

1-7 The Warrior Trust Bond

“The Strength of a Family as in an Army is in its Loyalty to one another.”

Mario Puzzo

Standing motionless in the cool, still morning air, eyes glazed, your heart is heavy as you look out over thousands of white monuments of Heroes past. Memorial Day was always filled with a solemn sadness... your father, a Combat Veteran from Vietnam always had a hard time... until he took his life that day.

You never understood his actions, never got over your anger, thinking he was weak, even dishonorable for such an act. But after two combat deployments in Iraq and two more in Afghanistan, all that's changed now.

Deep in thought as you slowly walk down the white marble staircase, the austere beauty of this Memorial Cemetery overwhelms you. Reaching for a pack of cigs, while sitting on the cool glistening stairs, you light up and recall...

“I’ve lost so many. So many that I loved so much.”

Tears well up as you pull a flask of bourbon from your field jacket. You take a long swig, then a puff, wipe your eyes, and continue...

“I feel more comfortable here among my dead Bro’s than I do out there with those fuckin’ civilians.”

Rage begins to build. Another swig, and lighting up again...

“They don’t even know there’s a war goin’ on. And I’m sittin’ here with the dead from it.”

Slowly standing, you continue down the staircase.

Following the asphalt road to your truck, you think...

“I’m sure as hell glad I’m goin’ back to base tomorrow.”

You could only stand it ten days on your pre-deployment leave. You’ll be goin’ down range for the fifth time and looking forward to it.

Deciding not to wait another day, you return to your small barren apartment and load your gear. Shutting the door for the last time with a sigh of relief, you head out back to base. The long drive is a good one. You’re calming down because you know where you’re heading.

Finally you arrive. And pulling up to the checkpoint, showing the guard your I.D. and then heading to the Base Exchange for a few last items on the list, you think...

“Damn! It feels good to be back on base. Wheels up in a couple of weeks... back to Goat Country.”

Pulling into the Exchange parking lot, turning off the engine and lighting up another cigarette, then taking a long drag... you exhale and relax for the first time in days.

Watching a battle-ready platoon standing at parade rest in the adjacent field, you think...

“I’m Home.”

An old Warrior once said,

“Truth is what drives our Spirit into action. And our Soul responds accordingly to the highest calling. So then, we must allow it full sway through Courage, Honor, and Self-Sacrifice.”

All this talk about Honor and Self-Sacrifice may be hard to get a grip on for some, so let’s just flesh it out a bit.

Battle tested Warriors live by what is absolutely the purest code of human behavior possible. They must, or someone dies from the lack of it. So whether at first they chose it or not, they've still gotta live it.

Proof is in "Actions Not Words!" So just because you put on body armor, web gear, and pick up a weapon, all that doesn't make you a Battle Tested Combat Warrior. You've gotta go down range into the shit to get Baptized in Blood... become a member, so to speak. And every member helps every other member stay alive.

Here, I'll give you an example.

Let's suppose you're gonna start car-pooling to work each day with four other people. You know each of them pretty well since you went through all the office training bullshit together, and you've been assigned to a rough part of town to set up shop.

On the first day, you're at a stoplight. Two gang bangers jump out of their low rider Chevy parked across the street. They yell "Gringo Bitches," pull out pistols, and head toward your team, screaming foul language in Spanish while cranking rounds through your nice new Saturn sedan.

Calmly rolling down the window and reaching into her purse, your driver for-the-day pulls out a .45 Caliber Desert Eagle and drops these two shit birds before you can say, "Holy Fuck!"

This tends to build Respect in your car pool team and builds the Survival Bond of Friendship.

Next day, some moron is about to throw a Molotov Cocktail (civilian IED) at your car, but one of your Knuckle Draggin' friends from Vietnam gave you an M-79 with Pletchette rounds to make your day. As you briskly fire

your vintage weapon, you're amazed at how this advancing dingleberry is transformed into a bloody, perforated mass of flaming stupidity. And so the adventures go.

Each time you save each other's lives, respect grows, mutual gratitude grows, and you love each other a whole bunch more. And the interesting thing is, no one from "Outside" your car pool team understands what you've been through... 'cause they ain't been there.

"So how do I understand Combat Warriors?" you longingly ask.

Easy! Go into Combat! There isn't any other way to "Feel" War.

So you see, the Warrior Trust Bond is only established on the battlefield. And it goes beyond the forces of nature. Our unconditional love for our fellow Warriors is stronger than life itself. It goes beyond the love of family, children, country and God. And we would gladly die to protect our true Car-Pool Friends.

