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## Roots, War & the Soul: Healing through Story

*When a story is told, it is not forgotten.  
It becomes something else.  
The memory of who we were.  
The hope of what we can become.*  
~Sarah's Key by Tatiana de Rosnay

### Journaling Questions

Which of your ancestors has shown up to help guide you? To put documents or people in your path so you could learn the stories, see the patterns, and find the truths?

Which ancestor's story have you put off researching and writing? Why have you resisted this particular story?

What family patterns have you discovered through your stories?

Which ancestor's story meant the most to you? Why is this? What did you learn from this story or the research you had to do to tell the story?

Have you shared your family stories with others? Why or why not?

Describe the ways you have healed parts of yourself or your ancestral lineage through your ancestors' stories.

What energy healing techniques have you explored to heal yourself and your lineage?

# Children and Grandchildren of War

Excerpt from my book [\*Stories from the WWII Battlefield: Writing the Stories of War\*](#).

## Children

1. What lessons (positive and negative) were passed down through the family because of the war?
2. What habits remained in the family after the war? Which habits were started because of the war or even earlier, during the Great Depression? Consider food storage, recycling, using everything until it had no use for anything.
3. What kind of fear did you experience during the war?
4. If you were born prior to the war, how was life different when the soldier was at war?
5. How did family life change when the soldier returned after the war? Did your parents remain married?
6. Did your father or mother suffer from any mental trauma because of their service? If so, how did they cope? How did you cope? How did this affect your life and the life of your family when you were grown?
7. Was there any neglect or abuse because of the trauma of war? Emotional, mental, spiritual, physical? This question applies not only to children but spouses of those who served.
8. Were there any prejudices or hatred held onto against the enemy after the war?
  - a. Were these ingrained in you as a child?
  - b. Did you hold onto those and pass them down to your children? Or did the cycle stop?
9. After the war, did your parents live more for “now” or the present moment rather than think too far into the future?
10. If your father survived the war, how did your perception of him change after you began investigating his military service? How did the military records compare to the stories you heard growing up?

11. If your father was Killed In Action,
  - a. How did your mother cope? Did she remarry? Did she move in with family? How did this affect your upbringing and your future?
  - b. What stories did you hear from your mother or family members about your father and his service? Or did anyone talk about it?
12. What remnants of war were held onto that affected the way your parents raised you?
13. After World War II, men at age 18 were required to enlist or be drafted and serve a compulsory two year term of service. This lasted until the late 1950s. Then by Vietnam it was enlist or be drafted. How did the sons and grandsons of World War II veterans feel about this? How many in your family enlisted in the branch of their choice? How many were drafted?
14. What anger or resentment did your or do you still, carry around toward your father/soldier? How have you dealt with this to heal it and forgive him?
15. What anger or resentment do you carry toward your mother if she raised you without your father/soldier?
16. What do you wish your parents would have *told* you about the war or their military service?
  - a. Why do you wish they could have talked about these things?
17. What do you wish you could *ask* your parents about their service or life during the war, if they were still alive?
  - a. How would that help you understand your life?
18. Most men of the right age HAD to go fight. There was no choice. How did this lack of choice affect how they lived the rest of their lives and raised their children, if they survived the war? Did they feel they still had choices after the war?
19. How did your mother and the family cope if the father was in any way disabled (mentally, physically, emotionally) from the war?
  - a. How did the family cope if he spent most of his days living in a hospital rather than with the family? How did this impact the lives of his children?

20. How did the family feel about education after the war? With the GI Bill, many men and women had the opportunity for higher education. For those who took advantage of this, did that change the way they saw education for their children?
21. What opportunities existed for your family post-war that were not there pre-war?
22. If you had pre-war born siblings and you were a war or post-war born child, how did your relationship with your parents differ from your siblings? Think about time, affection, resources, emotions, and family dynamics.
23. If your father died in the war or was in a hospital and you were raised by your mother, how did that impact how you related to women? Did that impact the type of woman you married? How did the lack of a father figure impact your ability to be a good father and male role model?
24. If your father did not fight in the war for any reason (age, disability, job essential to the war effort, other) how did that affect him and your family? Many men were called cowards if they did not fight. Did your family encounter this?
25. Due to the Great Depression and the war, are there issues that spread through the generations surrounding wants, needs, lack (of money, resources, choices) and how did that affect the family?
26. If you examine your family through historical context and the military research, put yourself in their shoes. Try to understand why things were the way they were and how that affected how they dealt with life and raised their family. For the things you carry around that need to be forgiven, find answers or understanding of, closure or healing, how can you find this?
27. As you write the stories, do you see any similarities between your life and that of your parents?

## Grandchildren

1. What lessons were passed down through the family because of the war?
2. What habits remained in the family after the war? Which habits were started because of the war or even earlier, during the Great Depression? Consider food storage, recycling, using everything until it had no use for anything.
3. What stories did you hear about your grandfather or grandmother who served in the war?
  - a. What was your perception of that individual?
  - b. How did your perception change after you started researching his or her service?
4. What remnants of war were held onto that affected the way your parents raised you?
5. Were there any prejudices or hatred held onto against the enemy after the war that your parents carried through their generation?
  - a. Were these ingrained in you as a child?
  - b. Did you hold onto those and pass them down to your children? Or did the cycle stop?
6. Was there abuse or neglect in your family because of how your parents were raised after the war? How did you cope with it? Did you allow the abuse to continue or did you stop the cycle?
7. What anger or resentment did your or do you still, carry around toward your grandfather/soldier? How have you dealt with this to heal it and forgive him? (I never realized I was angry with my grandfather for enlisting when he had a wife and three boys at home, until I compared my life as a single mom to that of my grandmother's after the war.)
8. What do you wish you could ask your grandparents about their service or life during the war, if they were still alive?
  - a. How would that help you understand your life?
9. If you examine your family through historical context and the military research, put yourself in their shoes. Try to understand why things were the way they were and how that affected how they dealt with life and raised their family. For the things you carry

around that need to be forgiven, find answers or understanding of, closure or healing, how can you find this?

10. As you write the stories, do you see any similarities between your life and that of your grandparents?

11. How do you feel about war? Did you serve in the military? Why or why not?

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## Upcoming Classes, Writing Groups, and Webinars

Join the Roots and War Writing Groups! Two day/time options to choose from!

<https://www.wwiieducation.com/rootsandwar-jan2020>

Follow me everywhere and see the latest classes and offers: <https://linktr.ee/jenniferholik>

## Additional Resources

### Ancestral Souls

<http://ancestralsouls.com>

Explore the deeper layers of healing through personal and ancestral lineage healing work.

### Finding the Answers Journey

<https://www.findingtheanswersjourney.com/>

The online course and webinar site for Ancestral Souls where we explore the deeper layers of family and military research, writing, and healing.

### WWII Research & Writing Center

Educational articles, information on records access, my research books, examples of military records, resources for all military branches, and country specific resources can be found on my website. <http://wwiirwc.com>

### WWII Education Online Course & Webinar Site

<http://wwiieducation.com>

Research Books See all my books at <https://wwiiresearchandwritingcenter.com/our-books/>

- Holik, Jennifer. *Stories from the World War II Battlefield: Volume 1 Reconstructing Army, Air Corps, and National Guard Service*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Woodridge, IL: Generations, 2016.
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Holik, Jennifer. *Stories of the Lost*. Woodridge, IL: Generations, 2014.

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