: to live a peaceful and contented life - a life where we have discovered our purpose and defined the skills and tools we have been given to accomplish the task assigned to us. Just like any other challenge we have successfully accomplished, we define the destination or goal or target, develop a plan and assemble our team. When you were in the military, or part of a first responder unit, you

assembled a team to address the threats (obstacles) you knew you would face. This is no different today.

One of my favorite books speaks of the wisdom of assembling a team, even a two-man team. The passage I'm recalling references the need to confront obstacles in a team formation. I'm of course remembering the words of the person history labeled the world's most brilliant man, King Solomon. The passage is found in the Bible's section of his writing named Ecclesiastes, in chapter 4, verses 9 through 12: *"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken."* The wisdom of the ages speaks to addressing the obstacles we are bound to face in life along with a brother or sister as imperative. You can't do it alone.

If we're going to succeed we need to first identify the threat. We need to name the most common obstacles we will face as we seek to change our lives. I want to define them in two groups: obstacles that are common to all of us; and obstacles that are specific to those of us struggling with Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS), Moral Injury (MI), or Sexual Trauma (ST).

Obstacles common to all: 1. Not having a plan, 2. Trying to take too much ground at once, 3. Stopping short of the objective, 4. Physical limitations, 5. Letting the past determine the present.

Obstacles related to PTS/MI/ST: 1. Reintegration into civilian life, 2. Isolation and withdrawal from help, 3. Addictions, 4. Suicidal thoughts.

Clearly, we don't have the space in this article to discuss the depth of these obstacles to your success in attaining your goal and completing your mission. My intention is to convince you that you will face obstacles, and you need help in beating them. Help is available, so embrace hope! You can beat this thing; MOUSA and SBMH are here for you. Find us online [Contact Military Outreach USA](#) We are prepared to help you via zoom teleconference, face to face, or by phone. Learn more about who we are, and what we do. There may be a Foxhole Soul Counselor just a short drive away from you right now.

We all face challenges (obstacles) but we don't have to let them stop us. Don't let them stop you. Let us help you develop a plan that will take you from where you are today to a better place.



***Leah Gwen McCool***  
*SBMH Director Florida Chapter,*  
*Veteran Sergeant U.S. Air Force,*  
*M.A. in education from Liberty University*

***Worthwhile Women: One Step at a Time***

Encouraging and uplifting thoughts help co-workers cope with Mondays and the rest of the workweek, but how did the encouraging thought survive? How did it come about? The best policy is honesty, and I share only from what I know. Motivational speakers walk through devastation, trials, and obstacles. Individuals, family, friends and mentors are the eye-witnesses to hardship and heartbreak as well as triumph and trailblazing personal growth! Within this article you will discover the common bond that each person holds to unlock the power that can transform the world, one step at a time.

Decades have passed, but I still remember taking the oath of enlistment. I had the dream of making the world a better place; that dream did not die. Women have served in the military for centuries, including a few warrior princesses disguised as male counterparts to provide support in battle. There are currently women (worthwhile) who fulfill duties combat-related, support-related, and healing-related. I have had the honor of serving with great leaders and the heartache of knowing authority figures who did not meet the standard of a role model. Having the latter made me appreciate the former exponentially!

Often injuries are unseen and can trigger negative responses to those individuals who genuinely desire to help. Renowned authors write a plethora of material about “The Battle of the Mind” but the truth is that the mind is a battleground. However, the person reading this article is tenacious! You are victorious, not the victim, and you are worth it!

Years ago, a loved one experienced severe anxiety and depression but she continues to press on today. During the heat of the battle, a nurse spoke the words that I never forgot, “No struggle, no strength.” You and I will struggle, but the struggle is not in vain. Mental and emotional muscles are gaining strength, and the trials will help us help others.

The one step required for healing is a process, not a quick-fix. The natural tendency for coping may involve physical actions, but the supernatural tendency requires the mental and emotional discipline called *forgiveness*. Forgiveness provides freedom for the captured wounded; it provides the mind and soul with the strength and opportunity to grow through healing.

## Need Help?

**SBMH Help line - 847-378-8262**

**For additional information please contact us at**

**Info@militaryoutreach.org or email us on our website by [clicking here](#).**

To receive our newsletter, click on the Newsletter box on our website at [www.militaryoutreachusa.org](http://www.militaryoutreachusa.org).

If you're interested in helping out, **[DONATE HERE](#)**