



# **Nurses After War: The Reintegration Experience of Nurses Returning from Iraq and Afghanistan**

*Mary Ellen, PhD, RN, CNM Doherty, Elizabeth, PhD, RN, OCNS Scannell-Desch*

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Based on candid interviews with 35 nurses who were deployed for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, this is the first book to reveal the stresses and moral dilemmas they experienced as they transitioned back into everyday life. The nurses share their difficulties with family separation, clinical reassignments, post-traumatic stress disorder, the perceived stigma of seeking mental health counseling, and compassion fatigue. They describe how "doing nursing" in a war zone changed them personally and expanded their nursing skills, and how reintegration was more difficult than they had anticipated. In addition to serving as a personal account of the experiences, both individual and collective, of these military nurses, the book will serve researchers as a compelling example of qualitative, phenomenological, and descriptive research.

Interviewees describe in vivid detail their homecoming, family adjustments, renegotiation of spousal and parenting roles, domestic and workplace challenges, and many other dilemmas posed by the reintegration process. They provide insights and thoughtful recommendations for changes to current military debriefing to improve the experiences of future wartime nurses. Encompassing all three branches of the military, the book also examines the differences between active duty services and reserve unit services, issues of substance abuse, the Veterans Administration, the burden of multiple deployments, and other common threads among nurses who served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

### KEY FEATURES:

- Provides vivid narrative accounts of nurses' reintegration experiences
- Delivers the first research study of nursing reintegration, which includes Army, Navy, and Air Force Nurse Corps officers following deployment in the Iraqi and Afghani Conflicts
- Demonstrates how a comprehensive qualitative nursing research study can be crafted into a highly accessible, compelling account
- Explores the personal and professional paths of 35 nurses returning from war
- Addresses the reintegration differences between active duty versus reserve status

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**Anthony McDonell:**

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**Thomas Fleischmann:**

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**Gayle Anderson:**

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