![A picture containing bird

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Moral Injury, in its most basic definition is perpetrating, failing to prevent, bearing witness to, or learning about acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations. Moral Injury is most often talked about within a Veteran/military context but moral trauma can happen in ANY area of life. You will find that there are several different ways of defining and understanding Moral Injury and in my opinion, no one way is right or wrong. Trauma is complex, humans are complex, therefore the understanding of Moral Injury is also.

As a former Army Chaplain, and current professional mental health chaplain specializing in PTSD, Moral Injury, and trauma, I wanted to create a resource guide that brings together all the information I have gathered over the years. As Moral Injury has become a hot topic within both the pastoral care and mental health professions, there are lots of great scholars and clinicians talking about it.

My sincere hope is that these resources help you to understand a deeply complex experience of trauma known as Moral Injury. As you will see, there is a plethora of information out there and it is all over the place. My goal in creating this guide is so that you no longer have to spend hours and hours searching the internet, research articles, Amazon, and libraries. Some of the resources are free, and many, such as the books, have a cost. In addition, many of the research articles will only be accessible through a site membership via an educational institution, although many local libraries can order articles for you. I am including both Pastoral Care and Mental Health resources because I believe you cannot fully understand Moral Injury unless you study perspectives from both disciplines.

**Chaplain Rachel Mikaelsen, M.Div, BCC**

**Let’s start with the symptoms of Moral Injury:**

**A screenshot of a cell phone

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**Videos**

* [Moral Injury: A Working Definition](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJtuUguqVVo&feature=youtu.be)
* Ed Tick on Moral Injury: <https://youtu.be/SkTwpMo65HY>
* The Veterans Health Administration Chaplain You Tube Series:
  + - <https://youtu.be/3qb1JTBn7TE>
    - <https://youtu.be/2zszUCdV7BQ>
    - <https://youtu.be/w8RlMtLcyAc>
* <https://youtu.be/L_1PNZdHq6Q>
* [Dr. William Nash Discusses Moral Injury Beyond the Military Context](https://www.voa.org/moral-injury-center/videos/dr-william-nash-discusses-moral-injury-beyond-the-military-context)
* [Extending the Concept of Moral Injury Beyond a Military Setting](https://www.voa.org/moral-injury-center/videos/moral-injury-and-collective-healing)
* [Volunteers of America CEO Speaks to the Personal Side of Moral Injury](https://www.voa.org/moral-injury-center/videos/volunteers-of-america-ceo-speaks-to-the-personal-side-of-moral-injury)
* [Abiathar Carroll Discusses the Concept of Moral Injury](https://www.voa.org/moral-injury-center/videos/abiathar-carroll-discusses-the-concept-of-moral-injury)
* [Moral Injury Affects Healthcare Workers](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCy2cMY80v4&feature=youtu.be)
* https://youtu.be/9kR4KdmYDic
* **News Stories**
* [WLKY 5.2.20 Moral Injury Impacts healthcare workers](https://www.wlky.com/article/moral-injury-concern-grows-as-front-line-healthcare-workers-respond-to-the-coronavirus-pandemic/32355367)
* [Fox5DC 4.28.20 moral injury impacts healthcare workers during covid19 pandemic](https://www.fox5dc.com/news/experts-worried-about-the-mental-health-of-healthcare-workers-during-covid-19-pandemic)
* [KTVU – moral injury. 4.9.20](https://fox5sandiego.com/news/coronavirus/moral-injuries-what-they-mean-for-essential-workers-during-pandemic/)
* [Coronavirus: Why healthcare workers are at risk of moral injury](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-52144859?intlink_from_url=&)
* [Coronavirus: Health care workers face stress that's 'in many ways equal' to combat](https://money.yahoo.com/coronavirus-health-care-workers-201554091.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAJtixhBY24kNun1SgnMrd877m6ilHU4fcolkmG6raW4mah3QjDTwFcblYmEbUxXHNWfLXDvJWV0lo4pLqoKqQpeDxjRNzBZEdOWWlKi0qXtwacFHkVuf94nH6DNLE4GMmaamGZbnosjAKNyGzKH0OMJefXRR7Jr9ptCqb6llFjr1)
* **Books**
* Boulanger, Ghislaine (2007). [*Wounded by Reality: Understanding and Treating Adult-Onset Trauma*](https://www.amazon.com/Wounded-Reality-Understanding-Treating-Psychoanalysis/dp/0881634301)*.* Mahwah, NJ: Analytic Press.
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* **Movies**
* [*The Best Years of Our Lives*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0036868/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1)(1946) – Combat trauma and moral injury in WW II veterans
* [*Coming Home*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0077362/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1) (1978) – Combat trauma and moral injury in Vietnam veterans
* [*The Deerhunter*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0077416/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1)(1978) – Combat trauma and moral injury in Vietnam veterans
* [*The Accused*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0094608/)(1988) – Noncombat PTSD and moral injury from sexual assault
* [*Born on the Fourth of July*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0096969/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1)(1989) – Combat trauma and moral injury in Vietnam veterans
* [*Jackknife*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0097607/?ref_=nv_sr_2)(1989) – Combat trauma and moral injury in Vietnam veterans
* [*The Fisher King*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0101889/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1)(1991) – Noncombat PTSD
* [*The Prince of Tides*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0102713/?ref_=nv_sr_1)(1991) – Adult effects of childhood trauma, moral injury (suicidality)
* [*Schindler’s List*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0108052/?ref_=nv_sr_1) *(*1993*)* – Noncombat moral injury
* [*The War at Home*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0118117/?ref_=fn_al_tt_2)(1996) – Combat trauma and moral injury in Vietnam veterans
* [*Missing in America*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0384699/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1)(2005) – Combat trauma and moral injury in Vietnam veterans
* [*Gran Torino*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1205489/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1)(2008) – Combat trauma and moral injury in Korean War veterans
* [*In the Valley of Elah*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0478134/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1)(2008) – Combat trauma and moral injury in OED/OIF/OND veterans
* [*Brothers*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0765010/?ref_=nv_sr_6)(2009) – Combat trauma and moral injury in OED/OIF/OND veterans
* [*Manchester by the Sea*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt4034228/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1) (2016) – Noncombat moral injury
* [*Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt5027774/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1) (2017) – Noncombat moral injury
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* **Suicide Prevention**
* Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS)
* Marek S. Kopacz, Hugh F. Crean, Crystal L. Park & Rani A. Hoff (2017): Religious Coping and Suicide Risk in a Sample of Recently Returned Veterans, Archives of Suicide Research, DOI: 10.1080/13811118.2017.1390513
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* Suicidal behavior and spiritual functioning in a sample of Veterans diagnosed with PTSD. Journal of Injury & Violence Research 2016 Jan, vol. 8(1): 6-14. [Doi: 10.5249/jivr.v8i1.728](http://jivresearch.org/jivr/index.php/jivr/article/download/728/527/0)
* **Other Sites**
* The Moral Injury Project: <http://moralinjuryproject.syr.edu/>
* Soul Repair Center: <https://www.brite.edu/programs/soul-repair/>
* VA PTSD website article on moral injury: [www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/newsletters/research-quarterly/v23n1.pdf](http://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/newsletters/research-quarterly/v23n1.pdf)
* **Measures**