I probably should mention here that in your car pool, each time you save a member of your team's life, their life becomes more precious than your own. And of course, there's always the wonderful benefit of your entire car pool team becoming complete adrenaline junkies... ain't life in combat great?

The way we look at the relationships we have in combat becomes the ONLY standard we'll ever have for every relationship in our future.

Why is that? Real Simple.

We establish these standards of unconditional love, friendship, trust, Honor, and self-sacrifice at the highest levels of excellence possible in human beings. It's hands-down, the very best we've got as a race of marginally

insane people tryin' to exterminate ourselves.

So why settle for anything less? You want a true friend who will die for you? Don't look on the local dating website, look on the local recruiting roster instead. You want someone to be trustworthy and Honorable to the death? Don't look at who's on the election ballot... and so on.

Think about it: After thirty six months (three deployments) of car-pooling with your team, having hundreds of near death experiences, and feeling like you all live inside the same body, what's the absolute worst thing that can happen to you?

Yep! You lose one of your team members. Or even worse, you get kicked out of your team. And it really doesn't matter why. If you get kicked out of your team unit, life just isn't worth a shit. And you feel about the same.

At that point, your life may begin to spiral downward toward suicide, homicide, and substance abuse. This is happening at an alarming rate right now with our young Warriors from the Iraq and Afghan Wars.

When these Heroes are transitioned out of their units and eventually out of the military, they desperately need to replace their bond and the self-worth they once held so sacred. They need to feel something meaningful, something that breathes Honor, and someone to call Friend... that is, in the Warrior Standard of Friendship.

Now here's something you're not gonna hear on the ambulance chasin' local news or the Hollywood-Meaningless-Melodrama-Update national news. It may shock you a bit, but that's the point here, isn't it? Maybe someone should ask the folks in the media why this isn't "Breaking News"?

To show you how dangerous it is to ignore our Troops

coming back, I'd like to tell you what I learned firsthand last year. This year it's even worse.

I got a call from a buddy at the Chicago Airport, and he said,

“Brandi! You're not gonna believe this shit!”

He went on to explain how greeting our uniformed Troops just past the security check point were “Gang Bangers” and “Bikers in Full Colors” passing out business cards! No Shit! That's right. Gangs asking our young Troops to join up!

I called Washington as soon as I heard this, and they pitched a fit. But to this day, I haven't heard much about the cake-eatin'-magic-bubble-folks takin' this on as a mission. Maybe I'm wrong, but except for civilian organizations welcoming our Troops home at the airport, not much is happening.

So what does this have to do with the Warrior Trust Bond? Plenty.

Think about it. Let's suppose you're walking down the ramp at the airport, you've lost your military friends, you feel abandoned, and you're thinkin'...

“There isn't a friendly civilian in this entire country.”

That's right, the country you just fought to defend. And someone walks up to you and says...

“Welcome HOME!”

He shakes your hand, then he says...

“Join our Family. We'll take care of you. You'll be respected and loved. And you'll even get to blow shit up and kill people!”

Where do I sign up? That would be my response. And guess what? That's exactly what's happening. Gang

membership went up 30% last year, and I expect it will be even higher this year.

We're gonna go over this topic in more detail at the end of this book. But for now, be advised it is definitely a major problem for law enforcement and civilians alike. No one is hidin' in the bunker on this one, and the artillery strike is on the way. Hell, it's already begun!

It's real difficult to explain "Feelings" in words. And what I'm attempting to do here is to explain the intense feelings of the absolute trust and friendship that our young Warriors feel for one another. Here's something you might just think about. Ask yourself...

"Who is my very best Friend in this world?"

Got the image in your mind? Now, ask yourself this...

"Would that person, my friend, die for me right this second?"

That means give up his life for you without hesitation. To instantly sacrifice himself for you. To give up every hope, every dream, every aspiration and vision for his future right this second. To save your life.

Well, unless you're thinking of a Combat Warrior, chances are the answer is most likely NO. But you see, that is exactly what Warriors do. And they are doing it right now in Iraq and Afghanistan.

They've done it in the past, and they'll do it again in every conflict in the future. It's simply the Code of Honor we all live by. It's because of the Warrior Trust Bond we all share. It's because... It's just War.

You've got to respect and admire their courage, and their love for one another. This is truly living the Nobility of the Human Spirit. Too bad it has to be in War. Just imagine if everyone had this kind of color-blind, race-blind

love for one another. We can only hope that this excellent attitude will one day be the standard for all human relationships... not just Warriors.

Don't go takin' off that body armor just yet!

Grab more ammo and grenades!
The enemy's headin' our way!

Expect to "Engage" on this next topic!

Feels like an ambush! Stay Low! Stay Frosty!