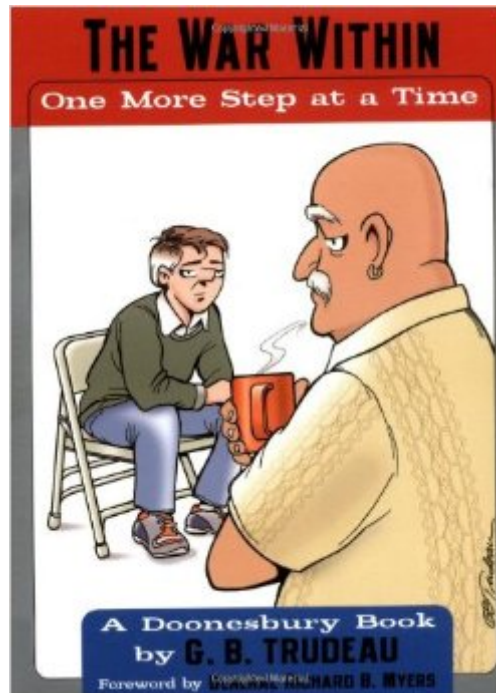


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# The War Within: One More Step At A Time (Doonesbury)



## Synopsis

Your compassionate portrayal of Lieutenant B.D.'s recovery and struggle . . . has touched our Warrior family and opened the eyes of the rest of the world to the physical, emotional, and personal challenges our soldiers face."The initial stages of B.D.'s recovery from losing a leg in Iraq were dramatically portrayed in *The Long Road Home: One Step at a Time*, but his healing journey was far from over. As this powerful sequel shows, the "war within" can be a long and lonely struggle, hardly the life of a "glamorous amputee" imagined by his daughter's jealous classmate. With his coaching job at Walden re-secured and the marathon PT sessions paying off, B.D.'s return to normalcy seems to be progressing well. But those who love him see alarming signs of trouble, namely anger and alcohol. First there's the punching of an MP. Then there's the daily breakfast of beer, a subject not open for discussion even with a best-intentioned friend like Mike Doonesbury. And "the screaming at night isn't very Christmassy," Boopsie notes. As B.D. admits to his doctor, "I'd rather sleep with my weapon than my wife! How messed up is that?" Messed up enough that our wounded warrior forces himself to begin circling the local Vet Center, where he is gently and skillfully reeled in by a remarkable counselor and fellow Vietnam Vet named Elias. Their sessions together form an extraordinary and moving chronicle of catharsis and coming-to-terms. The words "Welcome home, soldier," are powerful and transformative, and B.D. is fortunate in finally getting to a place where he can hear them.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

These are some most heart-rending yet funny cartoons I have ever read. For a man who has never "been there" Trudeau does an outstanding job of showing the long road that a military man has to walk to "recover" from war. B.D. is wounded both on the outside and the inside and as Trudeau shows in a daily comic strip, sometimes it's the hidden wounds that are the worst. If any comic strip is worthy of a Pulitzer, it is the current run of Doonesbury with the ongoing journey of B.D. If you have any empathy for the American fighting man/woman these strips will bring tears to your eyes. They are Art with a capital A.

Featuring a foreword by General Richard B. Myers (USAF, Ret., Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) *The War Within: One More Step At A Time* is a unique collection of G. B. Trudeau's Doonesbury newspaper comics that is not only humorous, but also cutting-edge relevant. The strips follow the daily life Vietnam, Gulf War, and Iraq War veteran B.D., whose tour of duty was cut short by a near-death experience, the loss of his leg, and perhaps most shockingly, the loss of his iconic helmet. Far more life-altering than the physical damage is the post-traumatic stress disorder that leaves him increasingly disoriented, hostile, withdrawn, and turning to alcohol to self-medicate. When B.D. is on the verge of mistaking friends and family for mortal enemies, the turning point comes when he overhears his own daughter say that she has become afraid of him. Help comes in the form of the local Vet Center, and the skillful aid of counselor and fellow Vietnam vet Elias. *The War Within* brims with classic Trudeau wit, yet also reveals the author's resolve to accurately portray the harrowing pressures America's armed forces are subject to during and after risking their lives in the service. Highly recommended. Proceeds from "The War Within" are to benefit Fisher House, a "home away from home" for families of patients receiving medical care at major military and VA medical centers.

Received and read "The War Within" last week but find it hard to characterize this one. While BD was the central figure in "The Long Road Home" I think this one has a cast of figures with equally important stories to tell. BD continues his journey but one gets a much deeper understanding of his pain and struggles as well as those of his family. Adding to the story are his counselor Elias, as skillful and intuitive as any of us could hope to ever be and the ever clever Celeste... an equally skillful counselor in secretarial clothing! "The War Within" will be required reading in one of the classes I teach Spring semester.

connecting veterans and those who share their lives with the reality of their struggles, in this easily understandable format, is a great service. "If we cannot learn our history, we are doomed to repeat it."

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