## Appendix A

Study Vignettes

Instructions

A series of hypothetical scenarios are presented below. Each scenario describes a particular traumatic event that may occur during a deployment, as well as experiences that may follow such an event. As you read each scenario, please try your best to imagine yourself as the character being described, and continue imagining yourself as this character as you respond to the questions following the scenario.

PTSD – Injury to self (Control)

Word Count: 237

Grade Level: 10

Reading Level: Fairly difficult to read

Reader's Age: 14-15 years old

A year ago, you returned from an overseas deployment. During your deployment, you were conducting a routine surveillance operation with your unit when, without warning, there was a powerful explosion. The explosion immediately knocked you to the ground and you recognized you were injured. As you attempted to move to safety, a second explosion nearby cast large debris toward you, hitting you. Although you noticed the others in your team were safe, you felt seriously injured. With difficulty, you crawled away from the scene and were able to receive the critical attention needed to survive. You know that all protocols were followed correctly, that you and your squad could not have responded any better, and that the accident could not have been prevented. Since returning from this deployment, you have experienced unwanted memories and disturbing dreams. You find yourself upset and physically reactive (e.g., heart racing) when reminded of the experience. You have been trying to avoid any reminders of the accident. You have been distant with friends and family, irritable and quick to anger, and have been unable to feel happiness or affection. You have cut down on the amount of time you spend on work, have been accomplishing less than you'd like, and haven't been participating in normal social or household activities. Your family members mention that you have changed and recommend that you seek help from a mental health professional.

MI – Women and child injured but unable to help

Word Count: 252

Grade Level: 10

Reading Level: Fairly difficult to read

Reader's Age: 14-15 years old

A year ago, you returned from an overseas deployment where insurgents committed atrocities against their own civilians. You frequently drove through villages where you witnessed injured women and children by the side of the road. On one particular day, you noticed a mother with an infant and a small child who were all injured and desperately in need of medical attention. You could see the mother was attempting to care for her children, but was too critically wounded to sustain care. There were no other civilians around to provide care, and it appeared safe to approach the family. You requested permission from your chain of command to help them but received orders to not intervene. You followed these orders, though you realized that the family may not make it without intervention. Since returning from this deployment, you feel guilt for not helping the villagers and keep on thinking of what you could have done differently. You have also experienced unwanted memories and disturbing dreams. You find yourself upset and physically reactive (e.g., heart racing) when reminded of the experience. You have not told others about the details of your experiences. You have been distant with friends and family, irritable and quick to anger, and unable to feel happiness or affection. You cannot focus on work and you are accomplishing less than you'd like. You haven't been participating in normal social or household activities. Your family members mention that you have changed and recommend that you seek help from a mental health professional.

MI – Witnessing intentional harm to innocent civilian by peer

Word Count: 269

Grade Level: 11

Reading Level: Fairly difficult to read

Reader's Age: 15-17 years old

A year ago, you returned from an overseas deployment where local insurgents committed atrocities against their own civilians and allied forces. On one specific week of the deployment, one of your close friends in the squad was killed in an ambush during a standard patrol of a

nearby village. During your squad's visit to the village the next day, your sergeant used excessive physical force towards many of the civilians during a house-to-house search for insurgents in the town. In an altercation that could have been avoided, your sergeant fatally wounded one of the male civilians. Although some members of the squad, including you, were distraught by the death of the friend the day before and wanted justice, you believe that what the commanding officer did was wrong and went against the rules of engagement. However, everyone kept this detail to themselves. Since returning from this deployment, you feel shame for being involved in that incident and question whether you did the right thing by not reporting the incident. You have also experienced unwanted memories and disturbing dreams. You find yourself upset and physically reactive (e.g., heart racing) when reminded of the experience. You have not told others about the details of your experiences. You have been distant with friends and family, irritable and easily angered, and have been unable to feel happiness or affection. You cannot focus on work and you are accomplishing less than you'd like. You haven't been participating in normal social or household activities. Your family members mention that you have changed and recommend that you seek help from a mental health professional.

