

Operation Enduring Care

Wounded Warrior Family
and Caregiver Conference



El Paso, TX
September 23

2010



Sport Psychology
for the
Wounded Warrior
Dr. John Heil

HIGH PERFORMANCE REHAB

Dr. John Heil

Licensed Clinical Psychologist

Chair, USA Fencing Sport Science

**Certified Consultant, Association for Applied
Sport Psychology**

USOC Sport Psychology Registry

Instructor, Roanoke City Police Academy

**Lecturer, Virginia Tech Carilion Medical
School**

Fellow, American Psychological Association



**Psychological
Health
Roanoke_{PC}**



Sport Psychology & High Performance

Sport Psychology

Principles & Practices
Practical-Guide to Action

High Performance Environments

Military
Police & Fire Service
Performing Arts
Medicine



SOURCES

Medicine & Science

Martial Arts & Outdoors
Literature

Professional Experience

Personal Lessons



Sport Psychology & Rehab

Athletes as “Test Pilots”

Familiar Planes, Unfamiliar Maneuvers

&

Unfamiliar Planes, Familiar Maneuvers

Musculoskeletal Injury

Concussive Injuries



Combat Theatre Service

Many Hazards

Many Casualties

Many Challenges



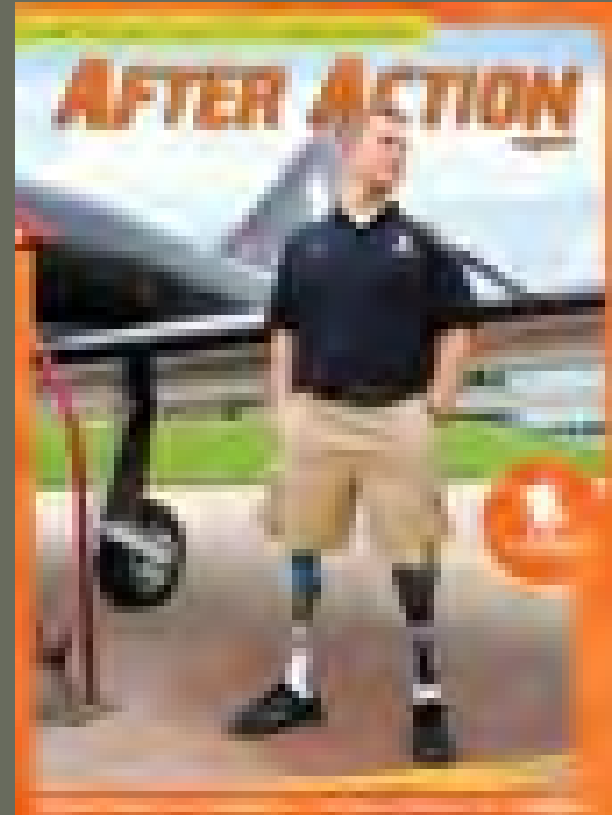
WOUNDS of the BODY

TRAUMATIC INJURY

Terrible to See
ADLs & Retooling

CHRONIC PAIN & INJURY

Unseen to Others
Poorly Understood



TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

WOUND to BODY

&

WOUND to PSYCHE

Unseen to Self

How to manage an injury
you don't know you
have



Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Wound to Psyche

Combat Fatigue
Shell Shock

Survival Response

Learn & Prepare

How to manage an injury you
don't know you have?



