

➤ **What is “Soul Injury”?**

- A penetrating wound within our deepest self that pierces beyond the defenses of our ego. The concept originated with a group of VA hospice nurses who cared for 10,000 dying Veterans; the nurses witnessed “soul injuries” firsthand as they surfaced unbidden on combat Veterans’ deathbeds.

➤ **What are the essential qualities that characterize most soul injuries?**

- Disruption of a person’s fundamental *identity* that shrinks their sense of goodness/beauty and fuels a haunting sense that they are defective/tainted;
- A sense of *betrayal* by another person, themselves, an organization or government, God, religion, etc.;
- Vague *emptiness* or a profound *aching* and sense of meaninglessness caused by disconnection from the part of self carrying the pain; and
- Lack of adequate *support and protection* that validated the suffering at the time of the original injury.

➤ **Who is at risk for developing a *Soul Injury*?**

- Victims of sexual assault, crime, accidents, natural disasters, abuse, and neglect
- People who have experienced loss of personal health or a loved one’s health, death of a loved one, or betrayal by a significant other
- Veterans, families of veterans, civilians who experienced a war zone, first responders & their families
- Personal and professional caregivers vulnerable to “burn-out” or “compassion fatigue”

➤ **Why should we be addressing *Soul Injury*?**

- Unmourned grief and unforgiven guilt become stored in peoples’ bodies, minds, and spirits sabotaging their lives and generating both physical and emotional symptoms.
- Re-owning and re-homing the part of self carrying the pain and guilt starts a healing process. By revitalizing the weary, wary heart, hope emerges that “restoreths the soul.”

➤ **How does care for *Soul Injury* and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) differ?**

- In both PTSD and *soul injury*, people shift from trusting themselves to trusting fear.
- PTSD focuses on managing symptoms, whereas restoration from *soul injury* includes *opening up* to the symptom and connecting with the part of self generating the pain.
- PTSD treatment helps people manage their triggers and control anxiety; soul restoration focuses on disarming the heart through grief, love, and forgiveness

➤ **What is a *Soul Restoration* ceremonial workshop?**

- A 4-8 hour ceremony carefully crafted to provide the utmost psychological safety
- Education about the roles that unmourned grief and unforgiven guilt play in keeping soul injury alive
- Exercises to take people beyond their mind and heart into the recesses of their soul
- A “Fallen Comrades” ceremony for Veterans and a “Releasing Ceremony” for non-military participants
- Self-care tools for continued integration and healing after the ceremony is over
- Available on-site services including: one-on-one counseling, Eye Movement Desensitization Resolution (EMDR), massage, art therapy, and follow-up referrals to community resources
- Soul Restoration ceremonial workshops enhance treatment for PTSD, not replace it.

➤ **What is *Opus Peace*?**

- *Opus Peace* (www.opuspeace.org) is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization whose vision is to start a movement that facilitates the restoration of wholeness by helping people with *soul injuries* learn how to love, forgive, and trust themselves to navigate in the world again by disarming their heart while cultivating personal intimacy with scattered aspects of self. For more information, please visit the Soul Injury website at www.soulinjury.org or call (727)755-4265.