<u>MI – Children sexually abused by a local community leader</u>

Word Count: 256

Grade Level: 9

Reading Level: Standard / average

Reader's Age: 13-15 years old

A year ago, you returned from an overseas deployment. During the deployment, you witnessed something that you found disturbing. There were rumours that some spiritual leaders in the community were using young boys as sex slaves in the area. One afternoon, you were sitting down for chai outside the village leader's compound. A young boy waddles out and placed the teapot and glasses in front of you without fully bending down. The boy had tears in his eyes. You also heard strange noises coming from inside the compound. The village leader then emerged from the compound. You were immediately alarmed and suspected that young boys were being sexually abused by this leader. You asked your corporal to investigate. The investigation was closed without repercussions to the village leader and, going forward, you were told to ignore these behaviours because they may be part of the local culture. Since returning from this

deployment, you are questioning whether you did the right thing and feel regret for not intervening. You have also experienced unwanted memories and disturbing dreams. You find yourself upset and physically reactive (e.g., heart racing) when reminded of the experience. You have been distant with friends and family, irritable and quick to anger, and have been unable to feel happiness or affection. You cannot focus on work and you are accomplishing less than you'd like. You haven't been participating in normal social or household activities. Your family members mention that you have changed and recommend that you seek help from a mental health professional.

MI – Unable to save refugees due to RoE as a peacekeeper

Word Count: 248

Grade Level: 10

Reading Level: Fairly difficult to read

Reader's Age: 14-15 years old

A year ago, you returned from an overseas peacekeeping operation. Along with your subordinates, you were responsible for overseeing the safety of a refugee camp that sheltered women and children escaping genocide. One day, you received a credible report of an ambush that would occur within the next few days, with the refugee camp being the primary target. Knowing this information, you requested extra munition and approval to engage the militia in the case that they decided to attack the refugees. Your request was denied and you were told to stand down unless directly fired upon. The next day, the militia attacked the refugee camp. Your team was never fired upon, so you did not have the permission to engage the enemy. You witnessed the killings of many innocent lives. Since returning from this deployment, you feel shame for being involved in that incident and question whether you did the right thing by following orders and not firing back at the militia. You have also experienced unwanted memories and disturbing dreams. You find yourself upset and physically reactive (e.g., heart racing) when reminded of the experience. You have been distant with friends and family, irritable and quick to anger, and have been unable to feel happiness or affection. You cannot focus on work and you are accomplishing less than you'd like. You haven't been participating in normal social or household activities. Your family members mention that you have changed and recommend that you seek help from a mental health professional.

MI – Intentional harm to community informant/asset by insurgents

Word Count: 271

Grade Level: 10

Reading Level: Fairly difficult to read

Reader's Age: 14-15 years old

A year ago, you returned from an overseas deployment. During the deployment, you were responsible for gathering intelligence and building relationships with the local community leaders. Your goal was to persuade local leaders to support the allied forces mission and infrastructure developments. By psychologically influencing these leaders, you were placing them in significant danger because even the perception of working with you could get them and their families killed. You formed a very close relationship with one specific leader. He was very helpful to you during the last few months of your deployment, providing you with valuable and actionable information. He considered you a friend and even invited you to meet his family at his home. After not hearing from him for a while, you started to get worried that something bad may have happened to him. One day, you received news that he, his wife, and three young children were executed. Since returning from this deployment, you feel shame and guilt for building a relationship with him and trying to use him as an allied asset. You question whether it was all worth it. You have also experienced unwanted memories and disturbing dreams. You find yourself upset and physically reactive (e.g., heart racing) when reminded of the experience. You have been distant with friends and family, irritable and quick to anger, and have been unable to feel happiness or affection. You cannot focus on work and you are accomplishing less than you'd like. You haven't been participating in normal social or household activities. Your family members mention that you have changed and recommend that you seek help from a mental health professional.

Confidentiality Add-ons to Vignettes:

*Absolute confidentiality*

You have been made aware that if you choose to seek help from a mental health professional, your personal information and details of your experiences will be kept absolutely confidential, and will not be shared outside of the sessions with the mental health care provider. In other

words, personal and medical information given to a health care provider will not be disclosed to others unless you have given specific permission for such release.

*Ambiguous confidentiality*

You have not been made aware of whether your information and details of your experiences will be kept confidential if you choose to seek help from a mental health care professional. You are unsure whether your personal details and information will be shared outside of the sessions with the mental health care provider.