

Reflection #5  
By Eugene Dufour

### **Essential Workers and Health Care Workers - Dealing with the Fear of Infection.**

A few years ago, I worked with one of our Canadian Soldiers who came back from Afghanistan. He was a communication and computer specialist and was stationed at the base in Kandahar. He never went past “the wire” and never saw active battle. He never in a million years thought he would be asked to go overseas. Without him realizing, as he boarded the plane to go to the place of fear and suffering, his body tightened up and his fight and flight reaction was engaged. It stayed like that for the 10 months that he was based at Kandahar. Our soldier came back with a very serious PTSD.

This is the same kind of pressure that our Health Care and Essential Workers may be feeling  
As Health Care and Essential Workers, remind yourself to do the following:

#### **Before Your Shift -**

1. **Be aware** of the pressure of being in these roles.
2. When you start your shift take a few minutes to **connect** with the emotion of fear.
3. Do a **body scan** of where your tensions are in your body.
4. **Safe & Vigilant** -Review your work protocols for being **safe** and be **vigilant** to follow them.
5. **Affirmations** - Say to yourself, I can do this, and I have a team that has my back.

#### **After Your Shift –**

1. **Get rid of fear** -Physically prepare yourself to come out of harm’s way. Shower and change clothes. As you are showering feel the fear of infection being washed away.
2. **Being in the moment** -Mentally ground yourself and put all your fears and concerns about working with suffering aside. Right now, I need to be present to myself and my family.
3. **Acknowledge and Suspend** -Create and practice your own ritual of acknowledging and suspending the fear of infection.