

#HELP22

RESTORING THE VALUE OF LIFE AMONG OUR VETERANS AND MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS
RE-ENLIST IN LIFE, TODAY AND EVERY DAY

To Every Veteran Struggling with Suicidal Thoughts:

We know that you are engaged in a battle for your life. Your adversary—whether depression or PTSD or head trauma or addiction – is like a ruthless insurgent force using extremely powerful propaganda to convince you that nothing will ever change, and that life is not worth living. Neither is true. Your psychological enemy will be defeated.

You have proven your courage and willingness to fight for this country. Now, we need you to enlist, again—in life. This time, the battle is to stay with us, on this planet of ours, committed to one more day, each and every day, even though it hurts. Your family is counting on you. Your friends are counting on you. And your country is counting on you.

We know what we are asking. *We are asking you to be heroic, again.* We know you could be feeling as though every minute of every day may have turned into gut-wrenching grief, panic and helplessness. Every minute.

We know you may feel as though those minutes will repeat themselves inescapably, infinitely and forever. While bearing that pain, you may feel entirely alone, as though no one could ever fathom what you are experiencing. But we need you to bear it, nonetheless. You are a vital national resource. You are a symbol of resolve and grit. We need you to be courageous, again.

Depression and PTSD and all the rest of the mental propaganda machine is trying to steal reality from you. The real truth is that you can be stronger than what afflicts you. The reality is that you are a veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States. The bottom line is that you always answer the call to be more and do more despite the pain and no matter how much it hurts.

Depression and other psychiatric illnesses can deploy so deeply inside you that they become the entire horizon, drowning out any light and any feelings of love from any other human being or for any other human being. But if you re-enlist in life today, and every day, they simply cannot win. Period. The sun will always shine to win out.

As hard as it is to believe at this time, the grief, panic or helplessness you are feeling is trying to trick you into believing that life itself is a scourge. Every single negative moment you are experiencing today is a cruel trick of perception. Don't let that perception become your reality.

We are urging you to entirely discount any conclusion you have come to about when the pain might stop or life might brighten. You can't rely on your reasoning, or any hopeless view, because major depression or PTSD or addition or chronic pain as deep as yours can take over your logic. Don't let it tell you nearly irresistible lies about yourself.

It is imperative to start talking back to your depression or PTSD right away. Talking back can help you notice it is a very separate thing from you, and stalking you. It is the adversary. The enemy. So, we are asking you to tell it that you will bear anything to defeat it. You have what it takes inside you to defeat it, because it can't outlast you.

We are asking you to re-enlist, again—this time, in life. We are asking you to be a hero, again—this time, for your family and friends and country.

If our enemy is telling you to end your life, you must fight against the invader with everything and every resource. Deploy every weapon. Get to an emergency room or call a suicide hotline or 911 and tell someone the absolute truth about all the dark thoughts you are experiencing. Don't let the propaganda of the Grim Reaper defeat you. They are not you.

Recruit soldiers to help you fight this war against depression or PTSD or addiction or any other occupying force and drive it from the lands of your mind and soul. Ask a family member or a friend to stay by your side, 24/7. Walk into a psychiatrist's office unannounced and tell that person that you don't want to live another moment. Stop at the local police station and turn in the invader trying to overwhelm you.

We are asking you to re-enlist in life one day at a time, every day. We are asking you to be a hero, again. Can we count on you for that? We know how much we asking . . . and we are asking.

Respectfully and with courage in you,

Commander Kirk Lippold, USN (Ret)



Keith Ablow, MD



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Help22 is a not-for-profit organization that provides coaching, counseling, therapy and encouragement to veterans, in order to increase their resiliency—specifically, their capacity to stop suicidal thinking and/or resist acting on thoughts of suicide.

Help22 believes that those who join the military are mission-driven people. We seek to galvanize their will to survive the battles they face with depression, despair or severe disruptions in their lives with a direct challenge:

Live To Fight One More Day, Every Day

We believe that if veterans survive depression, despair or severe disruption in their lives, after their service, that they are heroes, again, because they affirm the power of faith and insulate their fellow servicemen, friends and loved ones from the immense grief of losing them.

We re-define suicidal thinking as an invading enemy, demanding surrender.

Help22 Heroes Vow to Live Through Depression, Despair or Disruption NEVER SURRENDER

We believe that veterans confronting depression, despair or severe disruption in their lives can benefit from being part of a nationwide veterans' movement to never surrender one's life, part of smaller groups in which they encourage one another to "fight one more day, every day," and participants in one-on-one sessions with coaches, counselors or therapists who reinforce the commitment to embrace that challenge, even in the face of severe emotional pain.

Celebrate Life

We believe that celebrating the refusal to surrender to depression, despair or disruption is both appropriate and important at intervals of 30, 100 and 365 days, all the while never forgetting the underlying and fundamental challenge to live one more day.

We believe that defining depression, despair and disruption as a powerful, foreign invading force that must be defeated daily can activate the warrior inside the veteran and unleash his or her tenacity, resiliency and will to live.