

Dennis Deal's Story

Another kind of motivation comes out of necessity for leadership, and it is directly related to having a sense of purpose. This motivation was demonstrated Dennis Deal in the Ia Drang Valley in November 1965. This is a very well known story. The novel *We Were Soldiers and Young* was written by Lt. Gen. Hal Moore, quite possibly one of the greatest combat leaders ever, and Joe Galloway a journalist who was there in the Ia Drang Valley that November. Their story was even the subject of a Hollywood movie production. When reading Mr. Deal's story I felt that he was highly motivated by his sense of duty and obligation to keep his men, his brothers alive. Mr. Deal states in his story that "what you have to do when you're a leader and everybody is looking at you, is to figure out a way to pull out that extra millimeter of courage. All you need is one more millimeter than the guys around you and they're ok. But if you show failure, they will stampede." In most platoons, a soldier is instructed to learn the job of the man above him, and teach their job to the man below them.

Final thoughts,

It is often portrayed in the media that our soldiers fight for freedom, country, liberty, or to defeat terrorism. In reality, after the "Great Cause" of the American Revolution in the mid-late 1770's and the Civil War that ultimately led to the freeing of slaves in the U.S., the causes to go to war became much more vague to the infantryman. A soldier will fight and die when he is asked to, ^{because} that's what makes them a soldier. But most American soldiers have fought and died for a reason that is nowhere near as complex as politics, or religion. Ask any soldier why he fights, and 99% of them will tell you they fight for the man next to him. It's as simple as that. In a war that is as complicated and multi-angled as the Vietnam War, the only thing that IS clear to a soldier, is that they are fighting for the man next to them, ^{so} that he might make it home. (Believing and knowing in their own heart, that the man next to him is doing the same.) I believe this to be the ^{greatest} sense of purpose felt by the soldiers who fought and died in Vietnam, it continues to be on the battlefield today, and will always be whenever and whenever soldiers are called upon to serve. Of course this is only my opinion. I hold the soldiers of all sides who answered the call of country and cause, in the highest regards. On either side they fought for their own way of life, Communist and Capitalist.

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