

**Coping With Deployment During Peace Keeping Operations;  
a Narrative Perspective by Caregivers in the SANDF.**

**Die Hantering van Ontplooingsdruk Tydens  
Vredesmagoperasies;  
'n Narratiewe Perspektief Deur Versorgers in die SANDF.**

**By**

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## Dedication

Words remain the worst way to express one's true feelings. I am grateful to all who supported me in my research journey. I would have loved to share the outcome with my parents. Elzeth, without your help I would never have been able to complete it! Marisa and Trix, as your dad I hope my studies will not demotivate you to study further, but hopefully will encourage you to seek the joy of discovering new ideas. Ma Theresa, your continuous positive encouragement was precious. Without my co-researchers' contributions it would not have been possible. Thank you, it is greatly appreciated. Hanrie, your editing abilities saved me from numerous blunders. Prof Julian's patience and ability to allow room for independent thought will forever be appreciated. To all deployed soldiers and their loved ones for their sacrifice to enable the dream of peace: may the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you wherever you are now and forevermore! Amen

## Toewyding

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## **Declaration**

Hereby I, Wilhelmus Gottlieb Francois Neethling, declare that the content of this research is my own work within the context of the narrative research framework.

## **Verklaring**

Hiermee verklaar ek, Wilhelmus Gottlieb Francois Neethling dat die inhoud van die navorsing my eie werk is binne die narratiewe navorsingsraamwerk.

## Abstract

Since the democratic changes in South Africa in 1994, there have been great expectations of the role that South Africa can play in promoting peace and stability in Africa. South Africa cannot prosper in isolation on a continent which is not at peace with itself. It is in the country's national interest to play a role in the prevention of conflict. During my deployment to the Antarctic and in Africa, I asked why some people are better able to cope with deployment and isolation than others. Deployed chaplains provided spiritual, emotional and pastoral support. In their efforts to provide care, they are supported by Social Workers, Healthcare Professionals and Psychologists. For the purpose of this research, they are all referred to as Professional Caregivers. Under the term *Caregivers* I understand professionally trained people focusing on caring for other people as part of their work. "How do caregivers cope with deployment?" was the question answered by my Co-researchers. In obtaining this data the narrative research paradigm was used.

Within the context of Peacekeeping Missions, aspects ranging from military discipline, alcohol misuse, how soldiers cope with the deployment stages, the role of Social Constructionism and how we create our own reality, is considered. Narrative research strives to listen to people's stories of how they explain their own understanding of how they coped with deployment. The aim of narrative research is not to bring about change, but to understand their stories. I was interested in learning about the caregivers' personal experiences through their own stories. These stories would be documented as part of personal interviews as shared by the caregivers in looking back at their deployment experiences. The term *Co-researchers* were used in the research process to explain the role and inputs made by the caregivers who shared their stories of coping. The role of faith combined with the knowledge gained from interdisciplinary inputs in coping with deployment is addressed. Caregivers expressed their opinions regarding the lack of support from management as well as possible solutions. Alternative interpretations and outcomes were made by the Co-researchers to explain how they were able to cope.

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