Traumatic Response

Varying over Time

Evolving
as

+ or -

Varying by Severity

Devil is in the Details



TBI + PTSD + PAIN

Post Deployment
Multi Symptom
Disorder

Complex Array
Interlacing Symptoms

Difficult Diagnosis



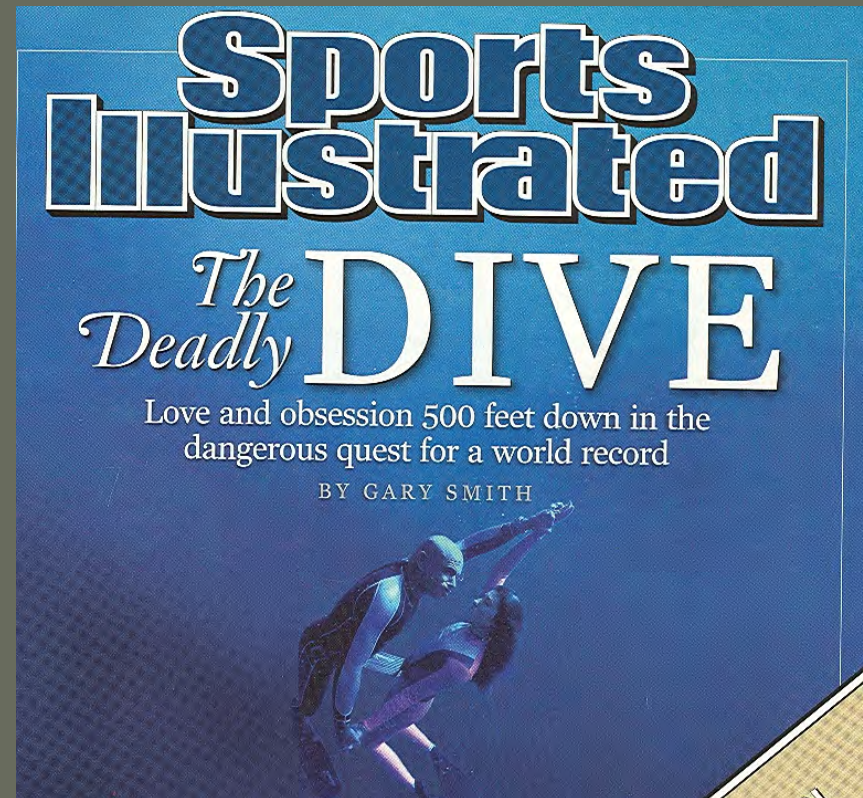
- Walker, R.L., Clark, M.E. & Sanders, S.H. (2010). The “post deployment multisymptom disorder”: An emerging syndrome in need of a new treatment. *Psychological Services*, 7 (3), 136-147

SURVIVOR GUILT

Questions
without
Answers

Why Not Me
Why Me

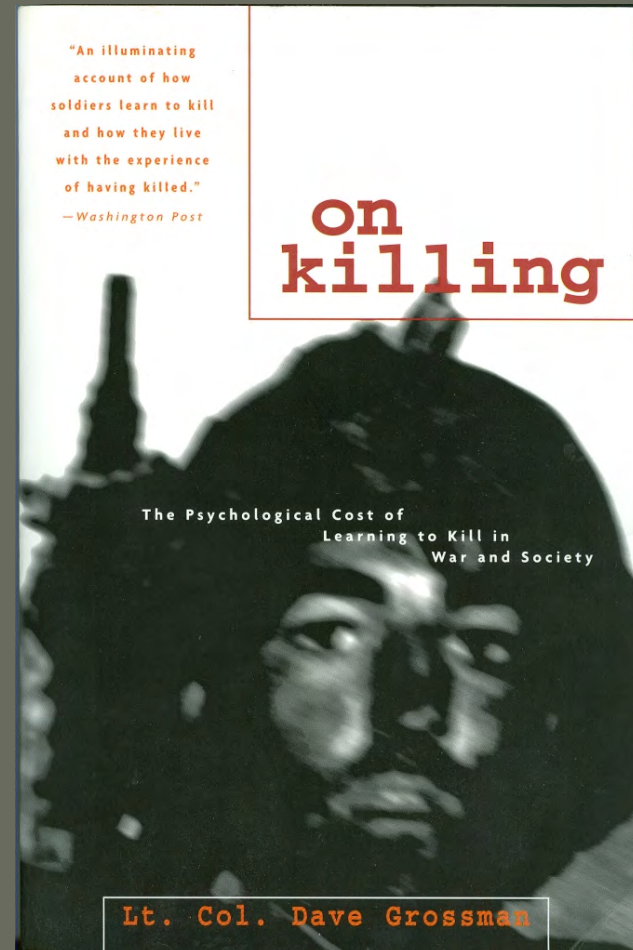
Why Does a Hero
Feel Shame



KILLING

Learn to Kill

Learn to Live
with Killing



Police as “Homeland Warriors”