• 45-item Moral Injury Symptom Scale

Koenig HG (2018). Measuring symptoms of moral injury in Veterans and Active Duty Military with PTSD. Religions 9 (3):86 (open access free download, includes full 45- item scale)

(<http://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/9/3/86>)

Koenig HG, Ames D, Youssef N, Oliver JP, Volk F, Teng EJ, Haynes K, Erickson Z, Arnold I, O’Garo KN, Pearce M (2018). The Moral Injury Symptoms Scale – Military Version. Journal of Religion and Health 57(1):249-265 (institutional access only)

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10-item Moral Injury Symptoms Scale- Short Form

Koenig, H.G., Ames D, Youssef N, Oliver JP, Volk F, Teng EJ, Haynes K, Erickson Z, Arnold I, O’Garo KN, Pearce MJ (2018). Screening for Moral Injury – The Moral Injury Symptom Scale-Military Version Short Form. Military Medicine, in press

(<https://doi.org/10.1093/milmed/usy017>)

(institutional access only; see below for scale)

Koenig, H.G., Youssef NA, Pearce M (2018). Assessment of Moral Injury in Veterans and Active Duty Military with PTSD: A Review of Measures. Frontiers in Psychiatry, in submission

* Responding to Grief, Trauma, and Distress After a Suicide: U.S. National Guidelines
* Humphrey, Karen M.  *Counseling Strategies for Loss and Grief*
* Neimeyer, Robert A.  *Meaning Reconstruction & The Experience of Loss*
* Worden, William J. *Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy:  A Handbook for the Mental Health Practitioner 4th edition*
* Viorst, Judith.  *Necessary Losses:  The Loves, Illusions, Dependencies and Impossible Expectations That All of Us Have to Give Up in Order to Grow*
  + Responding to Grief, Trauma, and Distress After a Suicide: U.S. National Guidelines PDF: <https://www.sprc.org/sites/default/files/migrate/library/RespondingAfterSuicideNationalGuidelines.pdf>
  + Suicide Postvention in the Department of Defense: Evidence, Policies and Procedures, and Perspectives of Loss Survivors PDF: <https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR586.html>
  + Jordan, John. R. Grief After Suicide: The Evolution of Suicide Postvention: <https://www.johnjordanphd.com/pdf/pub/Grief%20After%20Suicide%20-%20Evolution%20of%20Suicide%20%20Postvention.....pdf>
  + Information and Support After a Suicide Attempt: A Department of Veterans Affair Resource Guide for Family Members of Veterans Who are Coping with Suicidality: <https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn19/docs/ResourceGuideFamilymembers.pdf>

Below is a list of mental health specific measures but could also be useful for other care providers in looking at the different approaches to measuring and evaluating a person’s experience of Moral Injury:

A screenshot of a cell phone

Description automatically generated