

Due date: Saturday, 30 October 2010, 09:05 PM

Last edited: Thursday, 28 October 2010, 10:13 AM (1078 words)

Commitment stands for many things, but I perceive being committed to binding yourself intellectually or emotionally to a course of action, a purpose that you hold steady and true to. I am a committed person so when I choose to do something or commit myself to something, I do it. It's my word and to me it's as good as a written contract or agreement, you follow through. I have found in my life's journey and travels that commitment does not mean a lot to people and if they want to "quit" or "give up" they do so, maybe because things got a little rough or because they have changed their mind, I was not raised that way and I do not raise my children that way, it gets you nowhere in life. I have chosen stories that I believe show "commitment" even when all the odds were against them or the task at hand was way too rough.

This woman was a prisoner of war in her own country for eleven years, Truong My Hoa was 19 at the time of her arrest, the Saigon Military had accused her of disrupting order and political stability. She was officially sentenced to eighteen months but that turned into 11 years. Her commitment to her beliefs and her family ended up causing her grief, pain and suffering. She was put into a tiger cage about 11/2 meters wide and about 2 meters long, inside this cage housed five women who were tortured for talking with limestone and water, they were not allowed to shower for a year and had one set of clothes for a whole year. These clothes were used for many purposes including their sanitary napkins for their natural given female menstrual cycles. Many times they would end up naked and to a Vietnamese woman that was harsh. Yet for her commitment to her beliefs she did not cave in. Extreme torture was still to come, hands, legs, and fingertips were hammered with nails, they were hung barely off the ground, hoses shoved in their mouths, I could go on for a long time describing the torture she endured. She was committed in her beliefs and would only salute her flag. The prison wardens called the strong ones "tigresses" because not even the tiger cages could tame or subdue them. She was committed to saluting her own flag and could not be broken and absolutely was not.

Most people perceive commitment as being a war hero or a prisoner of war but in reality that is not always the case, Commitment in the Vietnam war came out in many different ways from the smallest of jobs to the biggest of jobs, and this next story will show you commitment in a different but not any less of a significant way, in the form of a 23 year old stewardess named Helen Tennant Hegelheimer. Her job was to transport soldiers in and out of Vietnam. The flights were long, and she knew a lot of these soldiers were not coming home. She tried to give them comfort and be their friend. At one point she started writing letters to some of them that had nobody, she bought magazines and sent them to the men while they were in combat. She listened to their stories and told them how "perfect" they were. Helen explains about how the senior stewardess position was to be at the top of the ramp when the men got off in Vietnam, but how she usually asked for a volunteer to take the forward door. All you had to do was stand at the door and say "goodbye", but nobody wanted that job. Helen always took that job because she was good at it and the men needed that. She never said "goodbye" or "good luck" she would shake their hand, look them in the eye, smile and say, "see you later" or "see you in twelve months". At that moment she says, "I was their wife, their sister, their girlfriend and in some cases their mother." that was the most difficult thing for her to do, but yet the love and commitment that she had for these men, sacrificing their lives for this country, she knew it was the only thing to do. It was the least she could do and she was committed to doing it right.

Sylvia Lutz Holland was an unusual case of commitment, she shows commitment to her job even in the most gruesome of times but she shows commitment to her country and its men even when her heart could have easily taken over, she was committed to doing what she was supposed to do. Sylvia was a triage nurse, serving for the 312th evacuation hospital in Chu Lai, Quang Ngai Province, Republic of Vietnam. Her job was to treat the wounded using a certain type of protocol, severity of wounds and injuries placed you how you were going to be treated, in what order or even if you were, some of the worst did not take precedence because their chances of survival were still slim. In a sense these nurses and doctors "played god" using the knowledge of the job and commitment, not their hearts or human instinct. She talks about the order in how they were treated but also the status of who they were, Americans first always. She talks about the blown off body parts and holes in people's bodies, the gruesomeness that went with

her job, but she always did it with a smile and as professional as possible not letting her feelings get in the way. The one story she tells that rings out in my mind, especially with her being a woman and having a natural born motherly instinct was the story about the Vietnamese woman was injured and pregnant. They treated her injury but moments later she was giving birth, that baby was born alive however premature but could survive. The doctor handed the baby to Sylvia and said " We can't waste the oxygen." Sylvia had to wrap the baby and throw it in the garbage. She knew that they had to save the supplies for the American soldiers. She did just that. If that does not show commitment to her job but first and foremost to our own American soldiers, I honestly do not know what does. That took a strong committed person to do that.

Close this window



[Moodle Docs for this page](#)