

Bob Delaney shares PTS story with War College Community

By Daria Dunning

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Bob Delaney, a former New Jersey state trooper, spoke to the Army War College Community Sept. 17 about the human response to trauma, basing his comments on his own post- trauma stress symptoms and how he learned to cope and continue through a NBA referee career.

How often we have questions without answers, or don't know where to turn for help? We may be trying to seek answers from the doctors, and looking for medicine to change the way we feel. It's easy to "shut down" and stop showing our emotions to the others, but the others are often the ones who can help us in the most effective way. Trust a buddy, and talk it out – that's the lesson of a first-person presentation on post-traumatic stress.

Bob Delaney, veteran, NBA referee, author, and nationally recognized PTSD authority, talked with Families and with the USAWC student body today in two presentations here at Bliss Hall to increase awareness and education on post-traumatic stress. He knows the problem first hand. He developed the condition as a young New Jersey State Trooper in the mid-1970s, after an undercover assignment with the Mafia.

Delaney is a leader in the post-traumatic stress disorder education, but as he said himself, he prefers to call it "post-traumatic stress development". He wants people to understand that it is not a sign of weakness or a stigma, but a normal physiological response to untenable amounts of stress. Sharing his

formula for development, he offered three recommendations: share one's experience, be intellectually ready to learn, and reflect.

PTSD remains misunderstood, and can bring feelings of shame. Delaney's own experience inspired him to educate others and remind us that we influence and shape others' lives just as they can influence and shape ours. The first step, according to Delaney, is to understand the fundamental truth – what we really need is each other.

He believes that change of attitude can make people feel more comfortable opening up to their peers, seeking help and lives may even be saved. Trust a buddy, and talk it out.

As a leader in the PTSD education and awareness movement, Delaney has presented before members of law enforcement, firefighters, and emergency service workers for the past three decades. He visited and worked with troops in Iraq and Afghanistan in 2009 and 2010 and was brought to Fort Hood by the base commander, General Robert W. Cone, following the tragic shooting rampage in 2009. If you missed the lecture, you can find more about his life and experience from his books: "Covert: My Years Infiltrating the Mob" and "Surviving the Shadows: A Journey of Hope into Post-Traumatic Stress".

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