In Afghanistan there have been **52 deaths** since 2001\(^1\) (23 of which happened in 2006 alone). The situation is even worse in Iraq, where **140 British troops have been killed**, whilst the number of **injured UK personnel is over 2,700**\(^2\).

The number of British casualties though is tiny when compared to the number of Iraqis who have died. According to the best available estimate\(^3\), there have been at least **655,000 war-related deaths in Iraq since the 2003 invasion**. 26 percent of Iraqis have experienced the death of a relative in the last 3 years\(^4\).

Even those that are lucky enough to come back from a combat zone alive still have a difficult life ahead of them. **25% of rough sleepers in the UK were once part of the Armed Forces**\(^5\). Combat Stress, the main mental health organisation for ex-servicemen and women with clinical depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, bi-polar disorder, and a greater likelihood to engage in substance abuse\(^6\). Since 2001, and the invasion of Afghanistan, life has become ever more dangerous for those joining the military.

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There is also a large body of evidence suggesting that **those who return from active service are a greater danger to themselves** (either through self-harm or attempting suicide) and a **greater risk to their family**, with a greater propensity to commit domestic abuse\(^8\) or murder\(^9\) than the civilian population.

For more information on these topics we would encourage you to use the resources to the right. There are thousands of opportunities outside of the military where you don't have to suffer these traumatic, stressful events. Perhaps you can explore those.

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