

# **Soldiers' Values...**

**- What is the value of a couple of feet?**

**Ask the soldier who was sitting next to the guy that was killed.**

**- What is the value of an inch?**

**Ask the soldier that has had bullets strike right next to him.**

**- What is the value of one breath?**

**Ask the soldier that has held his friend in his arms and felt him take his last.**

**- What is the value of fifty meters?**

**Ask the soldiers in front and back of the vehicle that was hit by an IED.**

**- What is the value of training?**

**Ask the soldier that has used it to save a life.**

**- What is the value of family?**

**Ask the soldier that is separated from his.**

**- What is the value of love?**

**Ask the soldier whose son has sobbed through tears  
"Daddy, please don't go. I love you too much."**

**- What is the value of love?**

**Ask the soldier whose spouse has told them they have found someone else.**

**- What is the value of pain?**

**Ask the soldier that has realized that as long as you can feel pain, you are still alive.**

**- What is the value of a letter?**

**Ask the soldier that has not gotten one from their spouse in over six months.**

**- What is the value of a brother?**

**Ask the soldier whose only brother serves in the combat zone eighty miles to his north.**

**- What is the value of a son?**

**Ask the mother and father that have their only two sons serving in this war.**

**- What is the value of a son?**

**Ask the soldier that has missed a year and a half of his sons' childhoods.**

**- What is the value of building a fortress around your heart?**

**Ask the soldier that has seen friends die, has seen the carnage of war, walks with the blood of friends on his boots and, through all of this, is still able to perform his duties.**

**- What is the value of a key?**

**Ask the soldier who knows his sons hold the key to the fortress surrounding his heart.**

**- What is the value of respect?**

**Ask the soldier who has been thanked for his patience, his guidance, his love and his example.**

**- What is the value of darkness?**

**Ask the soldier that lies in bed at night and is able to hide his tears from the people that look up to him. Ask the soldier that lies in bed with tears falling on his pillow as he**

thinks about his sons and how much he loves and misses them.

**- What is the value of a chance?**

**Ask the soldier that asks for one in order to fulfill the lives of those he loves. Ask the soldier that has realized and grown more in a year than thought possible in a lifetime.**

**- What is the value of a year?**

**Ask the soldier that has aged a lifetime in that year.**

**- What is the value?**

**Ask the soldier who places monumental value on the smallest things he used to take for granted.**

**- What is the value of a friend?**

**Ask the soldier that has found one and become one. Ask the soldier that has to sit back in the base camp and listen over the radio as his friends wrap each others' wounds. Ask the soldier that hears there are casualties over the radio but doesn't know who they are. Ask the soldier that desperately searches the faces when the ambulance doors open.**

**- What is the value of a heartbeat?**

**Ask the soldier whose heart skips one when the ambulance doors open and he sees a friend, a mentor, his father away from home, on a stretcher.**

**What is the value of all of this? Just ask me and I will tell you about what I have learned. I now know the value of love and friendship. I know the value of taking the time to read another story to my boys before bed time. I know to value every moment of a hug. I know the value of time spent with people I love, knowing that what movie we are watching doesn't matter, but that the time we have together does matter. I know the value of setting down what I am doing to play catch when asked by my sons,**

because the look on their faces says "WOW! I am more important!" I know the value of keeping in touch with family and the important role that grandparents and great-grandparents play in the development of children. I know the value of true friendship with men willing to risk their lives for me and who know I am willing to risk my life for them. I know the value of rolling over, even when exhausted, and kissing the woman I love and telling her WHY I love her. I know the value of two sons that love me and that are so deeply embedded in my heart that the weight of this love buckles my knees. I know the value of respect. Both the respect that I have for men here and that I have earned from them by leading by example and giving more than ever asking for.

Just ask me and I will tell you.

- What is the value of time?

Ask the soldier that has come to realize that time is the only thing that can slowly wash away the blood from our hands.

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If you would like to know more about this poem please contact Greg, ([greg@bearessential.org](mailto:greg@bearessential.org)) for comments and/or inquiries about use, etc.