

Because Some People Never Give Up

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By Young Journalist

Redmond Middle School reporter

Have you ever been wondering about what inspires some people to pick themselves up, when they fall, and then reach their goals declining challenges? And if such a person has survived battle wounds, capture, torture, and disability? Danylo Melnyk is one of such people, the officer of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, who is studying now to become a military psychologist.

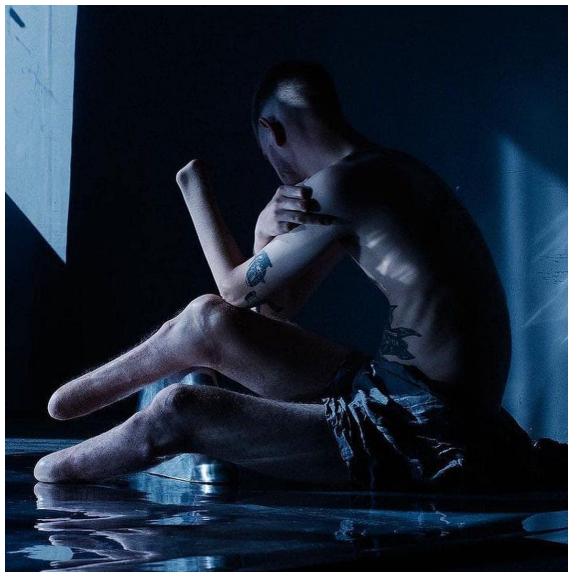


Photo by Marta Sirko

How does war change our lives?

During 2023, two wars are running - the Palestinian war against Israel and the continuation of the military occupation of Ukraine by Russia. Both wars are heavily bloody and have lots of injured military and civilians. According to Ukrainian statistics, hundreds of thousands of soldiers from both sides died in the Russian-Ukrainian war, and thousands of soldiers and civilians became disabled.



Photo by The Voice of America

Currently, the US is actively helping injured people get the necessary prosthetics, but these people will still need psycho-emotional rehabilitation to accept their changed bodies and overcome the stress they got in the war. Unfortunately, despite good prostheses, many individuals will be forced to change professions because they cannot continue working since those changes.

Danylo Melnyk and the Russian-Ukrainian War

Danylo Melnyk is a 20-year-old man who was a sergeant in the Armed Forces of Ukraine and led the unit. Along with other soldiers, he was fighting in the battles for Kyiv and the Kyiv region. Danylo's unit fell into a trap, the military fought, but many of them either died or were captured. As Danylo remembers, when he realized that his hands were damaged and that he would not have the ability to shoot anymore, he gave all the container holding a spool to his fellows and tried to slip into the shelter.

A few days later, the wounded Danylo was taken away by the Russian military. His hands were severely injured, thus Russian surgeons amputated one of his hands and several fingers on his other hand. Danylo was also injured by frost weather, and his legs were damaged so much. However, Russian surgeons did not want to cup off them, and Danylo suffered a lot.

It was a challenge for Danylo to walk on legs that hurt him and fester. He does not like to talk about his captivity because those conditions are inhuman even for severely injured soldiers. During his captivity, he realized that if he would be able to return home, to Ukraine, he should help the military, who also suffered physical and psychological injuries because of the war.

Danylo was more lucky than thousands of other Ukrainian soldiers because he returned home after 3 months of captivity. After returning home, both of his feet were amputated because his legs' tissues had been dead for some time. Danylo survived and did not forget his promise to help people.

Life after: where to find motivation to not give up before the challenge?

If you have ever communicated with a person who got severe injuries, you might know that finding self-motivation to continue living is not easy, and Danylo got the same problems. But, his inner power recharged him, so today Danylo is a "motivation specialist" for thousands of people both in Ukraine and abroad. He inspires his followers on Instagram through his thoughts about the bodily changes he has and his poems. Danylo did not give up as a hero for himself, and he considers everyone who chose to not give up, who adapts and lives with all the changes in their lives to be a hero.



"Heroism is more about a way of thinking or a set of personal and social skills... ..Heroism requires incredible moral courage within each person."

Danylo Melnyk

Photo from Danylo Melyk Instagram

In his account in Instagram, Danylo describes his path in recovering and perceiving himself as a person with new features. Once he shared with his followers that he feels terrible because he would never be able to "walk on grass with morning dew by his bare feet again", and it is as devastating to him as inability to communicate with his friends who died. In order not to give up, he looks for inspiration in nature, in the weather, in coffee, and in communication with interesting people.

Change of profession

Danylo studied at the Military Academy and planned to become a military officer. Because of his injury, he cannot continue his military officer preparation. Instead and because of his promise,

he decided to become a military psychologist and help injured soldiers to adapt to a new life. Today, Danylo studies military psychology and cooperates with experienced specialists. Together, they hold online public meetings about how to talk to veterans.

As a progressive student, he is thinking about necessary changes which Ukraine must consider:

- (1) introducing more modern assistance based on the protocols of NATO and other military organizations;
- (2) changes in approaches in veteran-psychologist communication because lots of patients feel uncomfortable visiting a psychologist with a focus on treatment, rather than on problem analysis and violation of personal boundaries;
- (3) include the practice of "random meetings" which can become a solution to this problem.



"Get used to it yourself and explain it to the children! Now more and more new beautiful people will appear on the streets. They will have no eyes, hands, or feet. Their faces are mutilated by debris and their bodies are covered with scars. These people are WONDERFUL! These people - HEROES! Brace yourself a little and try to show them with all your respect that they are no different from you! Try not to poke them with your fingers or give them a long pitying look. This is our nowadays, and you'll get used to it eventually."

Photo by Yuliia Matvieieva

Because some people, like Danylo, never give up, they inspire others and fulfill them with hope, kindness, and love.