Critical Incidents

Killing & Being Killed

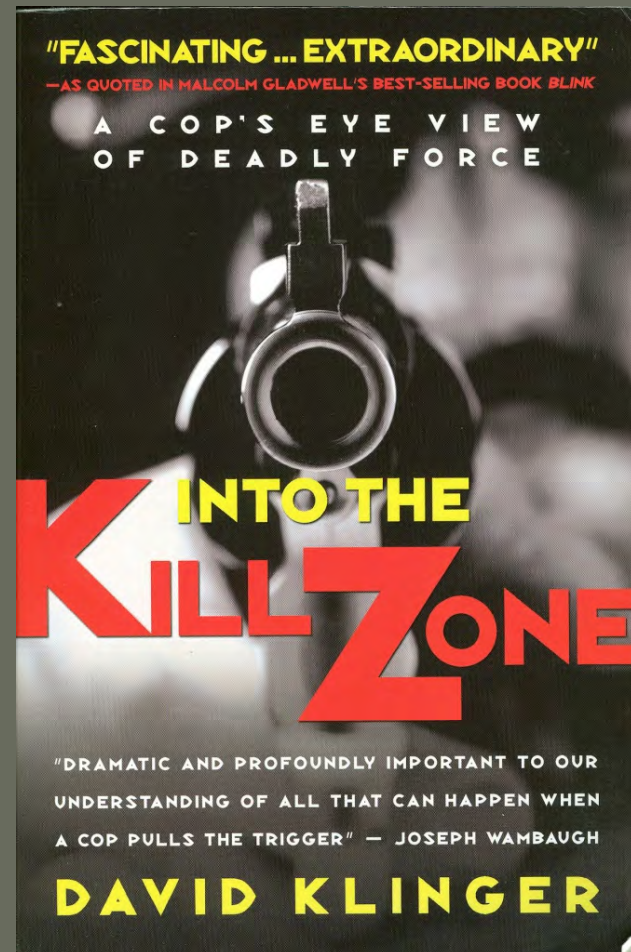
Post Incident Adjustment

Best Day & Worst Day

in

Same Day

Same Event



SUICIDE

The Ultimate Casualty

End Point of
Other Conditions

Military
Linked to Killing



Police as “Homeland Warriors”

SUICIDE

Deadliest Threat

Irreconcilable
Differences w/Self

Devastating Impact on
Survivors

EMOTIONAL SURVIVAL FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT



A Guide for Officers
and Their Families

Kevin M. Gilmartin, Ph.D.

