

# ***Why I Believe War Is Not the Answer***

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I'll be honest, the first thought I had when I began writing this essay was, "Why isn't war the answer?" Part of me wanted to play devil's advocate, but the other part was questioning this topic. That is, until I educated myself. Now, it is quite clear to me that war in the form of *fighting* and *killing* is never the answer, and I will tell you why I think that's the case.

Sun Tzu may have put it best (if not most concisely), in his book *The Art of War*, when he said, "The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting." When most people speak of war, they usually speak of the fighting. War, to them, connotes guns, helicopters, tanks, and most of all, death. This makes sense, of course. Most of what we hear about war has everything to do with death, injury, and destruction. War in this sense should be condemned, reviled, and looked down upon by civilization.

Fighting is for children, and we can see examples of this nature. Take, for instance, the majestic lion. As cubs, their form of playing involves brawling with their siblings. As adult animals, they cease their foolish games, and they become attackers. Predators. They grow into defenders of their young and of their entire pride. In this way, the lion is always at war. Yet the lion kills to protect his territory and to eat and to feed his young. And the lion, as predator, follows his nature and kills the weakest in the food chain. He does not kill for hate, but for his survival. War is different. It is based on hate and control of people, property, and natural resources. It is not done for survival, but for possession and greed. We are far different from animals in that sense.

Something else that I learned about while researching for this essay was not only the great sadness that people have experienced during wars, but the great loss of lives that caused most of this sadness. As a guy, it scares me how many men have perished throughout human history in war, and that if there were ever to be a draft again, I might just die and become another number and add myself to the countless men who died too young. A man can do far more good off the battlefield than on it. What I'm getting to here is that the cost of war is far too great. It depletes our greatest resource: us!

From the time I can first remember, my grandparents who grew up in the sixties and the Vietnam War era, have preached peace, not war. They started Fighting Bob Fest and held lectures with the Peace on Earth/Goodwill Toward Progressives parties in Baraboo. I was involved as I got to help set up the stage for the Recall Walker event in 2011 and even got to go with my parents to pick up John Nichols and Ed Schultz and his camera crew at the Baraboo/Dells Airport. What was said and done at these events didn't get through at first, but the message, always repeated, has started to resonate. I mean, I've gotten the message from the time I was young about the devastation of war, but I'm a guy with video games showing non-stop killing and while all of this was going on about me, I often thought, "What's the big deal?"

I'm starting to understand the "big deal" because I will be eighteen in September. ISIS is evil and is sprouting up all over the world. There may be a draft in my future, and I understand some may not be able to support themselves in any other way than through the military. It's personal to me now, and I am starting to "get it." We are in a perpetual war, a state that we have created with our thirst for power and natural resources and as we act as the world's police.

I no think of the trillions of dollars spent for war and the devastation that our bombings have had on people's lives, their drinking water gone, their way of life shattered, their family and friends and homes and books and schools no more. Instead, I imagine what the world would look like if the money had been spent on bullet trains and building bridges, not walls and bombs. The good will created instead of the hate would change the whole dynamic of this world. I am just beginning to understand that war is not the answer.