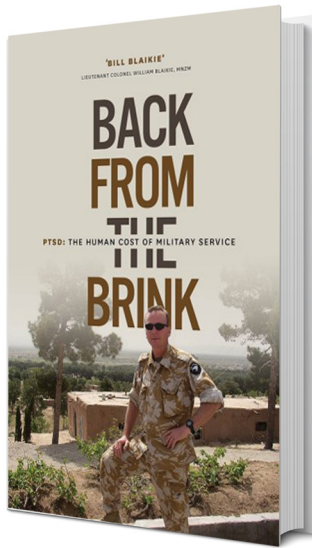


—indie experts

IN OTHER WORDS



Publication Date:
11 th November 2017
Size: A5 Paperback
Extent: 164 Pages
ISBN: 978 0 473 42170 0
Published By: Nawmac Ltd

Back From the Brink

PTSD: The human cost of military service

Bill Blaikie

“Shall I shoot?” ...

“No don’t shoot” ...

“I’m going to shoot” ...

“Don’t shoot!”

Rapid fire yelling within the confines of a vehicle stuck in the middle of stalled traffic, facing an unknown person wearing a full burqa peering into the car.

Inches away from the driver’s face, a large hand pressed against the window.

“We didn’t know if they were male or female or what was about to happen, but we were absolutely sure that if we shot this person, the crowd, including the armed policemen nearby, would turn on us and there’d be no escape.”

No amount of training can prepare you for what happens in your head after the uniforms are off and the guns are packed away.

In 2004, Lieutenant Colonel William Blaikie was shipped out to Afghanistan to head up a team dedicated to rebuilding the country after war. As part of the New Zealand Defence Force, his skills lay in intelligence and communications – his mission was to form a team, develop and implement plans to work with USA and Coalition partners to help get Afghanistan back on its feet.

Bill experienced situations that were beyond tense, often facing life-and-death situations and decisions, that required deep and quick

thinking, not always having enough information at hand.

On returning home to New Zealand, his journey coping with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder began, and the nightmares were not limited to sleep time. Everything has remained at life-and-death levels for Bill, and this book details how he and his wife, Nancy, have worked through suicide attempts, getting help and finding answers to what is an epidemic-level challenge for military personnel everywhere.

Includes:

- Daily Life in Kabul
- Building a Team in Afghanistan
- Tension in Herat
- Frozen in Time
- Dislocation of Expectations
- Leaving the Army
- The Anxiety Riddled Hero
- A Gradual Decline into Darkness
- At War With Myself
- Agencies and Confusion
- Asking for Help
- Trauma Recovery Programmes
- The Stress of Secrets
- Coping After Suicide
- The Invictus Games
- The Journey Continues

About the Author



Bill Blaikie is a highly regarded speaker on PTSD and veterans returning from combat zones.

“This is an important book for those with PTSD and, perhaps more importantly, those who don’t suffer from the affliction. For that audience with PTSD, Nancy and Bill have captured the realities of the disorder that will be familiar. From Bill’s coping mechanisms to the frustration of battling with service providers, I expect much in Bill’s story will resonate. Nancy’s view may provide a new perspective for those with PTSD and their loved ones. For those outside the grip of PTSD, Bill’s book provides a rare view into the life of sufferers. Through his candid presentation, readers witness the spiral down to suicide, and the thought process behind it’.

Kevin K. Frank, PhD, Captain, US Navy (ret)

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