10 CHALLENGES

1: Knowing the Game

6: Playing with Pain

2: Identifying Goals

7: Training Intensity

3: Visualizing the Plan

8: Calculating Risk

4: Focusing Thinking

9: Staying Tough

5: Managing Emotions

10: Self-Actualizing

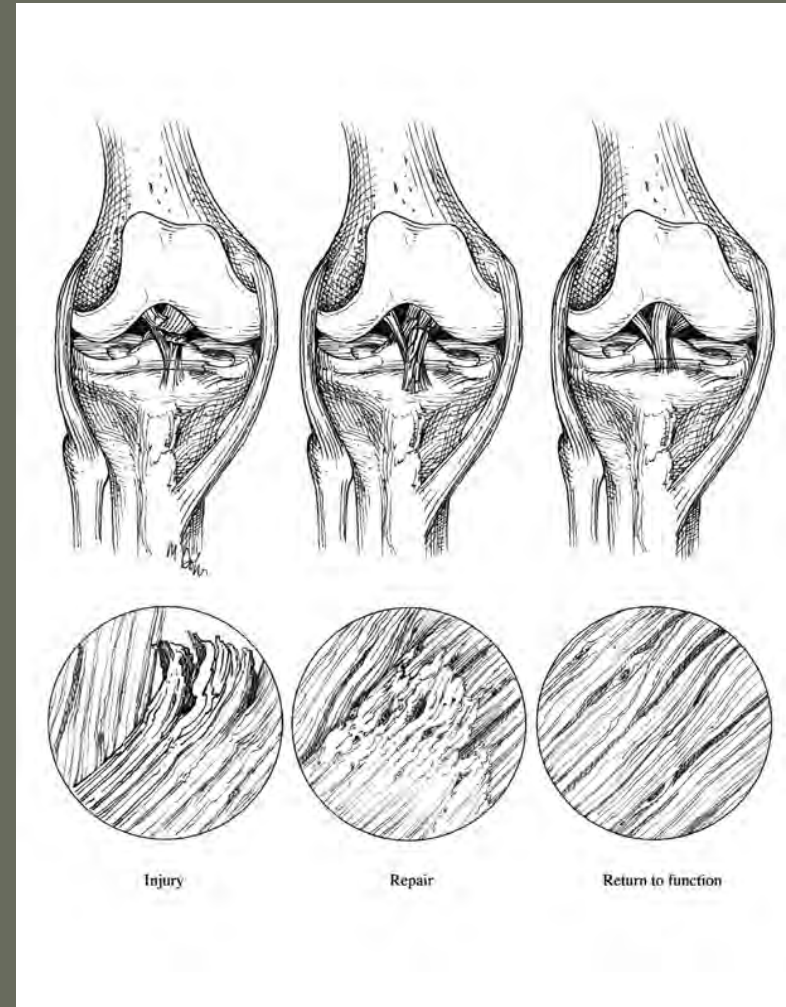
1: Knowing the Game

“Knowledge is Power”

The “WHAT” & “WHY”
of injury & rehab

Invests Athlete in
Rehab

Knowledge - “What & Why”
+
Investment
=Responsibility



2: Identifying Goals

“Drawing the Road Map to Success”

The “HOW” of Rehab

Timeline

Short, Intermediate & Long
Term goals

Realistic Expectations

Understanding of “How”

+

Knowledge of “What & Why”
= Control



3: Visualizing the Plan

“See, Believe & Achieve”

IMAGERY

Thinking & Feeling
Motion & Emotion

APPS

Skill Rehearsal
Situation Rehearsal
Mental Maps



4: Focusing Thinking “Mental Tenacity”

PLANNING

Managing the Journey

Knowledge+Goals+
Vision

CONCENTRATION

Managing the NOW

*Thinking about the right thing, at
the right time, in the right way*



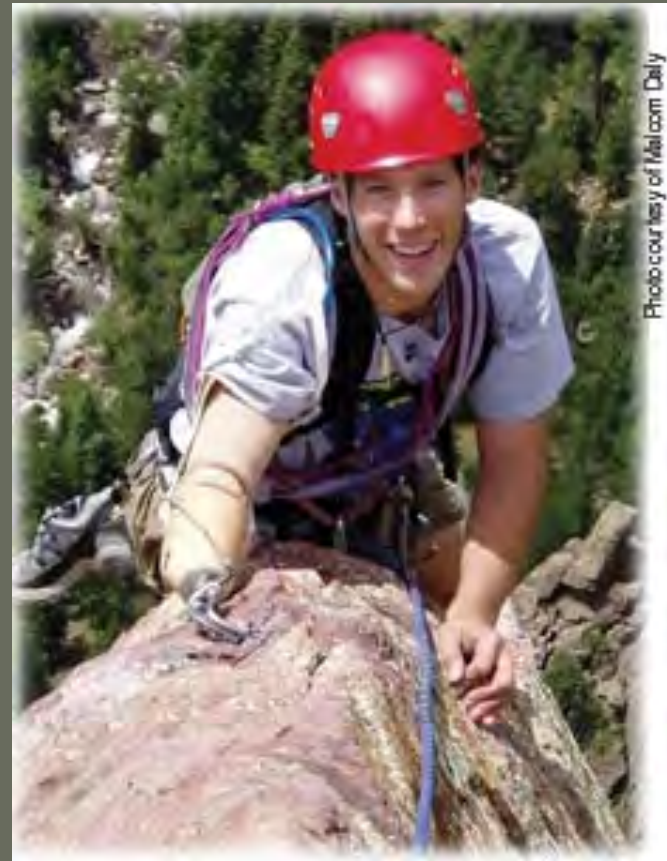
5: Managing Emotions “Bringing Heart to Rehab”

