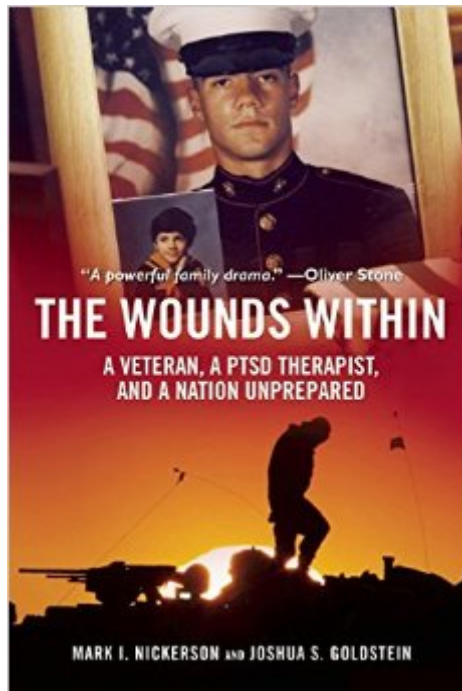


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# The Wounds Within: A Veteran, A PTSD Therapist, And A Nation Unprepared



## Synopsis

As America's longest wars end, hundreds of thousands of veterans and their families struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). *The Wounds Within* follows the iconic case of Marine Lance Corporal Jeff Lucey, who deployed early in the Iraq War, battled PTSD after returning home, and set his family on a decade-long campaign to reform the Veterans Affairs system and end the stigma around military-related mental health issues. Their story is told uniquely from the perspective of Jeff's psychotherapist, Mark Nickerson, an internationally recognized expert on trauma treatment. Driven by the family narrative, and by later case histories of Nickerson's veteran clients, the book explains PTSD and the methods by which it can be treated. With coauthor Joshua Goldstein, an award-winning author, Nickerson engages the big issues of America's attempts to cope with the millions of returning veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan; from belated reforms to overwhelmed military families to clueless civilians who can't get beyond "Thank you for your service." • *The Wounds Within* combines a moving and compelling human drama with national policy and a clinical explanation of how to heal veterans' traumas. It will stand as the definitive account of PTSD in those who fought America's latest wars, and a much-needed source of information for their loved ones.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Nickerson's is a strong, guiding, necessary voice in a too-faint cultural conversation - it contributes with conviction to the dialogue about what happens when soldiers return home with wounds beyond

the physical, AND it offers viable strategies to treat those wounds. I feel so much more knowledgeable about this subject and the book was a quick and accessible read, and very engrossing. The experience many veterans and their families endure is epitomized by that of Jeff Lucey and his loved ones... hard to read without crying. It touches you on a human level, while still delivering the news about the broader context, and the gaps in treatment for those with PTSD. I highly recommend it!

As soon as I began reading it, I found myself unable to pull away from this story. The authenticity of the narrative provides a heartbreaking and compassionate portrayal of how systems- familial and institutional- can be ravaged by war. Nickerson and Goldstein use the poignant story of Jeff Lucey and his family to reveal the numerous structural weaknesses and individual challenges that arise as aftershocks of warfare. But *The Wounds Within* is not simply an illumination of problems, it is the beginning of a critical discussion about solutions. The authors knowledgeably educate readers about the needs of veterans and their families and describe specific interventions that can decrease the overwhelming impact of large scale conflict. Jeff's torment will burrow into your heart and mind and haunt you even after you've put the book down. But in the same way that the book will bring you to the depths of sadness, it will energize you to desire and support change.

I wanted to learn about the impact of war on Veterans and their families. This book is a clear and sensitive account of how PTSD and the stresses of military deployment affects our service men and women. The book has had a powerful impact on me. The warm and clear writing style made the story deeply moving to me.

Hard to say "I love it" (via the 5 star rating) - as this was a painful book for me to read. I saw a LOT of my son in this Veteran, Jeff Lucey. His story - and his family's story - need to be read by everyone. Especially anyone who says (re: Veterans) "Well, they VOLUNTEERED." They didn't volunteer for coming home after fighting for their country - and dying from the neglect and outright abuse from that same country. The 2nd half of the book is about EMDR treatment. Fascinating - and - gives one hope. This clinical explanation of how to heal veterans' traumas was well written and easily understood. I just hope the VA system will start offering this - even if they need to outsource to doctors/therapists more local to the veteran.

Very timely. It is sad that returning veterans are not getting the mental health help that they need.

The VA is not equipped to deal with PTSD and other mental health issues. It has not done a very good job with the Vietnam veterans....paying lip service to their need for help. I have seen first hand that lack of taking responsibility for the veterans. It angers me that we--as a nation--are not stepping up to the plate to pay for that kind of help. There is still a stigma about mental health problems. Veterans, especially men, have been socialized to think that they need to 'suck it up' because it's not MACHO to need that kind of help. The military itself has perpetuated that concept...as shown by the scandal at Ft. Clark and others across the nation.

Excellent book for the layperson describing a young veteran's experiences with war, post-9/11, and his symptoms of PTSD. Written by a local Western Massachusetts EMDR psychotherapist, Mark Nickerson weaves Jeff Lucey's gripping struggle into an account of how lethally PTSD can wreck a soldier's life, and the (lack of) resources offered by our military and veteran branches. The first half of the book depicts Lucey's life and service in the Reserves, as well as the struggles of his family in helping him deal with his emerging PTSD symptoms upon return to home from a tour of duty. The second half speaks more globally about PTSD, EMDR treatment of PTSD symptoms, and activism of civilians and military to increase services for veterans returning home from traumatic war. A must-read for anyone interested in how our soldiers fair after spending months and years overseas in the service of our freedom.

Very informative, very well written. I bought this book because I had to give a presentation to a group about PTSD. My son has it also. It was written by a psychologist, and centers around one of his patients with PTSD. I learned a lot by reading it, and highly recommend it for anyone wanting to educate themselves about PTSD.

This book addresses the mental health needs of returning veterans, our lack of knowledge and resources and what is necessary to help them. The author describes the case of a veteran with PTSD, the failure of the VA to properly assist him and his family, the therapist's lack of preparation to treat him, and the lessons learned. The author presents a succinct and knowledgeable description of the issues facing returning combat vets and the currently endorsed effective treatments. He also provides his preferred mode of therapy, EMDR. I recommend it.

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