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**AMID RISING VET SUICIDES, HOPE FOR PTSD SUFFERERS**

***Clinical Studies of Non-Drug Treatment Show Promising Results***

SANTA ROSA, CA. The Army recently announced that the number of military suicides has risen to unprecedented levels – 41 in January and February alone, compared to 16 in the same period of 2008. In recent congressional testimony, Gen. Peter Chiarelli, vice chief of staff, pointed to stress and anxiety as a prime cause. Stress contributes to behavioral problems, increased use of psychiatric medications, and a high prevalence of PTSD. A RAND corporation study found that as many as 300,000 troops may be diagnosed with the disorder.

One of the few bright spots in this picture is emerging from new scientific research on PTSD. Two pilot studies have been done with veterans with PTSD, and have found statistically significant improvements. After treatment, the average veteran is PTSD-free, and remains so even when re-tested one year later. They are being treated with EFT or Emotional Freedom Techniques, an innovative method which pairs the recall of traumatic memories with physical stimulation of specific points on the body to discharge stress.

Bob Culver, a veteran who had suffered from intrusive memories since the Vietnam war, says, "The changes in my life are 110 percent totally different. Once you start EFT it's a totally different way you handle things. Everything like sleep and nightmares and even suicide thoughts all come into a place where a total turnaround happens." Carl Levin, D-MI,

Chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee, has urged Veterans Administration and Defense Department to study EFT as a way of coping with the hundreds of thousands of veterans returning from combat with PTSD.

The successful pilot studies were funded by Soul Medicine Institute, which is now recruiting veterans for a national randomized controlled trial of EFT. Veterans get six free sessions through the study by registering at [www.StressProject.org](http://www.StressProject.org). Second lieutenant Olli Toukoulehto, an Iraq veteran helped by EFT, and a medical student who is now on the research team, says, "I regained the quality of life that I had prior to deployment. Since then, I have been on a constant upward spiral and have been able to transform my past into a great strength. We worked through every single memory and emotion that I was not in peace with. I have been using EFT on myself whenever something new has emerged from my past."

#### References:

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Iraq Vets Stress Project: [www.StressProject.org](http://www.StressProject.org)

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