Fire that Fuels Performance

Loss → Lost Sport/Identity
Desire to recover

Threat → Uncertain Future
Readiness to challenge

Convert Emotion (positive
and negative) to energy



6: Playing with Pain

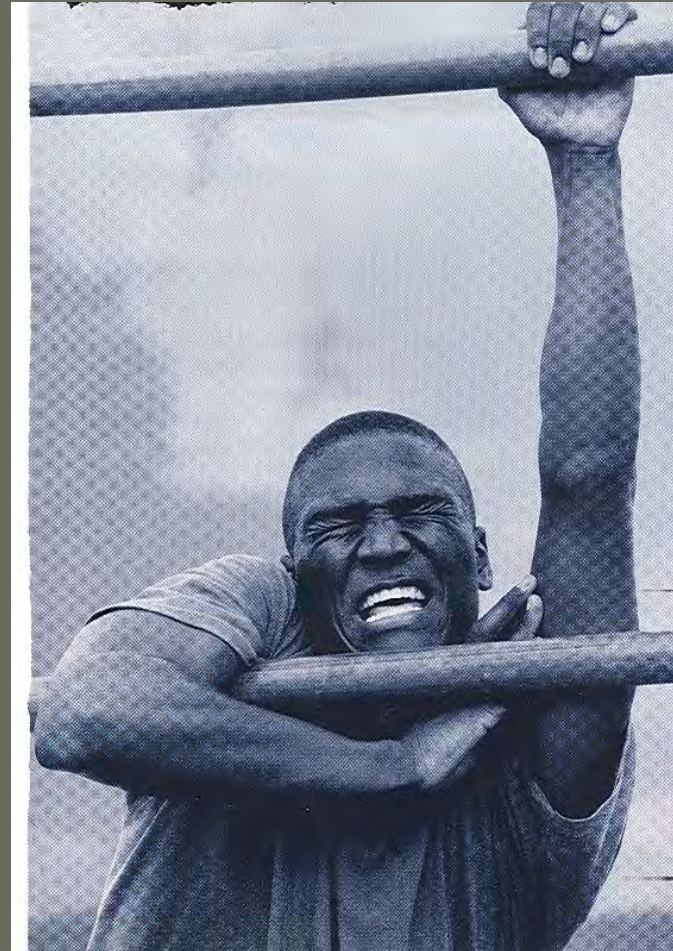
“Mastering the Mind-Body Paradox”

Pain is inevitable

Performance Pain
Injury Pain

Pain Assessment as
Skill

Uncoupling Pain &
Fear.



7: Training with Intensity “Working Smarter”

Core Task

Modulated Intensity
&
Precise Skill Execution

Balancing Intensity
&
Intelligent Action



8: Calculating Risk

“Playing the Edge”

Sport - Risky Enterprises
Losing, Failure, Injury

Calculated Risk Taking
Out of Harm's Way
Along the Path to Success.

Assimilates
Knowledge of Ability
Intensity & Pain.



9: Staying Mentally Tough “Courage in Adversity”

Surviving Adversity
Courage to Take
Control of *what can
be controlled*
Personal Thoughts,
Feelings & Actions.

Living Well
with
Winning and Losing



10: Self-Actualizing “Striving for the Zone”

DESIRE to EXCEL
*a fundamental element of the
human spirit*

SELF-ACTUALIZATION
Growth & Discovery
as striving gives way to thriving.

PEAK EXPERIENCES
supremely satisfying moments in
the pursuit of excellence





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