

In 1945, American soldiers liberated my parents from Nazi concentration camps. I am honored to care for veterans who answer the same call that those soldiers did. None of us lives in a vacuum; everything we do has a consequence, but few of us can determine what the long term effects of our actions will be. Members of the armed forces, by definition, often act under orders, without a full understanding of the impact of their actions, yet their courage in carrying on under these conditions is even more for not knowing, for their trust in a greater need, and their willingness to answer that need.

Following liberation, my parents met on a train returning to Hungary, and were married later that year. They were able to come to the United States, become citizens, work and live and start a family. In other words, because of what those soldiers did, I am alive. It's as simple as that. My gratitude is as personal as it gets. I literally owe them for my existence. I'll never know who those soldiers were, and they'll never know that a life, mine, exists, because of what they did. They'll never know what it meant for my parents, and countless others who were rescued from the Nazi horror, to have been saved by them. They'll never know the particulars of the gift they gave to life, to the world, by placing duty above personal gain and answering the call when it came. They will never know how many live, breathe, have families, and enjoy freedom because of them. But for all their brothers and sisters in arms, who carry on with that same dedication and courage, I owe my gratitude. What they did was not easy, and they will carry the price of that generosity as long as they live, in one way or another. As a society, we owe them care and respect. I am glad to be part of that effort.

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