

Meditation, Mindfulness, Psychedelics: Helping Veterans Suffering From PTSD



By Frances Arnold | [Namaste Nutritionist](#)

What affects one of us affects all of us.

In 2006 & 2007, after Hurricane Katrina, I went to New Orleans to help with rebuilding efforts. The International Association for Human Values (IAHV) offered trainings to help people with therapy for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after the devastation of losing their homes. During this time, the IAHV trained me, and dozens of other young people, to help the community. We learned to teach a program called “Breath Water Sound”. This was a community workshop, held over 3 evenings, that helps traumatized and stressed individuals.

IAHV operates with the low overhead. For example, many non-profit organizations pay large salaries, use large marketing budgets, and pay for trainings and travel. IAHV relies almost entirely on volunteers, who pay their own expenses for training and travel. This helps keep costs down, and results in IAHV spending only 3% on their overhead.

This is the lowest figure that I've seen.

Our soldiers are in desperate need for therapy from the psychological trauma experienced in war.

At Namaste Nutritionist, we support a program called "[Project Welcome Home Troops \(PWHT\)](#)", which is run by IAHV. We recognize that our US soldiers are in dire need of support after war. PWHT aims to address the intense distress some returning veterans experience. Many of these brave men and women have been repeatedly exposed to traumatic events and life-threatening situations on multiple deployments to combat zones.

We donate 5% of our income to supporting our veteran's recovery through PWHT courses. We feel much more indebted to them, and they deserve so much more. But this much we can do, to start.

Soldier suicide rivals, and possibly outnumbers, the death toll of soldiers on the battlefield.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that PTSD afflicts:

- *Almost 31 percent of Vietnam veterans*
- *As many as 10 percent of Gulf War (Desert Storm)*

veterans

- *11 percent of veterans of the war in Afghanistan*
- *20 percent of Iraqi war veterans*

Source: [The National Institutes of Health](#)

Soldier suicide rates

Breathing, mindfulness and meditation are helpful adjunct therapies for many PTSD sufferers.

One of the reasons I support PWHT is that traditional talk therapy and anti-depressants for PTSD is underwhelming in its results.

“Previous studies suggest that war-related PTSD may be more prevalent and harder to cure than PTSD caused by other types of trauma, and this study may help establish the relationship between trauma etiology and treatment efficacy. . . According to some estimates, a single diagnosis of PTSD can cost up to \$1.5 million in taxpayer-funded benefits over a soldier’s lifetime. In 2011, the U.S. Veterans Administration spent about \$5.5 billion on PTSD disability payments to approximately 275,000 veterans, with costs and numbers of veterans with PTSD continuing to increase.” – [MDMAPTSD.ORG](#)

Psychedelics, MDMA – assisted psychotherapy for PTSD treatment

Another therapy with research underway is MDMA – assisted psychotherapy. This is a potentially more effective and less expensive form of therapy for veterans suffering with PTSD.

Says former Army Ranger about the MDMA-assisted psychotherapy he experienced,

“It’s basically like years of therapy in two or three hours. You can’t understand it unless you’ve experienced it.”
– *Military.com* (March 2009)

[READ THE REST OF THIS ARTICLE...](#)